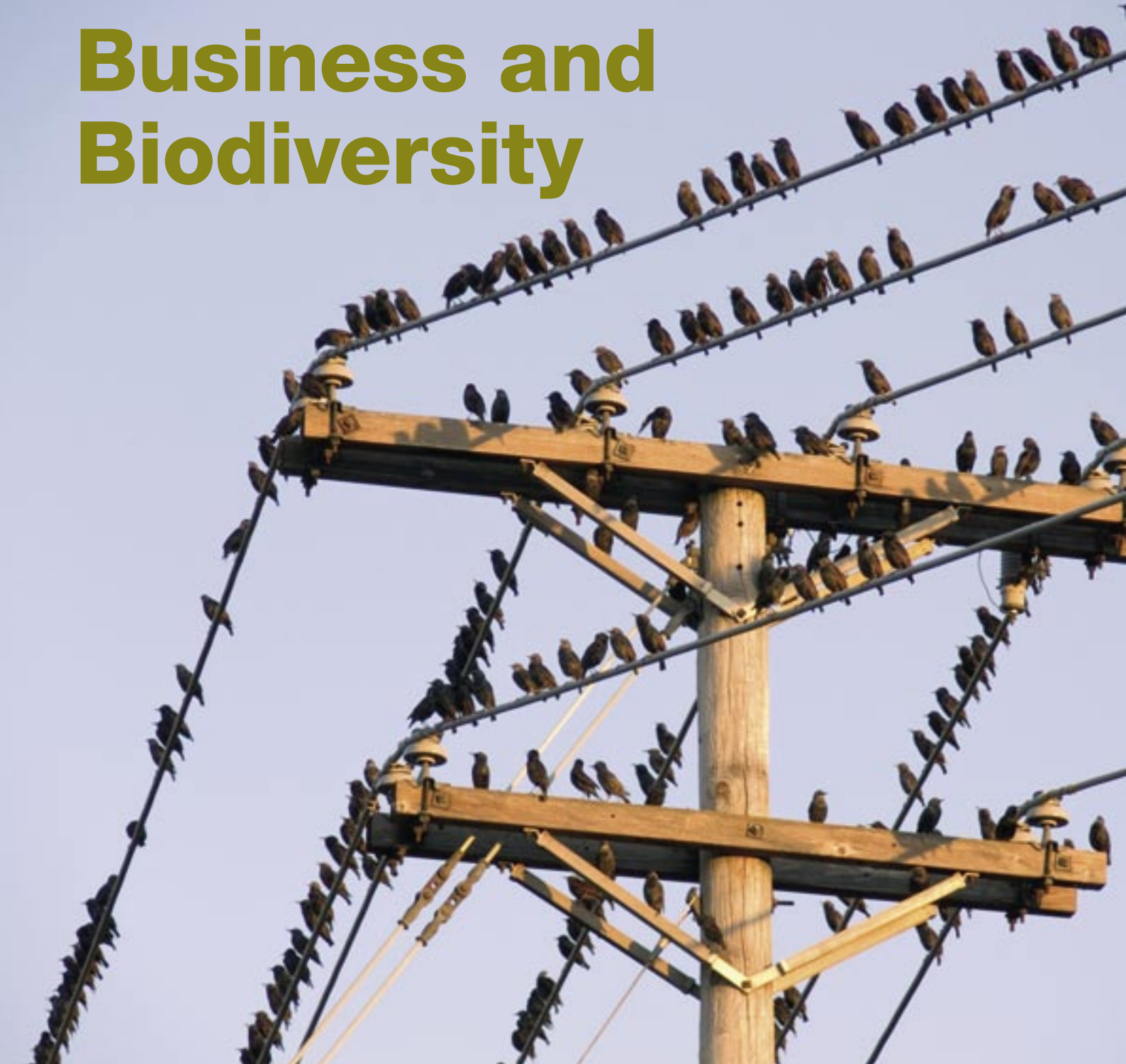


Business and Biodiversity



European Initiative on
Business &
Biodiversity





Editorial

What a year for biodiversity in Europe!

In 2007, the pan-European region will host two major events for nature conservation. In May, all 170 parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) will meet in Bonn, Germany for their Ninth Conference of the Parties. Around 1000 delegates from governments, international organizations and civil society will discuss how to better protect forests and marine areas, develop a regime on access and benefit sharing and agree on an action plan to achieve the 2010 biodiversity target.

A diverse and sustainable world

Between October 11-15, the 10th IUCN World Conservation Congress will be held in Barcelona, Spain. It will turn to the big questions about the future of our planet. The Congress, one of the world's most important environmental events, consists of a four-day Forum run by our members and partners discussing cutting edge ideas, thinking and practice. The Forum leads into



IUCN
World
Conservation
Congress
Barcelona 2008

The four-day IUCN Members Assembly, a unique global environmental parliament of governments and NGOs. This Congress will be particularly special. Sixty years ago in Fontainebleau, France, on October 11, a handful of true visionaries created our Union. Barcelona, on October 2007, will welcome more than 1,000 people celebrating IUCN's birthday, looking back on 60 years of achievement, and forward to the future.

What business for biodiversity?

This newsletter issue looks at the relationship between business and biodiversity, one of the crucial components on our way towards sustainable societies and a green economy. Brian Stigson, President of the World Business Council for Sustainable Development (WBCSD), explains the importance of rich biodiversity and thriving ecosystems for the 200 member companies of the Council. Jean-Paul Jeanrenaud, WWF's Director of Business and Industry Relations, has useful tips for IUCN members on how to deal with businesses. The European Commission and the Portuguese Presidency of the EU introduce the European Business and Biodiversity Initiative, one of the main outcomes of the High Level Conference in November 2007 in Lisbon, co-organized by IUCN and Countdown 2010. We believe that there is no future without responsible business, and I would like to encourage all companies to join this endeavour.

Tamás Marghescu
IUCN Regional Director for Europe



By *Björn Stigson*, President of the World Business Council for Sustainable Development (WBCSD)

“Biodiversity must be integrated in company strategy and management decisions. We must create conditions for biodiversity to be viewed as an investment and not as a cost.”

Antonio Mexia, CEO, Energias de Portugal (EDP) speaking at the European Initiative on Business Biodiversity in Lisbon, Portugal, November 2007





quarry, Jordbro Stefan Janson

A new focus on ecosystems

As a result, all sectors of society, especially business, have been encouraged to view sustainable ecosystem management and use as a potential for creating new business opportunities and managing risk. The MA led to the decision by the WBCSD to establish ecosystems as its fourth Focus Area.

Under the aegis of this Focus Area, WBCSD member companies are proactively addressing business risks associated with ecosystem degradation as well as exploring business opportunities associated with uptake of best practice mitigation and market-based approaches that support the sustainable management and use of ecosystems and their services – both on a stand-alone basis and in cooperation with other stakeholders.

The importance of building alliances and partnerships with research organizations, NGOs, industry associations and governments with a view to improving understanding of ecosystem services, scaling up solutions and sharing assessment tools and best practices, has been a key message of the WBCSD for quite some time.

For example WBCSD has been collaborating with IUCN for the last decade on biodiversity and sustainability-related issues. More recently, the two organizations decided to firm up this partnership and develop a Framework for collaborative action to deliver enhanced commercial benefits and conservation outcomes.

“Biodiversity, ecosystems and the services they provide underpin all forms of life. They are also the pivot around which human activities revolve.” – Bern Stigson

Ecosystem degradation and the associated loss of ecosystem services seriously threaten the business licence to operate. The companies, their suppliers, customers and investors are faced with operational risks such as increased scarcity and cost of raw materials as well as higher insurance costs caused

by natural disasters such as flooding. Similarly, the emergence of new government policies like higher taxation or moratoria on extractive activities, pose regulatory risks. Furthermore, changing customer preferences, shareholder resolutions, or media and NGO campaigns can cause reputational damage, while the adoption of more rigorous lending and investment policies by the financial community can result in restrictions in capital access.

However, responding to ecosystem challenges such as water scarcity, climate change, habitat change, biodiversity loss and invasive species, overexploitation of oceans, and nutrient overloading can also create new business opportunities. For example companies might benefit from developing new technologies and products that will serve as substitutes, reduce degradation, restore ecosystems or increase efficiency.

Markets for ecosystem services

Also the creation of markets and payments for ecosystems and ecosystem services can lead to new revenue streams and cost savings. For example direct payments can be a cost-effective way of securing the continued provision of a valuable service, certification and eco-labelling a way of capturing positive externalities, and tradable permits a mechanism for managing environmental liabilities.

Although they may sound unusual, in reality some of these markets have existed for a long time. Ecotourism is one obvious example. A number of new markets are, however, also emerging for watershed services, carbon and biodiversity. The burgeoning trade in carbon credits was worth more than US \$30 billion in 2001 alone.

Using market mechanisms offers new business opportunities and the chance to use ecosystems and their services to tap into previously unrealized assets. However, these mechanisms are not without their limitations. Weak institutions and poor governance in some often biodiversity-rich areas can make it difficult to exploit market



Dave Weller



Little Normandy Alexis Perez

Ecosystem Services Review (ESR) tool

The Ecosystem Services Review (ESR) tool is a guideline It has been developed to help companies assess the impacts of their activities on ecosystems and their services evaluate the risks and opportunities presented by ecosystems, and devise strategies and management plans for their long-term operations and investments It looks at company impacts through the lens of ecosystem services including provisioning, regulating and supporting, and cultural services

The ESR is divided into five simple steps: (1) Assess the scope for the impact assessment (2) Identify priority ecosystem services (3) Undertake a trends analysis () Identify business risks and opportunities and () Develop strategies The scope of an ESR evaluation can range from a company and its immediate operation to an assessment of impact further down the supply chain, for example Depending on the field of activity, the guideline can be applied to a single business unit, a division or an entire operation

This tool is not about meeting government standards or compliance, but about informing corporate strategy It does not replace environmental impact assessments (EIAs), but should complement them

The ESR is currently being road-tested by six WBCSD Member companies: BC Hydro, DuPont, The Mondi Group, Akzo Nobel, Rio Tinto and Syngenta

The hope is that it will result in a robust, tested and refined methodology for conducting an ecosystem services review and increased business “know how” and capacity to incorporate ecosystem service and biodiversity considerations into corporate strategies and operations



WWF

Interview with Jean-Paul Jeanrenaud, Director of Business and Industry Relations, WWF by Wiebke Herding (IUCN)

When did WWF get serious about working with the private sector?

Around 2008 we were approached by Lafarge via an intermediary. Initially, they wanted to plant a tree for each of their staff members. We instead agreed to do some serious work on a forest restoration initiative. Once we got talking, it was clear that there was a much broader potential for collaboration. As the cement industry produces about 7% of global CO₂ emissions, we worked with Lafarge to define targets for CO₂ reductions in their company. WBSCD then invited Lafarge to co-host their cement sector initiative. As a result of that, 80% of the world's major cement producers adopted similar targets. His initiative has transformed the industry as a whole.

Where do you see the biggest potential in WWF's engagement with companies like Lafarge?

The activities of the private sector are amongst the primary causes of environmental degradation. Lots of industrial processes have a very heavy footprint. To deal with that, you can raise awareness about the damages, take the companies through the courts and expose them in the media. But you can also engage with progressive companies and support them in making changes to the way they do business. We believe that most people – even within companies – want to do the right thing, but very often don't know how. We embark on a mutual journey to move towards more sophisticated, less damaging ways of doing business.

How do you choose which companies to work with?

We have different types of relationships. We have bilateral relations with companies like Lafarge, Nokia, HSBC, Canon and others. With heavily impacting companies we try to get to the core of the business and improve from there. If companies do things that we deem to be positive in terms of the environment, we engage with them to give them marketing exposure.

In other cases companies become part of a group. With Nestlé, Unilever and Procter and Gamble for example, we work on crops with high environmental impact (palm oil, soya, sugar etc). They want to be involved in defining standards for the industry as a whole. Together we look at ways to produce these raw materials without degrading the environment and having major social impacts.

Are all companies you engage with also sponsors of WWF?

Some relationships bring in a fair amount of money for WWF. We try to cover the cost of the engagement, and get some funding for our programmatic work. We also engage in joint projects with companies.

But there are also companies we don't take money from. With Shell for example, we met on a regular basis, looking at the overlaps between biodiversity hotspots and areas of exploitation, and finding out where sensitivities might be. In this case, no money would change hands, because we have a moratorium on taking money from oil and gas companies as major contributors to climate change.

Has there been a case where WWF has had to pull out of a relationship with a company?

Not so far, and that is mainly because of the work we do before we enter into a relationship. We first do a couple of exploratory meetings and then get the company to pay for a due diligence study – an external, third party assessment of the company. This gives us and the company a clear idea where the potential risks and opportunities are. Only if the opportunities outweigh the risks, will we start to engage.

Can you give advice to IUCN members who want to engage with business?

Do it, but make it very clear which principles you are adhering to. You can and probably should mutually agree to disagree on certain issues with the company. We put systems in place to give companies warning if they do things we're uncomfortable with, and we reserve the right to publicly criticize them, if we feel that they're not making the right level of effort. Engagement can be very fruitful for both sides. The companies learn a lot, but we also learn a lot from the company.

You have to be careful about the way you engage and the public perception of the engagement. A financial relationship might be difficult if you are at the same time doing research on the company or the sector. Engage by all means. Money should only come as the secondary motivation. First you need to assess if it's going to be good for conservation. Can it bring about radical change across the sector or set an example to follow?

We have a very simple test for credibility. If we were approached by an investigative journalist, could I put my hand on my heart and persuade him that the engagement is worth doing and not just about the money, knowing that he would find out if you can do that, go ahead. If you can't, you're probably on shaky ground.

If you look into the future, how do you see the relationship between business and the environment changing?

I think people are beginning to realize that we have to come up with practical solutions if we still want to have a habitable planet in 50 years. Even amongst companies there's an understanding that sustainability is not just an add-on to their business, but something that is part of the core business model. Sustainability is becoming part of the DNA of companies.

Attitudes now are very different from the ones we encountered 10 or 20 years ago. There's no longer this idea of 'them and us'. The problems that we're having in the world are largely the result of a consumerist model that is out of sync with the way the planet functions. More and more people are beginning to realize that we're part of a whole system, not a little thing that can act in isolation. I think we're going to see some major changes in the way business works.

European Initiative on



The High Level Conference on Business and Biodiversity - held on November 12-13 in Lisbon - brought together more than 100 business leaders, biodiversity experts, NGOs and policy makers. On the following pages, the Portuguese Presidency of the EU and the European Commission explain why this conference was crucial to move forward on Business and Biodiversity in the European Union. We also document the resulting Message from Lisbon on Business and Biodiversity.



Humberto Rosa | IUCN | Wiebke Herding

Biodiversity loss impacts the business sector

By *Humberto D. Rosa*, Secretary of State for Environment, Portugal

Business has an important role to play in addressing the challenge of biodiversity loss. We have noticed that an increasing number of business leaders are willing to take into account the importance of

biodiversity, and are looking for guidance on how to act. We believe that in most cases this trend is driven by a genuine understanding of the competitive advantages gained from biodiversity conservation and the sustainable use of biological resources, rather than merely by corporate image strategies.

The European Commission has supported this initiative from the beginning, and conducted several stakeholder meetings, with business and NGO participants, that were crucial in shaping the initiative. The High-Level Conference on Business and Biodiversity, held in Lisbon on 12–13 November 2007, brought together representatives of over 150 companies and encouraged in-depth discussions to bring further definition to the initiative. The meeting's conclusions recognised the need to promote the incorporation of biodiversity strategies into the business sector as well as awareness among consumers, and to offer information and expertise to business, to assist companies in shaping their commitments to biodiversity.

The European Union has had a lead role in tackling other global environmental problems, like climate change. In 2002, the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity, in Germany, and the development of the European Business and Biodiversity initiative, are further opportunities for European leadership on biodiversity concerns to be further established.

The European Business and Biodiversity Initiative

Abridged text of the speech of Mogens Peter Carl,
Director General, DG Environment, European Commission



Opening Plenary: Peter Carl IUCN Wiebke Heisterkamp

The public perception of the economic importance of the loss of biodiversity has been distorted by partial arguments and false logic. Arguing that one has to stop an important infrastructure development because of the risk of losing a certain species of bat will often be met with barely concealed ridicule. It is a classical situation of marginal losses not being perceptible except to a few experts. But once these marginal losses have added up over time to a huge cumulative loss, it is often too late.

There are deeply worrying signs that we may be facing an accelerating loss that has already reached a high level of danger, such as the so far unexplained disappearance of a large proportion of the population of bees in the United States, which are indispensable for the pollination of agriculture. Even closer to home, our fish stocks are collapsing. Once stocks are gone they are gone – we have seen the virtually complete disappearance of cod in the North West Atlantic for many years now.

2. Secondly, what is bad for society is not necessarily bad for the individual or business. It is perfectly logical if the individual fisherman, in the absence of any legal restraint, continues to go to sea until he has caught the last cod in the ocean. Market forces do not provide any signal because prices go up as available supplies are caught and stocks reduced. It is only if the individual fishermen are aware of the long-term consequences of their actions that they will be prepared to accept legal constraints and cooperate amongst themselves to take action.

3. Thirdly, while biodiversity protection may be seen as desirable from an ethical or aesthetic standpoint, it is often considered as having little if any economic justification. Indeed, in relation to Europe's own Natura 2000 network we still hear comments to the effect that land designated as part of the network is in some way "wasted land" that has no economic value. This is inagrant contradiction to the fact that normal economic activity may continue.

My message to you is that even if you are not inspired or persuaded by the need to protect some endangered species, to protect biodiversity not only makes very sound economic sense, but it is also indispensable for our future wellbeing.

Protecting biodiversity not only makes sense at a macro-economic level it also makes sense for individual companies. There are many business leaders who have already recognised this and taken initiatives to promote biodiversity protection. Over many years organisations such as IUCN and WWF have also provided inspiration and groundbreaking initiatives in working closely with business and elaborating the business case for biodiversity protection. Many of these company initiatives now provide the benchmark for others to follow.

But we need an EU dimension. The European Commission is convinced that the business community can and should make a significant contribution towards biodiversity protection both inside and outside the EU. It cannot all be imposed by law from above. We need the active participation of business – it must also internalise biodiversity amongst its planning objectives, in addition to climate change which is finally getting the recognition that it has long deserved.

The Commission aims to build on the foundation provided by our Portuguese colleagues with the Lisbon Conference on Business and Biodiversity. We want to develop this momentum into an EU initiative on Business and Biodiversity. From our perspective this initiative should focus on

- achieving measurable practical benefits for biodiversity protection
- working with business sectors in promoting greater awareness of biodiversity issues and in developing, benchmarking and promoting best practice
- giving recognition to businesses that take positive steps to incorporate biodiversity concerns into their business operations.

To this end we will create a technical facility to work with business sectors, NGOs and national organisations in order to develop a strong implementation network. But we will not be able to make progress unless business is convinced of the added value. Those companies or business sectors that are interested in working with the Commission are invited to contact us so that we can develop operational partnerships together.

Although these partnerships are voluntary in nature, the business sectors involved will need to commit themselves to working within and supporting the existing legal framework governing biodiversity protection. I am convinced that the energy, skills and resources of the business community can be a hugely positive contributor to biodiversity protection and a major factor in halting the loss of biodiversity.

Message from Lisbon on Business and Biodiversity

We the Ministers and representatives from governments, business and civil society participating in the High level Conference on Business and Biodiversity organized by the Portuguese Presidency of the EU Council, held in Lisbon, Portugal from 12 to 13 November 2007:

Convinced that as part of the common efforts to implement the objectives of the Convention on Biological Diversity and in particular CBD Decision III on private sector engagement, there is a strong business case for biodiversity, including the competitive advantage gained from conserving biodiversity and using biological resources in a sustainable way and recognizing that competitive markets also have an enormous potential to mobilize private resources and stimulate innovation

Recognize the significant progress that has been made in recent years by a number of business sectors and leading companies and support the scaling up of such efforts across other business sectors in Europe and abroad

Acknowledge the primary need to promote an even greater awareness of the importance of biodiversity throughout the business sector as well as among consumers, to make knowledge, information and relevant expertise available to business and to assist companies in shaping their commitments to biodiversity

Recognize that there is an urgent need to promote biodiversity conservation in micro, small and medium sized enterprises, and in particular those with a strong link to biodiversity conservation as well as those based in the rural economy and to provide them with the information, relevant expertise and tools which are adapted to the operating conditions of these enterprises and recognizing also the valuable role that business associations can play in this process as well as the potential value of clusters of interest groups working within the context of specific, physical landscapes

Encourage the incorporation of biodiversity considerations into existing responsibility schemes and the implementation of such schemes in combination with other approaches (e.g. market mechanisms, regulatory frameworks). Improvements in the understanding of biodiversity and ecosystem services through research and practical experience should support the evolution of business contribution to biodiversity so as to engage businesses in a process of continuous improvement

Welcome the progress made in biodiversity performance assessment and reporting by several leading business which complement the regulatory assessment schemes such as those established within the EU under the Habitats Directive, the Environmental Impact Assessment and the Strategic Environmental Assessment Directives

Encourage establishing and strengthening public-private partnerships between and among local, regional and national governments, NGOs, business and academia to avert biodiversity loss as well as the development of mechanisms by which these stakeholders and other relevant groups can identify each other with a view to developing practical, operational partnerships

Recommend the development and testing of market-based approaches for biodiversity, learning from the approaches and models which have been implemented in connection with climate change related instruments

Recognize the need to promote the principle of a level playing field at a global level in order to provide the correct incentives and signals to those companies that are taking active steps to conserve biodiversity and practice sustainable use and recognizing also that the EU could play a significant role in this context

Welcome within the context of the EU's objective of halting biodiversity loss by 2010, the launching by the Portuguese Presidency of the EU Business and Biodiversity Initiative and the commitment from the EU Commission to establish a technical facility to support this initiative

Welcome and congratulate the government of Portugal for identifying business and biodiversity as a priority during the Portuguese Presidency of the EU and, in particular, for providing a new approach by engaging the business sector in the biodiversity agenda through a high-level multi-stakeholder conference on the subject

Welcome also the German efforts to advance business and biodiversity agenda in preparation of CBD COP-8 and the actions taken by Slovenia in its capacity as the next EU Presidency in continuing to support this agenda

Invite the Portuguese EU Presidency to transmit the message from Lisbon on Business and Biodiversity to the EU Summit in December 2007 and to the ninth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention of Biological Diversity to be held in Bonn in May 2008, including its High-level Segment and the World Conservation Congress in Barcelona in October

Express our gratitude to the government of Portugal for hosting this conference with the support of the European Commission and IUCN's Countdown 2010 initiative

www.countdown2010.net/business



Countdown 2010 new way of doing business

By Sebastian Winkler, Head of Countdown 2010



Picture above: IUCN Wiebke Herding, picture below: Imr

Strategy for Enhancing IUCN's Interaction with the Private Sector
 The goals of the IUCN strategy are
 a more accountable private sector which contributes to
 sustainable development, including conservation and social e
 2. a conservation community that is well-informed about mar et
 mechanisms and understands their potential and limitations to
 achieve biodiversity conservation and
 3. an effective dialogue and collaboration between IUCN and the
 private sector which helps to achieve conservation through, and
 alongside, sustainable development.

set of Operational Guidelines for Private Sector Engagement
 was published in and led to the establishment of a dedicated
 business and biodiversity programme at IUCN headquarters
 in Gland The operational guidelines specify procedures for
 approaching companies, executing due diligence to manage risk
 and for the use of the IUCN brand for products and publicity

As an IUCN initiative, Countdown embraces these goals and
 applies the private sector guidelines, including a due diligence
 study before businesses join the Countdown initiative In its
 recent interactions with business the experience of Countdown

has shown that more effort is needed by the conservation
 community to formulate the business case for biodiversity clearly
 With its strong focus on communications, the initiative has put a
 lot of effort into communicating the business case, and now sees
 these efforts pay back as an increasing number of businesses
 sign the Countdown 2010 Declaration. E plicit commitments
 to biodiversity range from net-positive impact on biodiversity,
 to raising the awareness of employees on biodiversity issues.
 Currently Countdown 2010 has some 30 businesses that signed
 the Countdown 2010 declaration, thus supporting governments in
 their commitment of halting the loss of biodiversity by 2010. rivate
 sector partners range from small and medium-si ed enterprises, to
 multinational companies and a number of business associations.

or instance, UE , the European ggregates ssoication joined
 Countdown 2010 in May 2007 by signing the Countdown 2010
 declaration and in particular committing to ma e every effort towards
 net positive impacts of the aggregates sector on biodiversity.

UE 's members represent suppliers of natural aggregates and
 construction materials throughout Europe, operating from more than
 2 .000 sites and employing over 350.000 people. They recogni e
 that the activities, products and services provided by them have a
 potential impact on biodiversity and ac nowledge the importance
 of biodiversity at each stage of their production enabling the
 creation of new natural areas and habitats. The UE Environment
 Committee has set up a Biodiversity Tas orce which too the
 decision to join Countdown 2010. urthermore, the aggregates
 association committed to communicate the 2010 biodiversity target,
 including the IUCN-Countdown 2010 initiative by disseminating
 Countdown 2010 materials. s part of its commitments, UE
 developed a biodiversity statement for the aggregates sector and
 its sta eholders which among other issues aims at promoting
 compatibility between e tractive sites and Natura 2000.

ortugal and wit erland have so far provided support to the
 Countdown 2010 ecretariat in further advancing the engagement
 of businesses in the 2010 biodiversity agenda.

Business and Biodiversity Offsets

By Kerry ten Kate, Director, Business and Biodiversity Offsets Program, Forest Trends

What are biodiversity offsets?

Biodiversity offsets are conservation actions with measurable *in situ* conservation outcomes that compensate for a project's significant residual impacts on biodiversity, after appropriate prevention and mitigation measures. Their goal is "no net loss", or, preferably, a net gain of biodiversity with respect to structure, and ecosystem function, including livelihood and amenity aspects.

There is a growing interest in biodiversity offsets as a possible mechanism to support sustainable development. New construction and development are important for economic growth, but are also a significant cause of the current unprecedented loss of biodiversity, through the destruction and fragmentation of natural habitats. Many infrastructure projects have a significant, adverse impact on biodiversity and on the livelihoods of local people, by converting habitat and polluting soil, water and air. Biodiversity offsets can contribute to the conservation of priority areas beyond the immediate sites affected by development and help developers account for a project's full impact on biodiversity, assisting companies to manage their risks, liabilities and costs. Laws in several countries – from the United States and Australia to Brazil and South Africa – now require biodiversity offsets, or compensatory conservation, for some projects, setting "no net loss" or "net gain" thresholds. Within the European Union, the Birds, Habitats, Environmental Impacts and Environmental Liability Directives all have relevant provisions.

In addition, companies can often see business advantages in undertaking voluntary biodiversity offsets. They can secure their licence to operate, obtain permits rapidly, maintain a competitive advantage as preferred partners with governments and other stakeholders, access capital from banks, and operate cost effectively with the support of local communities. Conversely, bad environmental practice can lead to higher operating costs, costly permit delays, liabilities, and lost revenues.

Despite these potential advantages, biodiversity offsets need to be handled with great care. Before developers contemplate offsets,

they should first avoid and minimize the harm to biodiversity, where practicable. Also, biodiversity offsets are only appropriate where the nature of the impact to biodiversity can genuinely be offset.

For instance, one cannot offset an impact that pushes a species closer to extinction. Biodiversity offsets should be designed and implemented to support the letter and spirit of relevant legislation.

In the European Union, for example, Natura 2000 sites are sacrosanct. And the design and implementation of biodiversity offsets require a detailed assessment of a project's impact on biodiversity and the offset's gain, and close work with local communities and government representatives.

The Business and Biodiversity Offsets Program

The vision of the Business and Biodiversity Offsets Program (BBOP) is that all developers with a significant impact on biodiversity, whether in the public or private sector, will undertake biodiversity offsets to ensure "no net loss" in the context of their operations, and preferably a net gain. BBOP aims to stimulate a shift in industry practices resulting in significantly more, and better prioritized, conservation outcomes that benefit local people as well as addressing national conservation priorities.

Forest Trends and Conservation International provide the BBOP Secretariat, and the programme is a partnership between some 30 non-governmental organizations, companies, government agencies and financial organizations with an interest in biodiversity and business from around the world, all represented on the BBOP Advisory Committee, of which IUCN is an active member. BBOP is working with companies such as Shell, Newmont, Rio Tinto, Anglo American, Sherritt and others that include public sector developers, to ensure that new capital projects integrate a conservation component to offset their residual impact on biodiversity. The offset conservation activities aim to protect threatened habitat and contribute to national biodiversity strategies and address local communities' biodiversity-related livelihood needs. In its first phase, the objectives of BBOP are:

- to test the mechanism of biodiversity offsets through a portfolio of pilot projects worldwide
- to develop and disseminate a practical toolkit of good practice methodologies, principles and key questions for biodiversity offset design and implementation, using the International Advisory Committee and a broader Learning Network
- to catalyze the policy changes needed to stimulate and support broad use of biodiversity offsets by companies and governments world-wide

The Advisory Committee members support the pilot projects in their offset design and are helping in the preparation of the BBOP Toolkit. In addition, the BBOP Learning Network comprises over 1000 interested individuals and organizations worldwide. Learning Network members receive a quarterly newsletter and invitations to meetings.

For more information: <http://www.forest-trends.org/biodiversityoffsetprogram>



Protecting the riverbank forests of Moldova

By Andrei Dumbrăveanu, Aurel Lozan and Teodor Glăvan



Kevin Burden

The remains of ancient Geto-Dacian settlements and the Palaeolithic settlement of Cosauti are of great scientific and cultural significance

The “Stanca-Jeloboc” forest is an example of how to start protecting small forest remnants from extinction. In the 1990s, a policy for protecting small forest areas based on the microreserve concept was developed as a result of successful cooperation between scientists, NGO activists and local authorities. Due to this policy, a national “protected landscape” conservation category was assigned to the 300 ha of forest in the Cosauti area, Soroca district. Nevertheless, the area is still conservation dependent.

Local people and their interests were taken into consideration. For example, an extensive information campaign was launched to raise awareness and keep the public informed about the need to co-exist with the forest. Several expeditions were organised in order to: (1) demonstrate the importance of the species habitat structures and the main biodiversity issues affecting the area; (2) cooperate with local authorities and people; and (3) plan future conservation strategy. Preliminary lists of plants and animals of the area, including species in the national Red Book and of global interest (IUCN Red List species), have been published. Several ecological films have been made, showing the state of the environment in the region, and its attractiveness and uniqueness. These films also give voice to the opinions of scientists and local stakeholders, and show the urgent need for conservation.

Transboundary conservation and regional development. Nature does not recognise borders. Saving small patches of forests individually is the best solution for the moment, but it should not be the only one. Preserving the entire riverbank ecosystem as a transboundary Natural Park is our ultimate goal. Moldovan-Ukrainian regional cooperation is needed in order to ensure a sustainable environment and non-fragmented habitats for biodiversity.

The richness of the natural landscapes and the complexity of the historic and cultural resources (archaeological and palaeontological sites, castles and monasteries, traditional crafts etc.) make areas along the Nistru basin very attractive for visitors. Alongside the general growth of tourism, we see environmental tourism as a potential solution to satisfying the joint needs of nature conservation and the maintenance of local livelihoods, by helping more local people get jobs or supplement their incomes in areas where nature is under intensive human pressure. Important forest patches are exposed to the risk of total disappearance as islands of biodiversity. Combining regional tourism with regional landscape protection improves the chances of developing larger conservation areas.

As protected areas in Moldova occupy just 1% of the overall territory (one of the lowest in Europe, with no national parks, and only 1% forestation), every step taken to protect our natural heritage is of huge importance for our common aim of protecting the environment.

The biodiversity of the Middle Nistru river basin

The Middle Nistru river basin is home to numerous habitats that are true refugia for biodiversity. The Greater Horseshoe Bat (*Rhinolophus ferrumequinum*), Eagle Owl (*Bubo bubo*) and Black Woodpecker (*Dryocopus martius*), and insects such as the Clouded Apollo (*Parnassius mnemosyne*) or Southern Festoon (*Zerynthia polyxena*), are just some of the rare species recorded in the area.

Diverse biotopes, from dry ledges and crest ravines to wet meadows and cliff forests on the river bank, are of great scientific importance, still preserving communities of such protected species as the Bird's Nest Orchid (*Neottia nidus-avis*), ferns *Gimnocarpium robertianum*, *Phyllitis scolopendrium*, *Polypodium vulgare*, *Polystichum aculeatum*, the Pasque Flower (*Pulsatilla grandis*), the Turk's Cap Lily (*Lilium martagon*) etc.

The “Stanca-Jeloboc” conservation case study

There are areas requiring urgent conservation, such as the natural complex “Stanca-Jeloboc” and its historical monuments. This riverbank forest is made up of the once famous “Soroca Codri” hill forests, about 100 ha remaining of old-growth oak forest in north-eastern Moldova. Its historical-natural heritage has gone hand in hand with cultural activity over the millennia. The monastery and curative stream, in the heart of this amazing landscape, have deeply affected the attitudes of people towards the area's natural values.

Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew

with the living collections to help study plant characteristics and catalogue the diversity of the plant kingdom

How does Kew fulfil this?

The Gardens have developed from their 17th century origins to form a unique cultural landscape. Kew is recognised as a world class scientific institution, holds botanical collections of global significance, and has been designated a UNESCO World Heritage Site. Kew's 700 staff and 300 volunteers also welcome over a million visitors a year to Kew Gardens in London and Wakehurst Place in Sussex. The Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew is funded by the UK government, visitor revenue and charitable donations.

Kew's plant collections include living and preserved plants and plant products. The living collection is the most comprehensive in the world, with around 30,000 different kinds. Plants are included in the collection primarily for their scientific or educational value and many of them are actively used in Kew's research programmes. Many species grown at Kew are endangered in their natural habitats and Kew is increasingly involved in their conservation as threats to the world's vegetation escalate. Specimens of such plants are cultivated and propagated for distribution to other botanic gardens and, wherever possible, returned to their natural habitats.

Kew's Millennium Seed Bank, at Wakehurst Place, plays a key role in this aspect of Kew's work, preserving seeds of species from around the world that are endangered and potentially threatened to aid in their protection. The Seed Bank aims to collect at least 2,000 plant species from all over the world by 2010 to help reduce the risk of plant extinctions and increase the chances of successful re-introduction of plants into their native habitats. The native flora of the UK has already been successfully collected.

A wealth of information

Kew's preserved plant collection consists of over 7 million specimens of dried or spirit-preserved plants and fungi housed in the Herbarium and the Jodrell Laboratory. It represents nearly 10% of all the plant genera in the world and has the largest collection of historical plant specimens. These include types (which define species names), original specimens collected by famous naturalists such as Charles Darwin. Botanists from around the world use the Herbarium together

Kew's library is probably the most comprehensive botanical library in the world, with over 1,000,000 books, 200,000 prints and drawings, 1,000 periodical titles, 1,000 pamphlets and an extensive archive.

Scientists in the Jodrell Laboratory study plant structure, plant and fungal DNA, chemistry and genetics. Their research complements the taxonomic studies of the Herbarium as well as helping to identify plants of economic importance and supporting the conservation of plants. Kew leads research on the IUCN Red List Index for Plants and helps to monitor progress towards the 2010 biodiversity target. Included in the benefits emerging from their research are improved understanding of plant-animal and fungi-plant interactions as well as the authentication of plants currently entering the trade.

Who is this knowledge shared with?

The knowledge and expertise of Kew's scientific and horticultural staff is shared with other professionals and the public through collaborations, publications, online resources, scientific conferences, and educational programmes including internships and studentships.

Among the programmes for specialists are the three-year Kew Diploma in Horticulture, and courses on Herbarium Techniques, Botanic Garden Management, Plant Conservation Strategies and Botanic Garden Education. Others, open to all, cover topics as diverse as landscape design, botanical illustration, plant photography, and how to make willow hurdles! The schools education programme at Kew and Wakehurst holds training days for teachers and study days for children, catering for more than 1,000 individuals each year.

Kew's annual events programmes also include many education days such as Fungal Forays, and our team of volunteer Guides offer informative tours of the Gardens almost every day. A community education programme works with local ethnic and special needs groups to enhance their contact with Kew's work.

Kew advises the UK government and works with scientists and policymakers around the world to help increase knowledge and understanding of the plant and fungal kingdoms. Kew leads and contributes to many national and local projects in countries worldwide to enable better management of the Earth's environment for the benefit of everyone.





Peter Lengyel



Andras Ambrus

TEMATEA: Online database of international environmental agreements

Several hundreds of international agreements both at a global and regional level provide legal frameworks for different environmental issues, such as biodiversity, climate change, chemicals, regional seas, trade in endangered species etc. However, the implementation of this multitude of obligations at a national level remains a huge challenge, mainly because of limited financial and human resources. It requires significant efforts to translate international initiatives down to national levels where there is a need for improved coherence both in implementation and in policy setting.

The online database TEMATEA provides structured information about issues of common concern between different multilateral environmental agreements (MEAs). To date, the website includes modules on Inland Waters, Sustainable Use, Climate Change, Biodiversity, Invasive Alien Species and Protected Areas. Another module on Access and Benefit Sharing will follow soon.

In addition, the project organizes hands-on capacity-building sessions to help national experts identify and better implement their priority areas, for example in Norway, Georgia and the Seychelles. UNEP and IUCN have therefore joined forces to carry this forward together to ensure the sustainability and quality of both new as well as existing modules in order to provide national experts with a broad set of tools and practical support for fulfilling their commitments under different biodiversity-related MEAs.

For more information, see www.tematea.org or contact Ines Verleye, ines.verleye@countdown2010.net

Environment for Europe: Building bridges without sustainable foundations

From 10-12 October 2007, more than 2,000 delegates gathered in Belgrade for the 10th Ministerial Conference "Environment for Europe". Previous conferences had featured the challenge of conserving biodiversity highly, resulting in a common strategy for the Pan-European region (PEBLDS) in 1998 and the Kiev Resolution in 2003, including the commitment to halt biodiversity loss by 2010. The resolution specifies seven target areas that need to be met in order to effectively halt biodiversity loss by 2010.

But pan-European Governments have largely failed to take their promise to halt biodiversity loss seriously, reveals the Countdown 2010 Readiness Assessment launched in Belgrade. The study notes that the majority of the Kiev commitments are poorly implemented. "Considering the huge challenges we face, I cannot understand why biodiversity is not more visible on the official agenda of the conference", comments Sebastian Winkler, Head of Countdown 2010.

CEEWEB, ECNC, ECOForum and IUCN organized a Countdown 2010 Biodiversity Lounge to stage side events and provide a biodiversity meeting ground for the delegates. The Lounge was kindly supported by the governments of Belgium, Norway, Switzerland and the Netherlands. The next "Environment for Europe" Conference will take place in 2011.

New IUCN Members

- Agentschap voor Natuur en Bos van het Vlaams Ministerie voor Leefmilieu, Natuur en Energie (Belgium)
- Centro de Extensión Universitaria e Divulgación Ambiental de Galicia (Spain)
- Departamento de Medio Ambiente, Diputación Foral de Álava (Spain)
- Fundació per la Preservació dels Recursos Interns (Spain)
- SAE Foundation (Safeguard for Agricultural Varieties in Europe) (Germany)
- Emissions Research and Initiatives (Switzerland)

Mr Guido Broekhoven is Senior Forest Governance Officer for the Global Forest Governance Programme and the European Programme, working from Tilburg and Brussels. His main responsibility is the coordination of IUCN's programme on Forest Law Enforcement and Governance. Since 1993, Guido has worked in IUCN's Global Forest Team, based in Kenya, Cameroon, Vietnam and Thailand. Most recently he coordinated the "Strengthening voices for better choices" project for the Asia Regional Office. Guido is a Dutch national, and holds a Masters Degree in Tropical Ecology from the University of Utrecht. He is married and has two daughters.

New arrivals at IUCN

Dr Annika Kerfeldt is Membership Relations Officer at the IUCN Regional Office for Europe as of September 2007. A Finnish national, she studied psychology in the UK, Finland and Germany, finishing with a PhD in Cognitive Psychology. Subsequently, Annika handled Public Relations for Belgian IUCN member states before joining IUCN. She speaks Swedish, Finnish, English, German, Dutch and is currently learning French. Her other hobbies include sports, both actively pursued, and studying Communication and Political Science on Open University courses.

Ms Elisa Calcaterra is Project Manager for Countdown 2010 as of January 2008, focusing on the engagement of local authorities in biodiversity conservation. An Italian national, she has been managing European Commission-funded projects in the field of international development and has worked for ICLEI, Local Government Sustainability and other NGOs. Elisa holds a degree in International Relations from the University of Trieste and University of London and a Masters degree in Development Management from the London School of Economics. She speaks Italian, English, French and Spanish.



Belgrade Conference IUCN Katharina Diehl



Peter Lengyel

Pan-European Green Belt Meeting

Within the Green Belt initiative, nature conservation meets regional development on a transboundary level. As one of the Green Belt projects, IUCN coordinates and organises regional meetings to foster cooperation and information exchange between the different stakeholders along the Green Belt. "Networking for Nature and Development" was the motto for a pan-European workshop that took place in Bratislava Stupava on November 1-21. It was supported by the German Federal Agency for Nature Conservation (BfN).

The Green Belt has many faces. Seventy-two participants from 11 countries gathered during the three-day workshop to present the outcomes of projects along all three sections of the Green Belt: Fennoscandia and the Baltic States, Central Europe and South Eastern Europe. Results from a cartographic mapping project strengthened the visual identity of the project area, while products and services produced within the framework of the "Protection and Valorisation of the Landscapes along the former Iron Curtain" project led to further discussions on shaping the initiative.

Extended trans-sectoral cooperation has created new possibilities for nature conservation awareness raising. Partners presented a range of publications on various areas of the Green Belt, in English as well as in local languages.

For more information: www.europeangreenbelt.org

Using wild resources across Europe

EU citizens are spending billions of euros annually on wildlife-related activities, indicate the first results of the case study UNWIRE (Using Wild Resources Nationally across Europe). Activities covered include hunting of birds and mammals, angling, bird watching, gathering fungi and using plant materials in all 27 EU Member States. Members of the IUCN European Sustainable Use Specialist Group (ESUSG) surveyed lead organisations on governance and wildlife uses. To secure a response rate of more than 70%, country coordinators translated the questionnaire and explanatory documentation into 11 languages. UNWIRE is part of the EC Research Project "Governance and Ecosystem Management for the Conservation of Biodiversity" (GEM-CON-BIO).

The results were presented at the workshop "Using Wild Resources across Europe: Values and Governance" held in Vienna from 13 to 14 September 2007. The 30 participants recommended a fuller and more systematic Pan-European survey of the EU agencies. Data gaps were particularly apparent for fungi and plants. In a separate business meeting, Robin Sharp stood down as Chair of ESUSG after 10 years. Professor Robert Kenward of the UK was elected as the new Chair, along with several new members of the Committee.

Ms Sarah Gindre coordinates IUCN's Sailing to Barcelona initiative for the World Conservation Congress 2008. Beforehand, Sarah managed communications for IUCN's Natural Environmental Agreements and the sustainable use of natural resources Programme on Protected Areas and the World Commission on Protected Areas (WCPA) eco-tourism. Prior to her current position, Ana worked for various national and international organizations, where she managed internationally funded projects in Environmental Studies from Tufts University and a Masters in Environmental Management from Duke University, with a specialization in Coastal and Marine Management in Environmental Management and Policy from the University of Lund (Sweden). She is fluent in English, Spanish and Italian, and proficient in French and Portuguese.

Ms Ketik Shireli works as a Conservation Officer at the IUCN Programme Office for the Southern Caucasus. She is involved in the implementation of the Countdown 2010 project "Halting the loss of biodiversity in the Southern Caucasus" where she assists the programme staff and facilitating the smooth operation of the office. Maia is responsible for the implementation of two work packages covering biodiversity monitoring and strengthening of the protected area system in the South Caucasus. Before joining IUCN, she worked as an administrative assistant for various companies and institutions. Most recently, she worked as an English lecturer at a secondary school in Tbilisi. Maia Karumidze has graduated from the Institute of Foreign Languages in Tbilisi and speaks English, Russian and Georgian. She holds a Masters Degree in Environmental Sciences and Policy from the Central European University (Budapest, Hungary) and another one in Ecology from Tbilisi State University (Tbilisi, Georgia).

Ms Ana Shubitidze is working as a Conservation Officer at the IUCN Programme Office for the Southern Caucasus. She is responsible for the implementation of

