



PRESS RELEASE

At United Nations Biodiversity Conference, countries agree to double resources for biodiversity protection by 2015

Special attention for biodiversity-rich marine areas among other key outcomes

Hyderabad, India 20 October 2012 -The world's governments have agreed to increase funding in support of actions to halt the rate of loss of biodiversity at the eleventh meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity, which ended today.

Developed countries agreed to double funding to support efforts in developing states towards meeting the internationally-agreed Biodiversity Targets, and the main goals of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020.

The Saragasso Sea, the Tonga archipelago and key corals sites off the coast of Brazil are among a range of marine areas to receive special attention by governments as part of renewed efforts to sustainably manage the world's oceans agreed in Hyderabad. Many of the areas are beyond national jurisdictions and, as such, receive little or no protection at present.

Other key decisions taken at the 11th Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD COP 11) include new measures to factor biodiversity into environmental impact assessments linked to infrastructure and other development projects in marine and coastal areas.

Braulio Ferreira de Souza Dias, Executive Secretary of the Convention on Biological Diversity said: "These results, coming in a period of economic crisis, demonstrate that the world is committed to implementing the CBD. We see that governments are moving forward in implementation and seeing biodiversity as an opportunity to be realized more than a problem to be solved."

"We now need to move forward in the next two years, under the able leadership of India, the COP 11 president, to consolidate this work and to advance further. I look forward to other pledges in support of the Hyderabad call for Biodiversity Champions that will allow us to realize our goals" he said.

Smt. Jayanthi Natarajan, minister of Environment and Forests for India, and president of the COP said: "The present economic crisis should not deter us, but on the contrary encourage us to invest more towards amelioration of the natural capital for ensuring uninterrupted ecosystem services, on which all life on earth depends."



Convention on
Biological Diversity

Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity
United Nations Environment Programme
413 Saint-Jacques Street, Suite 800,
Montreal, QC, H2Y 1N9, Canada
Tel : +1 514 288 2220, Fax : +1 514 288 6588
secretariat@cbd.int www.cbd.int



XI Conference of Parties
CONVENTION ON BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY
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"The UN biodiversity conference in Hyderabad has taken forward the renewed momentum, forged two years ago in Nagoya," said United Nations Under-Secretary-General and UN Environment Programme Executive Director Achim Steiner.

"Countries have sent a clear signal and delivered additional commitments underlining the fact that biodiversity and ecosystems are a development priority and central to a transition to an inclusive Green Economy," added Mr. Steiner.

"Mobilizing the necessary financial resources from the public and private sector needed to ensure achievement of the 2020 targets remains a challenge - but here in India, many nations including developing economies have signalled their determination and sense of urgency to seize the opportunities by providing much needed additional support," said Mr. Steiner.

Agreements on Funding

Developed countries agreed at the conference to increase funding to support efforts in developing states towards meeting the Aichi Biodiversity Targets.

Using a baseline figure of the average annual national spending on biodiversity between 2006 and 2010, developed countries said they would double biodiversity-related international financial flows by 2015. The COP also set targets to increase the number of countries that have included biodiversity in their national development plans, and prepared national financial plans for biodiversity, by 2015.

All Parties agreed to substantially increase domestic expenditures for biodiversity protection over the same period.

These targets, and progress towards them, will be reviewed in 2014.

For the first time, developing countries at COP 11, including India and several African states, pledged additional funds above and beyond their core funding towards the work of the CBD.

The conference also saw the launch of the Hyderabad Call for Biodiversity Champions. The programme will accept pledges from governments and organizations in support of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity. The government of India this week committed over US\$ 50 million as part of the programme.

The Global Environment Facility, the financial mechanism of the Convention, for the first time, was provided with an assessment of the financial resources required to meet the needs of developing countries for implementing the Convention.

Marine Biodiversity

The 193 Parties to the CBD agreed to classify a diverse list of marine areas, some renowned for containing 'hidden treasures' of the plant and animal world, as ecologically or biologically significant.

Earlier this week, UNEP launched its Protected Planet 2012 report which found that half of the world's richest biodiversity zones remain entirely unprotected - despite a 60 per cent increase in the number of protected areas since 1990.

To meet the Aichi Biodiversity Target of ensuring that 10 per cent of marine areas are protected by 2020, says the UNEP report, an additional 8 million square kilometres of marine and coastal areas would need to be recognized as protected - an area just over the size of Australia.

COP agreed to transmit the results of this classification work to the United Nations General Assembly so that they can be considered by relevant UN processes linked to the United Nations Convention on Law of the Sea, in particular the United Nations General Assembly Working Group which is considering the development of an international agreement for biodiversity conservation in marine areas beyond national jurisdiction.

Parties to the Convention also called for more research into the potential adverse effects of underwater noise from ships on marine and coastal biodiversity, and highlighted the growing concern on the adverse effects of marine litter. It also recognized the growing challenge of climate change impacts on coral reefs, which, Parties agreed, will require significant investment to overcome.

There was also a call to fisheries management bodies to play a stronger role in addressing the impacts of fisheries on biodiversity.

The series of agreements at COP 11 on oceans and coasts builds on the commitment of countries made at the United Nations Rio+20 summit in June to protect and restore marine ecosystems and to maintain their biodiversity.

National Biodiversity Plans

Much of the COP 11 negotiations revolved around practical and financial support for countries in implementing national biodiversity plans to meet the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity and the 2020 Aichi Biodiversity Targets.

In reviewing global progress in implementing such measures, the COP reaffirmed the need for enhanced technical and scientific cooperation among countries, while underlining the potential for enhanced cooperation among developing countries. To support such efforts, a new National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans Forum (NBSAP Forum) was launched at COP11 by UNEP, CBD, The Global Environment Facility (GEF) and the UN Development Programme (UNDP). The online forum provides easy-to-access, targeted information such as best practices, guidelines and learning tools for countries.

UNEP's Economics of Ecosystems and Biodiversity (TEEB) Initiative also presented a series of practical guides for governments at COP 11 for integrating the economic, social and cultural value of ecosystems into national biodiversity plans.

COP 11 also agreed to a number of measures to engage the main economic sectors, such as business and development organizations, to integrate biodiversity objectives in their plans and programmes.

COP 11 developed new work in support of achieving Aichi Target 15 which calls for the restoration of 15% of degraded lands. This work was supported by a call, in the margins of the meeting, by the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), the UN Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) and other bodies for concerted action in support of the decision.

A decision on climate change and biodiversity called for enhanced collaboration between the CBD and UN climate change initiatives including Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation (REDD+)

Given that forests are home to more than half of all terrestrial species, initiatives such as REDD+, where developing countries can receive payments for carbon offsets for their standing forests, can potentially help achieve international biodiversity targets, as well as those concerned with cutting carbon emissions.

The decision covers technical advice on the conservation of forests, sustainable management of forests, and enhancement of forest carbon stocks.

However the COP also noted discussions around the need for biodiversity safeguards relating to REDD+ and similar incentives. Actions such as afforestation in areas of high biodiversity value, or the conversion of natural forests to plantations, for example, may have adverse impacts on biodiversity.

The COP adopted recommendations for improving the sustainable use and management of species hunted for 'bushmeat' in tropical and sub-tropical regions, where large-scale hunting and trade of animals has led to 'empty forest syndrome', and is increasingly threatens food security, and the ecological stability of forests and other ecosystems. Together with FAO and other organizations, the CBD Secretariat will establish a global 'Collaborative Partnership on Sustainable Wildlife Management' to support developing countries in the implementation of relevant CBD provisions.

COP 11 adopted a decision on protected areas that provides a framework for achieving Aichi target 11 . It calls for integration of national action plans for Protected Areas into revised National Biodiversity Strategies and action Plans.

A parallel summit of Cities and Local Authorities was convened with the support of ICLEI. Participants adopted the Hyderabad Declaration on Subnational Governments, Cities and other Local Authorities for Biodiversity, which supports the work of cities to achieve the Global Strategy for Biodiversity and calls for greater coordination between levels of government.

For more information, please contact:

David Ainsworth, Information Officer, Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity, Phone +1 514 561 2720 (mobile), Email: David.ainsworth@cbd.int

Bryan Coll, Newsdesk, United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), on Tel. +254 731 666 214, E-mail: bryan.coll@unep.org / unepnewsdesk@unep.org

Notes to Editors

Other COP 11 decisions:

The Conference welcomed the establishment of the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES) earlier this year and recognized the potential contribution it could make to enhance the effectiveness of the Convention. COP requested IPBES to contribute to assessments of the achievement of the Aichi Biodiversity Targets. It was decided that the Convention's Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice at its next meeting would provide additional explanatory information on the tasks requested from IPBES and that it would convey this information to IPBES before its second plenary meeting at the end of 2013.

A decision on Article 8(j), relating to indigenous and local communities was adopted which provided a major component of work on customary sustainable use. The decision also advanced three tasks that may contribute to the implementation of the Nagoya Protocol including Guidelines related to prior informed consent, mutually agreed terms and others.

Governments also provided guidance to the preparations for the entry into force of the Nagoya Protocol and agreed that a third meeting of the Intergovernmental Committee for the Nagoya Protocol will be needed in the upcoming two years. It was further urged to complete a number of tasks in advance of entry into force in a timely manner.

For a full list of decisions made at CBD COP 11, please visit: www.cbd.int/cop11

About the UN Convention on Biological Diversity

Opened for signature at the Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro in 1992, and entering into force in December 1993, the Convention on Biological Diversity is an international treaty for the conservation of biodiversity, the sustainable use of the components of biodiversity and the equitable sharing of the benefits derived from the use of genetic resources. With 193 Parties, the Convention has near universal participation among countries. The Convention seeks to address all threats to biodiversity and ecosystem services, including threats from climate change, through scientific assessments, the development of tools, incentives and processes, the transfer of technologies and good practices and the full and active involvement of relevant stakeholders including indigenous and local communities, youth, NGOs, women and the business community. The Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety is a subsidiary agreement to the Convention. It seeks to protect biological diversity from the potential risks posed by living modified organisms resulting from modern biotechnology. To date, 164 countries plus the European Union have ratified the Cartagena Protocol. The Secretariat of the Convention and its Cartagena Protocol is located in Montreal. For more information visit: www.cbd.int.

About the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP)

Established in 1972, UNEP is the voice for the environment within the United Nations system. UNEP acts as a catalyst, advocate, educator and facilitator to promote the wise use and sustainable development of the global environment. UNEP works with a wide range of partners, including United Nations entities, international organizations, national governments, non-governmental organizations, the private sector and civil society. UNEP work encompasses assessing global, regional and national environmental conditions and trends; developing international and national environmental instruments; strengthening institutions for the wise management of the environment; facilitating the transfer of knowledge and technology for sustainable development; and encouraging new partnerships and mind-sets within civil society and the private sector. For more information, visit: www.unep.org

UNEP presented the following reports at CBD COP11:

TEEB Water and Wetlands report:

<http://www.unep.org/newscentre/Default.aspx?DocumentID=2697&ArticleID=9305&l=en>

Avoiding Future Famines report:

<http://www.unep.org/newscentre/Default.aspx?DocumentID=2697&ArticleID=9303&l=en>

Protected Planet 2012 report:

<http://www.unep.org/newscentre/Default.aspx?DocumentID=2697&ArticleID=9308&l=en>
TEEB Implementation Guides to Aichi Targets 2, 3 and 11:
<http://www.unep.org/newscentre/Default.aspx?DocumentID=2697&ArticleID=9307&l=en>
Cities and Biodiversity Outlook report:
<http://www.unep.org/newscentre/Default.aspx?DocumentID=2697&ArticleID=9302&l=en>