

Geneva Ministerial Biodiversity Call for Immediate Action

Château de Bossey, Geneva

3 September 2010

We, the Ministers of responsible for biodiversity of the countries who have held or will hold the Presidency of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity, having met in Geneva on 3 September 2010, with the kind support of the Government of Switzerland, affirm that:

- Biological diversity plays a key role in maintaining the benign conditions of our planet that are the basis of the well-being of human societies and very survival of our species;
- Only by conserving biodiversity, using it sustainably, and sharing the benefits arising out of the utilization of its genetic resources and associated traditional knowledge will we ensure the continued provision of the ecosystem services upon which we all depend;

We note with extreme concern that:

- The Johannesburg biodiversity target to reduce significantly the rate of loss of biodiversity by 2010 has not been met in full, and biodiversity continues to be lost at an unprecedented rate and is being compounded by climate change;
- Implementation of the Convention is constrained by: insufficient human, technical and financial resources, especially in developing countries, in particular the least developed countries and small island developing states, as well as countries with economies in transition; insufficient integration of biodiversity issues into broader policies, strategies and programmes; lack of an international regime on Access and Benefit Sharing; lack of awareness about importance of biodiversity and incomplete understanding of opportunity costs and valuation of ecosystem services.
- The third edition of the Global Biodiversity Outlook published in May 2010 confirms that human actions are putting such strain on the environment that the ability of the planet's ecosystems to sustain future generations can no longer be taken for granted and that the pressures driving the loss of biodiversity show few signs of easing and the consequences of current trends are much worse than previously thought;

- As demonstrated by the Global Biodiversity Outlook, if current trends are allowed to continue over the next decade or two, several “tipping points” will be reached before the end of the century with irreparable damage to the ability of major ecosystems to continue providing their goods and services ;
- The fate of biodiversity for millennia to come will be determined by action or inaction over the next decade or two.

We declare that:

Equal attention must be given to the three objectives of the Convention: the conservation of biological diversity; the sustainable use of its components and the fair and equitable sharing of benefits arising from the utilization of genetic resources

- All countries should commit themselves to a common long-term vision and short-term mission for biodiversity and to global, regional and national targets to be achieved;
- These targets need to be both ambitious and realistic; they need to be understandable to policy-makers and the public;
- National targets should be developed in the light of national circumstances and capabilities;
- Implementation of these the new biodiversity Strategy need to be supported by the Strategy for Resource Mobilization for the provision of adequate and predictable financial resources, and technology transfer, to developing countries;
- The new biodiversity mission requires the full engagement of all stakeholders and welcome the Business and Biodiversity initiative and call for the active engagement of the Business community in the implementation of the post 2010 Biodiversity Strategy;
- The issues of climate change and biodiversity loss are inextricably linked; each can exacerbate the impacts of the other, but at the same time there are policy options that can address both issues. The identification of such co-benefits is essential at global, regional and national levels. In particular the implementation of voluntary REDD/REDD+ mechanisms should be done to enrich biodiversity.

We call upon all government to the High-level Meeting on Biodiversity of the 65th session of the General Assembly to provide participants at the tenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity with clear guidance for concluding a Protocol on Access and Benefit Sharing (ABS) at Nagoya and for adopting and

implementing the new biodiversity vision for the 21st century that will reduce and ultimately halt the net loss of biodiversity such that vital ecosystem services are maintained. We stress that the new biodiversity strategy for 2011-2020 will provide an overarching framework for action by all biodiversity partners.

We support the initiative of Japan to recommend that the United Nations consider declaring 2011-2020 as the International Decade for Biodiversity.

We also call upon all countries that have not yet done so to accede to the Convention as soon as possible.

We decide to establish an informal ministerial COP Presidency biodiversity forum. This forum will meet periodically at relevant biodiversity-related ministerial meetings to exchange views and provide leadership in the implementation of the 2011-2020 Strategic Plan of the Convention as well as during the United Nations Decade on Biodiversity, if it is declared so by the UNGA. The meetings will be convened by the country presiding the Conference of the Parties with the support of the Executive Secretary.

We decide that the Geneva Ministerial Biodiversity Call for Immediate Action to be presented to the High Level Event of the sixty-fifth session of the United Nations General Assembly to be held in New York on 22 September, 2010 as well as the High Level Segment of the tenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to be held in Nagoya, Aichi Prefecture, Japan on 27-29 October, 2010.

Château de Bossey, Geneva
3 September 2010

[Signatures]

(For)

His Excellency Prof. Dr. Gusti Muhammad Hatta, Minister of Environment, Indonesia
President COP-2, 1995-1996)

(For)

His Excellency Dr. Homero Máximo Bibiloni, Minister of Environment and Sustainable Development, Argentina

President COP-3, 1996-1998

(For)

His Excellency Mr. Zsolt Simon, Minister of Agriculture, Environment and Regional Development, Slovakia

President COP-4, 1998-2000

(For)

His Excellency Mr. John Michuki, Minister of Environment and Natural Resources Kenya

President COP-5, 2000-2002

(For)

Her Excellency Ms. Gerda Verburg, Minister of Agriculture, Nature and Food Quality, The Netherlands

President COP-6, 2002-2004

(For)

His Excellency Datuk Douglas Uggah Embas, Minister of Natural Resources and Environment, Malaysia

President COP-7, 2004-2006

Her Excellency Mrs. Izabella Teixeira, Minister of Environment, Brazil

President COP-8, 2006-2008

His Excellency Dr. Norbert Röttgen, Federal Minister for the Environment, Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety, Germany

(For)

President COP-9, 2008-2010

His Excellency Mr. Sakihito Ozawa, Minister of Environment, Japan

President COP-10, 2010-2012

His Excellency Mr. Jairam Ramesh, Minister of State (Independent Charge) for Environment and Forests, India

Potential President COP-11, 2012-2014

His Excellency Mr Moritz Leuenberger, Minister of Environment, Switzerland

Host of the Geneva meeting