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A SUMMARY REPORT FROM "BIODIVERSITY AFTER JOHANNESBURG"  
ON-LINE AT [HTTP://WWW.IISD.CA/SD/SDUND/](http://WWW.IISD.CA/SD/SDUND/)

## BIODIVERSITY AFTER JOHANNESBURG: THE CRITICAL ROLE OF BIODIVERSITY AND ECOSYSTEM SERVICES IN ACHIEVING THE UNITED NATIONS MILLENNIUM DEVELOPMENT GOALS 2-4 MARCH 2003

The meeting on Biodiversity after Johannesburg, organized by the Equator Initiative, Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB), The Nature Conservancy, United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), United Nations Environment Programme-World Conservation Monitoring Centre (UNEP-WCMC) and the UK Department for International Development (DFID), convened from 2-4 March 2003 in London, UK. Participants discussed the links between biodiversity, ecosystem services, sustainable development and the UN Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). This was the first of two meetings in London dealing with the linkages between biodiversity and sustainable development. Over 160 participants, representing governments, international organizations, non-governmental organizations, academia and the private sector discussed these issues in plenary and in working group sessions.

The plenary sessions provided an overview of the MDGs and biodiversity mandates arising from the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), the World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD), and the Water, Energy, Health, Agriculture and Biodiversity (WEHAB) framework. To explore the interaction between biodiversity and the MDGs, participants convened in four working groups to discuss: poverty, hunger and biodiversity; health and biodiversity; water, sanitation, urban poverty and biodiversity; and MDG 8 on developing a global partnership for development. The final plenary summarized the meeting's recommendations, which will contribute to the second meeting on "Biodiversity after Johannesburg" and to the UN Millennium Project.

### A BRIEF INTRODUCTION TO BIODIVERSITY AND THE MILLENNIUM DEVELOPMENT GOALS

In September 2000, the UN Millennium Summit adopted the MDGs, setting targets for, *inter alia*, eradicating extreme poverty and hunger, achieving universal primary education, promoting gender equality, reducing child mortality, combating disease and ensuring

environmental sustainability. The eight MDGs comprise 18 targets and 48 indicators and are universally accepted as a framework for measuring development progress. To support the MDGs, the UN launched the Millennium Project in 2002. Over a period of three years, the Millennium Project intends to devise a recommended plan of implementation to allow developing countries to meet the MDG targets by 2015.

In 2002, various fora acknowledged the important relationship between biodiversity and the MDGs. In April, the 6<sup>th</sup> Conference of the Parties (COP) to the CBD, recognizing that biodiversity underpins sustainable development, established 2010 as the target year for halting biodiversity loss. In May, UN Secretary General Kofi Annan set out the five WEHAB priorities for the WSSD. And in September, the WSSD's Plan of Implementation consolidated many internationally agreed goals relating to sustainable development, including biodiversity, and called for concerted action from all sectors of society to meet these goals. Specifically, the WSSD called for significantly reducing biodiversity loss by 2010.

### REPORT OF THE MEETING

Discussion of the meeting's agenda items commenced during a pre-meeting workshop on Sunday, 2 March, which Jeffrey Sachs, Director of the Millennium Project, and the organizers, workshop presenters, facilitators and rapporteurs of the four working groups convened to consider ways to ensure that the outcomes of the meeting would contribute to the UN Millennium Project. Sachs then addressed all participants, discussing the role of the international biodiversity community in achieving the MDGs.

Following morning plenary sessions, participants met in four parallel working groups on Monday afternoon and Tuesday morning, 3-4 March, to formulate conclusions and recommendations on: poverty, hunger and biodiversity; health and biodiversity; water, sanitation, urban poverty and biodiversity; and MDG 8 on developing a global partnership for development. Also on Tuesday morning and afternoon, participants convened in plenary to address issues related to biodiversity and MDG strategies, targets and timetables, and ways forward. This report summarizes the meeting's presentations and deliberations.

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### **OPENING PRESENTATION**

On Sunday, 2 March, Jeffrey Sachs, Director of the Millennium Project, addressed the role of the international biodiversity community in achieving the MDGs. He noted that biodiversity and ecosystem management are important aspects of the strategy to overcome poverty and improve human health, food production and water supply. Sachs stressed that biodiversity issues are under represented in discussions relating to the UNDP Human Development Reports and the MDGs. He highlighted the need for interaction between the economic development and biodiversity communities.

Sachs explained that in September 2000 the UN established the MDGs, which encompass eight goals, 18 targets and 48 indicators, and proposed standards to achieve pragmatic global policies. He pointed out that some of the indicators are arbitrary and suffer from insufficient data. Showing data analyses of poverty, infant mortality and access to clean water, Sachs emphasized the absence of clear biodiversity data and information that clarify the relationship between biodiversity and economic development.

Sachs highlighted the need for: a systematic approach to monitoring ecosystem functions in all parts of the world to ensure adequate information on ecosystem and biodiversity degradation; a biodiversity map of world species similar to the Human Genome Project; mechanisms to assist policy makers to translate biodiversity concerns into action; and specific guidance for policy makers on biodiversity and ecosystem management around urbanized areas.

Participants discussed the need to: develop vehicles for promoting multi-stakeholder participation on biodiversity and development issues; include elements related to population control in the development agenda; integrate the principles of the CBD with economic and social issues; link urbanization, development and biodiversity; and analyze the drivers of biodiversity loss.

### **KEYNOTE ADDRESSES**

During the morning plenary meeting on 3 March, Charles McNeill, UNDP, welcomed participants on behalf of the sponsoring organizations. Michael Dixon, Director General of the Zoological Society of London, underscored the importance of jointly addressing the issues of biodiversity conservation and poverty alleviation.

Graham Wynne, Chief Executive of the RSPB, noted insufficient progress on biodiversity conservation in the decade since the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED). He said the MDGs provide a window of opportunity for promoting the integration of social development and biodiversity conservation goals and highlighted the growing political momentum in this regard. He called for practical and concrete solutions, strong legal and policy frameworks, and reinforced linkages between policy makers and practitioners.

Randall Curtis, Director of Multilateral and Bilateral Affairs, The Nature Conservancy, commended UNDP for launching the Equator Initiative. He highlighted the need to identify approaches for "creating jobs and dollars" while "saving the birds and the bees."

McNeill underscored that biodiversity and ecosystem services are crucial for the livelihoods of over one billion poor people globally, and stressed that the MDGs' implementation should not compromise biodiversity goals. He asked participants to consider how the world's development agenda and priorities, embodied in the MDGs, can be more effectively integrated into, and harmonized with, the world's biodiversity agenda, embodied in the CBD, in order to make progress on both sets of objectives.

Clare Short, Secretary of State UK DFID, noted that the objectives of the environmental movement in developed countries are not always consistent with those of developing countries, and lauded the commitment of developed country environment ministers to the MDGs. She said biodiversity loss results from, *inter alia*, increasing poverty, corruption, mismanagement, and illegal logging. Highlighting the potential for "win-win" solutions, she stressed the need to manage, rather than just conserve, biodiversity to promote economic growth and improve livelihoods of the poor. She underscored the importance of addressing the MDGs as an integrated whole.

Klaus Töpfer, UNEP Executive Director, highlighted the importance of linking environment and development, noting that poverty is a threat to the environment. He underscored the need for alternative development paths and to reinvest in nature. Highlighting the CBD principles related to benefit sharing of resources, Töpfer said a combination of development and conservation projects would assist in protecting biodiversity and livelihoods. He stressed that environmental assessments and indicators would contribute to the implementation of MDGs.

During the ensuing discussion, participants addressed the importance of protecting species and community livelihoods; the environmental effects of war and the linkages with peace, stability and sustainable development; and government accountability and participation of the poor in decision making and assessing development outcomes.

### **PRESENTATIONS OF KEY ISSUES**

Following the keynote addresses, the key issues to be considered by the working groups were introduced. Izabella Koziell, UK DFID, described the complex relationship between poverty and biodiversity. Highlighting the need for good governance, she said biodiversity offers important pro-poor growth opportunities, but stressed that the benefits derived from biodiversity resources often fail to reach the poor. She highlighted the need to: encourage transparent and inclusive decision making; develop better indicators and assessment methods; understand how to effectively apply community-based approaches; strengthen capacity and confidence at the local level; improve awareness of sustainable-use methods; introduce incentives for practicing alternative livelihoods; increase coherence and coordination across sector policies and legislation at the national level; and identify suitable fiscal policy instruments and other economic incentives.

Sara Scherr, Forest Trends, highlighted the dependency of poor people on biodiversity and noted that biodiversity loss intensifies hunger and food insecurity. She advocated that, rather than a threat to biodiversity, local communities should be seen as a central tenet. Scherr suggested national actions that prioritize: strengthening local rights to own and manage biodiversity resources; reforming conservation poli-

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cies to enhance food and income security; and setting up payments for biodiversity services to reward the poor for conservation activities. She also highlighted international actions that should be prioritized, including: financing and supporting integrated initiatives for biodiversity conservation and food security; and carrying out Clean Development Mechanism projects under the Kyoto Protocol to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change that promote benefits related to biodiversity, climate change and livelihoods.

Eric Chivian, Harvard Medical School, spoke on the importance of biodiversity to human health. Drawing examples from specific species, he emphasized the significance of biodiversity to medical research. He highlighted the role of biodiversity in world food production, including pest control, pollination and soil fertility. In conclusion, he provided case studies on schistosomiasis, sleeping sickness, HIV/AIDS and ebola to demonstrate how environmental degradation and biodiversity loss can increase disease prevalence through complex ecosystem linkages.

Ian Douglas, Manchester University, spoke on water, sanitation, urban poverty and linkages with biodiversity in relation to MDG 7 on ensuring environmental sustainability, increasing access to safe drinking water and improving the living standards of slum dwellers. He highlighted the need for institutional coordination to manage whole river basins rather than treating urban and rural river sections as distinct. Referring to the 500 million people living in urban poverty, he highlighted the threats and opportunities provided by urban biodiversity, including the risk of disease and contamination, and the opportunity provided by urban production processing of foods and medicinal plants, and water treatment. To ensure the sustainable utilization of the mosaic of urban biodiversity, he emphasized the importance of traditional knowledge, community participation and strategic partnerships.

Carlos Quintela, Wildlife Conservation Society on behalf of the Conservation Finance Alliance, and noted that financing is a key challenge in achieving biodiversity conservation. This, he explained, is due to the lack of access and dissemination of information on the known values of ecosystem services and biodiversity, the inability of markets to internalize short and long term environmental social costs and benefits, and perverse subsidies such as annual agricultural subsidies. He suggested that achieving sustainable finance for biodiversity conservation would involve: creating appropriate conditions through the removal of barriers to private enterprises and the removal of perverse subsidies; building capacity to design and manage biodiversity-based revenue generating activities; expanding the funding base in the form of grants from bilateral and multilateral donors and in the form of debt relief and equity from the business sector; and changing the sustainable finance model through, *inter alia*, enhancing market-based, revenue-generating options.

Guido Schmidt-Traub, UN Millennium Project, described the Project's mission to develop and operationalize a framework of implementation allowing developing countries to meet the MDGs by 2015. The Project's structure, he noted, consists of an advisory body to the UN Secretary General, which receives input from ten task forces. On milestones, he mentioned upcoming interim reports including the 2003 UN Human Development Report and a final recommendation report to be submitted in 2005.

Sean Southey, Equator Initiative, introduced the four working groups, which met in parallel on Monday afternoon and Tuesday morning, 3-4 March, to address: how biodiversity loss and the disruption of ecosystem services contribute to problems addressed by the MDGs; how the sustainable management of biodiversity can contribute to solving problems addressed by the MDGs; and the priorities and most promising strategies for maximizing the contributions that biodiversity conservation and ecosystem services can make to achieving the MDGs. Participants sought to identify how to more effectively integrate biodiversity with the MDG agenda. Linkages between MDGs and the working groups(WGs) are summarized as the following:

- **MDG 1**, Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger: Poverty, hunger and biodiversity WG;
- **MDG 2**, Achieve universal primary education: Cross cutting issue;
- **MDG 3**, Promote gender equality and empower women: Cross cutting issue;
- **MDG 4**, Reduce child mortality: Health and biodiversity WG;
- **MDG 5**, Improve maternal health: Health and biodiversity WG;
- **MDG 6**, Combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases: Health and biodiversity WG;
- **MDG 7**, Ensure environmental sustainability: Water, sanitation and urban poverty and biodiversity WG;
- **MDG 8**, Develop a global partnership for development: Conditions for effective global partnership WG.

**POVERTY, HUNGER AND BIODIVERSITY:** The working group on poverty, hunger and biodiversity, facilitated by Jeffrey McNeely, World Conservation Union (IUCN), and assisted by John Hough, UNDP/ Global Environment Facility (GEF), as rapporteur, met on Monday afternoon to identify, *inter alia*: areas where seemingly useful strategies for implementing the poverty- and hunger-related MDGs may erode biodiversity and ultimately undermine the achievement of those Goals; information gaps in "making the case" that the conservation of biodiversity is important for achieving MDG 1 on eradicating extreme poverty and hunger; the measures and investments to conserve, sustainably use, and equitably share the benefits of biodiversity that can effectively contribute to the achievement of MDG 1; the value of services from biologically-diverse ecosystems for MDG 1; how to articulate these values in terms relevant to policy makers; and data and information gaps that hinder making the political case for investments and action to conserve biodiversity as an important basis for achieving MDGs.

**Discussion:** Regarding how achieving the MDGs might erode biodiversity, participants highlighted ineffective land-use planning due to current incentives promoting "land grabbing," and identified the need for more inclusive decision making. Some participants noted the need for corridors and mosaics to promote biodiversity conservation in monocultures. Participants also stated that facilitating the participation of the poor in markets may not be useful for biodiversity conservation. Regarding information gaps, participants discussed the need for information on the value of ecosystem services, and on how changes in landscapes lead to changes in ecosystem services. Participants identified the need to "speak the language of economists," noted a lack of awareness

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among policy makers regarding the vital importance of biodiversity, and identified the need for improved access to biodiversity-related information at the local level. On strategies for enhancing the contribution of biodiversity to achieving the MDGs, participants discussed, *inter alia*, the need for good governance, transparent policies, and better legal arrangements for bio-prospecting. Participants also identified the need for business and marketing training for local communities, and social and environmental standards in the private sector. Participants highlighted that traditional knowledge is important for food security and should be protected, and existing initiatives, including the Clean Development Mechanism and Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (PRSPs), should be used to enhance the contribution of biodiversity to achieving the MDGs.

**Outcome:** Regarding negotiations and negotiating capacity, the working group highlighted the need to, *inter alia*: ensure that the interests of the poor are represented during negotiations; build their capacity to negotiate; and ensure that the poor have access to information. Regarding the role of PRSPs in promoting the recurrence of systematic poverty, the working group concluded that, *inter alia*: although PRSPs are useful, they do not reflect the interests of all stakeholders; PRSPs should incorporate biodiversity considerations; PRSPs should address the needs of agriculture, subsistence farmers and herders; interactions with climate, desertification, livelihoods, migration and biodiversity need to be considered; and there is a need for coherence between PRSPs, National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plans (NBSAPs) and National Strategies for Sustainable Development.

Regarding the competing paradigms of industrialization and urbanization versus sustainable agriculture as means for poverty alleviation, the working group concluded that, *inter alia*: the conservation community should use poverty reduction as a strategy for conservation; local knowledge and cultural diversity are critical elements of productivity and adaptation to change; self-reliance should be promoted; coherence is necessary between development activities, trade and sustainability policies; and all countries need to consider how their activities impact biodiversity.

The working group also concluded that land and resource tenure are important issues and that economic assessments of ecosystem services should be incorporated into development activities at global, national and local levels.

**HEALTH AND BIODIVERSITY:** The working group on health and biodiversity, facilitated by David Brackett, IUCN, and assisted by rapporteur Don Hinrichsen, UN Population Fund, identified, *inter alia*: problems related to health, biodiversity and the MDGs; research, data and information gaps; options to value ecosystem services derived from biodiversity for the health-related MDGs; measures and investments to conserve, sustainably use and equitably share the benefits of biodiversity; priorities for action, stakeholder interests and specific recommendations for the Millennium Project on child and maternal mortality, HIV/AIDS, malaria and major illnesses, and environmental sustainability.

**Discussion:** The working group identified problems related to health and biodiversity, including: loss of knowledge of traditional medicines important for human health and biodiversity conservation; links between biodiversity loss and population growth in ecologically

fragile areas; impoverished diets and susceptibility to diseases; and gender issues relating to the education and training of women as a means to increase their ability as resource managers. The working group identified research gaps on: assessing impacts of harvesting medicinal plants on ecosystems; linking maternal mortality to biodiversity preservation; examining alternative and cost-effective ways of growing food crops for household consumption to improve diets and relieve the pressure on natural systems; establishing systematic documentation of traditional health knowledge and indigenous knowledge; and improving the understanding of the origins of some disease vectors. The working group pointed out gaps in data and information on biodiversity loss and lack of indicators relating to valuing biodiversity. The working group addressed options for valuing ecosystem services and underscored that biodiversity is vital for life, invaluable and to some extent immeasurable, but suggested that in specific cases partial opportunity costs of biodiversity loss could be estimated. On gender issues, the working group recognized that reducing maternal mortality would translate into fewer infant deaths, healthier families and more empowered women better able to manage resources. The working group suggested measures and investment to conserve, sustainably use and equitably share the benefits of biodiversity, including: considering the spread of disease vectors such as mosquitoes in water management schemes; contributing to biodiversity by increasing the capacity of women to act as resource managers; considering MDGs under the CBD; and linking at the national level the implementation of biodiversity priorities, health strategies and MDGs.

**Outcome:** The working group recommended priorities for action, including: providing access to potable water and sanitation for poor communities to improve human health conditions; implementing the International Conference on Population and Development Programme of Action and the Beijing Action Plan, which call for universal access to reproductive health and family planning to all those who want these services by 2015; establishing a system to ensure the transfer of traditional medicinal knowledge in a manner that respects and protects stakeholder rights; supporting a life observation system that allows for the identification of biodiversity and its trends and threats in order to reduce disease; and asking member countries of the CBD to include in their NBSAPs considerations relating to the links between MDG implementation measures and their impacts on biodiversity.

**WATER, SANITATION, URBAN POVERTY AND BIODIVERSITY:** The working group on water, sanitation, urban poverty and biodiversity was facilitated by Peter Bridgewater, UN Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, with John Fanshawe, Birdlife International, and Neville Ash, UNEP-WCMC, acting as rapporteurs. The working group identified how biodiversity can contribute to achieving MDG 7, aiming to ensure environmental sustainability, recognizing that achieving this and other MDGs rests upon the two key aspects of water supply: quantity and quality.

**Discussion:** The interaction between hydrological systems and biodiversity was discussed, including: effective watershed management to ensure continuous flows of water and avoid erosion, sedimentation and flooding; sustainable management of alluvial plains to preserve groundwater purity; and coastal protection by mangrove ecosystems. It was stressed that biodiversity provides additional services to those

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provided by human-made infrastructures and that upstream communities should be compensated for the sustainable management of biodiversity in watersheds.

Participants considered methods to value ecosystem services, suggesting that insurance premiums be used as an indicator and that estimates be made of savings in the costs of water services and flood management reaped through effective watershed management.

Participants noted that past failure to conserve watersheds has arisen from the spatial and functional distinction of watershed ecosystems from serviced areas. Participants also said the degradation of freshwater ecosystems has reduced opportunities for the utilization of urban waterways as a food source, while deforestation of watersheds has led to irregular, low quality water supplies, exacerbated by the increased frequency of extreme events. Biodiversity degradation in rural areas was identified as a key cause of migration into marginal urban areas lacking water and sewage infrastructure, where migrants pay high prices for clean water.

It was recognized that women carry a greater share of the household burden for accessing water and hold and transfer traditional knowledge on integrated water management. However, participants noted that women's access to political decision-making structures and financial credit is often restricted, while time spent collecting water diverts young women away from education and participation in the formal economy.

Information gaps relating to the mapping and ecological characterization of watersheds were identified. Participants agreed that governments and institutions should use watersheds as a unit for monitoring and management in order to increase data and facilitate comprehensive management.

The discussion highlighted the multiple benefits of technologies that mimic natural systems to provide water services, such as constructive wetlands technologies and the UNEP Sloping Area Land Technologies programme. The separation of sanitation and drinking water to avoid contamination and disease was highlighted as a crucial aspect of water services in urban areas. Opportunities were identified for the small-scale separation of "black" and "gray" domestic wastewater streams and down cycling to lower grade water uses to reduce total water consumption. Participants recognized that biodiversity alone cannot deliver water access in urban areas without large-scale infrastructure developments required for distribution. The group stressed the importance of engaging local communities in infrastructure developments, to ensure long-term maintenance. Stressing that access to water facilities for the urban poor should not be obstructed by unaffordable prices, participants advocated the application of social price differentiation between different economic groups.

**Outcome:** The group produced a list of initiatives recommending priorities for action, including: recognizing the key roles of biodiversity and ecosystem services in the water cycle; adopting integrated watershed management; and using the ecosystem approach with community participation. Participants suggested that biodiversity be used to protect water sources and reduce treatment costs, while floodplain wetlands and coastal ecosystems be managed to protect urban settlements from flooding. The group recommended that biodiversity be used to enrich urban settlements, providing food sources, recreation, and constructive

wetland technologies for sanitation. Finally, participants emphasized the cost-saving aspects of biodiversity and ecosystem services in providing steady flows of clean water.

### **MDG 8 AND CREATING THE CONDITIONS FOR EFFECTIVE GLOBAL PARTNERSHIPS:**

The working group that addressed MDG 8, aiming at developing a global partnership for development, was facilitated by Sam Johnston, Institute of Advanced Studies at the UN University, and supported by rapporteurs Sheldon Cohen, The Nature Conservancy, and Carolina Lasén, Foundation for International Environmental Law and Development. The group's umbrella objective was to consider how pursuit of the targets of the MGD 8 on aid, trade and debt might undermine biodiversity. To answer this question, the group provided the following set of guiding sub-questions: whether donor focus on the MDGs poses a threat to funding for biodiversity conservation; whether the MDG 8 targets and indicators on aid, trade and market access promote unsustainable activities; and how might debt relief result in a negative impact on biodiversity.

**Discussion:** The working group discussed key gaps between MDG 8 and Official Development Assistance (ODA), market access and debt sustainability. Key gaps in MDG 8 identified by participants include: failure to communicate the conservation case to policymakers; insufficient consideration of the "poorest of the poor" in public-private partnerships; potentially harmful impacts of aid and trade targets; inadequate reference to the CBD 2010 target; insufficient ODA safeguards; lack of baseline data underpinning indicators; lack of transparency in reporting by donors on projects and programmes that support the CBD; unclear environmental impacts of industrialization; and insufficient reflection of biodiversity in the PRSPs. The group suggested that a more intensive analysis is needed in order to: comprehensively document the most critical biodiversity linkages; articulate concrete operational strategies for simultaneously achieving the biodiversity aspects of MDG 7 on ensuring environmental sustainability and other MDGs; and refine appropriate, national-level indicators for measuring progress on the specific targets of MDGs.

**Outcome:** The working group prioritized recommendations on MDG 8 and ODA, market access, debt sustainability and global partnerships. Some of the working group's key recommendations are listed in the following four clusters:

On ODA, the working group agreed on the need for: transparent reporting of donor commitment to projects and programmes that support implementation of the CBD; establishing effective national level structures for bringing together sustainable development strategies, including poverty, trade, environment and health; considering biodiversity in environmental assessment; taking into account the environmental and biodiversity impacts of structural adjustment lending; safeguards through effective national legal frameworks, to ensure effectiveness when meeting MDG targets; and encouraging donors to voluntarily report on biodiversity issues.

On market access, the working group agreed on the need to: integrate new mechanisms of sustainable natural resource management into the World Trade Organization (WTO) Doha Round by building on UNEP trade initiatives and presentation of the MDGs at the upcoming WTO meeting; develop tools for valuing biodiversity services; redirect OECD agriculture subsidies; adapt lending agencies' environmental

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safeguard criteria; measure the proportion of ODA allocated to the environmental sector in all countries; and take forward the Johannesburg Declaration on corporate accountability to develop an international framework that addresses liability and compensation for environmental damage.

On debt sustainability, the working group recommended incorporating sustainable national resource management investment provisions in PRSPs.

On global partnerships, participants recommended: providing resources to facilitate participatory processes at the national level; supporting effective communication of biodiversity costs and benefits; building close stakeholder cooperation with developing countries; and facilitating the transfer of best practices and knowledge between partners.

### **2002 EQUATOR INITIATIVE LAUREATES**

During an evening reception on Monday, 3 March, a video presentation showed some of the finalist communities for UNDP's 2002 Equator Initiative and outlined the criteria for their selection, including: adoption of a partnership approach; leadership and community empowerment; innovation and transferability; gender equality and social inclusion; sustainability; and positive impact. The Equator Initiative is a global partnership for change, which recognizes initiatives that successfully fulfill the UNCED commitments by safeguarding communities and their environment.

Three community representatives then presented the key strategic elements of their winning projects. The Talamanca Initiative, Costa Rica, works with grassroot organizations to promote a range of community-based ventures that integrate biodiversity conservation and socio-economic development. Ventures include crop diversification, organic agriculture and ecotourism, and have successfully captured significant revenues for the local economy while maintaining biodiversity. The Fiji Locally-Managed Marine Area Network protects marine biodiversity and alleviates poverty in fishing communities. The Medicinal Plants Conservation Center in Pune, India, has created a botanical inventory of medicinal herbs and successfully promoted their cultivation in decentralized nurseries, thereby relieving pressure on wild supplies and providing economic benefits to local communities. Nature Uganda, supported by the GEF and UNDP, also presented their work in researching, monitoring and conserving biodiversity and creating linkages with sustainable livelihoods.

### **NEXT STEPS AND CLOSING OF THE MEETING**

On Tuesday afternoon, 4 March, participants heard presentations on strategies and actions related to biodiversity and the MDGs, followed by closing speeches. Alberto Glender Rivas, Secretariat of the Group of Like-Minded Megadiverse Countries, presented the Group's perspectives and strategies related to biodiversity and the MDGs and explained that this new international group is composed of 15 countries from the developing world and represents over 70% of global biodiversity and over 45% of the global population. Rivas said that the main priorities of the Group are access to and benefit sharing of natural resources and biodiversity and protection of the traditional knowledge of indigenous and local communities. He pointed out that the WSSD Plan of Imple-

mentation establishes that biodiversity loss can only be reversed if local people benefit from the conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity, in particular in countries of origin of genetic resources. Highlighting conservation, sustainable use and benefit sharing as the three pillars of the CBD, Rivas said that the CBD approach to benefit sharing is narrow and should be expanded. He underscored that the key objective of the Group is to establish an international legally-binding instrument on access to and benefit sharing of biological diversity. Rivas said biodiversity and biotechnology are issues that need to be addressed, taking into account their positive and negative impacts.

Peter Schei, Norwegian Directorate of Nature Management, spoke on integrating the MDGs into the international biodiversity policy process, emphasizing linkages among the different WEHAB frameworks. He suggested that, considering the limited power of environment ministries, the participation of business and financial actors in the biodiversity process is vital. Stressing the need for consistency between actions at the national and international levels, he emphasized the need to consider different implementation scales during international discussions. While lauding the CBD target to halt biodiversity loss by 2010, he highlighted the technical difficulties in measuring a reduction. Emphasizing the importance of mutual support between trade and biodiversity decisions, he ended by stating that the variation within ecosystems represents the "life insurance for sustainable development." Following the presentation, a participant stressed the need for international policy makers to attend and respond to feedback from national and regional-level actors involved in implementing targets.

Providing a summary and synthesis of "Biodiversity after Johannesburg," Jeffrey McNeely, IUCN, underscored that biodiversity is intimately related to all of the MDGs. He identified the need to build political support for biodiversity conservation and recommended reaching out to other international fora and institutions, including the World Health Organization, the International Labor Organization and the WTO. McNeely also highlighted that biodiversity gives us the ability to adapt to changing conditions, noted that benefits arising from biodiversity resources often fail to reach the poor, and called for economic indicators of unsustainable consumption. He urged participants to link biodiversity and the MDGs in their work, and highlighted that the outcome of this meeting will feed into the work of the Millennium Project.

Delivering a statement on "Ways Forward", Mark Collins, Director, UNEP-WCMC, drew attention to key global and regional meetings and stressed the importance of international institutions "keeping in touch" to take the process of biodiversity conservation forward. Charles McNeill, UNDP, thanked participants and closed the meeting at 4:55pm.

### **THINGS TO LOOK FOR**

**SBSTTA-8:** The eighth meeting of the CBD Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice will convene from 10-14 March 2003, in Montreal, Canada. For more information contact: CBD Secretariat; tel: +1-514-288-2220; fax: +1-514-288-6588; e-mail: secretariat@biodiv.org; Internet:

<http://www.biodiv.org/doc/meeting.asp?wg=SBSTTA-08>

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**CBD INTERSESSIONAL MEETING ON THE MULTI-YEAR PROGRAMME OF WORK (MYPOW):** This meeting organized by the CBD Secretariat will be held from 17-20 March 2003, in Montreal, Canada. For more information contact: CBD Secretariat; tel: +1-514-288-2220; fax: +1-514-288-6588; e-mail: secretariat@biodiv.org; Internet: <http://www.biodiv.org>

**REGIONAL SEMINAR ON POLICIES FOR THE PROTECTION OF FARMERS' RIGHTS IN MOUNTAIN REGIONS:** This seminar will be held from 24-26 March 2003, in Godavari, Nepal. The seminar, organized by South Asia Watch on Trade, Economics and Environment (SAWTEE) and the International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development (ICIMOD), will seek to help participants understand the debate on intellectual property protection and the rights of the poor, to explore regulatory options under the TRIPS Agreement; and to provide trade negotiators with skills and knowledge. For more information contact: Dhrubesh Chandra Regmi, SAWTEE; tel: +977-1-482217; fax: +977-1-430608; e-mail: [dhrubesh@hqsaawtee.wlink.com.np](mailto:dhrubesh@hqsaawtee.wlink.com.np); Internet: <http://www.sawtee.org/forthcoming.html>

**MEETING ON MEDICINAL PLANTS: ACCESS, USE AND BENEFIT-SHARING IN LIGHT OF THE CBD:** This meeting will be held on 3 April 2003, in Oslo, Norway and is organized by the Centre for Development and the Environment, University of Oslo. For more information contact: Alida Jay Bove; tel: +47-22-85-89-00; fax: +47-22-85-89-20; e-mail: [alida.boye@sum.uio.no](mailto:alida.boye@sum.uio.no); Internet: <http://www.sum.uio.no/bioprospecting/cbd.html>

**11TH SESSION OF THE UN COMMISSION ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT:** This meeting will be held from 28 April - 9 May 2003, in New York City, United States. For more information contact: Zehra Aydin-Sipos, DESA; tel: +1-212-963-8811; fax: +1-212-963-1267; e-mail: [aydin@un.org](mailto:aydin@un.org); Internet: [http://www.un.org/esa/sustdev/csd11/csd11\\_2003.htm](http://www.un.org/esa/sustdev/csd11/csd11_2003.htm)

**INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON RURAL LIVELIHOODS, FORESTS AND BIODIVERSITY:** To be held from 19-23 May 2003, in Bonn, Germany, this conference will consider the role of forests in supporting rural livelihoods in developing countries and in maintaining biodiversity. Key objectives are to survey current knowledge and identify policy lessons and a future research strategy. Organizers include the Center for International Forestry Research (CIFOR) and the German Foundation for International Development (DSE), in collaboration with Germany's Ministry of Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) and 'Deutsche Gesellschaft für Technische Zusammenarbeit' (GTZ). For more information contact: William Sunderlin; tel: +251-622-622; fax: +251-622-100; e-mail: [w.sunderlin@cifor.cgiar.org](mailto:w.sunderlin@cifor.cgiar.org); Internet: <http://www.cifor.cgiar.org/shared/template/livelihoodconference.asp>

**2010: THE BIODIVERSITY CHALLENGE:** This second "Biodiversity after Johannesburg" meeting will follow up on the first. It is scheduled to take place on 21-23 May 2003, in London, UK. Organized

by the CBD, UNEP-WCMC and UNDP, it is intended to lead to an improved understanding of what the CBD target of significantly reducing biodiversity loss by 2010 actually means in real terms, and how to know whether the targets have been achieved. For more information contact: Jerry Harrison with UNEP's World Conservation Monitoring Centre, email: [Jerry.Harrison@unep-wcmc.org](mailto:Jerry.Harrison@unep-wcmc.org), Internet: <http://www.unep-wcmc.org>

**SHARING INDIGENOUS WISDOM: AN INTERNATIONAL DIALOGUE ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT:** This conference will be held from 8-12 June 2003, in Wisconsin, United States, hosted by the Sustainable Development Institute at the College of Menominee Nation. For more information contact: Nathan Fregien; fax +1-715-799-5951 e-mail: [nfregien@menominee.edu](mailto:nfregien@menominee.edu); Internet: <http://www.sharingindigenouswisdom.org>

### FOURTH TRONDHEIM CONFERENCE ON BIODIVERSITY: TECHNOLOGY TRANSFER AND CAPACITY

**BUILDING:** This conference will be held from 23-27 June 2003, in Trondheim, Norway, organized by the Norwegian Ministry of Environment in collaboration with UNEP. For more information contact: Trondheim Conference Secretariat; tel: +47-22-24-5700; fax: +47-73-80-1401; e-mail: [rita.strand@nina.no](mailto:rita.strand@nina.no); Internet: <http://www.biodiv.org/doc/meetings/abs/abswscb-01/other/abswscb-01-norway-en.pdf>

**FIFTH WORLD PARKS CONGRESS - BENEFITS BEYOND BOUNDARIES:** This meeting will be held from 8-17 September 2003, in Durban, South Africa. The Congress occurs once every decade and is sponsored by IUCN. For more information contact: Peter Shadie, IUCN Programme on Protected Areas; tel: +41-22-999-0159; fax: +41-22-999-0025; e-mail: [pds@iucn.org](mailto:pds@iucn.org); Internet: <http://wcpa.iucn.org/wpc/wpc.html>

**12TH WORLD FORESTRY CONGRESS:** This meeting will convene from 21 September 2003 - 28 September 2003, in Quebec City, Canada. The World Forestry Congress of 2003 welcomes everyone interested in forests and trees, and their future and sustainable management throughout the world. Organized under the auspices of the FAO, the Congress is held every six years. For more information contact: World Forestry Congress 2003 Secretariat; tel: +1-418-694-2424; fax: +1-418-694-9922; e-mail: [sec-gen@wfc2003.org](mailto:sec-gen@wfc2003.org); Internet: <http://www.wfc2003.org>

**INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON ECORESTORATION:** This conference will be held from 23-30 September 2003, in Dehradun and New Delhi, India. Participants will review existing knowledge on degradation of land and water resources, especially in developing countries and explore key elements of eco-restoration approaches. For more information contact: Brij Gopal, Jawaharlal Nehru University; tel: +91-11-610-7676 extension 2324; fax: +91-11-616-9962 or 61; e-mail: [brij@nieindia.org](mailto:brij@nieindia.org); Internet: <http://www.nieindia.org/conferences.htm>