



A Special Report on Selected Side Events at the Ninth Conference of the Parties (COP 9) to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD)

Published by the International Institute for Sustainable Development (IISD)

Online at <http://www.iisd.ca/biodiv/cop9/enbots/>

Issue #6 | CBD COP 9 | 19-30 May 2008 | Bonn, Germany | Tuesday, 27 May 2008

Events convened on Monday, 26 May 2008

The Corporate Ecosystem Services Review

Presented by World Business Council for Sustainable Development



Christina Hillforth, Eka, presented on her company's experience as a pilot in implementing the corporate ecosystem services review.

Mikkel Kallesoe, World Business Council for Sustainable Development (WBCSD), emphasized the dependence of businesses on ecosystem services, and noted that markets can be part of the solution. He said that the Millennium Ecosystem Assessment revealed that global ecosystem services have been heavily degraded, and noted that this has created both risks and opportunities for businesses.

Craig Hanson, World Resources Institute, said that the corporate ecosystem services review (ESR) helps companies become more aware of their dependence and impact on such services, including cultural services. He noted that risks can be operational, regulatory, legal, and reputational, and can be linked to changes in customer preferences and trends in ethical financing initiatives. He described the ESR process, which first identifies the scope of the assessment, then evaluates a company's dependence and impact on a range of ecosystem services. He provided several examples of how ESR can mitigate environmental liability.

Christina Hillforth, Eka, presented her company's experience in implementing ESR, as a provider of chemicals to pulp and paper customers in China and Indonesia. She noted environmental risks and opportunities associated with: timber and other fiber inputs; biomass fuel; fresh water; and global climate impacts. She said that the research, based on interviews with a variety of organizations, sought to determine the drivers of ecosystemic change. She said that ESR has: complimented Eka's existing systems; identified downstream risks; and raised the profile of back-burner issues.

Rashila Tong, Holcim, presented her company's approach to managing environmental and social sustainability, as one of the world's biggest suppliers of cement and aggregate materials. She described projects designed to rehabilitate spent quarries, and the process of assessing environmental and social impacts. She provided the example of a project in the state of Gujarat, India, designed to mitigate the effects of severe drought by turning former mining sites into reservoirs. She described a partnership established between Holcim and IUCN to develop Holcim's biodiversity policy and support local livelihoods.

Participants discussed the pilot testing of the ESR system, including a case involving hydro electric dam development in Campbell River, British Columbia, Canada.

More information:

<http://www.wbcds.org>
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This issue of the *Earth Negotiations Bulletin on the Side* (ENBOTS) © <enb@iisd.org> is written and edited by Claudio Chiarolla, Harry Jonas, Kate Louw, and Peter Wood. The Digital Editor is Markus Staas. The Editor is Leonie Gordon <leonie@iisd.org> and the Director of IISD Reporting Services is Langston James "Kimo" Goree VI <kimo@iisd.org>. The Sustaining Donors of the *Earth Negotiations Bulletin* are the United Kingdom (through the Department for International Development - DFID), the Government of the United States of America (through the Department of State Bureau of Oceans and International Environmental and Scientific Affairs), the Government of Canada (through CIDA), the Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMU), the Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the European Commission (DG-ENV) and the Italian Ministry for the Environment, Land and Sea. General Support for the *Earth Negotiations Bulletin* during 2008 is provided by the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Government of Australia, the Austrian Federal Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry, Environment and Water Management, the Ministry of Environment of Sweden, the New Zealand Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade, SWAN International, Swiss Federal Office for the Environment (FOEN), the Finnish Ministry for Foreign Affairs, the Japanese Ministry of Environment (through the Institute for Global Environmental Strategies - IGES) and the Japanese Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry (through the Global Industrial and Social Progress Research Institute - GISPRI). Funding for translation of the *Earth Negotiations Bulletin* into French has been provided by the International Organization of the Francophonie (IOF). Funding for the translation of the *Earth Negotiations Bulletin* into Spanish has been provided by the Ministry of Environment of Spain. The opinions expressed in the *Bulletin* are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the views of IISD or other donors. Excerpts from the *Bulletin* may be used in non-commercial publications with appropriate academic citation. For information on the *Bulletin*, including requests to provide reporting services, contact the Director of IISD Reporting Services at <kimo@iisd.org>, +1-646-536-7556 or 300 East 56th St., 11A, New York, NY 10022, USA. The ENBOTS team at COP 9 can be contacted by e-mail at <peterw@iisd.org>.

Space Supporting the Rio, World Heritage and Ramsar Conventions

Presented by the European Space Agency

Olivier Arino, European Space Agency (ESA), presented on the ESA's support for a number of multilateral environmental agreements, including those governing biodiversity, desertification, climate change, and wetlands. He outlined the Global Change and Global Land Cover 2000 programmes.

Nick Davidson, Ramsar Convention on Wetlands, introduced the GlobWetland project as an example of how earth observation can be used for wetland assessment, monitoring and management. He said that the project produced land use cover and change detection maps for use by wetland managers and policymakers.

Mario Hernandez, UNESCO, outlined joint programmes being undertaken by UNESCO and ESA, including: mapping world heritage sites such as the Great Wall of China, and "Diversity," which aims to promote the implementation of the CBD.

Lúcio do Rosário, Portuguese National Focal Point Assistant for the UN Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD), presented "DesertWatch," a joint UNCCD-ESA programme designed to assist parties with implementation.

Jean-Louis Weber, European Environment Agency (EEA), discussed the EEA's use of space data to produce integrated ecosystem accounting. He noted that the EEA aims to provide an assessment of the costs of ecosystem services, by calculating their true costs and valuing their benefits.

Martin Herold, Global Observation for Forest and Land Cover Dynamics, presented on the potential for satellite observation to inform the post-2012 negotiations of the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change and for driving national observation progress for forests.



Nick Davidson, Ramsar Convention on Wetlands, introduced GlobWetland, a programme jointly run by the Ramsar Convention and the ESA to map wetlands.

More information:

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Durban + 5: Future Directions for Protected Areas

Presented by IUCN

Nik Lopoukhine, World Commission on Protected Areas (WCPA), presented the results of a survey of WCPA members for issues to be addressed by the Commission, including: climate change; protection of marine waters; increasing competition for resources; habitat fragmentation; governance and participation; and the overall undervaluation of protected areas (PAs).

Charles Besançon, UNEP, presented on the global status of PAs. He reported that, although a significant numbers of PAs have been created, marine PAs constitute a small proportion, representing only 0.65% of total ocean coverage. He acknowledged progress on strengthening the network and management of PAs.

David Sheppard, IUCN, provided information on the World Parks Congress, which was convened by IUCN, and considered progress regarding the programme of work on PAs (PoWPA). He noted that the CBD PoWPA has been a major stimulus for action and stressed the need to set ambitious targets even if they are not always achieved. He also noted that international NGOs have played an import partnership role in establishing marine PAs in Micronesia.

Trevor Sandwith, IUCN, on Future directions for PAs, noted the ongoing loss of biodiversity and that PAs are not widely recognized as part of the solution. He argued that PA should be repositioned as underpinning local and global sustainability and that IUCN needs to work as one programme across relevant commissions and secretariats.



David Sheppard, IUCN, stressed that although there has been progress for PAs since the World Parks Congress in 2003, significant challenges remain.

More information:

<http://cms.iucn.org/about/union/commissions/wcpa/>

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Marine Biodiversity and the International Year of the Reef

Presented by ICRI, IYOR and the CBD

Christine Dawson, US Department of State, outlined the history and functioning of the International Coral Reef Initiative (ICRI). Ahmed Djoghlaif, CBD, underscored the importance of coral reefs and stated that biodiversity cannot be discussed without considering them.

Georg Heiss, Museum für Naturkunde, Germany, stressed the urgency of protecting coral reefs. Francis Staub, International Year of the Reef 2008, presenting on the 2008 International Year of the Reef, noted that the two core goals are to strengthen the awareness of the value of coral reefs and to improve understanding of the critical threats posed to them.

Clive Wilkinson, Global Reef Monitoring Network, stated that threats to coral reefs include: coral bleaching; rising carbon dioxide levels; disease, plague and invasive species; and the poor management of marine protected areas (MPAs).

Stefan Hain, UNEP-World Conservation Monitoring Centre, presenting an overview of the effects of climate change on coral reefs, stressed that the rise in sea water temperatures is responsible for coral bleaching, which could eventually lead to the loss of affected reefs.

Syamsal Ma'arif, Ministry of Marine Affairs and Fisheries, Indonesia, highlighted the initiatives undertaken by Indonesia to protect coral reefs, including the implementation of a regional cooperation agreement.

Atsuhiko Yoshinaka, Ministry of Environment, Japan, stated that a number of regional workshops on MPAs have been organized to share lessons learnt and identify future challenges.

Salvatore Arico, UNESCO, underscored the need for scientific knowledge to be made policy relevant and outlined a number of methods for achieving this.



Georg Heiss, Museum für Naturkunde, Germany, noted that possible actions to decrease the rate of coral reef destruction include: sound coastal development; reduced sea pollution; and the declaration of marine protected areas.

More information:

<http://www.icriforum.org>

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National Alliances for Zero Extinction and the 2010 Targets

Presented by the Conservation International and Alliance for Zero Extinction

Mike Parr, American Bird Conservancy, outlined the history of the Alliance for Zero Extinction (AZE), and emphasized its role as a tool to reach the 2010 Biodiversity Target. He noted that criterion for selection of sites as areas of concern, include: where species are endangered or critically endangered; those that have potential to be managed as a protected area (PA) or conserved area; and those that have a significant proportion of a species' population confined to one area.

Braulio Dias, Ministry of Environment, Brazil, introduced the Brazilian Alliance for Zero Extinction (BAZE) and highlighted that the goals of the initiative are to attain political commitment for the zero extinction target, integrate the conservation of threatened species and create a database with basic and geographically referenced information of species and sites of concern.

Norma Molinyawe, Protect Areas and Wildlife Bureau, Philippines, underscored the high diversity of species within the Philippines and that it is one of 34 declared biodiversity hotspots. She noted that most of the threatened species were terrestrial and assessments were being carried out to determine the pressures on biodiversity conservation in the Philippines.

Following the presentations, participants discussed a number of topics, including: the reliance of the AZE on the IUCN red listing of species and other data issues; integration of the AZE into the development agenda; prioritization and consolidation of PAs; and invasive alien species.



Braulio Dias, Ministry of Environment, Brazil; Gustavo Fonseca, Global Environment Facility (GEF)

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One Convention Family - Thousands of Species - Our Planet

Presented by UNEP/CMS Secretariat

Robert Hepworth, Convention on Migratory Species (CMS), underscored the importance of the CMS and called on participants to visit Kenya, with a view to reviving its tourist economy.

CMS Ambassador Stanley Johnson, praised the work of the CMS and drew attention to the recent work of the scientific task force on avian flu. He mentioned the plight of a number of terrestrial mammals, including the addax, an endangered antelope of which there are only 200 left in the wild. He highlighted the signing of two CMS-related agreements, one in Turkmenistan regarding antelope, and one in Central Africa to protect gorillas. He also discussed the efforts to protect the last remaining Mediterranean monk seals and South American leatherback turtles. He concluded by drawing attention to the fact that 2009 will be the Year of the Gorilla.

Ibrahim Thaw, UNEP, paid tribute to the CMS and pledged to support its ongoing work. Elsa Nickel, German Federal Ministry for the Environment, provided an update on the COP negotiations, celebrating the spirit of the ABS consultative group. She congratulated CMS on its work and underscored Germany's support for the ongoing programmes. She announced that, on account of his proactive lifelong work, Arnulf Müller-Helbrecht, the former Executive Secretary of the CMS, had been made a CMS Ambassador.

Amanda Lawrence, Australian Department of the Environment, announced the imminent 109th signatory to the CMS and heralded the launch of the CMS Encyclopedia.



Amanda Lawrence, Australian Department of the Environment, highlighted the launch of the Encyclopedia of the CMS.

More information:

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Food Security in an Era of Climate Change

Presented by the Platform for Agrobiodiversity Research with the CGIAR & UNEP

Toby Hodgkin, Bioversity International, explained that the Platform for Agrobiodiversity Research will strengthen the knowledge base that supports the maintenance and use of agrobiodiversity, focusing on linkages with climate change, and identifying opportunities to create new partnerships.

Vicky Tauli-Corpus, Tebtebba Foundation, stressed that the magnitude of climate change is unprecedented and that strengthening the collaboration between indigenous peoples and scientists is necessary to face this challenge.

Paul Bordoni, Bioversity International, launched the website of the Agrobiodiversity Platform, which will function as a clearing house mechanism for agricultural biodiversity and will help identifying tools and practices relevant to the conservation and sustainable use of agrobiodiversity.

Marieta Sakalian, UNEP, noted that the Global Environment Facility, supported the adaptation potential of agrobiodiversity through projects in 57 developing countries.

Patrick Mulvaney, Practical Action, argued that changes in ecosystem functions, which are due to the reduction of agrobiodiversity, should be closely monitored and noted that the structure of the international legal system prevents a freer exchange of seeds.

Emile Frison, Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research, explained that poor communities are not fed on major food staples and a mere increase in production would not solve the food crises.

Participants cautioned that the current food crisis could lead to a new push for the adoption of genetically modified crops and quick fixes are not an appropriate response, and described how agricultural biodiversity is contributing to meeting global challenges, particularly climate change and food security.



Vicky Tauli-Corpus, Tebtebba Foundation, stressed the importance of applying the ecosystem approach and mobilizing indigenous people in taking the lead on preserving biodiversity.

More information:

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