



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

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Events convened on Wednesday, 28 May 2008

## UNESCO-Biosphere Reserves: Ecological, Economic, Cultural And Social Benefits

Presented by: UNESCO



Debby Thomson, Kruger to Canyons Biosphere Region, emphasized the need for transboundary conservation cooperation.

Natarajan Ishwaran, United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), discussed the nature and extent of UNESCO-Biosphere Reserves, noting that almost 12% of the earth is now protected. Gertrud Sahler, Man and the Biosphere Programme, Germany, said that the programme has embraced the CBD's objectives, balancing sustainable use with conservation.

Konrad Uebelhoefer, GTZ, emphasized that sustainable management of biosphere reserves cannot be achieved overnight, and that this occurs across landscapes of up to a million hectares or more. He noted that Germany has just announced an additional commitment of 500 million Euros for the 2009-2012 period. He highlighted the need to balance local needs with conservation.

Debby Thomson, Kruger to Canyons Biosphere Region (K2C), described the cooperation between K2C and the Rhön Biosphere Reserve (RBR) in Germany, and noted similarities, including: ecotourism; land use change; and inclusion of disadvantaged groups. She also noted common objectives of both reserves, including the involvement of local people, and the use of reserves as learning platforms. She described the K2C region, covering 2.6 million hectares with high levels of endemism.

Doris Pokorny, RBR, described the RBR as one of 13 such reserves in Germany, and noted that most of it is located on private agricultural land. She highlighted the use of an approach she referred to as "conservation through consumption," and distributed organic produce and meat products for participants to sample. She lamented that the Rhön area is witnessing an out-migration of young people who are seeking employment elsewhere.

Norbert Schmalzing, Rhön Energy Agency, stressed the need to transition to local and renewable energy, and described the hydro-electric potential in the RBR. Peter Kowalsky, Bionade, described his family-run business which produces fermented organic soft drinks, in accordance with the Bavarian Purity Law of 1516. He indicated that at 250 million bottles consumed per year, it is the third most popular soft drink in Germany. He said that Bionade guarantees the purchase of their harvest on the condition that they grow organic barley and elderberries.

David Mabunda, South Africa National Parks, said he views biosphere reserves as a global partnership, and an important component in a mix of conservation strategies.

Participants discussed transboundary cooperation, and the potential to expand the Bionade model to other regions.

### More information:

<http://www.kruger2canyons.com>  
<http://www.biosphaerenreservat-rhoen.de>  
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## Conservation in High Seas Marine Protected Areas

Presented by WWF International

Kristina Gjerde, IUCN, outlined the legal processes underway in support of marine protected areas (MPAs). On steps to be taken to establish high seas MPAs (HSMPAs), she emphasized the need to: establish pilot HSMPAs; use the CBD mandate fully; and address the broader high seas governance weaknesses and gaps.

Delphine Maurice, Pelagos Sanctuary, noted that the Pelagos Sanctuary was a MPA formed by an international agreement signed by France, Italy and Monaco. She underscored the threat human activities pose to the area, including pollution and disruption of habitats.

Verónica Cirelli, Fundación Vida Silvestre Argentina, underscoring the need for an HSMPA to conserve marine biodiversity in the South West Atlantic seas, listed threats to biodiversity, including: elevated fishing pressures due to the lack of regulation and enforcement, and the high volume of concurrent fishing vessels from a variety of nationalities operating in a small area.

Adriaan van der Schans, Ministry of Agriculture, Nature and Food Quality, the Netherlands, highlighted a proposal for an HSMPA in the Charlie Gibbs Fracture Zone on the mid-Atlantic Ridge. He noted that CBD criteria are appropriate to describe the area and that integral management of the area would need cooperation between countries and competent authorities.

Participants discussed topics including: the terms of the Pelagos Sanctuary agreement; the legalities and regulation associated with international activities; nationalities of fishing vessels in proposed HSMPA sites; fluctuations of Argentinean squid populations; and best practices for the management of HSMPAs.



Christian Neumann, WWF Germany, chaired the side event on Conservation in Areas beyond National Jurisdiction - High Seas Marine Protected Areas.

### More information:

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## Real World Experience in ABS

Presented by the Access and Benefit Sharing Alliance

Eileen Yen Lee, Warisan Nature and Tradition, presented on her experience working with the Sarawak Biodiversity Centre and capacity building and technological transfer in Malaysia.

She noted that although the CBD is legally binding, most of its language is vague and subject to interpretation and implementation by national legislation. She emphasized the need for capacity building initiatives to be relevant to local needs.

Ben Prickril, Public Interest Intellectual Property Advisors (PIIPA), provided an overview of PIIPA's activities, including the provision of pro bono legal services regarding intellectual property (IP) rights in developing countries.

He provided the example of the Kakamega project in Eastern Kenya, which produces hoary basil to treat colds and flus, and White's ginger, which acts as a form of "herbal Viagra."

He stressed that contracts between resource owners and users need to be improved, and that Africa lags behind other regions of the world in terms of IP protection.

Susan Finston, Access and Benefit Sharing Alliance, said that initially the private sector was wary of the CBD because of sensitivities over accusations of bio-piracy.

She underlined the importance of social contracts, and said that companies cannot conclude a contract without the establishment of mutually agreed terms and obtaining the prior informed consent of resource providers.



Ben Prickril, Public Interest Intellectual Property Advisors, emphasized the importance of clearly defining terms such as "technology transfer."

### More information:

<http://www.abs-alliance.org>  
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## Biodiversity and Agricultural Commodities Program

Presented by International Finance Corporation and the GEF

Gustavo Fonseca, the Global Environment Facility, noting the three main objectives of the CBD, emphasized the importance of mainstreaming biodiversity into production processes. He stressed that although the private sector is often perceived as a threat, it can also provide opportunities.

Catherine Cassagne, the International Finance Corporation (IFC), outlined the aims of the Biodiversity and Agricultural Commodities Program (BACP), including: access to new markets; cost reductions for achieving sustainability; and fora for discussion and coordination of actors within the supply of chosen commodities. She underscored that a sustainable supply chain would be where, at minimum, no player "loses" and, at best, all players "win" over time.

Carlos Quintela, Chemonics, stressed that the BACP is designed to deal with four aspects within the commodity supply chain, including: policy frameworks; producers; demand and supply; and the financial infrastructure for the commodities. Quintela noted the two tools at the disposal of Chemonics and the IFC for achieving the aims of the BACP, include formulating strategies, and grants to implement these strategies. He noted that specific outcomes included 25 percent of producers being certified, and that 10 percent of commodities purchased are under the BACP.

Following the presentations, participants discussed: the expansion of the BACP to include commodities such as coffee; criteria to receive funding from the BACP; barriers to the adoption of sustainable management practices; carbon offsets; consistency in tools, methods and definitions of achieving sustainable objectives; and certification of products within the system.



Catherine Cassagne, the International Finance Corporation (IFC), highlighted that Côte d'Ivoire and Ghana, among other, have endorsed the BACP.

### More information:

<http://www.bacp.net>

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## Conservation and Sustainable use of Western Amazonian Biodiversity

Presented by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Finland

Paula Lehtomaki, Minister of the Environment, Finland, launched BIOCAN and introduced the outputs of the BIODAMAZ project, a joint research project undertaken by Peru and Finland to promote the conservation and sustainable use of Amazonian biodiversity.

Juan Lozano Ramirez, Minister of Environment, Livelihoods and Development, Colombia, applauded BIODAMAZ & BIOCAN for "giving meaning to the CBD" and said that at the environmental level, the peoples of the Amazon and Andes have the same environmental commitments. He underscored the importance of BIOCAN to deliver a clear vision of the region's biodiversity.

Luis Campos Baca, Institute of Peruvian Amazon Research, presented on the achievements of BIODAMAZ, which included consolidating information systems and increasing participation. He noted that it has been incorporated by regional and local governments and highlighted a project involving attempts to increase fish yields from Amazonian lakes. He underscored the project is decentralized and inclusive.

Marnix Becking, Regional Coordinator of BIOCAN, Comunidad Andina, presented on BIOCAN, which is a regional biodiversity programme promoting intercultural exchange and differentiated strategies for the disparate sociocultural groups. The project aims to improve the capacity of actors involved in managing biodiversity and noted that it includes the principles of complementarity and the ecosystem approach.

Omar Rocha Olivio, Biodiversity and Protected Areas, Bolivia, Antonio Matamoros, Ministry of the Environment, Ecuador, and Maria Luisa del Rio Mispireta, Peru, presented on the BIOCAN project, praising the regional strategy applied to an area of common identity, and affirmed their commitment to the project.



Marnix Becking, Regional Coordinator of BIOCAN, Comunidad Andina, presented on BIOCAN.

### More information:

<http://www.comunidadandina.org>

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# The Darwin Initiative

Presented by the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, UK Government

Joan Ruddock, Minister for Climate Change, Wildlife and Waste, UK, opened the meeting and emphasized the tremendous progress made in recipient countries through the Darwin Initiative, established after the Rio Earth Summit to pair expertise from the UK with that in recipient countries.

David Macdonald, Darwin Advisory Committee, noted the achievements of the Darwin Initiative, which assists countries that are rich in biodiversity but poor in financial resources to implement the CBD.

He described the four types of Darwin projects, which have involved 130 UK institutions and a far greater number of institutions in developing countries, including: main projects; post projects; scoping awards; and fellowships.

He also stated that the next round of Darwin funding will be announced soon.

He provided details of several projects, which have focused on building people's capacity in partner countries, and described a number of thematic reviews on these projects, including the Initiatives' contribution to: forest biodiversity; climate change; communication, education and public awareness; island biodiversity; and the global taxonomy initiative.

He also stressed that livelihoods are at the centre of Darwin projects as well as biodiversity conservation.

Macdonald listed successes of the Initiative during the last 15 years, including the conservation of: critically endangered vultures in India and Nepal; Kenya's indigenous forests; pink river dolphins in Brazil; big cats of Zimbabwe; and the European mink.

He stressed that the Initiative's family of experts and partners has played a crucial role, and noted that their conservation knowledge base remains largely untapped.

Macdonald noted that these massive efforts could not have been possible without a professional Secretariat in the UK Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, including many people who are vocationally involved.

Participants congratulated the Initiative, in particular for providing support to projects in countries which are not conventionally the target of conservation efforts.

Participants agreed on the desirability of increasing the budget for future activities while strengthening the relationship between conservation and development.



David Macdonald, Chair of the Darwin Advisory Committee, highlighted that 41 thousand hectares of forests have been protected in Indonesia over the last ten years with a cost of one pound per hectare per year, showing that interventions such as the Darwin Initiative can avoid deforestation while providing value for money.



Joan Ruddock, Minister for Climate Change, Wildlife and Waste, UK, expressed her support for the Darwin Initiative, which contributes to biodiversity conservation with 65 million pounds and 490 projects in 146 countries.

#### More information:

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