



Rio Conventions Pavilion Bulletin

iisd | Reporting Services

A Daily Report of the Rio Conventions Pavilion

Published by the International Institute for Sustainable Development (IISD)



ONLINE AT [HTTP://WWW.IISD.CA/BIODIV/COP11/PAVILION/](http://www.iisd.ca/biodiv/cop11/pavilion/)
ISSUE #8, VOLUME 200, NUMBER 18, THURSDAY, 18 OCTOBER 2012

RIO CONVENTIONS PAVILION HIGHLIGHTS: WEDNESDAY, 17 OCTOBER 2012

The Rio Conventions Pavilion convened on Wednesday for Ecosystem Restoration Day. The session began with a keynote speech by James Aronson, Society for Ecological Restoration (SER). Panels convened throughout the day on: inspiring action on the ground - the local context; inspiring action on the ground - the national context; and global partnerships for local results. The day concluded with the presentation of the Hyderabad Call for a Concerted Effort on Ecosystem Restoration.



James Aronson, SER

INSPIRING ACTION ON THE GROUND: LOCAL CONTEXT

Sarat Babu Gidda, CBD Secretariat, opened the panel. James Aronson, SER, discussed ecosystem restoration, arguing that it plays a crucial role in all three Rio Conventions. He defined ecological restoration as “the process of assisting the recovery of an ecosystem that has been degraded, damaged or destroyed.” He called on parties to respect international commitments and work together. He underscored the expansion of the human footprint, noting the destruction of 30% and degradation of 20% of forest landscapes, the 50% reduction in mangroves and the degradation of 75% of coral reefs.

Aronson stressed that ecological restoration is not an “either/or” situation, but should be done in parallel with conservation. He emphasized that restoration is about social, economic, ecological and political factors. Aronson noted “The Economics of Ecosystems and Biodiversity” (TEEB) study saying it is a key contribution for establishing the relationship between ecosystem services and biodiversity. He also underscored the importance of demonstrating that ecological restoration makes economic sense and enhancing the involvement of the private sector.

Moderator Sasha Alexander, SER, introduced the panel. Cristina Maria do Amaral Azevedo, Environmental Secretariat of São Paulo State, Brazil, discussed Brazil’s Atlantic Forest Restoration Pact (AFRP) initiative, a permanent independent and collective partnership between 226 diverse stakeholders. Noting the region is one of five global biodiversity hotspots,

with 383 of Brazil’s 633 endangered species, she described how the AFRP works towards achieving the Aichi Biodiversity Targets.

Azevedo said the AFRP mission is to restore 15 million hectares of degraded land in the Brazilian Atlantic Forest by 2050 and to promote: biodiversity conservation; job generation; income opportunities; maintenance and provision of ecosystem services; and improving land ownership. She noted AFRP’s online platform for sharing detailed project information.

Ritesh Kumar, Wetlands International, presented on the ecological restoration of lake Chilika, India. He argued that restoration “needs to make sense to people,” especially in terms of livelihoods. Explaining that the Chilika lake is a hotspot of biodiversity and responsible for the livelihoods of 0.2 million people, he demonstrated the benefits of restoration experiences both in ecological and social terms. He recalled the importance of partnerships, multiple knowledge base systems and management of social transformation as key factors of success.

Angela Andrade, Conservation International, presented experiences from the Rio Blanco Watershed Initiative, Colombia, on ecosystem-based approaches (EBA) to climate change adaptation. She explained high mountain ecosystems are characterized by high vulnerability to climate change, increased land use and forest transformation. She described high mountain ecosystems as candidates for win-win solutions for addressing climate change impacts, and increasing resilience through biodiversity conservation and ecosystem restoration.

Andrade highlighted the six year initiative, which found key enabling conditions of restoration for EBA, include: providing climate change impact vulnerability assessments; developing participatory processes; promoting learning-by-doing activities,

The *Rio Conventions Pavilion Bulletin* is a publication of the International Institute for Sustainable Development (IISD) <info@iisd.ca>, publishers of the *Earth Negotiations Bulletin* © <enb@iisd.org>. This issue was written and edited by Beate Antonich, Nicole de Paula Domingos and Anna Schulz. The Photographer is Manu Kabahizi. The Editor is Robynne Boyd <robynne@iisd.org>. The Director of IISD Reporting Services is Langston James “Kimo” Goree VI <kimo@iisd.org>. Funding for coverage of this meeting has been provided by the Rio Conventions Pavilion. IISD can be contacted at 161 Portage Avenue East, 6th Floor, Winnipeg, Manitoba R3B 0Y4, Canada; tel: +1-204-958-7700; fax: +1-204-958-7710. The opinions expressed in the *Bulletin* are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the views of IISD. Excerpts from the *Bulletin* may be used in other publications with appropriate academic citation. Electronic versions of the *Bulletin* are sent to e-mail distribution lists (in HTML and PDF format) and can be found on the Linkages WWW-server at <<http://www.iisd.ca/>>. 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., 11D, New York, New York 10022, USA. The IISD Team at the Rio Conventions Pavilion can be contacted by e-mail at <anna@iisd.org>.



<http://enb.iisd.mobi/>



L-R: Cristina Maria do Amaral Azevedo, Environmental Secretariat of São Paulo State, Brazil; Ritesh Kumar, Wetlands International; Sasha Alexander, SER; James Aronson, SER; Angela Andrade, Conservation International; and Cristo Marais, Department of Environmental Affairs, South Africa.

taking advantage of best available science and traditional knowledge; and including restoration in land use plans and other planning mechanisms.

Cristo Marais, Department of Environmental Affairs, South Africa, provided the South African perspective on restoring biodiversity and ecosystems. He discussed the challenges of land degradation, water scarcity and invasive species in the past 17 years and argued that biodiversity investment can combat poverty.

However, Marais noted the need to increase financial and human resources. As a solution, he proposed unlocking private sector investment in natural management and ecosystem restoration, along with the improvement of primary ecological science.

During discussions, Andrade recommended using vulnerability assessments in watershed area ecosystem restoration projects. Marais noted upstream and downstream impacts in watersheds vary regionally and stressed the important role of water management authorities. Azevedo explained AFRP can scale up efforts through financial support from the private sector and state governments.

Speaking from the floor, David Coates, CBD Secretariat, suggested recognizing opportunities for land restoration in the agricultural sector, and called for paying closer attention to increasing food productivity and restoration opportunities in cities. Aronson differentiated between restoration and rehabilitation, the latter aiming at increasing productivity in production systems and suggested thinking about renewing natural capital to cover the entire spectrum of ecosystems.



Sarat Babu Gidda, CBD Secretariat

INSPIRING ACTION ON THE GROUND: NATIONAL CONTEXT

Ramsar Convention Deputy Secretary General Nick Davidson opened the afternoon session. BMS Rathore, Joint Secretary, Ministry of Environment and Forestry, India, presented on ecosystem restoration using landscape approaches in India. He recalled key figures on India's forests and discussed ecosystem restoration challenges related to balancing conservation and development needs, and said climate change is an aggravating factor.

Rathore highlighted the Green Indian Mission model, which seeks to increase forest quality and cover. He underscored key elements of the landscape approach, including: identification and prioritization of restoration areas; interventions at "scale," addressing drivers of degradation; focus on multiple ecosystems in landscapes; and ecosystems restoration and livelihood support.

Yong Kwon Lee, Korea Forest Service, Republic of Korea, shared knowledge and lessons learned from forest landscape restoration in the Republic of Korea. Focusing on systematic implementation of forest restoration and management, he described how the Republic of Korea was able to triple its forest stocks since 1950, while simultaneously achieving economic growth.

Lee highlighted key elements of the Republic of Korea's success including: political leadership and public participation; sustainable use of forest resources for adaptation to changing



Sasha Alexander, SER

GLOBAL PARTNERSHIPS FOR LOCAL RESULTS



Angela Andrade, Conservation International

environments; and recognition that forests are linked with other landscape resources. He stressed the Republic of Korea is already sharing its experiences with other countries through the Asian Forest Cooperation Organization, working towards the greater goal of “sustainable development for a green Asia.”

Caroline Petersen, UNDP, provided an overview of UNDP work in scaling up national level finance for restoration. She highlighted several projects, including afforestation in Bangladesh and peatland restoration in Belarus. Petersen noted the UNDP-European Commission biodiversity finance project for its role in identifying finance gaps through a bottom-up approach. She concluded presenting the Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services Network, which seeks to build capacity via an online platform capable of bringing together practitioners, scientists and policy-makers, and to provide “easy quick facts” regarding technical and operational guidelines on restoration.

Kristal Maze, South African National Biodiversity Institute, discussed restoration banking of wetlands in South Africa. As the sixth biggest coal producer in the world, she explained South Africa’s challenge is to measure residual impacts and find ways to offset or compensate negative environmental impacts deriving from its coal-mining industry, which critically endanger its wetlands. Providing quality and quantity for the country’s water security, she described wetlands as a critical ecological infrastructure.

Maze underscored the importance of banked credits in the success of South Africa’s rehabilitation programme, which over the last eight years has employed residents to restore over 40,000 hectares of wetlands. She also stressed landscape-scale systematic conservation plans and wetland assessment tools as critical for freshwater ecosystems. She commended the Department of Water Affairs for adopting the integrated framework for the design and implementation of offsets.

During discussions, Kristal Maze welcomed further dialogue on offset risks and advice on how to improve offset metrics. Petersen recalled South Africa’s mapping of biodiversity as a great value for measuring the result of restoration projects. She also noted the disparities between short-term investments and long-term results, highlighting a project in Borneo, which will be monitored for 20 years in partnership with the Malaysian government. Lee stressed how the Republic of Korea, in partnership with the Association of Southeast Asian Nations, is prioritizing green economy and valuing natural assets.

Moderator James Aronson, SER, introduced the panel. Sergio Zelaya, UNCCD Secretariat, stressed that globally over 50% of agricultural land has degraded, and that annually 75 billion tonnes of fertile soil and 12 million hectares are lost due to drought and desertification. He said this puts 27,000 species at risk and negatively affects 1.5-2 billion people, especially women.

Zelaya also drew attention to the rising food, energy and water demands, as well as to the far-reaching impacts of desertification, land degradation and drought, including migration, instability and conflict. Commending the Rio+20 outcome on a “land-degradation neutral world,” he explained achieving this goal requires: stronger partnerships; restoring and rehabilitating more land than is degraded; and sustainable land use in the agriculture, forestry, energy and urban sectors.

Julia Marton-Lefèvre, Director General, IUCN, presented the IUCN goal of restoring 150 million hectares of lost forests and degraded land by 2020, known as “Bonn Challenge.” Highlighting the need for “pragmatic solutions,” she argued restoration could, at the same time, benefit ecosystems and people, affirming that this target is achievable. She called for a shared vision on restoration, highlighting successful cases of leadership and best practices in the Republic of Korea, Costa Rica and Tanzania. She said US\$ 84 billion per year in net benefits could be generated if the Bonn Challenge is achieved.

Ramsar Convention Deputy Secretary General Nick Davidson noted the inter-connectivity of all wetlands and observed a strong link between the focuses of CBD and the Ramsar Convention on global water cycles. He highlighted the new TEEB Study on Water and Wetlands found that natural wetlands provide more ecosystem services value per hectare than other ecosystems. He also observed 50% of the world’s wetlands have been degraded, with an accelerating trend in wetland conversion caused by agricultural impacts and overall land-use change.

Davidson described the Avoid, Mitigate, Compensate Framework under the Ramsar Convention as “a slippery slope” and stressed restoration and rehabilitation are important. He addressed several considerations to be taken into account in a cost-benefit analysis of wetland restoration. He emphasized focusing on multiple services when designing wetland restoration, including the wide variety of benefits they provide to people through their ecosystem services.

Simone Quatrini, The Global Mechanism, presented on financing options for implementing restoration and rehabilitation programmes to address degradation from unsustainable land use practices. Focusing on the viewpoint of



Julia Marton-Lefèvre, Director General, IUCN



L-R: Sergio Zelaya, CBD Secretariat; Ramsar Convention Deputy Secretary General Nick Davidson; James Aronson, SER; Julia Marton-Lefèvre, Director General, IUCN; and Simone Quatrini, The Global Mechanism.

investors, he noted three aspects are important: return; impact; and risk. He highlighted how a new category of investors has been increasingly combining social equity and environmental sustainability, creating innovative financial products.

Quatrini underscored several challenges for investors, including, *inter alia*: increasing awareness of investment impacts; reducing transaction costs on the ground; increasing leadership and coordination in the private sector; and improving common metrics and standards. On the demand side, he emphasized adequate safety nets against the effects of market failures and expertise to navigate complex financial architectures as relevant points to be addressed.

HYDERABAD CALL FOR A CONCERTED EFFORT ON ECOSYSTEM RESTORATION

Sarat Babu Gidda, CBD Secretariat, introduced the session, launching the Hyderabad Call for a Concerted Effort on Ecosystem Restoration, which was welcomed by all panelists. Rebecca Grynspan, Associate Administrator, UNDP, recognized restoration plays a vital role in meeting the inter-linked challenges of the Rio Conventions and requires prioritization based on best available science and traditional knowledge.

Naoko Ishii, CEO, Global Environment Facility (GEF), supported the Hyderabad Call and emphasized the GEF role in supporting parties to achieve the Aichi Biodiversity Targets.

CBD Executive Secretary Braulio Ferreira de Souza Dias welcomed the Hyderabad Call highlighting the win-win opportunities of joining forces by creating partnerships. He said the challenge is to upscale joint efforts.

UNCCD Executive Secretary Luc Gnacadja recalled that out of 1.5 billion people affected by land degradation, 74% are poor or extremely poor. He argued that restoration is about getting investments right.

Secretary General of the Ramsar Convention Anada Tiega said the Ramsar Secretariat is committed to working with the CBD Secretariat and recalled the successful restoration experience of Lake Chilika, in India.

Ibrahim Thiaw, Director, DEPI, UNEP, said restoration contributes to the objectives of the Rio Conventions and the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands. He drew attention to food security, the value of coastal areas and mountain ecosystems.

Julia Marton-Lefèvre, Director General, IUCN, commended the Rio Conventions Pavilion and the Ramsar Convention as important IUCN partners and stressed the Bonn Challenge is an important implementation vehicle for achieving the CBD and UNFCCC objectives.

Rejoice Mabudafhasi, Deputy Minister of Water and Environment, South Africa, said South Africa, as President of the UNFCCC COP 17, is happy to support the Hyderabad Call and highlighted the multiple benefits from healthy ecosystems and ecosystem restoration, including food and water security, job creation and poverty reduction.

Peter Kenmore, FAO, affirmed that the maintenance of ecosystems and restoration is fundamental to ensuring food security and sustainable development.

Yong Kwon Lee, Korea Forest Service, Republic of Korea, recalled the 20th anniversary of the Rio Conventions and expressed full support for promoting greater synergies among them. James Aronson, SER, welcomed Ecosystems Restoration Day discussions, saying it is exciting to see the energy and commitment of the Rio Conventions Pavilion partners and calling for all to “roll up our sleeves and get to work.”

Panelists then endorsed the Hyderabad Call for a Concerted Effort on Ecosystem Restoration. The Hyderabad Call: acknowledges that ecosystems and biodiversity underpin economic growth, sustainable development and human well-being; recognizes the fast degradation of earth’s ecosystems due to unsustainable development; acknowledges the emerging consensus on the importance of restoration and rehabilitation as conservation alone is no longer sufficient; and recalls the global commitments in the three Rio Conventions and other Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEAs).

The Hyderabad Call also notes that effective implementation of restoration helps to achieve the CBD Aichi Biodiversity Targets, adaptation and mitigation under the UNFCCC, striving towards zero-net land degradation under the UNCCD, wise use of wetlands under the Ramsar Convention, and achieving the Global Objectives on Forests of the UNFF and the Bonn Challenge. The Hyderabad Call also recognizes that major enabling factors in achieving ecosystem restoration commitments include: political will, leadership and commitment; knowledge dissemination and capacity building; governance, participation and partnerships; and financing, resource mobilization and other incentive mechanisms.

Finally, the document calls upon parties to the Rio Conventions and other MEAs, donor agencies, including the World Bank and regional development banks, private and corporate donors, other relevant international bodies and organizations, indigenous peoples and local community organizations and civil society to make concerted and coordinated long-term efforts to mobilize resources and facilitate the implementation of ecosystem restoration activities.