



***PAN-EUROPEAN BIOLOGICAL AND LANDSCAPE
DIVERSITY STRATEGY***

Geneva and Strasbourg, 7 September 2009

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**COUNCIL FOR THE PAN-EUROPEAN
BIOLOGICAL AND LANDSCAPE DIVERSITY STRATEGY**

**FIFTH INTERGOVERNMENTAL CONFERENCE
*BIODIVERSITY IN EUROPE***

**22-24 September 2009
Liege, Belgium**

**BACKGROUND PAPER: THEME 2
BIODIVERSITY AND CLIMATE CHANGE**

*Document prepared by Norway in collaboration
with the Friends of the Chair and resource persons for the session*

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THEME II: Biodiversity and Climate Change

5th Intergovernmental Conference “Biodiversity in Europe” 22 -24 September 2009, Liege, Belgium

“We cannot halt biodiversity loss without addressing climate change. It is equally impossible to tackle climate change without addressing biodiversity loss.” (from the Message from Athens (April 2009)¹)

The interlinkages between biodiversity and climate change has been recognized by several relevant conventions, in particular:

Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD)

Conference of the Parties (COP IX) decision 16 (<http://www.cbd.int/decision/cop/?id=11659>)

Convention on the Conservation of European Wildlife and Natural Habitats (Bern convention)

Recommendation No. 135 (2008) of the Standing Committee, adopted on 27 November 2008, on addressing the impacts of climate change on biodiversity

UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC)

Upcoming COP in Copenhagen December 2009. The current negotiating text (with many options) before the AGW-LCA (next session 28 September 2009) contains many references to ecosystems and ecosystem based adaptation (e.g. pg 8, 11, 12, 23, 29, 33, 35, 36, 39, 43, 45, 53, 150 of the text available at <http://unfccc.int/resource/docs/2009/awglca6/eng/inf01.pdf>).

Ramsar Convention on Wetlands Resolution X.24 on Climate change and wetlands
http://www.ramsar.org/res/key_res_x_24_e.pdf

For earlier decisions, and other conventions please see TEMATEA module on biodiversity and climate change: <http://www.tematea.org>

Synergies between different instruments, and in particular with regard to climate change and biodiversity, is high on the political agenda as emphasized in the declaration from the G8-meeting in L’Aquila ([G8 Leaders Declaration: Responsible Leadership for a Sustainable Future](#)). The ongoing work on REDD (reduced emissions from deforestation and forest degradation) and adaptation to climate change are also underlining the intrinsic linkage between biodiversity and climate change.

A TEEB Climate Issues Update paper, contributing to the discussion of the role of ecosystems and biodiversity in the climate debate prior to the Copenhagen UNFCCC conference, was published on 2nd of September. One of the TEEB recommendations is “significant investment in protecting ecosystem services and biodiversity, fostering the development of ecological infrastructure, as a contribution to both climate change mitigation and adaptation”. The report commissioned by the Swedish National Scientific Council on Biological Diversity “Biodiversity, Ecosystem Services and Resilience - Governance for a Future with Global Changes” is calling for increased use of adaptive management approaches and systems to deal with uncertainty and surprise.

The challenge is to promote co-benefits and stimulate for mutual supportiveness between these two main environmental challenges; climate change and loss of biodiversity!

¹ From 27 to 28 April 2009, the European Commission organized a conference in Athens to consider the future direction of EU policy on biodiversity protection.

Extensive information on the materials presented and discussed in the conference are available on the DG ENV web-site (http://ec.europa.eu/environment/nature/biodiversity/conference/index_en.htm).

The Biodiversity in Europe Conference should build on recommendations from recent European work. In this two of the key conclusions from the break out group on biodiversity and climate change from the Athens meeting could be highlighted as starting point of the discussions in the break-out groups:

- Conserving and restoring ecosystems can have **multiple economic, social and environmental benefits** and is the basis for cost-effective adaptation and mitigation to climate change.
- Adaptation and mitigation must be sustainable – based on an **ecosystem approach**. This is the only way to ensure long-term success of these strategies.

Ecosystems and biodiversity represent an essential part of a sustainable solution for the climate change challenge, but it has to be integrated in a mutually supportive way in order to prevent unwanted consequences both for biodiversity and for climate change.

In order to highlight the importance of the interaction between biodiversity, resilience and the security of carbon stocks, the three parallel breakout groups will focus their discussions around these topics:

1. How to manage biodiversity in a changing climate,
2. Biodiversity and climate change adaptation - threats, opportunities, positive and negative impacts of climate change adaptation
3. Biodiversity and climate change mitigation - threats, opportunities, positive and negative impacts of climate change adaptation

Selected documents²:

- The Ad-hoc Technical Expert Group on biodiversity and climate change under the CBD is finalizing its report in the end of July 2009 (translated summary in French and Russian will most probably be available to the conference)
- The resilience of biodiversity and ecosystem services in the face of climate change and other global challenges, The Swedish national Scientific Council on Biological Diversity. (chap. 4 translations)
- Towards a Strategy on Climate Change, Ecosystem Services and Biodiversity - A discussion paper prepared by the EU Ad Hoc Expert Working Group on Biodiversity
- The TEEB Climate Issues Update (ex-sum translations)

Other relevant reports:

Recently published reports from the World Bank and UNEP.³

² These documents will be available on the BiE Conference website:

³ World Bank: “Convenient Solutions to an Inconvenient Truth: Ecosystem based Approaches to Climate Change” http://siteresources.worldbank.org/ENVIRONMENT/Resources/ESW_EcosystemBasedApp.pdf

UNEP: “*The Natural Fix? The role of ecosystems in climate mitigation (2009)*”
<http://www.grida.no/publications/rr/natural-fix/>