



COUNCIL OF
THE EUROPEAN UNION



Council Conclusions
**Preparation for the ninth ordinary meeting of the Conference
of the Parties (COP 9) to the Convention on Biological
Diversity (CBD)**
(Bonn, 19 to 30 May 2008)

*2856th ENVIRONMENT Council meeting
Brussels, 3 March 2008*

The Council adopted the following conclusions:

"The Council of the European Union,

UNDERLINING the intrinsic value of biodiversity and its importance for life on earth and for supporting ecosystem services, as well as the EU's commitment to strong political responses to address all the objectives of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD);

RECALLING the EU's commitment to the global target of significantly reducing the rate of biodiversity loss by 2010 and the EU objective of halting biodiversity loss by 2010 within the EU, and to proceed urgently with the implementation of the EU Action Plan to 2010 and beyond, as referred to in the Council conclusions of 18 December 2006;

EMPHASISING the determination of the EU to play an active and constructive role and to contribute to ambitious, yet realistic outcomes at the ninth meeting of the Conference of the Parties (COP 9) to the Convention on Biological Diversity in May 2008; STRESSING the urgent need for vigorous efforts at all levels and further concrete actions to achieve the global 2010 biodiversity target;

P R E S S

THE COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN UNION:

1. REAFFIRMS the Council conclusions of 28 June 2007 and the positions contained therein;
2. STRESSES the importance of enhanced implementation of the CBD's Programmes of Work;
3. URGES COP 9 to address firmly the need for enhanced and effective collaboration at all levels between the Rio Conventions and other related instruments and processes, including work on reducing emissions from deforestation and forest degradation, as well as on other relevant mitigation and adaptation measures, and to determine ways to ensure that the CBD contributes to the process launched by the Bali Action Plan under the UNFCCC, to be concluded in 2009, with a view to maximising co-benefits and achieving greater synergies between climate change and biodiversity policies;
4. EMPHASISING the importance of a rapid and full implementation of the Programme of Work on Protected Areas for achieving the 2010 and 2012 goals, UNDERLINES its full commitment to the adequate implementation of the Natura 2000 network as the EU's most important instrument to implement the CBD Programme of Work on Protected Areas; STRESSES the need to meet the specific targets agreed in the Programme of Work; STRESSES the urgent need to develop more effective measures and adequate technical and financial support to establish and better manage protected areas in the regions in which they are most needed; in this context WELCOMES the LifeWeb Initiative aimed at matching voluntary commitments by Parties for the designation and management of protected areas with voluntary commitments from donors for dedicated (co-)financing; ENCOURAGES Member States and the Commission to participate in this initiative;
5. WELCOMES the outcome of the CBD expert workshop on Ecological Criteria and Biogeographic Classification Systems held in the Azores, Portugal, in October 2007, and CALLS UPON COP 9 to adopt on the basis of this outcome a set of ecological criteria for identifying marine areas in the high seas in need of protection and to agree on how to apply such criteria, *inter alia* in the context of a UN process for enhanced conservation and sustainable use of marine biodiversity in areas beyond national jurisdiction;
6. NOTES with concern the alarming outcome of the fourth report under the Global Environment Outlook (GEO-4) and, mindful of the short time left to achieve the 2010 biodiversity target, INVITES Member States and the Commission to announce at the High-Level Segment of COP 9 their specific commitments on additional actions for addressing biodiversity loss before COP 10, and to encourage other Parties to do the same;
7. RECOGNISING the importance of keeping the momentum after 2010 by timely preparation of an updated Strategic Plan for the Convention, CALLS UPON COP 9 to take the necessary decisions to launch this process;

8. WELCOMES the outcome of the 6th meeting of the Ad Hoc Open-ended working group on Access and Benefit-Sharing and STRESSES the EU's commitment to continue the elaboration and negotiation of the international ABS regime on this basis, with a view to completing the negotiations at the earliest possible time before COP 10; furthermore, HOLDS THE VIEW that the international ABS regime could include some binding components, if it also includes international standards on national access law and practice, linked to compliance support measures;
9. UNDERLINING the important role that the business community, including small and medium-sized enterprises, can play in the implementation of the CBD, as noted *inter alia* in the CBD Decision VIII/17 on private sector engagement, WELCOMES the Business and Biodiversity High-Level Conference, held on 12-13 November 2007 in Lisbon, providing guidance for the future development of the EU Business and Biodiversity Initiative and for the establishment of the European 2010 agenda on this topic; WELCOMES the commitment by the Commission to establish a technical facility to support the Initiative; CALLS for continued efforts to raise awareness of advantages that can be gained from biodiversity protection, promote further use of market, corporate responsibility and regulatory schemes, support business with operational tools, and encourage new incentives to develop public-private partnerships;
10. CALLS UPON COP 9 to adopt a resource mobilisation strategy; URGES the Member States, the Commission, other countries and organisations and the private sector to consider how to provide new financial means for supporting the implementation of the CBD and halting the loss of global biodiversity through innovative mechanisms and additional sources, such as *inter alia* the concept of payments for ecosystem services and the opportunities provided by the UNFCCC COP in Bali to look at payments for reducing emissions from deforestation and forest degradation;
11. RECOGNISES the work carried out by the European Platform for Biodiversity Research Strategy to identify and promote policy-relevant research;
12. STANDS READY to take part in on-going efforts to establish an international mechanism for the provision of objective, authoritative and peer-reviewed scientific knowledge to policy-making, while promoting synergy with existing processes; WELCOMES the contribution made by the IMoSEB consultative process and the Millennium Ecosystem Assessment and STRESSES the urgent need for a follow-up to the conclusions of the Conference of the International Steering Committee of the consultative process of IMoSEB held in Montpellier in November 2007 and ENCOURAGES Parties and others to engage in this process;

13. WELCOMES the outcome of the European Conference on Invasive Alien Species held in Madrid in January 2008; NOTING the increasing threats to biodiversity from invasive alien species (IAS), RECALLS the Council conclusions of 25 June 2002 that support the CBD Guiding Principles on alien species adopted at CBD COP 6 through Decision VI/23; REITERATES the EU's commitment to implement these principles and CALLS ON other Parties to do so as well; EMPHASISES the need to address the remaining gaps and inconsistencies in the international regulatory framework on invasive alien species; in this context RECALLS the urgent need for an EU strategy on invasive alien species and an effective early warning system; CALLS FOR effective response mechanisms at EU level; RECOGNISES the efforts made by the relevant conventions and organisations, such as the International Plant Protection Convention (IPPC) and the European and Mediterranean Plant Protection Organisation (EPPO);
14. UNDERLINES the need for COP 9 to address specifically and as a matter of urgency and priority the issue of the production and consumption of and trade in biofuels and biomass and associated concerns regarding conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity and ecosystems, as highlighted in the Council conclusions of 28 June 2007;
15. RECOGNISING the challenge to ensure sufficient and sustainable food production globally in the context of increased demand for food and wide and growing use of food and non-food crops for the production of biofuels, bioenergy and other uses, EXPRESSES its deep concern on the alarming rate of loss of agricultural biodiversity, including its services for wildlife and habitats; IS COMMITTED to supporting actions that will halt this loss while promoting food security, improving human nutrition and enhancing rural development; WELCOMES the work on the International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture and the Multi-Year Programme of Work of the FAO Commission on Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture encompassing plant, animal, aquatic, forest and microbial genetic resources and aiming, *inter alia*, at the achievement of Millennium Development Goals 1 and 7 and at climate change mitigation and adaptation, in particular in view of its contribution to the implementation of the Programme of Work on Agricultural Biodiversity of the CBD;
16. Furthermore, WELCOMING the FAO Global Plan of Action for Animal Genetic Resources adopted at the first International Technical Conference held in Interlaken, Switzerland, in September 2007, which provides an international framework for the sustainable use, development and conservation of animal genetic resources for food and agriculture, STRESSES its importance for the CBD Programme of Work on Agricultural Biodiversity and CALLS UPON COP 9 to encourage Parties to contribute to its full and effective implementation;
17. RECALLS the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples adopted by the UN General Assembly on 13 September 2007 and CALLS UPON COP 9 to invite Parties to take due account of these rights as identified in the relevant provisions, particularly relating to traditional knowledge and genetic resources, in order to guide the Parties and facilitate the fulfilment of their commitments under the CBD.