

PRE-CONFERENCE ON BIODIVERSITY AND ITS LINK TO SUSTAINABLE PRODUCTION AND CONSUMPTION PATTERNS

9 October, 2007
Room 15, first floor, Sava Centre, Belgrade

Background

Since its launch in 1991, the 'Environment for Europe' (EfE) process has been a unique platform of international environmental policy forming for the 56 countries within the UNECE region. Among other fields the EfE Ministerial Conferences delivered strong commitments and developed frameworks in biodiversity conservation, including the Pan-European Biological and Landscape Diversity Strategy (PEBLDS, endorsed in 1995) and the Kyiv Resolution on Biodiversity with the 2010 target to halt biodiversity loss (committed to in 2003). Since the last conference in 2003, governments, NGOs and other stakeholders have also paid more and more attention to sustainable production and consumption (SPAC) within the EfE process and for the 2007 session are calling for a Pan-European framework, taskforce and stakeholder dialogues to support national and subregional SPAC initiatives.

The 6th Ministerial Conference, which will take place on 10-12 October, 2007 in Belgrade, Serbia, will provide a good opportunity to greatly strengthen Pan-European cooperation on sustainable production and consumption issues. At the same time it will be the last Conference before the 2010 deadline to halt biodiversity loss on Pan-European level. Recognising the significance of the links between production and consumption patterns and biodiversity changes in the entire region, the European ECO Forum, a Pan-European coalition of environmental citizen organisations is organising a pre-conference on 9 October in order to draw attention to these relationships, provide input into the Ministerial Conference discussions and foster future cooperation.

About the pre-conference

The pre-conference on one hand will **deepen the understanding and raise awareness** of biodiversity loss and its link to production, consumption patterns and thus to the economic and social processes underlying environmental problems. This new approach of linking these two themes will help to highlight the root causes of biodiversity loss, and the role of different sectors in nature conservation through their sectoral activities, as well as of the general public through their lifestyle. In addition, the pre-conference will also point out to the consequences that biodiversity and ecosystems decline can have on people's wellbeing.

In the afternoon session the presentations and discussions will focus on practical experiences and regional policy initiatives to tackle these issues, and thus it is aimed to **facilitate Pan-European cooperation and implementation on the ground** by NGOs, governments and other stakeholders. The pre-conference will be also a source of inspiration and provide input into the roundtables dealing with biodiversity, as well as sustainable production and consumption at the following Ministerial Conference.

Besides the ample time available for open discussions during the whole event, the break-out session will give additional opportunity for active participation and formulation of common concerns, propose new ideas.

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Agenda

Tuesday, 9 October

09.00 Introduction and welcome (5')

I. Human well-being and the conservation of biodiversity – a necessarily trade-off relationship?!

09.05 The aims of development and reconciling society's needs and nature conservation interests (10') – Mr. Frédéric Chemay, General Advisor, in the name of the FPS Health, Food Chain Safety and Environment, DG Environment.

09.10 Ecosystem services (20') – Ms. Marianne Kettunen, Institute for European Environmental Policy

Why biodiversity and ecosystem services are essential for human life? Message from the Millennium Ecosystem Assessment.

09.30 Causes of biodiversity loss, links to consumption and production (20') – Mr. Joachim Spangenberg, ALARM Project, Helmholtz Centre for Environmental Research

How do we harm biodiversity through our consumption and the production? Can we tackle the pressures on biodiversity effectively without looking at the drivers behind these pressures? The ice berg of "environmental problems". Looking at the relationships between development schemes and biodiversity. Patterns of pressures and production and consumption. Subregional differences between EU and EECCA countries.

09.50 Discussion (35')

Questions to the audience: What is development? Is it possible to save biodiversity and meet present society's expectations at the same time? How can we promote fundamental changes in production and consumption patterns that can help achieving the 2010 target to halt biodiversity loss?

10.30 Coffee break

II: Useful concepts & approaches to communicate and tackle the problem

11.00 Energy, climate change and biodiversity (20') – Mr. Gunnar Boye Olesen, International Network for Sustainable Energy (INFORSE)

Climate change, as being a challenge biodiversity, and a result of the energy sector. How can we transform our energy production to reduce climate impacts without degrading our biodiversity in other ways? Sustainable energy visions. The biomass and hydro dilemmas.

11.20 The SPAC scheme (20') – Mr. Jeffrey Barber, Integrative Strategies Forum

Sustainable Production and Consumption (SPAC) as a system and cycle within society. Threats of production and consumption on biodiversity, and the need to conserve biodiversity through SPAC policies and practices.

11.40 Discussion (30')

Discussion based on the questions coming from the floor.

12.10 Lunch break

III: Experience from Practice

13.15 Policies and initiatives on different levels I. (15') – Ms. Anna Golubovska, Mama-86

State of affairs regarding consumption, production and its relations to biodiversity changes in Eastern Europe, Caucasus and Central-Asia.

13.30 Policies and initiatives on different levels II. (15') – Mr. Lewis Akenji, Association of Conscious Consumers

Central and East European initiative to change unsustainable consumption trends. Biodiversity implications.

13.45 Pan-European policy developments on sustainable production and consumption (15') – Mr. Pawel Kazmierczyk, European Environmental Agency

Overview of progress in the development of policies on sustainable production and consumption in the pan-European region.

14.00 Panel discussion on the basis of lead questions and relevant questions from the floor ('60)

Lead questions: What are the most effective entry points for governments and for NGOs to conserve nature through influencing production and consumption patterns?

15.00 *Coffee break*

IV: The Way Forward

15.30 Breakout session (discussion on the basis of prepared questions and questions arising from the panel discussions)

17.00 Report back to plenary

17.30 Conclusion of the pre-conference