

NGO message to the roundtables

Theme I: Valuing Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services

Fifth Intergovernmental Conference Biodiversity in Europe

The message was prepared by Pan-European NGOs at the NGO preparatory meeting preceding the Conference on 21 September 2009. It targets participants of the Fifth Intergovernmental Conference Biodiversity in Europe that takes place on 22-24 September 2009 in Liege, Belgium.

Appreciating the main principles behind ecosystem services valuation (sustainability, the precautionary principle, equity and the polluter pays principle) and having in mind the need to act on the drivers behind the loss of biodiversity

1. We support the idea of ecosystem services valuation, but we emphasize that it should not be limited to economic valuation in monetary terms. We stand for a wider interpretation of valuation including use values as well as non-use or intrinsic values (such as educational, cultural or spiritual values) with the same priority.
2. We emphasize that mutual knowledge transfer and networking are of key importance, especially in non-EU countries.
 - a. We stand for involving all stakeholders of the market, and support the establishment and implementation of Business and Biodiversity initiatives across Pan-Europe. The participation of NGOs in these initiatives should be considered essential.
 - b. It is highly important to build responsibility in the business sector, including marketing and publicity, because this sector conveys messages that influence peoples choices with impact on biodiversity.
 - c. We support the efforts towards raising awareness of decision makers and the general public in recognizing the value of nature.
3. EIA (Environmental Impact Assessment) and SEA (Strategic Environmental Assessment) legislation should be amended at all levels to incorporate valuation as defined above. We stand for a proper legal framework in a regional context.
4. We emphasize the need to incorporate valuation of biodiversity into all legislation, especially on forestry, agriculture and trade.
5. We are glad to cooperate with TEEB in involving PEBLDS countries (governments, scientists, NGOs, local communities), starting pilot projects, in order to widen and shape the concept of valuation to Pan-European level and involve the special ecosystems of Eastern and Central Asia.