

Governments of the biggest biodiversity convention should act now in order to halt biodiversity loss by 2020

Budapest, Hungary –The 10th meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD COP10) will take place between 18 and 29 October, 2010 in Nagoya, Japan. This will be one of the most important meetings of the Convention so far. Since the 2010 biodiversity target has not been achieved, a new strategic framework for the period to 2020 needs to be adopted. CEEweb for Biodiversity gave special input to the preparation of the CBD COP10 and provided recommendations on how future biodiversity policies should be formulated.

As population and consumption levels increase, biodiversity decreases and the capacity of the nature to continue delivering the goods and services is reduced. However, ecosystem services are vital to maintain human well-being, thus, protecting biodiversity is crucial. Recognizing this, in April 2002, the Parties to the Convention committed themselves to achieve by 2010 a significant reduction of the current rate of biodiversity loss at the global, regional and national level as a contribution to poverty alleviation and to the benefit of all life on Earth. Due to this 2010 biodiversity target, the United Nations Environment Programme declared 2010 the International Year of Biodiversity to raise awareness about biodiversity loss and promote the protection of environment. Unfortunately the 2010 biodiversity target is not going to be achieved and biodiversity continues to diminish. Therefore, Parties in Nagoya should use this special momentum to adopt an ambitious strategic approach for the coming decade which can really help to halt the loss of biodiversity by 2020.

Paradigm change in biodiversity policies is needed

The failure to meet the 2010 biodiversity target was caused by an excessive focus on sectoral problem solving and thus on end-of-pipe solutions which do not tackle environmental problems but extend them in space and time. Without paying attention to the deep-rooted drivers, pressures on environment, resulting *inter alia* in biodiversity loss, keep regenerating. As long as overexploitation of natural resources continues, excessive pollution exaggerates, consumption and production are still growing, the achievement of nature conservation goals will remain unrealistic. Therefore, a paradigm change in biodiversity policies is needed in order to identify and tackle the deep-rooted drivers.

CEEweb's efforts to make paradigm change happen

CEEweb for Biodiversity formulated clear recommendations on how to reach nature conservation goals. According to us, the strategic approach of the CBD should clearly address the drivers behind environmental pressures, such as our unsustainable consumption and production patterns. These patterns are determined by the current socio-economic systems, which allow the loss of natural heritage not to be compensated. These systems let energy expensive products and services flourish due to the cheap unlimited access to natural resources comparing to human labor. Going even one step deeper, we can find out that the socio-economic systems are defined by the values of society. Among these values the far most dominant is the belief in material wealth and in the continuous growth of GDB on the expense of other values such as healthy environment, happiness or security.

In the light of these complex interrelations CEEweb strives to advocate for strengthened political will to reduce the impacts of consumption on the Globe's natural heritage.

Noticing the importance of enhancing the CBD's new strategic approach, CEEweb for Biodiversity organized two meetings for Pan-European stakeholders within one year. The first meeting was held in September, 2009, in Liege, Belgium, while the second event was organized in July 2010, in Gabala, Azerbaijan. The main purpose of the meetings was to share ideas about effective formulation and implementation of biodiversity policies and their contribution to the Millennium Development Goals (MDG's).

About CEEweb for Biodiversity

CEEweb for Biodiversity is an umbrella organization of NGOs in the Central and Eastern European region. Our mission is the conservation of biodiversity through the promotion of sustainable development.

Convention on Biological Diversity

Opened for signature at the Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro in 1992, the Convention on Biological Diversity is an international treaty for the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity and the equitable sharing of the benefits from utilization of genetic resources. With 193 Parties, the CBD has near-universal participation among countries committed to preserving life on Earth. The CBD seeks to address all threats to biodiversity and ecosystem services, including threats from climate change, through scientific assessments, the development of tools, incentives and processes, the transfer of technologies and good practices and the full and active involvement of relevant stakeholders including indigenous and local communities, youth, NGOs, women and the business community. The headquarters of the Secretariat of the Convention are located in Montreal, Canada.

Millennium Development Goals

In September 2000, building upon a decade of major United Nations conferences and summits, world leaders came together at United Nations Headquarters in New York to adopt the United Nations Millennium Declaration, committing their nations to a new global partnership to reduce extreme poverty and setting out a series of time-bound targets - with a deadline of 2015 - that have become known as the Millennium Development Goals. By 2015 all United Nations Member States have pledged to:

1. Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger
2. Achieve universal primary education
3. Promote gender equality and empower women
4. Reduce child mortality
5. Improve maternal health
6. Combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases
7. Ensure environmental sustainability
8. Develop a global partnership for development

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