



POST 2010 BIODIVERSITY STRATEGY – STAKEHOLDER CONSULTATIONS

Statement of the lead partner of the LIFE+ project “European Business and Biodiversity Campaign”

In January 2010 the European Business and Biodiversity Campaign supported by the EU LIFE+ Programme was initiated. The main objectives of this communication campaign which is led by the Global Nature Fund are:

- Improve the awareness and understanding among corporate decision makers about impacts of business operations and about business opportunities in relation to biodiversity conservation.
- Promote biodiversity partnerships between business, NGOs and other stakeholders.
- Improve the quality of biodiversity partnerships between business, NGOs and other stakeholders.
- Provide information about existing Business and Biodiversity Initiatives such as the EU Business and Biodiversity Initiative/Technical Platform, IUCN Countdown 2010, Germany's Business and Biodiversity Initiative and other national and regional initiatives.
- Disseminate information and demonstrate methodologies and tools that help businesses to assess and mitigate their impacts on biodiversity.
- Refinement of the global challenge of loss of biodiversity to the local level and motivation and support of concrete action at local and regional level by SMEs.

Prioritised approach, subtargets and measures

A prioritised approach is essential to deal with the problem in an efficient way. One of the first priorities should be to establish an effective monitoring system to measure progress. Besides the methods mentioned in the background document, evaluation tools can include the Ecological Footprint and the Ecosystem Services Benchmark. Effort-based approaches cannot deliver satisfying results when applied to complex high urgency problems.

In order to counter the dramatic loss of biodiversity, the EU needs to move away from the pure in-situ conservation measures in protected areas to include also other approaches that protect biodiversity and promote the sustainable use of natural resources. In order to achieve this, it is essential to include biodiversity and ecosystem protection not only in nature conservation and environmental policies but also into other policies and programmes. Instead of treating biodiversity loss as an isolated issue, it should be integrated in existing policies. In addition, these policies should consider the link between biodiversity and human needs, such as the role biodiversity can play in poverty reduction.

The Common Agricultural Policy has had a big impact on biodiversity and ecosystems. We therefore propose to integrate biodiversity more thoroughly in the new Common Agricultural Policy. Together with regional development policies this might be the policy field with the biggest impact on biodiversity and ecosystems.



As one of the important drivers, the private sector should assume responsibilities for biodiversity conservation. Both the European Biodiversity Strategy as well as the national biodiversity strategies underline this message.

Policy Instruments

We recommend to include the following concrete actions into the Biodiversity Strategy:

Biodiversity should be included into environmental management systems, Eco-labels such as the “EU Flower”, food regulation, industrial standards, Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA), Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) as well as into quality management systems - possibly in a joint effort with ISO. We recommend the development of tools which support companies to tackle this highly complex aspect, such as sector specific biodiversity / ecosystem indicators (e.g. included in the planned EMAS Reference Documents), workshops and online capacity building tools.

The European Commission should work towards methods which ultimately incorporate the true cost of water and other ecosystem services. As recognised in the EU Water Framework Directive, the price for water in many member states does not reflect the true costs.

Similar to legislation in Germany, harmonised compensation legislation should be developed for all EU Member States. But in order to avoid misuse it is important to define those ecosystems and species which cannot be compensated for. Furthermore, compensation measures should be regionally coordinated and implemented in a way that real benefits for biodiversity and ecosystems will be assured

A study into the possibilities of transferring the agri-environmental schemes approach to other industry sectors needs to be conducted. Since the mid-1980s, agricultural policy reform has increasingly incorporated environmental issues and large areas of Europe now participate in agri-environmental schemes (AES). Agri-environmental schemes can be considered as a successful contribution to nature and biodiversity protection. Using similar schemes in other industries will create a situation in which companies or regions that decide to act “biodiversity friendly” and implement concrete measures of an agreed Action Plan, will be compensated for additional costs.

To summarise, the corporate sector plays a big role in the loss of biodiversity, new legislation should aim at companies. A new legislative framework can set the boundaries and minimum performance requirements while at the same time creating positive market incentives that motivate businesses to protect biodiversity. Voluntary approaches will be required to promote innovation and encourage leadership activities within the private sector but it will not be enough to create a level playing field among corporate stakeholders. These measures can be complemented by information campaigns aimed at consumers to create new market potential for companies.

Therefore, the EC should continue with awareness raising campaigns. Studies of PricewaterhouseCoopers and others confirm that the level of companies’ awareness of biodiversity is still very low and concrete action rare. It is therefore important to continue communication campaigns such as the “European Business and Biodiversity Campaign” to support national initiatives and the EU Business and Biodiversity Platform in development.



Finally, for a successful implementation of the EU Biodiversity Strategy, it will need its own funds because the majority of the EU-LIFE Plus program funds are already dedicated to the Natura 2000 Network.

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Stefan Hörmann, Global Nature Fund, lead partner of the “European Business and Biodiversity Campaign”, implemented in cooperation with
Lake Constance Foundation, Germany

IUCN ROfE, Belgium

Triple E, The Netherlands

Altop Publishing House, Germany

DOKEO, Germany

Fundación Global Nature, Spain

Contact

Global Nature Fund

International Foundation for Environment and Nature

Fritz-Reichle-Ring 4

78315 Radolfzell, Germany

Phone: +49 7732 9995-0

Fax: +49 7732 9995-88

E-Mail: info@globalnature.org,

hoermann@globalnature.org

www.globalnature.org

www.business-and-biodiversity.eu

