

**Convention on Biological Diversity
COP 9, 19-30 May 2008, Bonn**

Biodiversity and Climate Change

Item 4.5 of the provisional Agenda

Draft Policy Recommendations

IUCN URGES that COP9 to:

- **Call on** to promote synergistic approaches to implement the Rio Conventions and in particular between the CBD and UNFCCC, finding ways and means to achieve biodiversity co-benefits for combating desertification and land degradation in climate change activities;
- **Endorse** SBSTTA Recommendation XIII/6 to establish an Ad Hoc Technical Expert Group on Biodiversity and Climate Change with a mandate to develop advice on biodiversity, relevant to the UNFCCC decision on the Bali Action Plan (1/CP.13) as well as the UNFCCC Nairobi work programme and to remove the brackets around para. 23 (b) and (c)
- **Urge** Parties to adopt an ecosystem approach that integrates efforts to reduce emissions from deforestation and degradation, in coherence with both the CBD and the UNFCCC;
- **Urge** Parties to adopt adaptation measures to safeguard agricultural productivity and water supplies, and conservation measures that reduce the vulnerability of ecosystems and the livelihoods of people who depend on them.
- **Encourage** Parties to ensure that conservation measures to reduce the vulnerability of ecosystems and livelihoods are given high priority in the global discussions, not only in the context of climate change, but also in those on biodiversity conservation within the framework of the CBD and other biodiversity-related multilateral environmental agreements.
- **Call on** Parties to integrate invasive species management in the context of measures to address climate change and biodiversity loss
- **Encourage** Parties to use the UNEP-IUCN Issue-Based Modules and the CRISTAL tool when developing and implementing mutually supportive activities with regard to biodiversity and climate change at global and national levels

Minimizing environmental risks of ocean carbon sequestration

- **Urges** Parties to act in accordance with the decision of the London Convention and Protocol on ocean fertilization and not to authorize related activities by their nationals or flagged vessels, including the marketing of carbon offsets, until more studies on impact are available and regulations are in place to avoid or minimize impacts and to verify long-term sequestration
- **Urges** Parties to adopt measures on a global, regional and national basis to ensure that potential risks of ocean fertilization and other geo-engineering schemes have been carefully considered in advance and if allowed to proceed are subject to permits based on prior environmental impact assessments, advance notification and consultation, and requirements for monitoring of effects and reporting to verify results
- **Urges** Parties to fully assess the likely risks and benefits of sub-seabed emplacement (which is dumping in the terms of the London Protocol) of carbon dioxide on marine organisms and related ecosystems in advance of permitting any such activity. IUCN urges Parties to address the issue

of purity of any carbon dioxide streams in advance to ensure that they are not mixed with other materials that may also be harmful in a marine environment

Strengthening synergies between the Rio Conventions

IUCN urges COP9 to strengthen the synergies with other relevant multilateral agreements, especially the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change and the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification that can support Parties to mitigate and adapt to the impacts of climate change while also protecting biodiversity.

The issue of synergies and cooperation among the Secretariats of the Rio Conventions, their Parties, relevant organizations and stakeholders is of key importance for IUCN.

As SBSTTA 13, IUCN recognizes the need for COP 9 to set up an appropriate mechanism to provide input on biodiversity issues relevant to the UNFCCC's Bali Action Plan and Nairobi work programme on impacts, vulnerability and adaptation to climate change.

Working with UNFCCC on the biodiversity issues implied by REDD

During the last UNFCCC COP held in Bali in December 2007, it was recognized that up to one quarter of global greenhouse gas emissions come from deforestation and land-use changes.

The agreement that was reached in Bali for Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Degradation (REDD) represents a real opportunity to mitigate climate change.

However, IUCN insists that REDD should be based on an ecosystem approach taking a balanced account of the multiple functions and benefits of forests for biodiversity values, ecosystem functioning and local livelihoods. It should focus on enhancing the natural processes for the sequestration and storage of carbon, protecting existing forests and restoring degraded ecosystems. Special emphasis should be given to the maintenance of carbon-rich forests such as peatland forests.

The CBD should be working closely with the UNFCCC to ensure that biodiversity and ecosystem issues are well integrated into the new REDD mechanism.

Understanding and enhancing the capacity of natural ecosystems to adapt to climate change

Biodiversity supports ecosystem resilience which, through enhanced adaptability to a changing environment, will better buffer against climate change. IUCN strongly supports the need for better assessing and mapping of the vulnerability of ecosystems, protected areas and species, and for bridging the gap between scientists and resource managers to promote ways to enhance ecosystem and species resilience. Significant efforts should be made to address the specific issues faced by the most vulnerable ecosystems such as islands, coastal areas and drylands and the critical role of ecosystems in increasing community resilience to climate change.

It is also important to consider that extreme weather events provide exceptional opportunities for the development of invasiveness, while changes in temperature and other factors may facilitate further spread for many already highly invasive species.

Reducing the vulnerability of the poor to climate change through sustainable ecosystem management

Rural poor, disadvantaged communities and women are particularly vulnerable to the effects of climate change, as their livelihoods often rely on local natural resources with low adaptive capacity. IUCN highlights the crucial role of biodiversity and ecosystems in climate change adaptation, and the importance of capacity building in sustainable ecosystem management to enhance adaptive capacity. In collaboration with IISD, the Stockholm Environment Institute-US

and Intercooperation, IUCN developed a Community-based Risk Screening Tool – Adaptation and Livelihoods (CRISTAL) that could be used in the implementation of adaptation plans.

Minimizing environmental risks of ocean carbon sequestration

The oceans have already absorbed almost 50 percent of manmade emissions of carbon dioxide, posing questions related to its impact on ocean life through acidification. In an effort to combat climate change, some are seeking new ways to store or sequester more carbon dioxide in the oceans, either through burial, deposit on the deep seabed, or through the introduction of fertilizing agents. It is critically important that we better understand the potential impacts of ocean carbon sequestration technologies on marine biodiversity before these types of activities are allowed to proceed and carbon offsets or credits are marketed.

The Parties to the London Convention and Protocol are currently considering legal and scientific issues related to ocean fertilization. Under the precautionary approach embodied in the London Protocol, ocean fertilization activities would most likely be prohibited unless the Protocol is expressly amended. Parties to the London Protocol have already amended the Protocol to allow for sub-seabed sequestration of carbon dioxide as a means of dumping this carbon dioxide. However, IUCN remains concerned that the processes related to sub-seabed sequestration have not been studied sufficiently. Before any of these technologies proceed, there needs to be a full and transparent assessment to ensure that the risks posed to ocean ecosystems do not outweigh any potential climate mitigation benefit.