



**ROfE** Regional Office for Europe

## EU Liaison Office

*E-Update vol. 5, November 2006*

### Introduction

Welcome to the November update from the IUCN EU Liaison Office (EULO). In this edition we look back on the *Biodiversity in European Development Cooperation Conference* in Paris (19-21 September) and review our recent *European Members Meeting in Barcelona* (18-21 October).



Since our last update, the EULO has two new colleagues.



Geert Raeymaekers joined the EULO in September. He will assist ROfE in strengthening the relationship with the Belgian and Luxembourg authorities and IUCN members in the region, and aiming to increase the IUCN membership in both countries. Additionally, he will collaborate on EU-nature conservation policy issues. He has a background as consultant with the European Commission, DG Environment and worked on the preparation of the Habitats Directive, the monitoring of LIFE-Nature projects in the European Union and was involved in international conservation activities. Geert Raeymaekers presently works part-time for IUCN and can be reached by e-mail.

Elisa Hernández de Pablo has taken over the internship position from Catherine Quick. Elisa is doing a master's course in Environmental Education and Sustainable Development with the UNESCO Program for Environmental Education and we welcome her to the EU Liaison Office. We would like to thank Catherine for her hard work and help in organising the Biodiversity in European Development Conference.



### European Development Cooperation

#### **Conference Biodiversity in European Development Cooperation (Paris, 19-21 Sept)**

From 19-21 September 2006, over 450 participants (from Governments and International Organizations to Civil Society) gathered in Paris to consider how to better integrate biodiversity into EU development cooperation.

The conference "*Biodiversity in European Development Cooperation (BEDC) - Supporting the sustainable development of partner countries*", organized by IUCN and the European Commission, aimed to contribute to transforming political commitments into concrete actions by developing recommendations for the EC and European Union member States. This major



event was convened with financial support from the EC, Belgium, Finland, France and Sweden in the pursuit of the target to reduce significantly the current rate of biodiversity loss by 2010 and to halt it by 2015.

Ecosystems services are in decline, putting at risk sustainable development and the livelihoods of the poor. Participants highlighted the need to forge stronger links between the environment and development communities, and to move from policy design to

effective implementation.

Three days of intensive discussions led participants to identify four sets of challenges and related recommendations for common action on integrating biodiversity into EU development cooperation:

- Supporting biodiversity mainstreaming in partner countries
- Improving governance
- Strengthening instruments and policy coherence
- Recognising the important biodiversity of Overseas Countries and Territories

These challenges and recommendations are compiled in the *Message from Paris*. The EU Finnish Presidency committed to submit this Message to the EU General Affairs and External Relations Council in December 2006.

The Message from Paris and the BEDC Conference Background Paper can be found at <http://www.countdown2010.net/paris2006/>

More information: [Jean-Claude Jacques](#) and [Catherine Ghyoot](#)

## IUCN European Members Meeting

The IUCN European Members Meeting (EMM) took place in Barcelona from 18-21 October. It was attended by 200 delegates of which, 37 were National Governments, 88 NGO's, 5 UN organizations, 5 private companies and delegates from the EU Commission.



At this EMM, the EULO organized a training session entitled: *Access to the EU – Policy and Fundraising and Specific EU Funding Instruments*. The aim of this session was to provide IUCN members with a general overview of the EU, the EU policies and funding instruments for nature conservation and what the possibilities regarding this of the IUCN EU Liaison Office are. This was completed with practical examples from IUCN Members who gave a presentation about their experience in lobbying the EU or local institutions and in accessing EU funding. If you are interested in receiving these presentations, please contact [Anouska Plasmeijer](#)

## EU Policy

### Environment in the European Overseas Regions, Countries and Territories

Over the last few months important steps forward were made to get environment higher on the European agenda.

Firstly, in the **OCT's-EU Forum** (Nuuk, Greenland 4-8 September 2006) environment was a

key issue. The final political declaration of this conference pays unprecedented attention to environmental issues, mainly biodiversity and climate change.

Also the OCT workshop in the *Conference on Biodiversity in Development Cooperation* (Paris, 19-21 September) was well attended and resulted in recommendations that are summarized as one of the four main challenges of the message from Paris. The text goes as follows:

**Challenge 4: Recognition of Biodiversity in Overseas Countries and Territories**

*The EU should develop a coherent framework for environment in OCT's to promote sustainable management of their important biodiversity areas, and also encourage joint efforts with Outermost Regions including adequate funding mechanisms.*

The recognition of the OCT's as one of the 4 main challenges for the mainstreaming of biodiversity in European Development Cooperation is an important step forward. The recognition in such a high level conference forms a strong basis for the required operational policy framework and adequate funding mechanisms. The presentations of the Ministers from Greenland and Polynesia in the plenary closing session were impressive and really made the case for the OCT's.

The results of the Paris conference were recently discussed during the United Kingdom Overseas Territories Conservation Forum (UKOTCF) Conference *Biodiversity That Matters* (Jersey, 6-12 October) and welcomed by the participants.

The challenge will now be to make the commitments from the different conferences operational.

For further information, please contact [Jean-Philippe Palasi](#) or [Erik van Zadelhoff](#)

**Biodiversity Communication**

Following the adoption of the Biodiversity Communication by the European Commission in May, it is now going forward for discussion in the other two EU institutions, the European Council and the European Parliament.

The Parliament will be producing an 'own initiative report' on the Communication, probably in spring 2007. As recommended by IUCN and other NGO partners, the Biodiversity Communication is being discussed in several of the Council formations and not just the Environment Council. This reflects the aim of the Biodiversity

Communication to ensure that biodiversity objectives are integrated into all relevant EU policies such as agriculture, fisheries and development cooperation, and not just environment. IUCN has been providing comments on the Biodiversity Communication, by working with NGOs through the European Habitats Forum (EHF), of which IUCN holds the Secretariat.



To download a copy of the Biodiversity Communication, click [here](#).

For further information, please contact [Janice Weatherley](#).

## European Union Liaison Office Team



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