



Application of the Ecosystem Approach (Agenda Item 3.6)

**Ninth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention
on Biological Diversity (COP9), Bonn, Germany, 19-30 May 2008**

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Recommendations

IUCN calls on COP9 to:

- √ **Request** the Executive Secretary to invite relevant partners with experience, together with the Communication, Education and Public Awareness Informal Advisory Committee, to provide comprehensive, user- friendly and easily understandable guidance materials on the Ecosystem Approach.
- √ **Urge** Parties, other Governments and relevant organisations to:
 - i. promote the use of the Ecosystem Approach in all sectors as a tool for managing ecosystems to supply ecosystem services for human well-being, and as a way of enhancing inter-sectoral cooperation, using the tools provided by the Source Book among others;
 - ii. develop and carry out capacity building initiatives to apply the Ecosystem Approach more widely, using the tools provided by the Source Book, and with a focus on the priorities identified in economic and development planning.
- √ **Further develop** the online Source Book by:
 - i. developing interfaces for different user groups and providing practical guidance and methods based on synthesized information from case studies and other available information, including a checklist related to the application of the Ecosystem Approach;
 - ii. identifying additional case studies on the application of the Ecosystem Approach that relate to the programmes of work of the Convention and economic sectors affecting biodiversity;
 - iii. providing up-to-date links to relevant resource organizations and other sources of expertise; and
 - iv. demonstrating the benefits and trade-offs of the use of the Ecosystem Approach in achieving the 2010 target and the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

The Ecosystem Approach was endorsed by the Conference of the Parties (COP) to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) in 2000.¹ Its 12 principles present a holistic structure for integrated management of ecosystems, and serve as the primary framework for action under the Convention. The principles are complemented by operational guidance² and additional guidelines.³

IUCN notes that the application and awareness of the Ecosystem Approach has progressed significantly at local levels, where communities have actively participated. However, IUCN believes that the comprehensive application and broader awareness of the Ecosystem Approach should be enhanced at policy and planning levels.

IUCN calls on COP9 to:

- √ **Request** the Executive Secretary to invite relevant partners with experience, together with the Communication, Education and Public Awareness Informal Advisory Committee, to provide comprehensive, user- friendly and easily understandable guidance materials on the Ecosystem Approach.

Applying the Ecosystem Approach

The IUCN Commission on Ecosystem Management (CEM) has developed a set of case studies on the application of the Ecosystem Approach for analytical purposes: *The Ecosystem Approach – Learning From Experience*.⁴ (IUCN 2008). In the 2009-2012 period it will work closely with several governments for problem-solving through practical use of the Ecosystem Approach and will develop manuals to accompany the process. The CEM is committed to informing Parties on ways to use the Ecosystem Approach more widely and effectively as an essential tool for the formulation of national biodiversity strategies and action plans and in other relevant policy mechanisms. IUCN will also promote the application of the Ecosystem Approach in the development sector.

IUCN further calls on COP9 to:

- √ **Urge** Parties, other Governments and relevant organisations to:
 - i. promote the use of the Ecosystem Approach in all sectors as a tool for

managing ecosystems for human well-being, and as a way of enhancing inter-sectoral cooperation, using the tools provided by the Source Book among others;

- ii. develop and carry out capacity building initiatives to apply the Ecosystem Approach more widely, using the tools provided by the Source Book, and with a focus on the priorities identified in economic and development planning.

The Ecosystem Approach Source Book

IUCN welcomes the development of the online Source Book as a first step to providing Parties and practitioners with more guidance on the application of the Ecosystem Approach. Still, more practical and detailed guidance is needed including specific information and tools that enable users to apply the Ecosystem Approach in their specific sector. The Source Book should also provide information on how the Ecosystem Approach can complement and improve the rural development initiatives of governments and donors, with comprehensive synthesis of its potential contribution towards addressing sustainable development of local livelihoods and natural resources. Additional guidance on applying the Ecosystem Approach is not only needed for planning at the local level but also at policy and decision-making levels.

IUCN calls on COP 9 to:

- ✓ **Support** further development of the online Source Book by:
 - i. developing interfaces for different user groups and providing practical guidance and methods based on synthesized information from case studies and other available information, including a checklist related to the application of the Ecosystem Approach;
 - ii. identifying additional case studies on the application of the Ecosystem Approach that relate to the programmes of work of the Convention and economic sectors affecting biodiversity;
 - iii. providing up-to-date links to relevant resource organizations and other sources of expertise; and
 - iv. demonstrating the benefits and trade-offs of the use of the Ecosystem Approach in achieving the 2010 target and the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

¹ Decision V/6

² Decision V/6

³ Decision VII/11

⁴ IUCN 2008, *The Ecosystem Approach – Learning From Experience*