



IUCN
The World Conservation Union

EU Liaison Office
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Introduction

We are pleased to bring you the latest update from the IUCN EU Liaison Office, as we begin to work on our priorities for 2007. Following our successful 'Biodiversity and Development Cooperation' conference in Paris last year we're now working on the implementation of the conference conclusions, including the development of a programme on poverty reduction and environmental governance.



This year our Biodiversity in the EU work will include following the 2007 Habitats Directive implementation reports and ensuring that the EU rapidly implements the 2006 Biodiversity Communication and 2010 Action Plan. Another key focus for 2007 will be the development of the programme on EU Overseas Regions and Territories. This will include running the secretariat for Bioverseas, a coordination forum between all major concerned NGOs, as well as building an initiative on climate change and island biodiversity, involving a conference later this year.

Finally, we also look forward to building closer links with our members in Belgium and Luxembourg as we welcome our new colleague Marc De Coster to the team.

Colleagues



The beginning of the year brings a new face as **Marc De Coster** joined EULO in January. He will assist ROfE in strengthening the relations with the Belgian and Luxembourg authorities and IUCN members in the region. Also he aims to increase the IUCN membership in Belgium. He is an engineer in environmental management and has worked as a consultant for regional and local authorities, NGO's and companies. All his life he has been strongly involved in Belgian nature conservation associations. Presently Marc De Coster works part-time for IUCN and can be reached by [e-mail](#).

We thank **Geert Raeymaekers** for starting this work during his time with the IUCN Regional Office for Europe from September till December 2006. He supported the preparations for the IUCN Paris Conference 'Biodiversity in European Development Cooperation' and the IUCN pan-European Members Meeting in Barcelona. He also organised initial contacts with potential new Belgian IUCN members, regional government bodies and the Belgian development cooperation. We wish him a lot of success with his new position.

European Development Cooperation:
The POST PARIS PROCESS

Following the Conference *Biodiversity in European Development Cooperation (BEDC)* the *Message from Paris*, adopted by the participants, was welcomed by the EU General Affairs and External Relations Council in December 2006. In this context and in order to transform commitments into action IUCN started to work on **The Poverty Reduction and Environmental Governance Initiative (PREGI)**.

IUCN ROfE is setting up a 5-year global initiative to address some of the key issues of the Message from Paris and the EU Council conclusions, including:



- To strengthen civil society and implement capacity building programmes for all relevant stakeholders;
- To include biodiversity and ecosystem services in policy dialogue processes and mainstream biodiversity in national and regional development strategies and plans;
- To include biodiversity and ecosystem services in development cooperation programming; To develop and support the use of innovative financial mechanisms;
- To develop a coherent framework and a platform of exchange and dialogue on biodiversity and environment in Overseas Countries and Territories; and
- To better communicate on the importance of biodiversity for a sustainable development.

A working group will be set up during February so as to have a first draft of the **PREGI** by the end of March 2007 and finally to be discussed and finalized with potential partners before the end of June 2007.

Some preliminary contacts for a list of partners has been made with the Secretariat of the CDB, UNITAR, GTZ, AFD and WWF which have expressed their interest in being involved. Additional contacts will be made with interested governments of EU Member States and other multilateral and non governmental organisations.

For more information please contact: [Jean-Claude Jacques](#) and [Catherine Ghyoot](#)

EU POLICY

Biodiversity Communication is Welcomed by the Environment Council

In the conclusions of the 18th December Environment Council meeting, the Council welcomed the European Commission's Biodiversity Communication and invited the Commission and Member States to proceed urgently with its implementation ([for more information please see here](#)).

IUCN, together with members of the European Habitats Forum (EHF), wrote to Ministers of the Environment in advance of the Council meeting to give recommendations and are pleased with the statements made by the Council in its conclusions. IUCN has also given recommendations to the European Parliament which is currently preparing a report on the Biodiversity Communication. The Parliament report was discussed in the Environment Committee at the end of January and will be discussed in the plenary in March.

2007 Reporting under the Habitats Directive

In 2007, all Member States have to monitor, assess and report on the conservation status of all habitats and species listed in the Habitats Directive that are found in their countries. This is to comply with Article 17 of the Directive, which requires all Member States to report on progress every 6 years.

This process is important for IUCN members to be involved with because the European Commission is looking for two main conclusions from the process:

1. Firstly to know the conservation status of all species and habitats listed in the Directive
2. Secondly to assess how much the Birds and Habitats Directives contribute to meeting the EU's target of halting the loss of biodiversity by 2010

In 2006, IUCN in partnership with members of the European Habitats Forum (EHF) undertook a project, led by WWF in which 20 species and 8 habitats were assessed, monitored and reported on. The project resulted in 10 specific recommendations that we have already shared with the EU and Member States (and can be downloaded [here](#)). As Member States start this monitoring and reporting work during 2007, it is important that NGOs working at the national level get involved now with this process.

For more information on EULO's work on Biodiversity in the EU please contact: [Janice Weatherley](#)

LIFE+ calls expected in Autumn of 2007



LIFE+ is the EU's only financial instrument for the environment, which in this year, will target the priorities of the **EU's Sixth Environmental Action Programme**, i.e. climate change; nature and biodiversity; environment, health and quality of life; and natural resources and waste.

The LIFE+ Regulation is still subject to change as it has not yet been adopted by the EU legislature. Nevertheless, the Commission has recently published a call for proposals for financial support for European Environmental Organisations, financed by LIFE+, in order to enable quick implementation of this programme after the adoption of its legal basis. For more information on this call, click [here](#).

Around 80% of the budget of LIFE+ is expected to be allocated via national programmes run by EU Member States while the rest, 20%, will be via DG Environment. Potential applicants are advised to begin preparing their proposals as the European Commission has announced that the first calls from the EU Member States should be launched around autumn and before the end of 2007. Although the details of these calls are still uncertain the subjects covered will include nature, biodiversity and other environmental issues. Stay posted by checking the LIFE+ website of DG Environment that you can find [here](#)

For more information, go to DG Environment's LIFE+ website:

<http://ec.europa.eu/yourvoice/ipm/forms/dispatch?form=IllegalLogOptions>

Public Consultation Process Illegal Logging (FLEGT)

In order to combat the import of illegally logged timber into the EU, the European Commission published the [EU Action Plan for Forest Law Enforcement, Governance and Trade \(FLEGT\)](#) in May 2003, which was later approved by the Council of the EU in October of the same year. One of the key elements of this EU FLEGT Action Plan includes the proposal to establish a voluntary system to ensure that only legally harvested timber is imported to the EU from producer countries that agree to take part in a bilateral Voluntary Partnership Agreement (VPAs).



In response to pressure from some NGOs, the European Commission is now carrying out a consultation process to find additional options to combat illegal logging and go beyond the negotiation of Voluntary Partnership Agreements. We would like to encourage you to participate in the EC Consultation and to inform your contacts so they can input their views.

The EC public consultation is in the form of an electronic questionnaire and can be found [here](#). The deadline is March 5, 2007. For more information on FLEGT and VPA's, visit www.illegal-logging.info or contact [Anouska Plasmeijer](#). To find out more about IUCN's activities and work in combating illegal logging, click [here](#).

For more information please contact eu.liaison@iucn.org