

Biodiversity and Climate Change (Agenda Item 4.5)

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

Recommendations

IUCN recommends that COP9:

- √ **Endorses** 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;
- √ **Calls on** Parties to adopt the Terms of Reference of a possible Ad Hoc Technical Expert Group (AHTEG) on Biodiversity and Climate Change as contained in UNEP/CBD/COP9/20/Add.3;

In terms of biodiversity and climate change mitigation action

- √ **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; and
- √ **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.
- √ **Urges** 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;

In terms of biodiversity and climate change adaptation

- √ **Encourages** Parties and other States to ensure that conservation measures to reduce the vulnerability of ecosystems and livelihoods are given high priority in 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;
- √ **Calls on** Parties to integrate invasive species management in the context of measures to address climate change and biodiversity loss;
- √ **Urges** 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;
- √ **Encourages** 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;

For more information, please contact :

Elise Buckle
Programme Officer
Global Programme Team
IUCN Headquarters
IUCN Office
Tel: +41 22 999 0240
Fax: +41 22 999 0025
elise.buckle@iucn.org

Constanza Martinez
Senior Policy Officer
Global Policy Unit
IUCN Headquarters
Tel: +41 22 999 0254
Fax: +41 22 364 0025
constanza.martinez@iucn.org

Kristina Maria Gjerde
High Seas Policy Advisor
IUCN Global Marine Program
Tel: +48-22-754 1803
Fax: +48-22-756 4919
kgjerde@it.com.pl

IUCN World Headquarters
Rue Mauverney 28
1196 Gland
Switzerland
Tel: +41 22 999 0000
Fax: +41 22 999 0002
mail@iucn.org
www.iucn.org

Synergies between Biodiversity and Climate Change

IUCN recognizes the need for COP 9 to set up an appropriate mechanism to provide input on biodiversity issues relevant to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC)'s Bali Action Plan and Nairobi work programme on impacts, vulnerability and adaptation to climate change. IUCN supports the establishment of 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 Plan¹ as well as the UNFCCC Nairobi work programme as recommended by SBSTTA Recommendation XIII/6.

IUCN also welcomes the proposed Terms of Reference (ToRs) for a possible Ad Hoc Technical Expert Group (AHTEG) on Biodiversity and Climate Change, in particular those tasks related to analyzing the value of biodiversity in supporting adaptation in communities and sectors vulnerable to climate change. IUCN underlines the importance of local and indigenous communities in providing knowledge on including biodiversity considerations in vulnerability assessments and adaptation to climate change. IUCN also welcomes the inclusion in the ToRs of the analysis of the social, cultural and economic benefits of using ecosystem services for adaptation.

IUCN urges COP9 to take the opportunity of the establishment of the AHTEG on Biodiversity and Climate Change to strengthen the synergies with other relevant multilateral agreements, including the Convention to Combat Desertification. In order to ensure that the work of such an expert group is based in an ecosystem approach, an appropriate procedure should be designed to allow for all relevant stakeholders to contribute.

IUCN would like to offer its assistance and expertise in the work of the possible AHTEG on Biodiversity and climate change, as appropriate.

IUCN recommends that COP9:

- √ **Endorses** SBSTTA Recommendation XIII/6 to establish an Ad Hoc Technical

¹ 1/CP.13

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;

- √ **Calls on** Parties to adopt the Terms of Reference of a possible Ad Hoc Technical Expert Group (AHTEG) on Biodiversity and Climate Change as contained in UNEP/CBD/COP9/20/Add.3; and
- √ **Encourages** 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.

Working with UNFCCC on the biodiversity issues implied by REDD

During the UNFCCC COP held in Bali in December 2007, Parties 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.

IUCN encourages Parties to recognize 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.

The CBD should work closely with the UNFCCC to ensure that the ecosystem approach is the basis of the REDD mechanism.

IUCN recommends that COP9:

- √ **Urges** 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

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 climate change provides increasing opportunities for spread of invasive species - either as a result of temperature changes that alter species distributions or through related extreme weather events that provide exceptional opportunities for the development of invasiveness.

IUCN recommends that COP9:

- √ **Calls on** Parties to integrate invasive species management in the context of measures to address climate change and biodiversity loss.

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

IUCN recommends that COP9:

- √ **Urges** 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.

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.

IUCN recommends that COP9:

- √ **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.