



**COUNCIL OF  
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**NOTE**

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from : General Secretariat  
to : Delegations

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Subject : Business and biodiversity  
- Information from the Presidency

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Delegations will find annexed information from the Presidency on the above subject, which will be dealt with under "other business" at the meeting of the Council (Environment) on 30 October 2007.

**EU BUSINESS & BIODIVERSITY INITIATIVE**

Portugal announced that one of the priorities in its environmental agenda, during its Presidency of the EU in the second half of 2007, is the development of an initiative to strengthen the links between business and biodiversity protection. In the political agendas of the German, Portuguese and Slovenian presidencies, the protection of biodiversity and the integration of biodiversity criteria into business decision-making and corporate governance (“Business and Biodiversity”) are also recognised as common priorities.

This commitment was endorsed by a partnership between Portugal and the EC, with the support of the World Conservation Union (IUCN), and is fully consistent with recent developments at EU and international levels.

This business and biodiversity (B@B) initiative is an opportunity to reinforce the links between these two components by ensuring, at European level, the promotion, benchmarking, recognition and consistency of the different partnerships developed at local level, engaging business stakeholders in the conservation of biodiversity and confirming the added value of biodiversity for business.

The B@B initiative will also include an international conference to be held on 12-13 November 2007, in Lisbon, and is a direct response to the EC Biodiversity Communication and other international processes and meetings on this subject, as well as the Lisbon Agenda.

Regarding the Conference, 340 participants were invited; 300 have already confirmed their attendance - near 60% of these are from companies and 40% are evenly distributed among governmental and non-governmental organizations.

The Conference will be divided into plenary sessions and four workshops, with more technical aspects. The round-tables will have high-level participation; the welcome session will be chaired by the Minister for the Environment, and both the EU Commissioner for the Environment and the President of the Assembly of the Republic of Portugal are expected to attend. The first round-table will be chaired by the Executive Secretary of UNEP and participants will include the Brazil Government, the president of a relevant European bank, CEOs of main European companies (or “a CEO of a main European company“ - I'm not sure what the author means) and a representative member of WBCSD. The next round-table will also be attended by CEOs of high-profile companies and will be chaired by the Advisor to the Director-General of Enterprise & Industry of the European Commission. The closing session will have the participation of the Director-General of IUCN, the Ministers of Environment of the Team Presidency, the Executive Secretary of the Convention on Biological Diversity and the President of the European Centre for Nature Conservation.

The four workshops will take place along the two days of the Conference in three sessions each.

The workshop themes are:

- (1) Biodiversity-related responsibility schemes,
- (2) Business-related biodiversity assessments,
- (3) Markets for biodiversity goods and services and
- (4) Business & Biodiversity partnerships.

The first one will look at the opportunities for and the challenges presented by the integration of biodiversity objectives into environmental and social responsibility schemes. Business-related biodiversity assessments will explore the challenges and opportunities as regards developing biodiversity targets, performance indicators and assessment methodologies for measuring the biodiversity impacts of business. The workshop on markets will explore the challenges and opportunities as regards biodiversity-friendly goods and services.

And the workshop on partnerships will answer the question of “what can the EU do to promote biodiversity partnerships with European business?”.

The outcomes of the Conference on Business & Biodiversity will be presented to the Environment Council on December 2007. The outcome of this Conference will be presented to the CBD COP9, to be held in Germany during the Slovenian EU Presidency, for further refinement, and also to the IUCN's 4<sup>th</sup> World Conservation Congress, in Barcelona, during the French Presidency.

The implementation and the success of the Business and Biodiversity initiative has depended until now and will continue to depend on the commitment of enterprises, but chiefly on the active commitment of the European Commission and the Environment authorities (Nature Conservation and Biodiversity) of each Member State.