

“Carta di Siracusa” on Biodiversity

We, the G8 Environment Ministers, together with the Ministers of Australia, Brazil, China, the Czech Republic and Sweden as the current and upcoming Presidences of the European Union, Egypt, India, Indonesia, Mexico, the Republic of Korea, South Africa, and the International Organisations participating in the Siracusa meeting;

- I. *acknowledging* the importance of addressing biodiversity as an essential part of the G8 dialogues and building on the “Potsdam Initiative” and the “Kobe Call for Action for Biodiversity”;
- II. *recognising* the importance of the 2010 target, also reiterated at the Heiligendamm and Hokkaido Toyako G8 Summits, and wishing to keep the momentum on biodiversity in the La Maddalena G8 Summit and beyond;
- III. *fully aware of* the key role that biodiversity and ecosystem services play in underpinning human well-being and the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs),
- IV. *committed to* the three objectives of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD);
 - V. *highly concerned* that biodiversity loss and the consequent reduction and damaging of ecosystem services affect food security and water availability and reduce the capacity of biodiversity to mitigate and adapt to climate change, as well as undermining global economic processes;
- VI. *acknowledging* the substantial efforts made to achieve the 2010 target;
- VII. *recalling* the World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD) Plan of Implementation, noting that efforts to significantly reduce the current rate of loss of biological diversity will require the provision of new and additional financial and technical resources to developing countries;
- VIII. *recognising* the urgent need to support and strengthen the international process for the identification of an ambitious and achievable post-2010 common framework on biodiversity, involving all relevant actors and stakeholders and based on the lessons learned from the 2010 target;
- IX. *noting* the informal discussions of the High Level Working Group on the Future of Global Targets for Biodiversity convened by the current presidency of the CBD in Bonn, March 2009;
- X. *aware of the importance and committed to* make the best use of the opportunities arising from the celebration of the International Year of Biodiversity and the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) High Level Meeting on Biodiversity in 2010, thus stressing the key role of biodiversity on the international political agenda;
- XI. *convinced* of the need for the timely completion of the process of exploring mechanisms to improve the science-policy interface for biodiversity and ecosystem services;
- XII. *committed to* investments in biodiversity as a driving force to overcome the economic crisis, to promote job creation and to generate long-term economic benefits;
- XIII. *convinced* of the need to improve understanding of the benefits arising from biodiversity and ecosystem services and the costs of their loss, as well as to identify cost-effective policy options for the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity and for ensuring the resilience of ecosystems;

decide to take the following actions:

Biodiversity and Climate

1. Developing synergistic policies that consider the contribution that biodiversity and ecosystems provide for climate change adaptation and mitigation at local, national and global levels, taking into account that biodiversity and ecosystem services are critical for regulating our climate.
2. Proactively putting in place actions for climate change adaptation of natural and managed ecosystems since spontaneous adaptation is not expected to be sufficient to reduce the impacts on biodiversity at all levels, or on vulnerable ecosystems, or for long-term human well-being.
3. Pursuing a significantly improved understanding of the role of communities and ecosystems in climate change adaptation measures with a view to building their resilience and adaptive capacity and generating additional economic benefits.
4. Implementing biodiversity conservation and sustainable use actions with a view to improving climate adaptation in priority sectoral areas such as management of water, forests, agriculture, marine and coastal areas and infrastructure development, which include the use of new and improved technologies, paying special attention to sustaining ecosystem services.
5. Combating illegal logging, according with relevant legislation, including through support for sustainable forest management, as a contribution to supporting human livelihoods, conserving and sustainably using biodiversity and increasing carbon storage and sequestration.
6. Developing land-based climate change mitigation approaches, such as Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation (REDD) while promoting biodiversity conservation, sustainable forest management and enhancement of forest carbon stocks, to integrate the mitigation potential of forests and other land uses into future action to tackle climate change, taking into account the potential for such approaches to serve as a model for valuation of and payment for ecosystem services;
7. Ensuring the development and transfer of best practice, as well as soft and hard technologies, through mutually agreed terms, which will be essential to achieve a coordinated response and the cost-effective use of resources in coping with biodiversity loss and climate change.

Biodiversity, Economics and Business

8. Strengthening the use of economics as a tool to achieve biodiversity policy goals through mainstreaming an improved understanding of the benefits arising from biodiversity and ecosystem services and the costs of their loss, as well as the identification of consequent cost-effective policy options for the conservation of biodiversity and ecosystem services.
9. Investing in conservation, sustainable use of natural resources and climate change mitigation and adaptation in order to contribute to a green global economic recovery, through a positive and sustainable labour market trend and to contribute to poverty alleviation and to help all stakeholders in decision-making, taking into account their individual responsibilities.
10. Providing impetus, resonance and support to the ongoing study on “The Economics of Ecosystems and Biodiversity” (TEEB) introduced by the Potsdam Initiative and within the Millennium Ecosystem Assessment follow-up strategy, as well as similar studies. The private sector, civil society and individual citizens should be fully involved in the different stages of the development of these studies and the implementation of their outcomes.
11. Working towards the completion of the negotiation on the international access and benefit sharing regime by 2010.
12. Raising awareness, at all levels, on how terrestrial and marine ecosystems provide a steady flow of goods and services, including human life-support functions for present and future generations, and developing market opportunities or other means and mechanisms to affirm these values.

13. Broadening support for actions to combat the illegal trade in wildlife, where trafficking threatens both the components of ecosystems and the sustainable wildlife resources which poor communities value and from which they often derive sustainable sources of income.
14. Promoting the establishment, restoration and effective management of protected areas and their ecological connectivity as an essential tool for the continuous flow of ecosystem services.
15. Improving, promoting and effectively managing systems of terrestrial and marine protected area networks, to encourage economic and employment opportunities, and also promoting new and innovative financial mechanisms such as the Life Web initiative.
16. Avoiding or minimizing any adverse impact on biodiversity from the implementation of infrastructure development programmes, as well as considering how such programmes can effectively contribute to investments in 'Green/Greening Infrastructure'.

Management of Biodiversity and Ecosystems Services

17. Maintaining and restoring the long-term flow of ecosystem services.
18. Implementing biodiversity policies and incentives that relate to all relevant sectors, including forests, fisheries and agriculture; promoting markets for environmentally friendly products produced in harmony with nature; and promoting sustainable natural resource management as also mentioned in the Satoyama Initiative introduced by the Kobe Call for Action, so as to create the conditions to achieve the MDGs.
19. Achieving the ecological conservation and sustainable development of marine and coastal zones, in particular by applying the principles of integrated coastal zone management such as already initiated in the Mediterranean by the UNEP Regional Seas Programme.
20. Developing and strengthening actions to prevent and to control invasive alien species, also taking into consideration the high costs of coping with existing invasions and their strong impact on biodiversity and ecosystem services. Among the priority actions to implement are early warning and rapid response.

Science, Research and Policy

21. Continuing the process of exploring mechanisms to improve the science-policy interface for biodiversity and ecosystem services for conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity, long-term human well-being and sustainable development, taking into account the special need to develop and maintain the technical and scientific capacity of developing countries in biodiversity-related issues, as stated by the 25th UNEP Session of the Governing Council and the 10th Global Ministerial Environment Forum; and, looking forward to the next intergovernmental and multi-stakeholder meeting in October 2009, reaffirming our commitment to advance this process further, and striving to complete this process at the earliest possible time.
22. Supporting cooperation among countries, relevant international organizations, research institutes and NGOs to further global monitoring of biodiversity, building upon the effective networking of existing monitoring schemes.
23. Achieving biodiversity data, including data on appropriate indicators of human well-being, which is reliable, comparable and inter-operable, and developing global approaches to exchange scientific knowledge, best practice, technologies and innovation, based on existing organizations, centres and mechanisms.
24. Fostering comprehensive and focused research and capacity building, at all levels, on biodiversity and ecosystem services, taking into account different capabilities of countries and improving the development and wide use of advanced technologies to carry out monitoring of biodiversity changes and global environmental assessment.

And on the basis of the above we also propose:

A common path toward the post-2010 framework on biodiversity

- a) The multiple challenges that the world faces today are an unmistakable indication that we need to strengthen our efforts to conserve and sustainably manage biodiversity and natural resources.
- b) As significant economic loss arises due to the unsustainable use of biodiversity, timely and proper programmes and actions, aimed at strengthening the resilience of ecosystems, must be taken.
- c) Notwithstanding the efforts and commitments to achieve the 2010 target, direct and indirect drivers of biodiversity loss, aggravated by climate change, still continue. Furthermore, the world has been changing rapidly since the adoption of the 2010 target. All of these drivers of biodiversity loss, causing mid and long-term threats to biodiversity and identified on the basis of scientific research, should be considered in the development of the post-2010 framework.
- d) A thorough communication strategy, fully engaging all the different sectors, as well as stakeholders, indigenous and local communities and the private sector, to emphasise their own participation and their responsibilities, is also a key factor for the effective implementation of the post-2010 biodiversity framework.
- e) The reform of environmental governance at all levels is essential to integrate biodiversity and ecosystem services into all policies, to turn the current weaknesses in economic systems into opportunities and to boost sustainable development and employment, taking particular account of the circumstances of developing countries.