

**Global biodiversity mechanisms:
a thematic review of recent developments and future evidence needs**

Strand Palace Hotel, London 20th May 2009

MEA Briefing

IUCN World Conservation Congress

May 2009

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Briefing note: IUCN World Conservation Congress

This meeting convened in Barcelona from 5-14 October 2008 and attracted some 8000 delegates from the Secretariat, Commissions and the wider IUCN membership to participate in both the Forum and the Members' Assembly. In addition to electing a new President, Ashok Khosla, and Council, and adopting a new work programme, a wide range of issues were discussed resulting in the adoption of over 130 Resolutions and Recommendations. These ranged from those on the governance of the Union to species and regional specific topics. The overall theme of the Congress was *A diverse and sustainable world* with three subsidiary themes of:

- a new climate for change
- healthy environments - healthy people
- safeguarding the diversity of life

Amongst the issues under discussion, climate change and biodiversity figured prominently, especially as the impacts of climate change affect people through the impact on ecosystems. In turn, healthy, viable ecosystems offer the best hopes to mitigate, and adapt to the impact of, climate change. However, it was also recognised that economic mechanisms to conserve forests, and their role in carbon sequestration, need to ensure that issues of equity, land tenure and benefit sharing were addressed.

The Congress also saw the launch of IUCN's latest version of the Red List (which concluded that at least 1,141 of the 5,487 mammals on Earth are known to be threatened with extinction) and gave the UK IUCN Committee the chance to showcase its work with the launch of its report on *Funding for Biodiversity: an analysis of the UK's spend towards the 2010 target*¹.

Key outcomes included Resolutions and Decisions on:

- measures to enhance governance of the Union;
- costed work programme;
- climate change with respect to biodiversity, mitigation and adaptation, human rights, and reducing emissions from deforestation and degradation (REDD);
- sustainable biomass-based energy and industrial agro-fuels;
- the sustainable use of renewable natural resources and specific resolutions on European plan of action for sharks;
- on ensuring effective IUCN engagement on protected area issues and encouraging the creation of more marine protected areas, especially beyond national jurisdiction;
- the Overseas Territories of the European Union, in the face of climate change and biodiversity loss, and related issues for small island States more widely.

¹ http://www.iucn-uk.org/pdf/IUCNFundingUKBiodiversity_ExecutiveSummary.pdf