

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

Strand Palace Hotel, London 20th May 2009

Thematic Briefing

Climate Change and Biodiversity

May 2009

Visit: <http://www.jncc.gov.uk/MEA-event>



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Briefing note: Climate Change and Biodiversity

Climate change issues have been discussed at the following recent international meetings:

CBD CoP9 (May 2008)

[Decision IX/16: Biodiversity and Climate Change](#)

Ramsar CoP 10 (October/November 2008)

[Resolution 10.24: Climate Change and Wetlands](#)

CMS CoP9 (December 2008)

[Resolution 9.07: Climate Change Impacts on Migratory Species](#)

AEWA MoP 4 (September 2008)

[Resolution 4.14: The Effect of Climate Change on Migratory Waterbirds](#)

World Conservation Congress (October 2008)

[Resolution 4.075: Climate change mitigation targets for biodiversity conservation](#)

[Resolution 4.076: Biodiversity conservation and climate change mitigation and adaptation in national policies and strategies](#)

CBD CoP9 (May 2008)

The CoP agreed to include climate change as a cross-cutting theme across all of its work programmes including assessing the potential impacts, both negative and positive, of mitigation and adaptation activities. It also recognised the need to provide biodiversity-relevant evidence to the UNFCCC and to ensure that ocean fertilisation activities do not take place until a good scientific basis to justify such activities is established. The CoP also noted the importance of the conservation of wetland biodiversity, particularly peatlands, in addressing climate change. This last essentially reinforces existing links with the Ramsar convention.

The key Decision (IX/16) is comprehensive and covers four key areas:

- i. proposals for the integration of climate-change activities within the programmes of work of the Convention;
- ii. options for mutually supportive actions addressing climate change within the three Rio conventions;
- iii. ocean fertilization;
- iv. summary of the findings of the Global Assessment on Peatlands, Biodiversity and Climate Change.

In response to paragraph 12 (b) of decision IX/16 B a second *Ad Hoc* Technical Expert Group (AHTEG) on Biodiversity and Climate Change was set up. The purpose of the AHTEG is to provide biodiversity-relevant information to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) through the provision of scientific and technical advice and assessment on the integration of the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity into climate change mitigation and adaptation activities. This group has met twice, once in

[London](#) in November 2008, and again in [Helsinki](#) in April and may meet a third time to conclude its deliberations.

Ramsar CoP 10 (October/November 2008)

The Ramsar Convention has been asked by the Convention on Biological Diversity to take the lead on guidance and policies regarding climate change and wetlands. A draft resolution to the Ramsar CoP¹ stresses the importance of intact wetlands in carbon sequestration and storage, as well as in the provision of other ecosystem services.

The principle clause of the Resolution 10.24 sets the scene by urging '*Parties to manage wetlands wisely to reduce the multiple pressures they face and thereby increase their resilience to climate change and to take advantage of the significant opportunities to use wetlands wisely as a response option to reduce the impacts of climate change*'

The following issues are covered by the resolution.

- Promoting collaboration between relevant MEA's at all levels i.e. when preparing resolutions, through appropriate joint working of secretariats and through collaboration of scientific working groups.
- Understanding the role of wetland conservation in mitigation and the potential role of wetlands in adaptation activities.
- Protecting wetlands against potential adverse impacts due to the direct impacts of, and societal responses to, climate change.
- Promoting the role of wetlands in providing connectivity in the landscape e.g. along rivers.

CMS CoP 9 (December 2008)

The CMS CoP adopted a key resolution (9.07) on the impacts of climate change on migratory species. The principle paragraph of the resolution urges Parties '*to identify which migratory species are most likely to be directly or indirectly threatened or impacted by climate change or climate change mitigation or adaptation activities ... and to transmit relevant information to the Secretariat*'.

The following issues are covered by the Resolution, namely:

- application of the precautionary principle;
- the design and implementation of adaptation strategies for migratory species threatened by climate change or by climate change mitigation or adaptation activities;
- collaboration between daughter agreements and across scientific groups;
- co-ordinating the incorporation of climate change impacts and relevant adaptation measures into species-specific Action Plans.

AEWA MoP 4 (September 2008)

Following a UK-drafted Resolution on *Climate Change and Migratory Waterbirds*², adopted at MoP3 of the African-Eurasian Waterbird Agreement, further work has been funded by the UK, including the preparation of a major assessment of the impacts of climate change on migratory waterbirds and draft guidance for response options. At MoP 4 a resolution was passed (4.14) that identifies species particularly at risk

The following needs are identified by the Resolution:

¹ http://www.ramsar.org/sc/37/key_sc37_doc27.htm

² http://www.unep-aewa.org/meetings/en/mop/mop3_docs/final_resolutions_pdf/res3_17_climate_change.pdf

- an assessment of adaptation measures needed to benefit migratory waterbirds;
- an assessment of the vulnerability of species listed in Table 1 of the Agreement's Action Plan and identifying measures that may help maintain populations;
- production of adaptation guidelines;
- including potentially beneficial adaptation measures in the development and implementation of single and multi-species action plans; and
- identifying research needs.

World Conservation Congress (October 2008)

The Congress produced a significant number of Resolutions (which are directed to IUCN itself), identified below and a single Recommendation (which is directed to third parties). Some of the Resolutions are very specific and refer to one region or country.

[Resolution 4.016: Development of climate change guidelines for Red List assessments](#)

[Resolution 4.074: Climate change and overexploitation of natural resources - inclusion in the IUCN Programme](#)

[Resolution 4.075: Climate change mitigation targets for biodiversity conservation](#)

[Resolution 4.076: Biodiversity conservation and climate change mitigation and adaptation in national policies and strategies](#)

[Resolution 4.077: Climate change and human rights](#)

[Resolution 4.079 The European Union and its overseas entities faced with climate change and biodiversity loss](#)

[Resolution 4.080: Mobilizing action to build resilience and assist adaptation to climate change of coral reefs and marine ecosystems and people that depend on them](#)

[Resolution 4.068 Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation \(REDD\)](#)

[Resolution 4.069 Mangrove conservation in Mesoamerica](#)

[Resolution 4.078 Appeal for action to address global environmental change](#)

Three other resolutions are more directly energy related and are partly covered in the biofuel briefing.

[Resolution 4.081 Equitable access to energy](#)

[Resolution 4.082 Sustainable biomass-based energy](#)

[Resolution 4.083 Industrial agrofuel production](#)

A single Recommendation highlights the role of sustainable land management in mitigation of, and adaptation to, climate change and calls for measures to help achieve this. The principle MEA targeted is the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD).

[Recommendation 4.134: Responding to deforestation and land degradation related to climate change and desertification](#)