

# TRILATERAL PROJECT ON BUSINESS AND BIODIVERSITY



project report



[www.business-biodiversity.eu](http://www.business-biodiversity.eu)

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# 1 Introduction

## **Business and biodiversity: a perspective from three European NGOs**

*Bjela Vossen, Paula Lopes da Silva and Anamarija Slabe*

Our three organizations – Deutscher Naturschutzbund (DNR, Germany), Quercus (Portugal) and Institute for Sustainable Development (Slovenia) – concluded a project, funded by the Federal Agency for Nature Conservation and the Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety. The aim of the project was to provide input into the development of the European Business and Biodiversity initiative. The latter was implemented during the three Presidencies of Germany, Portugal and Slovenia.

Our project consisted of organizing conferences and seminars to facilitate further discussion and collaboration between civil society, business and public authorities. The goal of the project was to develop NGO awareness on 'business and biodiversity', to suggest how to prevent green-washing and to build sustainable biodiversity partnerships.

In September 2007, we organized a seminar on 'Civil Society, Business and Biodiversity' in Lisbon to discuss the prospects and limits of the Business and Biodiversity Initiative. Different approaches, from regulatory to more market based approaches – such as biodiversity labels – were discussed. We drafted the 'Lisbon Declaration of NGOs on the Business and Biodiversity Initiative' [1], which was distributed to participants of Business and Biodiversity High Level Conference, hosted by Portugal in mid November in Lisbon [2]. In the declaration, we state, in particular, the importance of developing guidelines as well as to set performance benchmarks for companies from relevant specific sectors.

In February 2008, in Ljubljana, the conference 'Forest and Wood – Green Business Opportunities' analysed biodiversity challenges in the forestry sector and pointed out the opportunities in the forest- and wood-based business, such as use of wood as sustainable building material and forest-based ecotourism. Besides the goal to initiate concrete partnerships between NGOs and the forestry sector, the basis of those partnerships was discussed and elaborated into conclusions and suggestions [3].

As part of the German contribution to the project, a report Business and Biodiversity between Greenwashing and Authenticity was published in German in December 2007 [4].



*Bjela Vossen*



*Paula Lopes da Silva*



*Anamarija Slabe*

The results of the whole project were presented at the COP-9 on 28 May 2008, during a panel discussion at the Forum of Diversity.

The project activities are comprehensively presented on the project website [www.business-biodiversity.eu](http://www.business-biodiversity.eu). Here the presentations and conclusions of the events organised in the frame of the project are available.

- [1] [www.business-biodiversity.eu/uploads/Xq/1EXq1E1IxMeOF4\\_x4-xhP-7Q/  
LISBON\\_DECLARATION\\_OF\\_ENGOS\\_ON\\_BB.pdf](http://www.business-biodiversity.eu/uploads/Xq/1EXq1E1IxMeOF4_x4-xhP-7Q/LISBON_DECLARATION_OF_ENGOS_ON_BB.pdf)
- [2] [www.countdown2010.org/business](http://www.countdown2010.org/business)
- [3] [www.business-biodiversity.eu](http://www.business-biodiversity.eu)
- [4] <http://www.eu-koordination.de/PDF/eur07-iii.pdf>

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## 2 Background

### Lisbon Message: The time is ripe for Business and Biodiversity

*Sebastian Winkler and Shulamit Alony*

Is there a role for business in biodiversity conservation? Current EU processes seem convinced. In May 2006, the European Commission (EC) launched a biodiversity communication titled “Halting the loss of biodiversity by 2010 - and beyond: Sustaining ecosystem services for human well-being”, which included a commitment to engage the private sector in partnerships for biodiversity. This commitment builds on decision 8/17 of the Conference of the Parties (COP) of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) on private-sector engagement. In particular, decision 8/17 “encourages Parties to prioritize the implementation of Article 6(b) of the Convention,” which in turn asks Parties to “integrate, as far as possible and as appropriate, the conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity into relevant sectoral or cross-sectoral plans, programmes and policies”.

Both decisions are contributing to the 2010 biodiversity target, with which the international community decided to address the biodiversity crisis with increased vigor and committed “to achieve, by 2010, a significant reduction of the current rate of biodiversity loss as a contribution to poverty alleviation and to the benefit of all life on earth” at the World Summit on Sustainable Development in Johannesburg in 2002.

The European Union is convinced that governments alone will not reach the 2010 biodiversity target. All sectors of society including the business sector will have to contribute in order to reduce biodiversity loss by 2010 and beyond. Countdown 2010 – a powerful network of active partners working together towards the 2010 biodiversity target – has been working with the private sector since its inception.

Lisbon is a symbolic place for movement on business and biodiversity: It was here that the EU Heads of State and Government agreed to make the EU “the most competitive and dynamic knowledge-driven economy by 2010”. Countdown 2010 thus encouraged the Portuguese Presidency to place business and biodiversity high on their EU Presidency agenda and supported a High Level Conference on Business and Biodiversity.

During the High Level Conference on Business and Biodiversity in Lisbon on November 12 -13 2007 more than 400 leaders from business, governments, the European Union and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) gathered at to explore how European business can improve performance integrating biodiversity into their business operations. The conference charted new ways towards a European Business and Biodiversity Initiative, by addressing issues such as the role of biodiversity in corporate social responsibility schemes, partnerships, assessments and markets. Convergence between public and private sectors on the critical importance of biodiversity – the rich diversity of animals, plants and nature that supports us all – and what needs to be done now to stem a steadily worsening global crisis, emerged at the conference. CEOs and senior directors from major European companies in many sectors showed strong consensus on the business case for putting biodiversity high on their agenda and at the heart of their companies.

In the closing plenary Julia Marton-Lefèvre, Director General of IUCN, expressed her appreciation to the honest dialogues between the sectors and added: “No one sector has all the answers. The wide range of large and small solutions needed to avert a breakdown in biodiversity will only be successful if companies, governments and NGOs work more closely together.”

The Message from Lisbon will pave the way in Europe for the Business and Biodiversity momentum initiated at the Lisbon conference. It contributes to the 2010 targets of making the EU the most competitive and dynamic knowledge-driven economy and to halting the loss of biodiversity by 2010. It calls on business, governments, the EU and NGOs to:

- Continue raising awareness of the strong competitive advantage companies can gain from conserving biodiversity;
- Promote the use of market, corporate responsibility and regulatory schemes;
- Support business with operational tools for biodiversity conservation and for measuring their performance in meaningful ways, especially in small and medium sized companies; and
- Encourage new incentives to develop and strengthen partnerships between companies, governments at all levels, NGOs and academia.

With the support of the European Commission and Member States, the Message from Lisbon will be followed up at the EU Council in December this year, the Convention on Biological Diversity's meeting in May 2008 in Bonn, and the IUCN World Conservation Congress in October 2008 in Barcelona. In addition, the European Commission has announced the creation of a facility on business and biodiversity in 2008.

More information on the conference and its outcomes can be found at [countdown2010.net/business](http://countdown2010.net/business).

# Message from Lisbon on Business and Biodiversity

We the Ministers and representatives from governments, business and civil society participating in the High level Conference on Business and Biodiversity organized by the Portuguese Presidency of the EU Council, held in Lisbon, Portugal from 12 to 13 November 2007:

Convinced that as part of the common efforts to implement the objectives of the Convention on Biological Diversity and in particular CBD Decision VIII/17 on private sector engagement, there is a strong business case for biodiversity, including the competitive advantage gained from conserving biodiversity and using biological resources in a sustainable way and recognizing that competitive markets also have an enormous potential to mobilize private resources and stimulate innovation.

Recognize the significant progress that has been made in recent years by a number of business sectors and leading companies and support the scaling up of such efforts across other business sectors in Europe and abroad.

Acknowledge the primary need to promote an even greater awareness of the importance of biodiversity throughout the business sector as well as among consumers, to make knowledge, information and relevant expertise available to business and to assist companies in shaping their commitments to biodiversity.

Recognize that there is an urgent need to promote biodiversity conservation in micro, small and medium sized enterprises, and in particular those with a strong link to biodiversity conservation as well as those based in the rural economy and to provide them with the information, relevant expertise and tools which are adapted to the operating conditions of these enterprises and recognizing also the valuable role that business associations can play in this process as well as the potential value of clusters of interest groups working within the context of specific, physical landscapes.

Encourage the incorporation of biodiversity considerations into existing responsibility schemes and the implementation of such schemes in combination with other approaches (e.g. market mechanisms, regulatory frameworks). Improvements in the understanding of biodiversity and ecosystem services through research and practical experience should support the evolution of business contribution to biodiversity so as to engage businesses in a process of continuous improvement.

Welcome the progress made in biodiversity performance assessment and reporting by several leading business which complement the regulatory assessment schemes such as those established within the EU under the Habitats Directive, the Environmental Impact Assessment and the Strategic Environmental Assessment Directives.

Encourage establishing and strengthening public/private partnerships between and among local, regional and national governments, NGOs, business and academia to fight biodiversity loss as well as the development of mechanisms by which these stakeholders and other relevant groups can identify each other with a view to developing practical, operational partnerships.

Recommend the development and testing of market-based approaches for biodiversity, learning from the approaches and models which have been implemented in connection with climate change related instruments.

Recognize the need to promote the principle of a level playing field at a global level in order to provide the correct incentives and signals to those companies

that are taking active steps to conserve biodiversity and practice sustainable use and recognizing also that the EU could play a significant role in this context.

Welcome within the context of the EU's objective of halting biodiversity loss by 2010, the launching by the Portuguese Presidency of the EU Business and Biodiversity Initiative and the commitment from the EU Commission to establish a technical facility to support this initiative.

Welcome and congratulate the government of Portugal for identifying business and biodiversity as a priority during the Portuguese Presidency of the EU and, in particular, for providing a new approach by engaging the business sector in the biodiversity agenda through a high-level multi-stakeholder conference on the subject.

Welcome also the German efforts to advance business and biodiversity agenda in preparation of CBD COP-9 and the actions taken by Slovenia in its capacity as the next EU Presidency in continuing to support this agenda.

Invite the Portuguese EU Presidency to transmit the Message from Lisbon on Business and Biodiversity to the EU Summit in December 2007 and to the ninth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention of Biological Diversity to be held in Bonn in May 2008, including its High-level Segment and the World Conservation Congress in Barcelona in October 2008.

Express our gratitude to the government of Portugal for hosting this conference with the support of the European Commission and IUCN's Countdown 2010 initiative.

[www.countdown2010.net/business](http://www.countdown2010.net/business)



### 3 Seminar Civil Society, Business and Biodiversity

#### A kick-off meeting to prepare for the official launching of B&B

*Paula Lopes da Silva*

This meeting, held in Lisbon (Portugal) the 26th September 2007, was meant to be a first kick-off to prepare Portuguese business people and NGOs for the launching of the B&B official initiative, later in November by the Portuguese Presidency of the European Union. It was organised by Quercus, in partnership with Gulbenkian Foundation and Foundation Caring for the Future and it received support from several business companies.

Highly participated by the target audience, this meeting intended to present a broad picture of what B&B would and could be; it aimed to carry the message for a business case on biodiversity, and to help create some leadership from business representatives. Finally it also intended to show current Portuguese NGO activities on biodiversity conservation. More than 200 people from businesses, NGOs, universities, etc, registered and the room was not enough to receive them all. At the beginning, it seemed the main question in many people's mind was "will business commit in B&B for marketing reasons or will they join in for deeper reasons?"



The presentations of IUCN/Countdown 2010 and the Institute for European Environmental Policy helped making the point on the business case for biodiversity, putting the emphasis on ecosystem services and the already existing commitments for halting biodiversity loss in 2010. Intentionally trying to demonstrate some case-studies and to gather the enthusiasm, a large company and the Portuguese Business Council on Sustainable Development were invited to present their ongoing projects and views. But also SMEs - a backbone in Portuguese economy - had their place and a specific project was presented, focusing on the positive interaction of pro-biodiversity SMEs in Natura 2000 and other protected areas.

One of the highest moments of discussion was during the presentation of somewhat opposite views, from the representative of the Dutch government and the representative of DNR, the Confederation of German NGOs. A speaker put the issue this way: would NGOs and companies act like Romeo and Juliet, setting harmonious partnerships for B&B or would they play David and Goliad, with NGOs naming, blaming and struggling under the enormous interests of huge corporations with harmful activities for nature?

The final presentations were from three Portuguese NGOs and showed the variety of approaches and the vast experience of these NGOs in nature conservation projects. In a superficial approach one could say that the more visible practical output of the Seminar was the building of partnerships between NGOs and companies, which in some cases started that same exact day! Indeed, after this meeting we noticed a higher willingness of companies to allocate money resources on nature conservation projects.

Coincidence or not, this was an intense year of debate on financing issues at Quercus and a new internal regulation was set later on.

The day after this Seminar, in a workshop meeting only for NGOs, we drafted a series of principles we believed a good B&B should stand for. This declaration of 10 principles undersigned by some Portuguese and other European NGOs, was sent to the Portuguese and German Governments and EU representatives before the official launching of the Business and Biodiversity Initiative, in a Conference held in November. The final declaration of the Conference included some of them, which for us was good news.

At the end of our triologue NGO project with meetings in three countries, and having observed the commitments and projects undertaken by several companies meanwhile, specially in Portugal and Germany, we would like to express here our wish that an European leadership on B&B arises soon: an EU platform that frames national B&B initiatives under the same umbrella, that pushes for a good B&B in all European countries and regulates the process the same way all over Europe and influences the rest of the world.

So far many NGOs have acted mostly as collateral beneficiaries of the process, receiving funds to implement nature protection projects. However, NGOs can play a bigger role in B&B processes. In our opinion, NGOs should stay prudent and alert as David, contributing to regulate the process and if necessary to name and blame bad examples of B&B. But they should be passionate as Romeo in the goal of halting the loss of biodiversity, therefore not closing doors and helping to spread awareness next to the civil society and the business world as well.



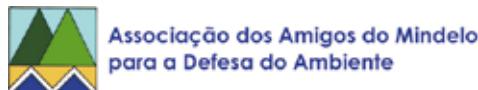
# LISBON DECLARATION OF ENGOS ON THE BUSINESS AND BIODIVERSITY INITIATIVE

On September the 26<sup>th</sup> 2007, the Seminar Civil Society, Business and Biodiversity was held in Lisbon, organized by Quercus – National Association for Nature Conservation, Foundation Caring for the Future and Foundation Calouste Gulbenkian. The following day several Environmental Non Governmental Organisations (ENGOS) attended a workshop organized by Quercus and Deutscher Naturschutzring (DNR) - the Confederation of German NGOs, to discuss their expectations on the initiative of the Portuguese Presidency of the European Union on Business and Biodiversity, to be launched in November 2007. Together they prepared a joint statement which is supported by those and other NGOs.

The undersigned state that:

1. *The Business and Biodiversity Initiative* that will be launched by the Portuguese Presidency of the European Union Council should be welcomed as a positive move in the framework of corporate social responsibility towards the environment. Corporations and enterprises are crucial players in determining the patterns of natural resource consumption in our society and thus have direct or indirect impacts on the functioning of Ecosystems Services and Biodiversity. The business sector therefore needs to be seriously involved in and committed to the EU goal of halting the loss of biodiversity till 2010 and beyond.
2. *The Business and Biodiversity Initiative* is understood as a contribution to implement the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD). Companies should therefore commit themselves to the three main objectives of the CBD, which are: conservation of the diversity of animal and plant species, ecosystems and genetic diversity; Sustainable use of natural resources; Fair distribution of advantages and profits resulting from the use of genetic resources. Particular attention should be given to the use of genetic material for medicine. In this respect Pharmaceutical businesses have to be strictly regulated and the process of benefit sharing should always include the participation of indigenous and local communities.
3. *Business and Biodiversity* is a voluntary initiative and therefore must be seen as a complementary action to other efforts in the framework of policies of the EU towards Biodiversity protection, whilst ensuring coherence with these same policies. It must be regarded as neither a solution nor a substitution of instruments such as Directives and Regulations. Given that in many cases and countries existing legislation is poorly implemented and enforced, the undersigned urge the EU bodies to better enforce and implement the legal instruments already existing and to fundamentally reform and green the agriculture sector of the EU with the goal to stop the loss of biodiversity. The reform of the CAP subsidy system towards support payments to the environment and rural development is fundamental.
4. Natura 2000, the network of protected areas under the Habitats and Bird Directive is an European-wide pool of biodiversity. It should be regarded as a preferential target for nature conservation activities in the framework of the Business and Biodiversity. Natura 2000 is a European reality and should be protected and cared by all Europeans, including companies.
5. *Business and Biodiversity* should include a solid mechanism for a systematic approach to Biodiversity within the company's policies, strategies, operations including the activities of their supply chains. In this sense the integration of biodiversity considerations into analytical tools such as environmental site impact assessments or into environmental reporting systems is needed. Business and Biodiversity mechanisms should also foresee the assignment of a senior executive with specific responsibilities for biodiversity management. To prevent greenwashing it must not be just a list of principles to be undersigned by companies, or a marketing based incentive to trigger more donations or sponsoring for nature conservation or research.

6. *Business and Biodiversity*, launched by the Portuguese Presidency, could continue throughout the subsequent Presidencies and beyond those. If successful and genuine according to the above criteria, it should become a mechanism permanently supported by the European Commission services. This could include an independent body with a secretariat to steer the process and to assess the functioning, results and positive impacts of Business and Biodiversity mechanisms on Biodiversity conservation. These resources should only be regarded as additional to, and never substitute, the resources required for European Commission Services and National authorities to implement and monitor the existing regulations and policies concerning biodiversity.
7. *Business and Biodiversity* should emphasise the role and contribution that medium, small and micro enterprises may give to Biodiversity conservation. SMEs are the major economic drive force of many countries in the EU and through their own activity they may improve nature conservation and contribute to sustainable local economies in Natura 2000 and other areas.
8. *Business and Biodiversity* should develop guidelines as well as set performance benchmarks for companies from relevant specific sectors, such as: Tourism, Fisheries, Forest, Agriculture, Mining and Energy. For each sector specific indicators should be developed, independently verified and monitored. As a start the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) label should be used for the forest sector, the Marine Stewardship Council (MSC) for the Fisheries sector, and the tourism guidelines that are included in the CBD should be used as a basis for indicators for the tourism sector. For the agriculture sector the European ecological farming scheme could be used. Traditional farming should be integrated into the farming scheme and the farming sector itself should be integrated into the Business and Biodiversity Initiative. Indicators for the energy sector should be developed in the near future, including specific indicators for renewable energy production. In the long run standards and later on a label for biodiversity friendly companies should be introduced. These standards should be credible in their criteria and subject to independent verification. Special attention should be given to agrobiodiversity promotion, the releasing of Genetically Modified Organisms and to agro-fuels and their predictable negative impacts on Biodiversity. Additionally, the Business and Biodiversity initiative should support biodiversity in rural planning and in the agricultural sector in general.
9. Activities for nature conservation under *Business and Biodiversity* should use as far as possible accurate scientific data from field research, either to assess the real needs for Biodiversity improvement, or to monitor the results achieved, if possible with ecological indicators to be provided by the research community.
10. *Business and Biodiversity* should consider the external relations of the EU with the rest of the world and its implications on Biodiversity. Our activities and consumption patterns rely to a significant extent on resource extraction and production through operations outside EU boundaries. Therefore, this initiative should be promoted in other forums and organizations, such as the World Trade Organization and in the near future it should be used for the next Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity.



## 4 Conference “Forest and Wood – Green Business Opportunities”

### Conference contents

*Anamarija Slabe*

#### **Part 1: Role of forest in global and national challenges**

The conference was opened by Marko Hren from the Government Office for Growth, Slovenia, representing the ministry and greeting the participants on behalf of the Minister for Growth Mr. Žiga Turk.

The first part of the conference was devoted to gaining an insight in the role of the forest in global and national challenges.

Mr. Andrej Bibič, Ministry of Environment and Spatial Planning, Slovenia, presented the importance of forest for conservation of biodiversity as one of key global and European challenges (“Countdown 2010”).

Dr. Nike Krajnc and mag. Mitja Piškur from Slovenian Forestry Institute described the importance of forests as a CO<sub>2</sub> sink, on the example of Slovenia.

Prof. Dr. Franc Pohleven from the Biotechnical Faculty of the University Ljubljana vividly described the role of wood in technologies that contribute to the lowering of carbon emissions. He especially pointed out that wood is a precious material with numerous excellent characteristics highly appreciated in building, furniture making etc. and that should be used in a truly sustainable manner, where, for example, burning for energy generation should be only the final step, after wooden objects and buildings have served their time and have came to the end of their life cycle.

Mag. Aleksander Golob, Ministry for Agriculture Forestry and Food, Slovenia, presented his research on the starting points for a sustainable strategy of wood use: trees / biomass / wood products.

#### **Part 2: Wood as sustainable material: business opportunities**

Second part of the conference showed valuable practical approaches and inspiring sustainable solutions in the wood-based business, as well as ideas and plans for the future.

Ing. Erwin Thoma is the founder of Erwin Thoma Holz GmbH in Goldegg, Austria. He and his company developed an innovative wood building system which they named “Holz 1000”. With this system, they take care for the quality of their building material – wood – from cutting and drying to building family houses, office buildings and even hotels. He described excellent properties of their innovative building modules made of solid wood, and their success with the products. By sourcing the wood locally, they add the final point to the sustainability of their buildings.

Mr. Alojz Lipnik is the mayor of Solčava, a forest-blessed community in the north of Slovenia. He presented the development of a sustainable wood work in the community and their plans for the future.

Mr. Michal Rezek came from Czech Republic to present the activity of FSC – Forest Stewardship Council,



Mateja Leskovar

Mrs. Mateja Leskovar is the director of company "zdrava HIŠA d.o.o." She presented green trends in building and furniture, the topic that she is well acquainted with, as her company is successfully pursuing the natural building in practice.

and the role of wood certification programs in "green business" opportunities.

Mr. Bojan Pogorevc from SFTP – Slovenian Forest-Based Technology Platform, explained the approach that this platform is developing to make the full advantage of the wood as sustainable material in different industries.

Mr. Bruno Komac is the Director General of the company Liko d.d. in Vrhnika, Slovenia. They were the first larger company in Slovenia who started to offer to the domestic market natural furniture made of solid wood.

Mrs. Mateja Leskovar is the director of company

"zdrava HIŠA d.o.o." She presented green trends in building and furniture, the topic that she is well acquainted with, as her company is successfully pursuing the natural building in practice.

### Part 3: Non-wood forest functions: business opportunities

The last part of the first conference day was devoted to the exploration of the non-wood forest functions from the viewpoint of business opportunities.

Mr. Jernej Stritih presented the function of wilderness and protection forests, and tried to show how it is possible to valorize it.

Mr. Avgust Lenar, Director of Landscape Park Logarska, Slovenia, described the role of forests in the conservation of cultural landscape and sustainable rural development.

Mrs. Marjeta Keršič Svetel devoted her presentation to the recreation and interpretation in forest which is an excellent opportunity both for business as well as for public awareness raising.

The day concluded with the presentation of Mr. Zoltan Kun, Executive Director of PAN Parks Foundation, who presented the PAN Parks concept of protected area management.

### Second day: Cooperation between business sector and non governmental organizations

The second day of the conference aimed at exploring the possibilities for cooperation between business and NGOs, especially environmental ones.

We started the day with the presentation of the initiative "Business and Biodiversity": its background, current status, and perspectives. The presentation was shared by Mr. Robert Flies, from the European Commission (GD Environment) and Mr. Duarte Figueiredo, the Deputy Director of the Biodiversity and Nature Conservation Institute in Portugal.

As a warm-up for the workshops, we heard a case study presented by Dr. Marjana Hönigsfeld Adamčič from Institute Lutra:



Robert Flies, EC, and Duarte Figueiredo, BNCI Portugal

## **Conference workshops**

Both conference workshops were facilitated by Mrs. Vida Ogorelec Wagner. The conference participants who took part in the workshops were from environmental NGOs, business, research and public administration, thus representing a broad range of interests.

### **1 Win-win partnerships – instead of “green-washing”: How to shape cooperation for biodiversity conservation between NGOs and business sector**

The aim of the first workshop was to identify the wishes and possibilities for green partnerships between business sector and environmental NGOs.

In the first exercise, the topics and areas of cooperation between business and environmental NGOs in the area of forest and wood-related business were identified. We identified four main areas: Policy, Fields of cooperation, Business practice and Healthy living in a healthy environment. We were able to identify numerous areas of common interest which we subsequently grouped in these four areas. Detailed outcomes can be found in the mind map on the next page.

In the second step, we looked at the expectations of both partners – business and NGOs – in relation to the cooperation. We identified the expectations from each of the potential partner (business/NGO) and found out that the expectations are very different, but they are not (necessarily) in contradiction. We concluded that because of this difference, a mutual understanding of each others' expectations is vital for a successful partnership. We grouped the expectations in four areas: Conditions, Input from partners, Partnership relations and Benefits. Detailed outcomes are presented in the mind map on the following pages.

### **2 Indicators for green partnerships: example of forest, timber and protected areas**

The aim of this workshop was to create minimum demands for green partnerships for selected areas to prevent “green-washing”.

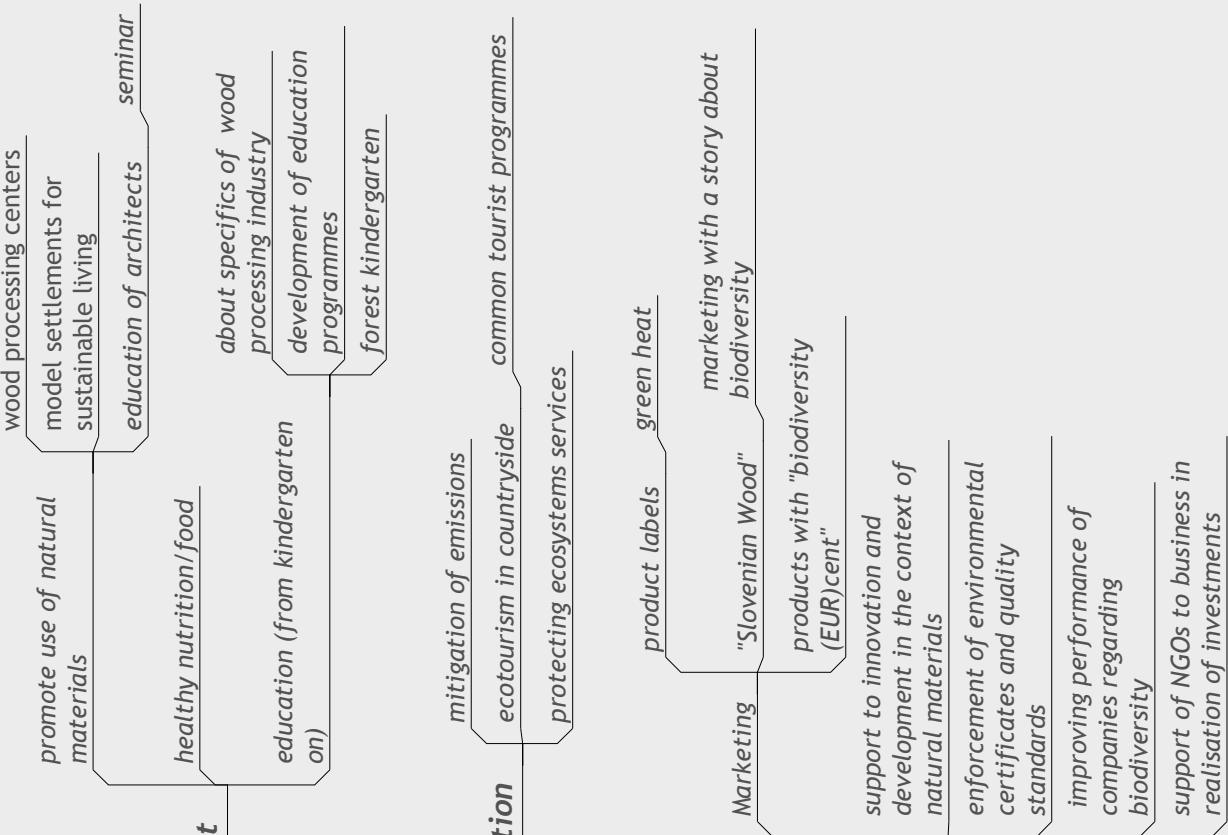
Mr. Helmut Klein, DNR – Deutscher Naturschutzbund gave us the introductory presentation on the indicators in forestry.

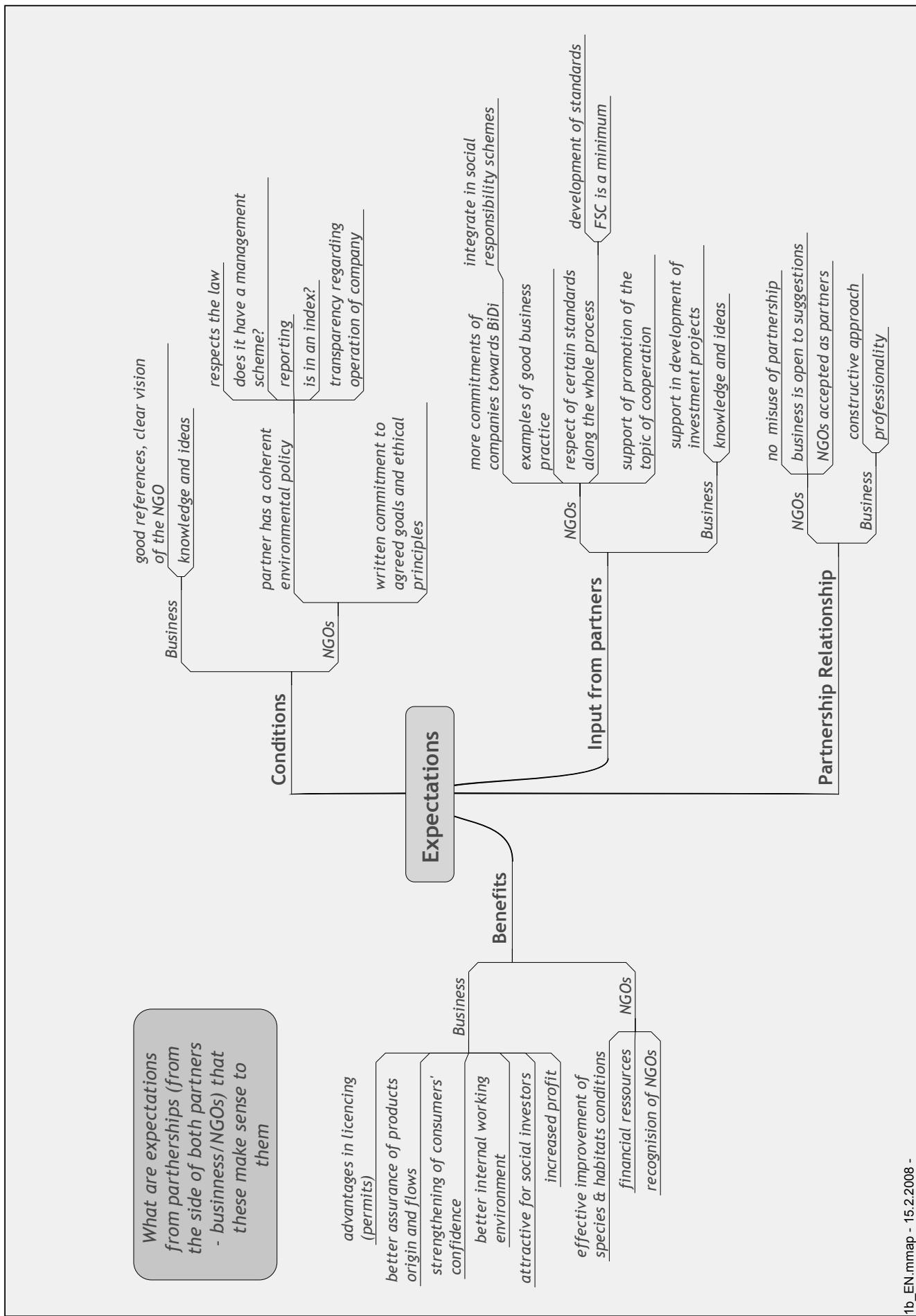
IN the workshop, we tried to answer the question: which criteria are to be developed to prevent green-washing? We worked on the concrete example of partnership for forest and biodiversity. We found two main demands: clear standards and absolute transparency (incl. control). We specified also requirements for partnership which would target mitigation of emissions. Detailed outcomes are presented in the mind map on the following pages.



Which are the topics/areas of common interest for business and NGOs?

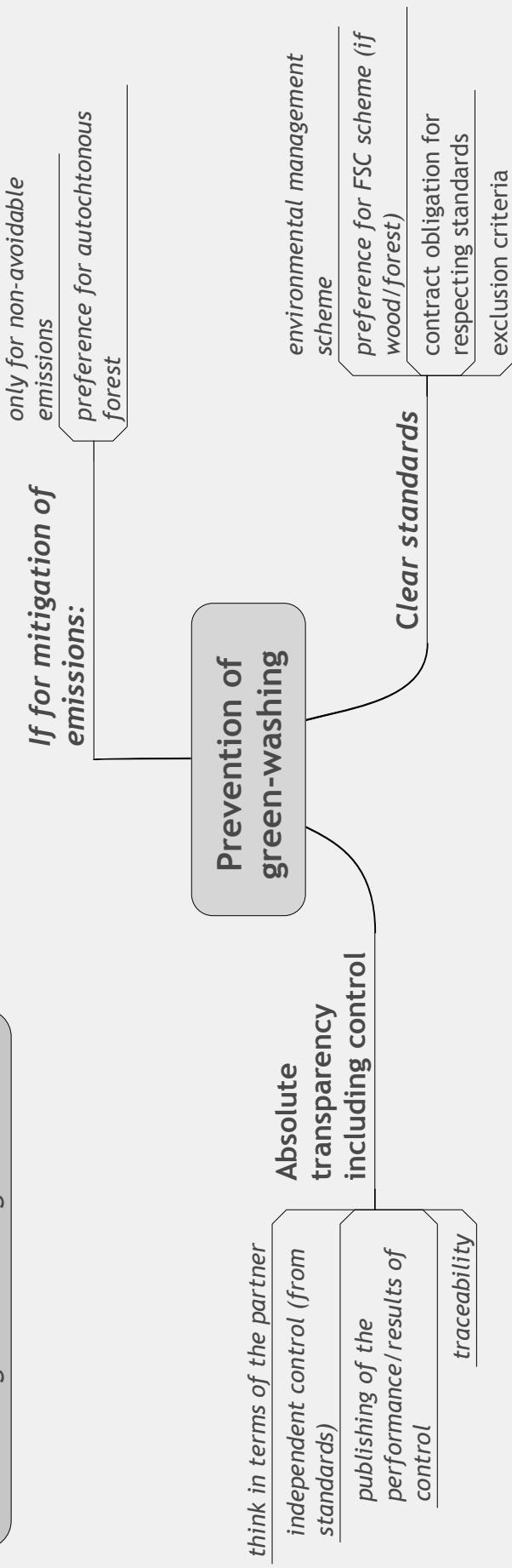
### **Healthy living in a healthy environment**





**Partnerships for forest biodiversity:** Which criteria are to be developed to prevent »green-washing«?

**If for mitigation of emissions:**



## 5 Side-event at COP 16

### Business and Biodiversity – Perspectives of European NGOs

Bjela Vossen

„Business and Biodiversity – perspectives of European NGOs“ was the title of the third event of the Trilateral Project, conducted 28 May 2008 during COP 9/CBD in Bonn. It was an excellent platform to discuss the results of several NGO projects on business and biodiversity with experts from NGOs, politics and business and to raise awareness in public.

Prof. Dr. Manfred Niekisch, director of the Zoo Frankfurt moderated the side event. The audience – about 40 attendees – listened to the explanation of Andras Demeter from the European Commission, DG Environment about the EU initiative on Business and Biodiversity, which was built on the foundation of the Lisbon conference and the “Message from Lisbon”. In 2008 the commission will mandate setting up a technical support facility on Business and Biodiversity (B&B) to benchmark best practice and to monitor and record approaches and mechanisms.

Another project on B&B run by the Commission is the EC Biodiversity Technical Assistance Units (BTau), presented by Miroslava Dikova, BSPB Bulgaria. This project develops tools to identify and prioritise “Pro Biodiversity Businesses” in Natura 2000 sites, making a profit whilst enhancing and safeguarding biodiversity in Bulgaria, Poland and Hungary.

Paula Silva from Quercus, Portugal, explained the background of the European B&B initiative and the NGO approach to accompany this process. In September 2007, Quercus organized a seminar on “Civil Society, Business and Biodiversity” in Lisbon to discuss the prospects and limits of the Business and Biodiversity initiative. The following day a workshop on business and biodiversity for NGOs – a contribution of the trilateral project – concreted the role of NGOs during that process. The result of that workshop was the „Lisbon Declaration of NGOs on the Business and Biodiversity Initiative“, which was distributed to the actors of the official process before the business and biodiversity High Level Conference in the mid of November in Lisbon.

Anamarija Slabe from the Institute for Sustainable Development, Slovenia, summarized the results of the conference “Forest and Wood”, accomplished within the trilateral project in February 2007 in Ljubljana. During two workshops the areas of common interest for cooperation between business and NGOs and the expectations of potential partners (NGO & Business) were identified. Furthermore criteria to be developed to prevent greenwashing in the area forest and wood were developed. For the prevention of greenwashing clear standards such as environmental management schemes, preferable FSC are to be used. Absolute transparency including control has to be the basis of any partnership.

Stefan Hörmann, from Global Nature Fund Germany, referred about the “Business and Biodiversity Initiatives for the Future”. He sees the role of NGOs in the B&B initiatives in naming and blaming industries with heavy



Stefan Hörmann



*Silja Dressel*

impact on biodiversity and ecosystems ignoring their responsibility. NGOs will assist the progressive industries in analysing their impacts, setting clear measurable targets and developing and implementing actions plans. Overall goals will be to prevent and mitigate impacts at the source and if unavoidable to promote a serious offsetting. Like in the climate debate there is a need of biodiversity neutral business. Silja Dressel, GTZ Germany, explained the German Business and Biodiversity Initiative. The leadership declaration contains strong commitments concerning all three goals of the Convention, the systematic integration of biodiversity into corporate sustainability management and the promotion of biodiversity in the supply chain management. The leadership declaration has perceived broad acceptance from the business sector: 34 companies have signed. The initiative has clearly contributed to an awareness raising and a broader understanding within the business sector on biodiversity issues.

In the discussion period opened to interventions from the audience, a question was raised: how far can NGOs "accept" B&B initiatives from those companies which core business is itself heavily harmful for nature? And how can we really distinguish greenwashing from not greenwashing? A representative from one of those 34 signing companies stated that having signed the Leadership Declaration was a step stone and they would never risk not respecting their commitments. The Portuguese NGO representative referred to the variety of companies that committed with B&B in Portugal and the variety of approaches they had, under a similar methodology as the German initiative. She added that some companies are so big and international it may be more complex to check their performance and if they are in the good way; NGOs wishing to get more involved in B&B have to learn more on reporting systems and other corporate instruments.



# **Supporting business for biodiversity: an opportunity to grasp**

*Dr Zbigniew Karpowicz and Dr Zenon Tederko*

The 2005 Millennium Ecosystem Assessment (MA), the most comprehensive report regarding the state of the planet to date, highlighted that most ecosystem services are generally in decline and that successfully making a link between enhancing competitiveness of our economies and long-term effectiveness of resource use could be a solution to sustainable livelihoods and sustainable economic growth.

Currently the importance of biodiversity is increasingly being reflected in the economic world and biodiversity externalities slowly but gradually are being reflected by global and regional markets. Nature deserves and gradually earns its price.

Despite a growing awareness that it is biodiversity which ultimately underpins economic competitiveness, growth and employment, it is still economic activity that is the principal cause of biodiversity loss. The case for engaging both business and banking is becoming irresistible and fully engaging both the business and banking sectors is a critical step in aligning economic and environmental objectives and redress the trends in biodiversity.

This year, the G8 countries have committed themselves to approach the financial sector to effectively integrate biodiversity into its decision-making frameworks. A key objective is to explore the need innovative mechanisms to finance the protection and sustainable use of biological diversity. Such mechanisms can ultimately increase the volume of finance available to biodiversity. The Portuguese EU presidency hosted a major conference in November 2007 on the theme of business and biodiversity. This conference has been recognised as the transformational moment when the platform for increasing the profile of the business and biodiversity linkages was created and when a start began for the longer-term, strategic initiative to build stronger links between business and biodiversity protection. This includes the hundreds of large corporations as well as the millions of micro, small and medium enterprises.

Specifically the Conference agreed that:

- there is an undeniable link between N2000 management and the role of SMEs;
- there is a need for EC common awareness approach for SMEs on opportunities from biodiversity; and,
- there is a need to continue the exploration of suitable financial instruments together with banks to support pro-biodiversity businesses at the ecosystem level.

The EU's approach to biodiversity is based on the principles contained in the EU Nature Conservation Policy, particularly the Natura 2000 ecological network of sites of high biodiversity value. However, in order to conserve the Natura 2000 network it has been estimated by the Commission that at least 6,1 billion Euro is needed per year, substantially more than current outlays.

Supporting the finance of natural heritage cannot any longer depend solely on public sources and public institutions. The role of the private sector must be addressed. There are many companies, of varying sizes and in a range of sectors, across Europe whose activities are based in areas of high biodiversity or whose activities utilise the goods or services provided by biodiversity. For example, in Poland in 7 pilot

(selected) Natura 2000 areas nearly 6.000 SMEs dependent on biodiversity were identified. Poland has designated some 250 sites of N2000, whilst entire EU counts for over 25.000 sites, covering 1 mill sq km, equalling to 25% EU's territory.

Such companies are willing and able to shift into a sustainable mode of operation, through commercially viable solutions. In theory, doing so will ensure that investments made help reduce or mitigate impacts on biodiversity and contribute to sustainable development. Yet, until now, investing in 'pro-biodiversity business' has been largely neglected and there seems to be little support from the banking sector, for new commercial and conservation opportunities. Inadequate information has been a key limiting factor for increased pro-biodiversity lending.

Micro and Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises which are nature-dependent or green by their nature are the obvious and major stakeholders amongst those who have a role to play in implementing biodiversity conservation particularly in N2000 sites.

Substantial demand for biodiversity-related investment already exists. However, finding ways to ramp up financing for 'pro-biodiversity business' (PBB) involves overcoming the knowledge and information gaps. For businesses to be viable and pro-biodiversity, such PBBs seek to generate both positive financial and biodiversity returns. Investment that has a biodiversity-relevant component has to be on the whole profitable, and profitable enough to provide a rate of return that is acceptable to the financier. It is true that many of the benefits of biodiversity are public goods with little scope for making money. However, if private property rights are well defined there are markets for many goods that can be produced in ways compatible with biodiversity conservation. Examples include forest products, agricultural services, secondary agricultural products, fisheries, eco-tourism, and certified timber.

Supporting such businesses will involve getting banks to understand their commercial viability but successfully tapping into these opportunities, will also require the role of private entrepreneurs in nature management, beyond the formal nature protection system needs to be enhanced. 99,8% of all enterprises in the EU are SMEs, a significant proportion of which depend on nature. Loans to these identified enterprises could help to improve both their commercial and environmental sustainability. For some time now the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development has been carefully evaluating the best way in which to target this niche market possibly with the creation of a new financial instrument. To be eligible for financing, a company must meet both financial and biodiversity criteria. Whereas the financial eligibility would be established by the partner bank, the biodiversity eligibility would be assessed by a third party, e.g. an independent expert team or an NGO, to ensure than a SME posses capacity to run successfully investment projects in line with the standards and criteria of a financial facility (pro-biodiversity credit facility).



Miroslava Dikova, BSPB Bulgaria,  
presenting BTAUs in Bonn

However, there are a number of challenges that will need to be resolved before biodiversity-friendly investments into micro, small and medium enterprises can be scaled up. Private players, both on the banking supply side and the company demand side are often not well aware of commercial biodiversity opportunities. Businesses working with biodiversity often encounter obstacles in accessing bank credit. Today, the rate of return on investment into pro-biodiversity businesses is generally perceived by financial institutions to be sub-optimal.

To overcome these barriers and help create an "institutional market place" for micro and SME in N2000 in particular and SMEs and biodiversity in general pro-active technical assistance is needed. This is precisely what the EC is now addressing through the establishment of Biodiversity Technical Assistance Units (BTAUs)

This is a three-year EC funded project to actively “accelerate” the market in PBBs, principally by showing that investments into biodiversity businesses are commercially viable and benefit nature. This will have a strong demonstration effect for other countries.

The project aims to create instruments in selected countries (Bulgaria, Hungary and Poland) that apply a public-private partnership approach in exploring business opportunities for safeguarding biodiversity. These instruments -'Biodiversity Technical Assistance Units' - will work to achieve two main aims:

- to facilitate the creation of a new pro-biodiversity investment market for the business and banking sector;
- to deliver a pipeline of bankable projects for future investment loans for the benefit of biodiversity.

At the end of the first year (2007) the project has:

- Established dedicated Units in three countries to support the development of pro-biodiversity businesses;
- Identified, in a pro-active manner, a pipeline of bankable biodiversity-related projects;
- Provided an overview of biodiversity investment opportunities for SMEs with a focus on access to friendly financial mechanisms;
- Established operational networks of biodiversity and finance expertise on national & local levels;
- Developed a toolkit and operational guidelines for assessing pro-biodiversity businesses and supporting biodiversity investment project concepts;
- Developed a Handbook for identifying, developing and implementing pro-biodiversity projects;
- Created operational communication platform - dedicated website, brochures; seminars;

The project is funded by the Directorate-General for Environment of the European Commission.

For more information on the project visit the BTAU Project website:

<http://www.smeforbiodiversity.eu>

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## 6 Project partners

### Quercus, Portugal



Quercus – ANCN (National Association on Nature Conservation) was founded in 1985 by several members of other environmental NGO. Its symbol, the acorn leaf, represents the most traditional family of trees in Portugal; Quercus is the Latin word for this family of trees.

From the beginning Quercus was organised on a regional structure, with groups in several areas of the country. The first fights were related to the protection of vultures and the opposition to the disorganised plantation of eucalyptus mainly due to the pressure of cellulose factories. The protection of birds of prey was also one of the main issues in the eighties. River protection, the fight against the construction of a nuclear repository in Spain, near the Portuguese border and the preparation of materials regarding natural aspects of Portugal where activities developed in the first decade.

The approval of the Declaration of Principles takes place in 1992, as well as the construction of new statutes. Later the new professional groups appear in the waste area and some projects related to water consumption and waste destinations are innovative studies that highlight central problems of the Portuguese environmental policies in Portugal.

In the nineties Quercus, for the first time in the Portuguese environmental movement, decides to buy certain pieces of land in order to preserve central natural values (600 hectares). By the end of the decade Quercus decides to contribute directly for the preservation of endangered species and creates two Centres for the Rehabilitation of Wild Animals. This decade was also the moment Quercus started working on other subjects besides nature conservation, and areas like waste, water, transports policy, air pollution appeared as equally important intervention areas.

Training courses also started to be developed in several areas and campaigns like "For a cleaner river" or "Recycling in developing" gain some relevance. In 1996, two projects on environmental tourism began, both financed by Life Program. Hunting management and the non-hunting land right were also main subjects, and the latter recognition of this right was a big victory for the environmental movement, and had been a Quercus demand for a very long time.

The construction of big infrastructures (highways, dams, touristic projects) has always been an area Quercus has been active in strategic and protective terms. In the waste area, pioneering projects as the research on waste management solutions in Portugal for urban solid wastes and hospital wastes, as well as the thorough work on toxic wastes were extremely important for Quercus.

Quercus worked several times with NGOs from other countries, especially with Greenpeace with whom actions were organized regarding waste, GMOs and tropical forests. Quercus is a member of European Environmental Bureau since 1987, of the Youth Environment Europe since 1989. In 1996 Quercus becomes the first Portuguese member of T&E, in 1997 becomes a member of "Elo Lusófono" (that includes NGO from Portuguese speaking countries). By the end of the decade, Quercus starts to work with GE-NET (European Network on GMO), with CIDN, the Iberian Council for Nature defence, with Climate Action Network.

In 1992, during the Eco92 Conference Quercus received the award Global 5000, attributed by UNEP. In the same year, Quercus receives from the President of the Portuguese Republic an honorary member of the Ordem do Infante D. Henrique award. In 1994 Quercus received the Ford European Conservation Award for the project "Tejo Internacional". In 1997, Quercus receives a new award from the same entity regarding the work with dolphins and the involvement of young people in it.

Quercus has launched several new projects on energy, water, nature conservation, forest protection, and has implemented for some years the Ecologic Olympiads that involve, each year, more than 30 000 students from several educational levels. Throughout the years Quercus always tried to maintain a regular contact with its members producing a newspaper or magazine. After several changes, Quercus Ambiente Journal has become a stable project and a regular contribution to keep the associates involved and informed. Several regional groups have their own publications. After 2003 Quercus webpage was renewed and released, and it's now another important element to communicate, not only with the associates, but with journalists, students, citizens in general.

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## **DNR – Deutscher Naturschutrzring, Germany**



The German League for Nature and Environment (DNR) is the umbrella organization of German conservation and environmental protection organizations. Founded in 1950 it currently has 98 member organizations which together represent over five million individual members.

The European Policy Coordination office of the DNR was established in 1991 in recognition of the increasing importance of EU environmental policy for Europe and Germany. It coordinates the activities of German environmental organizations throughout Europe, establishes contact with other activists within Europe, and influences EU policy. The team informs German environmental protection and conservation organizations about current developments at the EU level through numerous meetings, visitors programs, workshops, and publications. As a member of the umbrella organization European Environmental Bureau (EEB), the European Policy Coordination office closely coordinates its work with Brussels-based environmental organizations.

Europe is steadily assuming a worldwide pioneering role in conservation, environmental and consumer protection, and sustainable use of resources, and it advocates an equitable and sustainable global economic system. In order for this dream to become a reality, we want to accompany, influence, and change the decision-making process in Brussels accordingly, and support and call for the implementation and application of hard-won European regulations and laws in the EU member states. Therefore, it is important to us that our work sensitises societal actors to the importance of EU policy, informs our member organizations about current EU environmental legislation and mobilizes them to "interfere," develops an intensified dialogue and synergistic effects between representatives of civil society and European policy makers, promotes the lobbying activities of European environmental organizations, and supports coordinated and effective lobbying in German European politics.

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## **ISD – Institute for Sustainable Development, Slovenia**

ISD is a private non-profit institute founded in 1995. Its broader objective is implementation of the principles of sustainable development in the praxis and their integration into national and EU strategic development programmes. Its specific focus is on agriculture and rural development and protection of nature in agriculture, and support to the involvement of civil society in policy- and decision-making, in order to promote integration of the principles of sustainable development in all policy areas and sectors.

As a member of the European Environmental Bureau (EEB) and IFOAM EU, it is active also on the EU level and is providing a link between the EU environment policy agenda and national level.

The main areas of work of ISD are organic food and farming, protection of environment and biodiversity, sustainable management of natural resources in agriculture and forestry, agricultural and rural development policy, sustainable lifestyle, as well as enhancing the role of non-governmental organisations in development of strategic programmes on different levels (national, EU, international) and their implementation.

ISD activities are research, training, publication, providing advisory and expertise, and awareness-raising.

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## Trilateral Project on Business and Biodiversity: report

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Institute for  
Sustainable Development,  
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DNR – Deutscher  
Naturschutzbund,  
Germany

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