

Countdown 2010 Declaration

BIODIVERSITY - THE WEB OF LIFE ON EARTH - IS ESSENTIAL TO THE QUALITY OF HUMAN WELL-BEING, AND IT IS A CRUCIAL ELEMENT IN SUSTAINING THE SOCIAL, ECONOMIC AND SPIRITUAL DIMENSION OF ALL SOCIETIES WORLDWIDE. YET, BIODIVERSITY CONTINUES TO DECLINE. POLITICAL COMMITMENTS HAVE BEEN MADE TO STOP THIS TREND BY 2010. FURTHER STEPS NEED TO BE TAKEN TO HONOUR THIS COMMITMENT AND TO TRANSLATE IT INTO ACTION.

We the undersigned will take every practical opportunity to:

Support the commitments to halt or significantly reduce the current rate of biodiversity loss by 2010, made by:

- World Environment Ministers in the Hague Ministerial Declaration of the Conference of Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity in the Netherlands 2002;
- World Heads of State in the Plan of Implementation at the United Nations World Summit on Sustainable Development in Johannesburg, South Africa in 2002;
- World Heads of State in the United Nations World Summit Outcome in New York 2005;
- A number of biodiversity related conventions and regional processes since 2001.

Encourage decision makers at all levels, in both the public and the private sector, to contribute to these commitments and to:


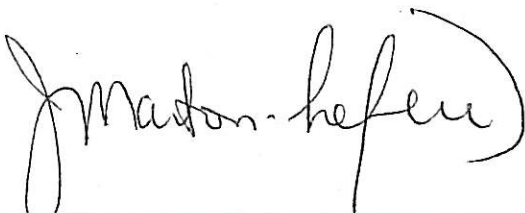
- Increase public awareness and participation for biodiversity conservation, including the promotion of exemplary activities towards the 2010 biodiversity target;
- Better integrate biodiversity considerations into all relevant sectors of public policy and economy;
- Undertake serious efforts to adapt human activities to the needs of natural systems;
- Support the development of suitable monitoring and indicator tools to assess the state of biodiversity.

Commit ourselves to encourage and assist decision makers and societies in achieving the 2010 biodiversity target, notably through:

- Actively promoting Countdown 2010 to focus attention and mobilise resources for achieving the 2010 biodiversity target;
- Significantly reducing our own impact on biodiversity.

In particular we will:

- Pursue to fully implement the Theme on Biodiversity of the Environment and Nature Policy Plan MINA 3+ (2008-2010) that has the 2010 target as an overall objective and that includes specific operational objectives for biodiversity conservation, inter alia:
- Complete the development of the conservation objectives for the Natura 2000 network as the basis for an effective and participatory management of the sites
- Enhance the coherence of the ecological network promote and support provincial authorities for designation and management of connecting sites, and promote transboundary cooperation
- Enhance cooperation with stakeholders of both the public and private sector
- Extend partnerships with land and forest owners
- Ensure effective and efficient implementation of tools and measures for the conservation of biodiversity
- Further develop specific monitoring and reporting of biodiversity based on the biodiversity headline indicators
- Promote scientific knowledge on ecosystem services
- Enhance integration of biodiversity considerations into all relevant sectors
- Raise awareness on biodiversity and on the 2010 target and promote educational tools to enhance awareness on ecosystem services
- Promote sustainable forest management inter alia through public procurement policy, support of forest conservation projects in developing countries through the Flemish Forest Fund, active involvement in the European FLEGT process
- Promote and support synergies between biodiversity and climate policies, as well as between the biodiversity related conventions with the objective to support realisation of the 2010 target.
- Continue profiling the 2010 target and Countdown 2010 during regional, national, European and international events and in particular during the Belgian EU Presidency with a focus on the review on achievements and on the reporting of the implementation of the EC Biodiversity Communication and Action Plan. To this extent organise an event in collaboration with IUCN in the second half of 2010 on the assessment of the achievements of the 2010 target and the review of the objectives for the action plan beyond 2010.



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