

December 3, 2010

# „The Frankfurt declaration 2010“

**International Conference on  
Biodiversity and the  
UN Millennium Development Goals:  
Challenges for Research and Action**

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**Frankfurt/Main  
Senckenberg-Museum  
Germany**

**Delegates to the Frankfurt Conference on „Biodiversity and the UN Millennium Development Goals“ which took place 1-3 December 2010 agree that biodiversity critically underpins human livelihood and well-being and conclude:**

- (1) The relevance of biodiversity to human well-being is greatly underestimated. Biodiversity and biodiversity change directly interact with, and have an impact on water availability, food production, human health, climate change, natural hazards etc., and this needs to be better understood and more widely disseminated.

Biodiversity research needs to be developed into a fast-acting, transdisciplinary science that focuses on the links between nature and human society.

In particular, biodiversity research needs to be strategically linked to the following MDGs: Hunger and poverty, Health, Environmental sustainability, Gender equality and empowerment of women.

- (2) Fundamental knowledge gaps still exist regarding the state of biodiversity, its loss and its ecosystem functions and services, particularly in the deep sea, soils and freshwaters, and in the genetic and microbial components of biodiversity.

A major increase in basic research efforts is required to fill these gaps. We urgently need to go beyond case studies to understand the underlying mechanism of the causes and consequences of rapid biodiversity change.

In particular, we need to better understand and predict how biodiversity changes as a consequence of external drivers such as land use change, invasive species, or climate change, single and in concert.

We therefore need more basic research on the functioning of nature conservation (e.g. tipping point research).

Rapid assessment tools, widely applicable indicators and long-term monitoring strategies have to be developed, tested, evaluated and implemented.

- (3) There are conflicts and trade-offs as well as undervalued synergies between biodiversity protection and improvement of human well-being. Loss of biodiversity has substantial implications for infectious diseases, bioenergy, agriculture, fisheries etc.

Comprehensive research is needed to understand these conflicts and trade-offs and to identify and use synergies to tackle biodiversity-related MDGs.

Foreign aid and development need to be based on this knowledge.

## International Conference on Biodiversity and the UN Millennium Development Goals: Challenges for Research and Action

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There is little knowledge or research and no policies concerning the response of people to biodiversity change worldwide, in particular the 2 billion subsistence households, a major group of curators of agro-biodiversity.

There is a need to incorporate traditional knowledge systems regarding the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity as a product of long-lasting interactions between human society and nature.

Although increasing the number and size of protected areas is valuable, this alone will not stop biodiversity loss or protect biodiversity on its own. Ecosystems need to be managed as coupled social-ecological systems.

There is a strong need to put biodiversity at the heart of governance – people are not above the tapestry of life.

- [4] Innovative research efforts are needed. With the failure of the 2010 targets and the 20 new targets so enthusiastically adopted in Nagoya at the Conference of the Parties of the Convention on Biological Diversity (COP 10), it has become clear that biodiversity has to be considered in a broader context and that science is lagging behind the actual societal needs.

The organisers of the Frankfurt conference take this event as a starting-point for a five-year campaign to advance strategies for the protection, management and sustainable use of biodiversity to underpin the successful implementation of the MDGs, by encouraging, communicating and pursuing research towards these goals.

The conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity will greatly benefit if research and policy development explore and recognise the strong links between cultural and biological diversity across the world.

Long-term, close partnerships between biodiversity, human health, agriculture, socio-economic and anthropological research domains must be established.

There is an urgent need to strengthen the science-policy interface to make existing knowledge available and to bring in questions from policy to the scientific community.

A major effort is required to increase the public awareness about biodiversity values and benefits for the sake of both nature and people.