



A Karen community in Northern Thailand engaged in collective rice harvesting in their traditional territory where agricultural, forest and river biodiversity are deeply interlinked with their cultural practices and traditional knowledge (Photo courtesy Inter-Mountain People, Education and Culture in Thailand (IMPECT) Association).

This edition is published to coincide with the fifth meeting of the Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties (COP-MOP 5) in Nagoya, Aichi Prefecture, Japan, from 11 to 15 October 2010, and with the tenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties (COP 10) being held in Nagoya, Aichi Prefecture, from 18 to 29 October 2010.

This newsletter aims to present a diversity of civil society opinions. The views expressed in the articles are the views of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the views of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity, its Secretariat or the CBD Alliance

Charting a Post-2010 Decade of Solidarity

By Jessica Dempsey, CBD Alliance

There is no uncertainty. We have failed to stop, yet again, the ongoing 'monoculturalism' of the planet. Worse than failing 'to reduce the rate of biodiversity loss', evidence coming out of the Stockholm-based Resilience Alliance suggests that the ongoing erosion of biodiversity is undermining ecosystem resiliency. Current rates of species loss take us far beyond the safe operating space for humanity, a situation made even worse by changing climates. (1)

Communities throughout the world do not need the Resilience Alliance or any

intergovernmental panel to tell them that biodiversity is necessary. Furthermore, as anthropologist Anna Tsing writes in relation to the Meratus peoples on the island of Borneo, survival is only one part of why they cultivate and create an incredible variety of vegetables. 'They value variety because of the taste, for the sociability it allows, for its sheer exuberance, and because it increases the chances of a bountiful harvest.' (2) The sheer exuberance of diverse life... I like the sound of that.

Biodiversity loss as market failure

As we ingloriously celebrate the International Year of Biodiversity, civil society is hearing carefully negotiated intergovernmental

reasoning and rationales for the failed 2010 target. Much emphasis is being placed on the lack of understanding about why biodiversity matters. If only we had focused more on the 'critical role of nature and its ecosystem services in supporting human well-being'. If only we could demonstrate, once and for all, that biodiversity and nature are 'the Treasury of all human beings, especially the Poor'. (3)

The crux of the problem is often stated as follows: No one cares about biodiversity; no one knows what it is, or why it matters. This kind of thinking has spurned a massive re-framing of biodiversity in terms of ecosystem services, towards focusing on how biodiversity contributes to human well-being. This re-framing is part of a widespread movement to value biodiversity, but these are likely not your grandmother's values. As the Executive Secretary of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD),

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Ahmed Djoghlaif, stated in a meeting with civil society just prior to the ninth meeting of the Conference of the Parties (COP 9) in Bonn (May 2008), 'The largest corporation in the world is not Walmart. It is nature'. Just like Walmart delivers American consumers the 'stuff of life' at cutthroat prices, so too does biodiversity. We just don't recognise it as such.

Much time and attention is now focused on revealing this value, to understand especially the economic value of biodiversity, especially through the Economics of Ecosystems and Biodiversity (TEEB) project. The project frames the problem of biodiversity very carefully. "At the heart of this complex problem is a straightforward and well-recognised issue in standard micro-economics. The lack of market prices for ecosystem services and biodiversity means that the benefits we derive from these goods (often public in nature) are usually neglected or under-valued in decision-making." (4) So the mantra goes: if only we had the right numbers—meaning costs of biodiversity loss expressed in monetary terms—to show people (especially leaders) what they are doing to themselves.

Demonstrating that nature provides services, and that investments in nature and biodiversity conservation therefore yield high rates of return, may well be part of the solution. An economy where all the social and ecological costs of doing business are incorporated is a laudable goal, and it would likely lead to radical changes in how business is conducted. It could transform the shape of economic systems and market transactions, leading to, among other things, 'reducing the rate of biodiversity loss'. But actually getting decision-makers to actually internalise the full cost of goods and services produced and provided by nature is like trying to get a Goldman Sachs executive to give up his god-given gazillion-dollar bonus—incredibly difficult.

A brief diversion to illustrate this. Recent Canadian research shows that a \$3 billion investment in early childhood education would increase gross domestic product (in Canada) by 20% over six decades. This is

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The World is Watching



*From the Secretariat:
Message from
Ahmed Djoghlaif,
Executive Secretary,
Convention on
Biological Diversity*

Beginning with the launch of the International Year of Biodiversity and culminating with the Nagoya Biodiversity Summit, the year 2010 is a pivotal year for biodiversity conservation.

The year coincides with the finish line of the target adopted by the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) to "achieve, by 2010, a significant reduction in the current rate of loss of biodiversity". Yet despite the progress we have made in gathering political momentum, it has not yet made a difference on the ground, as recent scientific data on global biodiversity trends and status demonstrate that the 2010 Biodiversity Target has not been met.

The third edition of *Global Biodiversity Outlook* recently published by the Convention and based on a global analysis of biodiversity indicators and national reports submitted by governments, shows continuing and often accelerating species extinctions and loss of natural habitat. It is clear that reversing the loss of biodiversity can no longer be considered as an issue separate from the core concerns of society.

This month in Japan, the CBD and hundreds of world leaders will meet to discuss these and other issues so critical to our future well-being and that of the Earth.

In Nagoya, Parties will adopt the Aichi/Nagoya 2011–2020 strategic plan of the CBD—and indeed of the entire UN system. The new strategic plan will incorporate a 2050 biodiversity vision, a 2020 biodiversity target and sub-targets, and contain a means of implementation as well as a monitoring and evaluation mechanism. Moreover, it will comprehensively address biodiversity loss so as to ensure that the poor will not become poorer and that humanity as a whole will not suffer in the future from the extensive loss of biological goods and ecosystem services. To do this, the

new strategic plan will emphasize that biodiversity loss is interlinked with a range of issues, from poverty to climate change, water scarcity, growth in demand, development and international conflict, and therefore can no longer be treated as a stand-alone issue.

Resource mobilization will prove crucial for the successful implementation of the strategic plan. For the plan to be effective, we need a 100-fold increase in funding in order to contribute to human well-being, poverty eradication, secure the planet's variety of life, and to, by 2020, have reduced the pressures on biodiversity, avoided tipping points, used biological resources sustainably, restored ecosystems and the services they provide, shared the benefits of biodiversity equitably, and mainstreamed biodiversity issues.

We also need to finalize the protocol on Access and Benefit-Sharing (ABS). After six years of intense negotiations, the draft Aichi Nagoya Protocol on ABS is now in place, and will be finalized and adopted on 29 October in Nagoya. A robust protocol on access to genetic resources and the fair and equitable-sharing of the benefits from their use is a major tool for the conservation and sustainable use of the biodiversity of our planet.

Civil society plays a critical role in the implementation of the new strategic plan for biodiversity and the Nagoya decisions. We join together with governments and other stakeholders to urge members of civil society to participate in the actual implementation on the ground.

The time for us to act is now. The whole world will be watching what happens in Nagoya. We owe it to ourselves and to future generations to prioritize the preservation of biodiversity and to ensure that we have the best tools in place to do so. Let us not take our eyes off the prize. [5b]



Black bear in Tofino, British Columbia, Canada
(Photo courtesy Holly Shrumm).

Biodiversity Justice: The Way Forward for Life on Earth

From the CBD Alliance: Message from Wilhelmina Pelegrina, Executive Director, Southeast Asia Regional Institute for Community Education (SEARICE); Ricarda Steinbrecher, Co-Director, EcoNexus; Susan Walsh, Executive Director, USC Canada

In 2010, we face compounding biodiversity, food, fuel, economic and climate crises. The conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity is fundamental to addressing these crises and charting a new (sustainable) path for humanity.

In Nagoya, governments will have to go beyond the “business as usual” approach. They should focus on addressing the root causes of biodiversity loss, and set forward a bold new path to defend and support the custodians of biodiversity—indigenous peoples, local communities and small-scale food providers, mostly women, like farmers, fisherfolk, and pastoralists.

Over the past six weeks, civil society groups from all over the world have been discussing, debating and coming to agreement on what they believe to be the key issues for the Nagoya COP. We call on Parties to strengthen (not weaken) the Convention’s core principles – like the ecosystem approach, the precautionary principle, and an understanding that biodiversity cannot be separated from those humans who nurture, defend and sustainably use it. Parties should stay clear of the market approach of other agreements, like the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change, and not permit biodiversity agreements be subservient to other international agreements, including trade agreements.

Instead, Parties should adopt a *biodiversity justice* approach, which means not only upholding the rights, dignity, and autonomy of all peoples, but also respecting the rights of *all* living things. A biodiversity justice approach places the custodians of biodiversity at the centre of policy making, and as the most critical beneficiaries of biodiversity policies.

Many civil society groups, from all over the world, have come together to create a set of 10 collective briefings: the “Top 10 issues for COP 10”, available at www.undercovercop.org. Below we present our own summary of the core concerns identified in those 10 briefings.

Civil society groups call for the following commitments in Nagoya:

- Parties urgently need to fulfill their obligations as signatories to the Convention on Biological Diversity and agree to a strong and ambitious strategic plan with targets that will:
 - Integrate biodiversity and its pivotal role in ecosystem function and resilience into international institutions and agreements, especially trade; and also in national policies, including economic development and accounting
 - Eliminate subsidies and perverse incentives harmful to biodiversity by 2020 (particularly for oil and gas, agriculture, agrofuels/bioenergy, fishing)
 - Reduce deforestation and destruction of natural habitats to zero by 2020
 - End current unsustainable production and consumption patterns
 - End overfishing and destructive fishing practices
 - Make agriculture, forestry and other land use sustainable and reduce nutrient loading below critical load levels
 - Achieve a representative system of protected areas based on full and effective participation of indigenous peoples and local communities and respect for their rights (including free, prior and informed consent and rights over their ancestral domains)
 - Increase public finance tenfold for biodiversity conservation and sustainable use
 - Defend, and increase genuine representation in decision-making of local conservers, users and developers of biodiversity.
- Parties need to adopt a legally-binding Access and Benefit-Sharing (ABS) Protocol that will have strong enforcement and compliance measures that can stop biopiracy, respects and protects the rights of indigenous peoples and local communities, and questions the primacy of intellectual property rules. The ABS Protocol should also ensure real and actual benefits



South Africa (Photo courtesy Holly Shrumm).

for indigenous peoples and local communities and that the Protocol will not result in further enclosures on genetic resources and technology.

- Parties should address the underlying causes of biodiversity loss, and remove perverse subsidies that promote the expansion of monocultures, bioenergy, biomass and other commodities.
- Parties should avoid risky, unproven approaches like forest carbon offset markets (e.g. in REDD), biodiversity offsets and the Green Development Mechanisms that lack appropriate safeguards for biodiversity and for indigenous peoples rights and human rights.
- Parties should adopt and uphold moratoria on the development, testing, release and use of new technologies which pose potential threats to biodiversity, including geoenvironmental and synthetic biology.
- Parties should focus on implementing decisions by developing compliance and enforcement mechanisms.
- Parties should put the real custodians of biodiversity at the centre stage in implementing the Convention and in decision-making.
- Parties should establish a definition of forests and sustainable forest management that excludes monoculture tree plantations and prevents invasion of alien

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not a new claim, but yet despite the strong research basis—research much tighter than that around biodiversity and ecosystem services, where experts admit that simply measuring biodiversity alone (never mind putting a dollar value on it) is a huge challenge (5)—it is still *unlikely* that governments will invest \$3 billion of its revenues in this way. And for many countries in the global South it is much more than a problem of preferences, as they simply cannot pay.

Serious challenges for correcting so-called 'market failures'

What I am getting at here is perhaps simple. There are serious limitations to the nature-as-Walmart approach, both for explaining why biodiversity loss is continuing, and for guiding solutions. More information and models about how biodiversity underpins all we do does not equal social change or political action.

This is partially because humans, unlike elegant economic/ecological models, are not rational, efficiency-seeking individuals. The 'decision-makers' that ecologists and economists so desperately want to convince are not necessarily going to be swayed by such models; perhaps they have a quasi-ideological disagreement with government intervention, or more likely, they find themselves in political/cultural systems that incentivise short-term thinking (i.e. political cycles of re-election, personal gain).

But perhaps the most intractable problem can be learned from the situation in the global South. The problem of who will pay for 'internalising externalities' of biodiversity loss. Our economies do not simply fail to value, count or price biodiversity; they are also the manifestation of hundreds of years of uneven development, of the centralisation of capital into (very few) States, and into the hands of Northern shareholders and consumers.

Recognising these entrenched interests in the current economic architecture is an incredibly practical problem that even the greenest free-marketers must grapple with. The TEEB authors carefully recognise this difficulty facing the implementation of 'full cost accounting', as 'such policies change the distribution of benefits and costs between different groups'.⁽⁶⁾ Internalising externalities not

only involves increased knowledge or better models about those externalities; it involves political interventions in economic systems where those externalities create benefit for some, at the expense of others. Those benefits accrue not only to corporate shareholders, but to millions of consumers, all over the world (mostly in the North). The economic solution, while perhaps a 'straightforward and well-recognised issue in standard micro-economics', is one that conveniently forgets (or ignores) uneven distributions of political power. It fails to account for the ugly, sticky, dirty mess of our political economies, and the difficulty of moving them elsewhere.

Finding hope in movements

Developing better understanding of how biodiversity underpins healthy ecosystems is part of the way forward. So, perhaps, is obtaining solid numbers estimating how much biodiversity is worth in economic terms. But in many ways, these are the easiest tasks ahead. What matters more, I argue, is a strategy for breaking these patterns of unevenness, the patterns of centralised power and control, the everyday market transactions that so clearly benefit some over others, while eviscerating biodiversity.

In Canada, it is indigenous First Nations and local communities working in solidarity with some environmental NGOs, human rights advocates, lawyers, and even a bank, that present the finest and most promising actions against biodiversity loss and climate change. In Northern Canada, a tiny First Nation (Indigenous)—the Beaver Lake Cree—are enacting a challenge against all of the companies in the tar sands, including Shell, BP, and ExxonMobil. The legal challenge seeks to enforce recognition of the Beaver Lake Cree's treaty rights and to protect their environment, increasingly riddled with oil wells, criss-crossed with roads and seismic lines and emptied of wildlife. Also in Northern Canada, in the birthplace of three great salmon rivers know as the Sacred Headwaters, the Tahltan people, who have hunted and trapped there for hundreds of years, engaged in blockades in order to stop Royal Dutch Shell from drilling for coalbed methane. (7) They are supported by numerous civil society groups.

Both the Tahltan and Beaver Lake Cree are considered economically poor communities,

Developing better understanding of how biodiversity underpins healthy ecosystems is part of the way forward.

communities still feeling the brunt of colonial relations and land theft, communities in need of so-called 'economic development'. But they are not content to pursue economic development or growth at all costs. They are guided by other ways of living. What they demand is redistribution, land rights and, at the core, space to carry out their own relationships with each other, the land and with other creatures.

Yes, biodiversity is intensely undervalued. But the way forward will not be found in new economic models or gigantic price tags on nature that will somehow magically convince decision-makers to act otherwise. Movements for biodiversity already exist, despite widespread poverty. The way forward, to break the entrenched and ever-so-uneven distributions of 'costs and benefits', is in solidarity with these communities, with social movements for both biodiversity and climate justice.

Let the next decade be one of solidarity-building with community-based struggles: putting the fear of citizen action in the heart of destructive developments, working alongside local communities to support their alternative visions of land use and development, and learning to have exuberant relationships with other forms of life. [sb]

This article reflects the viewpoint of the author, not that of the organization.

(Adapted from an article written for Third World Resurgence, No. 231/232, November-December 2009, pp 29-32)

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- 5 See note 4, page 14.
- 6 See note 4, page 29.
- 7 Coalbed methane (CBM) is a form of natural gas extracted from coal beds. For an inspiring timeline of events about this campaign, see www.dogwoodinitiative.org/campaigns/sacred-headwaters/the-situation/shells-plan-for-the-sacred-headwaters/timeline-of-resistance

Edible Landscaping

Making Agro-biodiversity everybody's Preoccupation

By Nirmal Jivan Shah, Nature Seychelles,
P.O. Box 1310, Roche Caiman, Mahe,
Seychelles (nature@seychelles.net;
www.natureseychelles.org)

Nature Seychelles' Heritage Garden, with its edible landscape of fruit trees, traditional food crops, spices, herbs, vegetables, and medicinal plants, is a necessity that needs to be replicated across homes, in backyards, and around buildings to safeguard genetic diversity and produce food to feed Seychelles in these difficult times. This was the sentiment of Antoine Moustache, the chief of the Seychelles Agricultural Agency, as he signed a Memorandum of Understanding last year with Nature Seychelles under the auspices of the National Food Security Strategy.

Seychelles is one of the most urbanized nations in Africa and, coupled with mountainous terrain, has very little arable land available for conventional agriculture. Paradoxically, whilst the country has a commendable reputation in environmental protection, conservation of agro-biodiversity has been greatly lacking. In fact, the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), of which Seychelles was the second signatory, lays strong emphasis on the preservation of native agro-biodiversity.

However, due to modern lifestyles, many traditional food crops, fruits and medicinal plants in Seychelles continue to disappear from communities and from peoples' cuisine. A limited range of fruits and vegetables, a substantive

portion of which is imported, is generally utilized. Diseases associated with modern lifestyles and inappropriate diets have become a serious health and economic problem.

Nature Seychelles started the Heritage Garden project about five years ago to help combat these problems in an unconventional manner. Last year, it established a demonstration garden at its headquarters located in the community of Roche Caiman next to the capital city of Victoria. Since then, Wildlife Clubs of Seychelles have been assisted to set up Heritage Gardens in about half of the schools on the main island. The project also promotes the traditional Creole cuisine and way of life.

Providing food for thought

With the official opening of the demonstration Heritage Garden at Roche Caiman by Mr. Joel Morgan, the Minister for Environment, Natural Resources and Transport, many of the local people who turned up for the event took the concept away to replicate in their homes and communities. The local media has also covered the project extensively and this has encouraged many more people to start thinking about doing their own edible landscaping.

We want everyone to know that they can beautify their grounds whilst having a wide variety of plants that they can use in cooking, traditional medicine, arts and crafts, and in new ways such as natural insecticides and aromatherapy, right at their doorstep. As such, we are not only introducing people to



Joel Morgan, Minister of Environment, Natural Resources and Transport of the Republic of the Seychelles, with Nirmal Shah of Nature Seychelles on a tour of the demonstration Heritage Garden (Photo courtesy Nirmal Shah).

a new partnership with nature but also conserving traditionally used plants, reducing alien species, enabling people to be more self-reliant, and reducing the country's carbon footprint.

The project also aims to help people minimize or stop the use of alien decorative plants, which are nothing more than "eye candy" in gardens and other landscaping. Invasive alien plants have a major impact on native biodiversity, especially those in small islands. In addition, in small island states, space is a premium and it is vital for land to be used sustainably. The project aims to maximize the space available for people to grow and value agro-biodiversity and make it part of their lifestyle.

The value of the edible landscape may be of global significance. Conservation of agro-biodiversity is inextricably linked to what some are calling the "coming food crisis". The skyrocketing rise in food prices has made most countries re-think their food strategies. With the multiple shocks of high oil prices and the domino effect down the food production chain, increases in biofuel production, the credit crunch, higher demand for food in India and China, and the carbon footprint involved in transportation of food, a total revolution in the way people think about food and agriculture is needed.

In the United Kingdom, for example, experts from the City University of London have said that Britain will have to rely on a return to past methods of food production and re-learn the gardening skills used a century ago. They conclude that the country has to consider planting on a massive scale as well as encouraging people to eat more fruit and vegetables. We believe that the edible landscape concept is well in tune with these ideas and can be replicated in households, urban gardens, parks, and communities across the world and thus assist in the CBD's goals to conserve and sustainably use agro-biodiversity. [sb]



Visitors to the Heritage Garden (Photo courtesy Nirmal Shah).

Of Brackets and Brass Tacks

By Kanchi Kohli, with Shalini Bhutani.
Kanchi Kohli is a member of the Kalpavriksh Environmental Action Group and Shalini Bhutani is Regional Programme Officer, Asia—GRAIN. Together with other groups in India they coordinate the Campaign for Conservation and Community Control over Biodiversity.

The negotiations on a global Access and Benefit-Sharing (ABS) protocol and its many brackets, has put on the table the core political motives of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD)—access to genes and the rules to govern them. But there are certain givens to reckon with in the context of India. For example, the biotech industry in India is on a roll. Being here gives it a springboard advantage in penetrating countries in the Asian region; countries with biological wealth, richness of knowledge and large markets. Thus any global or local rules on ABS will affect the more than half of the world's poor that live in this region.

In the South Asian sub-continent only Bhutan and India have, as of date, biodiversity laws in force. Yet for strategic reasons, including as indicated above, how India handles this issue is critical. As part of the Like-Minded Megadiverse Countries (LMMC) Group, India is holding its position with regards to a

“Turning a blind eye to ground realities means ignoring the deeper political changes that need to happen, both within countries, and at a collective global level.”

legally-binding international regime (IR) on ABS. India's negotiators, in asserting the principle of national sovereignty, insist that ABS mechanisms need to be *subject to national legislation*. This warrants getting down to brass tacks and taking a closer look at that legislation—particularly India's Biological Diversity Act (2002) and Rules (2004), etc. as it relates to ABS.

In January 2010, India's National Biodiversity Authority (NBA) released a draft set of *Guidelines on ABS* for public comments. These were available only through the NBA's web site and only in the English language, and therefore had limited reach.¹ What is ironic is that these proposed guidelines came only after the NBA had already approved several applications, ranging from research, to commercial utilisation and third party transfer. Out of 325 instances (as on the NBA website in August 2010), 269 were related to Intellectual Property Rights (IPRs). These went through without any guidelines established on how benefit-sharing would be determined. At the most the agreements between the NBA and



the applicant require payment of a royalty fee, which changes on a case to case basis and to be regulated by the ABS Guidelines. The NBA collects an amount equal to 5% of assessed benefits for itself as “administrative and service charges”. This is in line with Biodiversity Rule 20(9) as standard operating procedure.

Meanwhile, India's biodiversity law has a mandatory requirement of a ‘consultation’ (not free, prior and informed consent) with local level Biodiversity Management Committees (BMCs) before any decision on biological resources or associated knowledge is taken—that includes decisions on grant of access.² This entails imposing the BMC structure onto local people into BMCs and disregarding their existing customary structures. This process falls short of the prior informed consent (PIC) that is not only part of the CBD but also under negotiation in the Draft ABS Protocol. The reality is that none of the approvals granted by the NBA has gone through this legal requirement of acquiring prior informed consent (see example in Box).

One of the most debated aspects with regards to the IR on ABS is the compliance of domestic biodiversity regulation. If this is wanting, the effectiveness of any international protocol emphasising compliance comes into

Sharing at Sea?

In 2007, the National Biodiversity Authority (NBA) entered into a benefit-sharing agreement with PepsiCo India Holdings Private Limited.¹ The company paid INR 37.26 lakhs (approx 62,400 Euros) to the NBA for a type of dry seaweed (*Kappaphycus alvarezii*) accessed from the Gulf of Munnar area in the southern Indian State of Tamil Nadu. PepsiCo signed a yearlong agreement with the NBA to export this seaweed to Indonesia, Malaysia and the Philippines for commercial utilisation in the food and cosmetics industry. In the State of Tamil Nadu, neither any local Biodiversity Management Committee nor the required Tamil Nadu State Biodiversity Board had been set up in December 2007 when the agreement was signed. Thus there was no means by which mandatory consultations could be held with the local communities—the potential “benefit-claimers”, as defined in the law. To date, none of these structures have come in to place. Only in reply to a Right to Information application in July 2010 has the NBA admitted that the money received is “yet to be ploughed back to the benefit claimers”. The delay is explained by the fact that guidelines for utilisation of such monies deposited in the National Biodiversity Fund are yet to be finalised.

¹ The approval and agreement can be downloaded here: www.nbaindia.org/approvals/form_iv/tpt_omitbose_gurgoan.htm

² Section 41(2) of the Biological Diversity Act, 2002



(Photo courtesy Holly Shrumm)

question. Once access agreements are signed there is absolutely no way to determine whether users of the material or knowledge are complying with the conditions laid out in the agreement or if any practice is in contravention with a country's laws or its people's customary practices.

For people to be able to meaningfully participate in the discussions and be at the centre of the decision-making, more than a mere IR on ABS is needed. No one text is going to translate into poverty reduction for the millions of poor people in otherwise bio-rich countries.

Turning a blind eye to ground realities means ignoring the deeper political changes that need to happen, both within countries, and at a collective global level. Given a scenario that no agreement emerges on an international regime at the tenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties (COP 10), an opportunity presents itself. And even if it does, the journey after Nagoya will not be easy. It will need to traverse the distance between the bracketed text and what peoples on the ground are struggling for—community sovereignty and local conservation. [sb]

The CBD in Search of a Philosophy: A View from Asia

By Professor Kinhide Mushakoji, Former Vice-Rector of United Nations University and a member of the Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) community and Hiroo Komamiya, Chief Director of "Future of the Earth (NGO)", a member of the Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) community.

The root-causes of biodiversity loss cannot be grasped without realizing the historical roots of this reduction.

During the past century, modern civilization disseminated throughout the world a conception of nature which cuts all the ties linking humans and other beings, opposes both and make the former control the latter using different scientific technologies. The industrialized countries achieved an unprecedented high level of material wellbeing. Yet this life-style led to the extreme consumption of non-renewable energy resources (fossil fuels, uranium, etc.) and became in itself unsustainable. It is indispensable to make a critical re-assessment of the relationship between this dichotomous opposition of human-beings and other living beings, or between humans and nature.

The pseudo-scientific reductionism ignoring the interrelations among different organisms remains predominant in scientific technology even after ecology began to point out the danger of this reductionism. This insensibility to complex interdependencies among the living-beings is quite alien from the wisdom of peoples living close to nature, in the mountains, forests or lakes and seas. They strongly feel that their lives depend on the relationship among the diverse species living with them in the same environment. Indigenous peoples and the peoples living in traditional local communities continue even today to reject the concept of appropriation and possession of nature by humans.

We believe that biological resources and services cannot be owned by anybody, and should be fairly utilized by everybody. This principle obviously contradicts the CBD recognition of national sovereign rights over biodiversity which is justified in the present global economy where every resource is owned by somebody, state or firm. We insist, however, on the need for every actor in



IUCN Japan Committee's "Let's Origami COP 10 Project" collects messages from civil society on "What is the future you want to see in 2020". (Photo courtesy the Japan Committee for IUCN)

the world should renounce to own any biological resources, an ideal implemented today only by indigenous peoples. The cultural difference between the rapidly growing capitalist Europe and the traditional Asian bio-sustainable subsistence economies has to be understood by all Parties, and a synthesis of the two must become the target to aim for in the post-2010 context.

This colonial situation which continues even today, developed into an increasing dependence of the Asian subsistence economies on the industrial economy of the West, leading to the demise of the Asian life-sustaining economies which had been exchanging services with the different species in the eco-system and thus producing a self-sustaining economic culture. The global economy must be separated from the life-sustaining aspects of subsistence economy if it wants to become bio-sustaining and eco-sustainable. The poverty of the subsistence economic sectors of the world which covers its majority has to be overcome while keeping alive the life sustaining aspects of these communities for biodiversity to cease to decrease under the pressure of the present globalized market economy.

If possible, the global economy must be separated from subsistence economies.

In spite of all the opposite trends of the present neoliberal global economy, the local traditions of commons have to be reactivated by the common efforts of local citizens who genuinely hope to stop the rapid decrease of bio-diversity through their efforts to develop an ecologically healthy and locally sustainable economy. Any global effort to maintain bio-diversity cannot succeed

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The Need for Linking the CBD and UNFCCC to Achieve Post-2010 Biodiversity Target

"There is a need to link these two Conventions, whose combined efforts should combat climate change and its impacts on ecosystems and people, and contribute to poverty eradication"

By Sunita Chaudhary and Nakul Chettri, International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development (ICIMOD), Kathmandu, Nepal

The Conference of Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) set Biodiversity Targets to achieve by 2010 a significant reduction of biodiversity loss. A total of 29 indicators for 17 headline indicators under seven different themes were identified for assessing progress towards meeting the 2010 Biodiversity Targets and the goals of the CBD. However, current knowledge reflects that the Parties to CBD failed to achieve the targets. There are many reasons for not achieving the targets, including: the

set of indicators agreed seem to be impractical and inadequate; and the Parties, particularly developing countries, decry lack of access to technical and financial assistance for implementing their commitments to the CBD. Besides, the lack of institutional linkages between the conventions of common interests is also one of the reasons for not achieving the targets to some extent.

The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) brought home the reality of climate change as one of the major threats to our living planet. Evidence has proven that climate change and biodiversity are closely interrelated. The Millennium Ecosystem

Assessment has also predicted climate change to be one of the most significant drivers of biodiversity loss in coming years. The Global Biodiversity Outlook 3 also focuses on climate change as putting pressure on biodiversity, as it is having an impact on biodiversity and is projected to become progressively more significant in coming decades.

And it is well known that the direct and indirect impacts of climate change on biodiversity have an impact on people who depend on environmental services. The conservation and management of biodiversity could be one of the best mitigation and adaptation strategies to climate change. Studies have

Letters to Editorial Board

Decisions on Geoengineering must be based on Best Available Evidence

The previous issue of [square brackets] featured an article by the ETC Group calling for the Convention on Biological Diversity to adopt a "firm moratorium on the experimentation of all geoengineering climate technologies until there are comprehensive and solid studies and until a multilateral understanding and decision is reached on whether or not geoengineering is a path that the community of nations can accept."

In response to that article, and to comments made by the ETC Group on geoengineering in the Perspectives section of the newsletter, Professor John Shepherd FRS, Chair of the Royal Society geoengineering working group and Co-chair of the SRMGI steering group sent the editorial board a letter. ETC Group had a chance to read that letter and send a follow-up reply. The two letters are published here:

Dear Editorial Board,

In the May edition of Square Brackets two separate articles from the same NGO argue for a ban on research into geoengineering, i.e. the deliberate large scale intervention in the Earth's climate system in order to moderate global warming. This very broad definition includes a wide range of proposals, from planting trees, through to machines that remove carbon dioxide from the air, to putting mirrors in space in order to reflect away a little sunlight.

A [bracketed] recommendation has now been proposed to the CBD COP that calls for a complete moratorium on all climate-related geoengineering 'activities' until the scientific need for them has been demonstrated. There are serious problems with this recommendation. Firstly, what is meant by 'activities'? Full scale deployment? Field experiments? Computer modelling? Conversations? Thinking? And

what is to be regarded as geoengineering? Are tree planting or painting roofs white to be included, along with fertilising the oceans or sending mirrors into space? If it were approved, this ambiguous language alone would make the recommendation unworkable.

However, there is a more far-reaching problem at the heart of the proposal, because it calls for potentially useful research to be banned, based on fear and suspicion rather than on knowledge and evidence.

Last year the Royal Society published a report *Geoengineering the Climate*, in the hope that policymaking on this contentious issue could be informed by robust evidence. The report was written over 12 months, after wide consultation and scores of written submissions. It concluded that geoengineering does not present an alternative to reducing emissions of greenhouse gases, which should still be the focus of efforts to avoid dangerous climate change. However, this is proving to be difficult, and because geoengineering may possibly provide useful ways to

support these efforts, and even actually reduce global temperatures quickly in the event of a climate crisis, the report also recommended that it should be researched further. The purpose of such research would be to generate knowledge about the feasibility, costs and possible side effects of such methods, i.e. exactly the information that would be needed to decide whether they should be pursued, or banned.

Of course this is not to say that research should proceed without concern for environmental or social impacts. Maybe there should be a moratorium on large scale field experiments on the more extreme kinds of geoengineering. But should the same rules that apply to seeding the stratosphere with aerosols also apply to machines that scrub carbon dioxide from the air? The wide range of possible geoengineering technologies is likely to require a wide range of regulatory and governance arrangements, to make sure that safe and useful research can proceed while

already shown that well conserved and managed biodiversity can adapt to the impacts of climate change through shifting habitat, changing life cycles, or the development of new physical traits.

However, the CBD and the United Nations Framework Convention for Climate Change (UNFCCC) do not as yet have any institutional linkages. The conventions should coordinate with each other, and suggestions on CBD and UNFCCC implementation beyond 2010 should be enforced. Opportunities to implement mutually-beneficial activities between the Conventions have rarely been realized. Neither of the Conventions has taken any initiatives for joint collaborations to combat impacts of climate change, reduce biodiversity loss and thus contribute to the Millennium Development Goals. There is, therefore, a need to link these Conventions, whose combined efforts can combat climate change and its impacts on ecosystems and contribute to poverty eradication.

Conventions should advocate for cooperation

These two conventions should focus on complementarities between biodiversity and climate change and thus advocate for cooperation at global, regional and national levels to conserve and manage biodiversity as an adaptation and mitigation strategy. Actions and initiatives should be taken by the conventions to increase the level of understanding of the relationship between climate change and biodiversity. Even the focal points of CBD and UNFCCC at the national level hardly collaborate and take actions for a common goal. The conventions should encourage their Parties at the national level to collaborate in the implementation of objectives of the CBD and UNFCCC through mitigation and adaptation mechanisms within their country, or at least take complementary initiatives. The transboundary, regional and sub-regional programmes on climate change and biodiversity should be promoted by these two conventions.

The IPCC, tasked with evaluating the risks of climate change and implementing the UNFCCC, helped to move the climate change debate to the top of agenda. But, no such intergovernmental body for implementing and monitoring CBD actions currently exists. The Intergovernmental Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES), endorsed during the Busan meeting in Korea in June 2010, is believed to strengthen the science policy interface on biodiversity. However, this platform does not assure the linkages between climate change and biodiversity. Along with strengthening the science policy interface, this platform should also focus on implementing and monitoring actions of the CBD and its linkages with the climate change agenda of UNFCCC. The platform should help the CBD plan achievable goals and the Biodiversity Indicators Partnership (BIP) should develop and promote feasible and practical indicators for assessing and monitoring of biodiversity in order to achieve post-2010 targets and cope with the potential impacts of climate change. [sb]

risky and controversial research is controlled.

The Royal Society is now working on an international initiative to address these issues. Together with TWAS, the academy of science for the developing world, and the Environmental Defense Fund, we are convening the Solar Radiation Management Governance Initiative. This project will work with scientists, NGOs, policymakers and other experts from around the world to develop appropriate recommendations on how different solar geoengineering activities should most effectively be governed. Such efforts will complement and inform the request from SBSTTA for the CBD Executive Secretary to compile a report on the links between biodiversity and the various geoengineering technologies.

Policymakers require good quality information in order to determine appropriate regulations. Decisions on geoengineering, as with climate or biodiversity, must be based on the best available evidence. A moratorium on research would

only serve to preserve our ignorance.

Professor John Shepherd FRS, Chair, Royal Society geoengineering working group, Co-chair, SRMGI steering group

Intervening in the Planet's Climate is Everyone's Business

Dear Editorial Board,

Professor Shepherd states that "two separate articles from the same NGO" in [square brackets], which we assume are those written by ETC Group, called for a ban on geoengineering research. ETC Group has never called for a ban on geoengineering research; we support a moratorium on field trials and real-world geoengineering experiments.

Professor Shepherd attributes this position, held by many governments, scientists, civil society organizations, Indigenous Peoples and social movements, to "fear and suspicion" as opposed to "evidence and knowledge." It is possible however to be both knowledgeable and suspicious. There is little reason for the

global South to trust the governments, industries or scientists of OECD states that are interested in geoengineering to protect their interests. After all, these are the same governments responsible for climate change who have spent trillions of dollars to protect their industries while allowing more than a billion people to go hungry. We know that some "solar radiation management" experiments could threaten the food supplies of up to two billion people¹.

There is tremendous arrogance in the notion of "solar radiation management (SRM)," and in designing a blueprint for the governance of such projects through a SRM Governance Initiative, especially if that initiative results in a "voluntary code of practice." The governments of the world have barely begun to grasp the notion of blocking sunlight to reduce warming, so embarking on a governance structure under which it could take place is inappropriate.

Finally, language adopted by SBSTTA does indeed refer to activities, just as the 2008 moratorium on ocean fertilization referred to "activities." This did not stop anyone from thinking or talking about (or publishing on) ocean fertilization. Rather, we have witnessed two years of lively scientific debate and greater civil society and government involvement, leading to a deeper awareness of the precaution required in the face of planet-altering technologies – especially those involving profit-seeking private sector actors.

COP 10 must adopt language that prohibits the experimentation or deployment of geoengineering with cross border impacts to prevent high-risk technologies from being tested on a population of unwitting subjects according to rules designed by those in control of the technologies. If the Industrial Revolution has taught us anything, it is that intervening in the planet's climate is everyone's business.

Silvia Ribeiro, ETC Group, Mexico

1 Alan Robock et al., "A Test for Geoengineering?" Science, 29 January 2010, Vol. 327, no. 5965, pp. 530-31.

The Bushmeat Debate in Central Africa and the Need for an Objective Monitoring Tool

By Stéphane Ringuet (sringuet@wwf.fr or stephane.ringuet@wanadoo.fr), Regional Director, Central Africa; Roland Melisch, Senior Programme Director, Africa and Europe; Nathalie van Vliet, Bushmeat Strategic Advisor; Germain Ngandjui, Senior Programme Officer Central Africa; All authors with TRAFFIC, the Wildlife Trade Monitoring Network, see: www.traffic.org

In recent decades, the Central Africa bushmeat issue has largely been documented through publication of an increasing number of projects and programmes that aim to understand, assess and quantify consumption, hunting and trade in bushmeat and sometimes also examine how to tackle hunting and trade where overexploitation or illegal hunting takes place. Bushmeat has been documented as the main source of dietary protein and one of the most important sources of income for rural people in Central Africa, where the current annual harvest could exceed two million tonnes.

There is evidence that the scale of hunting occurring in Central Africa poses a threat to many tropical forest species. However, the long-term persistence of the bushmeat trade, documented in Africa over several centuries, suggests that the trade can be sustainable for resilient species (Cawlishaw *et al.* 2005, Nasi *et al.*, 2008). There is an increased recognition that the notion of sustainability in the context of bushmeat trade should include sociological and economic dimensions as recommended in 2009 by the Convention on Biological Diversity's (CBD) Liaison Group on Bushmeat.

Numerous governmental and intergovernmental bodies and NGOs are involved in projects shedding light on the bushmeat issue from very different angles, including in sectors relating to development, applied science, food, conservation and health. However, the ecological, social, economic and health implications of the bushmeat harvest and trade are still debated. Indeed, some talk of a "bushmeat crisis" but a detailed look provides a complex picture: is it a biodiversity decline crisis with an empty forest syndrome, a food or development crisis for

rural, particular local and indigenous communities, or in some instances, does this "crisis" refer to the health risks for consumers, or a combination of any of the above?

Clearly a full picture of bushmeat issues in Central Africa and a comprehensive analysis of the lessons learned through projects at national or regional levels are currently lacking. Policy decision-makers in Central Africa need to identify what the "crisis" is, and when it has occurred to know what remedial action is needed to tackle it. At least two guiding governing frameworks stand as examples of such demands upon decision-makers; the report of the Liaison Group on Bushmeat to the CBD; and the operational document relating to the Central African Forest Commission's (COMIFAC) Convergence Plan.

Since 2008, TRAFFIC has supported the CBD and COMIFAC in the development of a Central African Bushmeat Monitoring System through a participatory approach, including representatives of national institutions, scientific and technical institutions or organizations, NGOs and the private sector. In particular, TRAFFIC organized two workshops in Douala, Cameroon, in December 2008 and February 2010, to develop, in collaboration with selected key stakeholders, a monitoring system based on available aggregated survey information to provide a regular overview through proxy indicators. Discussions were held about the aim and scope of the monitoring system "Système de suivi de la viande de brousse en Afrique centrale" (SYVBAC), its potential structure and function, methodological aspects, challenges of data collection and site selection, identification of indicators, and also partnership and advocacy issues.

Indigenous and local communities suffer most from the aforementioned crisis' scenarios. Thus key input is provided at various stages of the development of SYVBAC by representatives of the *Réseau des Populations Autochtones et locales pour la gestion durable des forêts denses et humides d'Afrique Centrale* (REPALEAC). Discussions and information-sharing underlines the strong interest and



TRAFFIC
the wildlife trade monitoring network



TOP: Bushmeat market in Makokou, Gabon. BOTTOM: Children selling porcupine meat *Atherurus africanus*, South West Cameroon (Photos courtesy Nathalie van Vliet/TRAFFIC).

support of participants to contribute to the development of SYVBAC.

Ultimately we hope that SYVBAC will help decision-makers to have relevant and much needed data on bushmeat harvest, use and trade to hand. Government decision-makers will become increasingly better informed, primarily to meet national policy and development needs, but also to respond to various requests for inputs to the international fora and conventions such as *inter alia* CBD, Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora, Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, World Health Organization, International Tropical Timber Organization, regional bodies, e.g., COMIFAC and the Congo Basin Forest Partnership, and national bushmeat action plans and respective strategies, legislation and forest management plans. [sb]

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- Cowlshaw, G., Mendelson, S., & Rowcliffe, J.M. (2005). Evidence of post-depletion sustainability in a mature bushmeat market. *Journal of Applied Ecology*, 42, 460–468.
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- TRAFFIC acknowledges the German Ministry for Economic Co-operation and Development (BMZ), the French Development Agency/Agence Française de Développement (AFD) and WWF Germany for their kind support for the development of a bushmeat monitoring system.

in Search of a Philosophy

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unless it is based on the local efforts to rebuild the commons in their respective bio-regions by citizens in alliance with local business and local administration. It is impossible to cope with the diversity of local bio-regions through a global, international or national standardization and regulation. The local bio-regions have to become the basic units for decision-making in support of biodiversity. This is where the principle of “subsidiarity” which makes responsible the smaller unit on the lower echelon in local decisions (as supported by the Ecosystem Approach), leaving the higher echelon institutions the responsibility which cannot be exercised on the lower echelon due to the size of the eco-system concerned or the need to mobilize broader cooperation, locally, nationally, regionally or globally.

The principles of bio-regionalism and of a subsidiary global order based on local initiatives should be adopted in defining the multiplicity of units and complexity of the systems in the indicator-building and in the planning of the Post-2010 Roadmap. The eco-cultural diversities of the bio-regions, especially of the indigenous and traditional local communities, have to become the cornerstones of subsidiary local to global bio-diversity sustaining structures. The reproduction of this system can only be guaranteed if the use of biological services is strictly limited to their dividends. The above-stated description of the historical process that lead to biodiversity reduction and the principles following its critical assessment are proposed here as points for consideration by the State-Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity in their decision to prepare a document specifying the post-2010 Goals and Road-Map. [sb]

Update

Moratorium on Geo-engineering

By ETC Group

The fourteenth meeting of the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice (SBSTTA 14) in May 2010 agreed, with broad support, to send a recommendation for a moratorium on geoengineering activities to be decided at the tenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties (COP 10).

One geoengineering proposal has already been on the CBD agenda. Ocean fertilization is a process where iron or urea is added to the ocean in order to provoke a sudden phytoplankton bloom that could theoretically absorb excess CO₂ from the atmosphere, but that could also disrupt ocean ecosystems, including the marine food web. In an exercise of precaution, COP 9 in 2008 adopted decision IX/16 C, a *de facto* moratorium on ocean fertilization activities, with the exception of non-commercial (e.g., no carbon credits), small-scale experiments that could be carried out in coastal waters.

Following a COP 9 request, the Secretariat issued a synthesis of scientific papers on the impacts of ocean fertilization on biodiversity (*Technical Series No. 45*, www.cbd.int/doc/publications/cbd-ts-45-en.pdf), which further demonstrated the problems that ocean fertilization could have on marine biodiversity. Consequently, SBSTTA 14 recommended strengthening the COP 9 decision.

In addition, SBSTTA 14 acknowledged that other geoengineering techniques could also have harmful impacts on biodiversity and related livelihoods and decided to broaden the precautionary call to all geoengineering activities.

The expanded recommendation was initiated by delegates from four regions (Europe, Asia, Latin America and Africa) and almost reached consensus at SBSTTA. However, the recommendation goes to COP 10 in square brackets due to a last-minute request from the Canadian delegation.

Recommendations from SBSTTA 14 on geoengineering. XIV/5 In depth review of the work on biodiversity and climate change:

- (w) Ensure, in line and consistent with decision IX/16 C, on ocean fertilization and biodiversity and climate change, and in accordance with the precautionary approach, that no climate-related geo-engineering activities take place until there is an adequate scientific basis on which to justify such activities and appropriate consideration of the associated risks for the environment and biodiversity and associated social, economic and cultural impacts;]
- (n) Compile and synthesize available scientific information on the possible impacts of geo-engineering techniques on biodiversity and make it available for consideration at a meeting of the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice prior to the eleventh meeting of the Conference of the Parties

Geoengineering is not a solution to climate change (even advocates call it only a “plan B”) because it does not address the causes of climate change that continue to worsen.

In order to have a noticeable impact on the climate, geoengineering must be deployed on a massive scale. “Experiments” or “field trials” are actually equivalent to deployment in the real world because small-scale tests do not deliver the data on the effects on climate. For people and biodiversity however, the impacts would likely also be massive, immediate and possibly irreversible.

Therefore, those who nevertheless want to do research and experiments on geoengineering should be confined to laboratory tests and computer modeling. Otherwise, the rest of the world will be exposed to geoengineering activities, which are billed as “experiments” but could have serious impacts.

Global action is urgently needed to stop unilateral attempts to manipulate the climate through geoengineering, that will have impact on many others. COP 10 should endorse the recommendations from SBSTTA 14, ensuring that geoengineering activities are not permitted and that any research is confined to laboratories and modeling and not be allowed to take place in the real world. [sb]

Many civil society organizations and concerned scientists have launched a global campaign against geoengineering called “Hands off Mother Earth”. For more information: www.handsoffmotherearth.org



(Photo courtesy Holly Shrumm)

Biodiversity Justice

◀ *continued from page 3*

- species, in line with the objectives and principles of the CBD, that include the rights of communities to access, control, and govern forests.
9. Parties have an obligation to defend and protect the smallholder and peasant farmers, herders, fishers and other small-scale food providers who conserve, use and develop agricultural biodiversity that will secure our global food system as called for in the path-breaking International Agricultural Assessment on Science, Knowledge and Technology for Development (IAASTD) involving over 400 experts worldwide and endorsed in 2008 by 58 countries. It is also their responsibility to prohibit any systems, policies, processes or technologies as well as programs or policies which might damage agricultural biodiversity and related ecosystem functions.
 10. Parties should agree to improve governance of existing protected areas, and ensure that any new protected areas are based on the full and effective participation of indigenous peoples and local communities and respect for their rights (including free, prior and informed consent).
 11. Parties should agree to expand protected areas (terrestrial and marine) to include a greater representation of biodiversity and healthy ecosystems, but only with the free,

prior and informed consent of affected communities. Any new protected areas must not be part of biodiversity offset or other compensation programmes that allow business-as-usual practices to continue elsewhere.

The CBD COP 10 must be a turning point for biodiversity policy. We need to strengthen and renew efforts to conserve and sustainably use biodiversity and ensure benefits flow to those who nurture it. We need to strengthen the CBD's role in international policy and to strengthen its implementation at all levels. Civil Society calls upon parties to take heed of these imperatives for the sake of humanity and all living things/beings/biodiversity. [sb]

The Convention on Biological Diversity Alliance is a network of activists and representatives from non-governmental organizations (NGOs), community based organizations (CBOs), social movements and Indigenous Peoples' organizations (IPOs) advocating for improved and informed participation in Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) processes.

The "Top 10 for COP 10" briefing papers, from which this message is drawn from, were developed collectively by the CBD Alliance community which includes civil society and Indigenous Peoples' organizations. However, it should not be understood as representing the position of the CBD Alliance or of civil society in general. [sb]



(Photo courtesy Holly Shrumm)

[square brackets]

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Managing Editors

CBD SECRETARIAT
Neil Pratt
Johan Hedlund (johan.hedlund@cbd.int)
CBD ALLIANCE
Jessica Dempsey

Typesetting

Em Dash Design

Comments and suggestions for future columns are welcome and should be addressed to Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity

413 Rue St. Jacques, Suite 800
Montréal, Québec, H2Y 1N9 Canada
Tel. +1-514-288-2220 Fax: +1-514-288-6588
secretariat@cbd.int
www.cbd.int

[square brackets] is a newsletter focusing on the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) and civil society. It aims to draw content and opinion from relevant individuals, organizations and members of civil society and provide information on issues of importance to the CBD, and on views and actions being undertaken by civil society organizations.

This newsletter aims to present a diversity of civil society opinions. The views expressed in the articles are the views of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the views of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity, its Secretariat or the CBD Alliance.

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