



PRESS RELEASE



Major gap between what consumers want and what companies are doing to respect biodiversity

- Majority of consumers feel companies have a moral obligation to have a positive impact on biodiversity
- Awareness and understanding of biodiversity rising every year.

20 June 2018 – New surveys of more than 5,000 consumers in five countries indicate that the majority (79 per cent) feel that “companies have a moral obligation” to have a positive impact on people and biodiversity in their sourcing of natural ingredients, but only 37 per cent feel “confident that companies pay serious attention” to these issues.

The non-profit Union for Ethical BioTrade (UEBT) published the 2018 edition of the *Biodiversity Barometer* today. The report offers new insights as well as lessons from a decade of research on biodiversity awareness among over 60,000 consumers in sixteen countries.

The report was unveiled at the Beauty of Sourcing with Respect Conference, an annual event in Paris that brings together executives from global beauty brands, as well as company leaders from the natural pharmaceutical, specialty food, and personal care sectors, in addition to non-profit experts, policymakers and others.

One positive finding from *Biodiversity Barometer* is that awareness and understanding of biodiversity is rising each year.

Dr Cristiana Paşca Palmer, Executive Secretary of the UN Convention on Biological Diversity said, “It is promising to see that consumers want action from business. This trend shows the opportunity for businesses to embrace biodiversity at the core of their business models. The *Biodiversity Barometer* shows we are heading in the right direction to reach the global target of



making people aware of the values of biodiversity and the steps they can take to conserve and use it sustainably. However, much more still needs to be done.”

New this year is the clear evidence that biodiversity awareness is becoming more mainstream, beyond the well-educated and higher income brackets: awareness among people in low income brackets grew 15 per cent points over the last 10 years. In addition, young consumers aged 16 to 24 who were able to define biodiversity correctly, grew 20 per cent points, compared to 10 per cent points growth in awareness across all those surveyed.

“Growing awareness, along with a clear disparity between what consumers *want* from brands, and how few brands they can actually *name* that are ‘walking the talk,’ shows an incredible opportunity for business to take concrete action to position their brands as leaders in sourcing with respect for biodiversity and people,” said Rik Kutsch Lojenga, UEBT’s Executive Director and a leading global expert on ethical sourcing.

The only brand that currently stands out among consumers on respect for people and biodiversity remains Natura Cosmetics in Brazil: 62 per cent of respondents mentioned Natura. Its sister brand, The Body Shop, was mentioned most often in the UK, but still with only 33 per cent recognition. It must be noted that consumers might not be aware of the actions being taken to conserve and sustainably use biodiversity taken by other companies.

Respondents show a strong personal connection to biodiversity. Seventy-four per cent of those surveyed in the UEBT report agreed that it would “personally affect them” if biodiversity disappears. They find biodiversity conservation important for their personal well-being and that of future generations: more than 80 per cent of people in France, Germany and Brazil said that biodiversity is important to their quality of life.

The findings also show that people want to personally contribute to biodiversity conservation, although they don’t know how. Seventy-four per cent of respondents agree that buying products that respect biodiversity makes them “feel good.”

“This latest *Biodiversity Barometer* report is encouraging businesses to seize the opportunities offered by growing consumer awareness and contribute to a world in which people and biodiversity thrive,” said Dr Paşca Palmer.

NOTE TO EDITORS

Biodiversity Barometer

To access the full report and more key takeaways, quotes and statistics by country, consumer group as well as top brands cited go to www.biodiversitybarometer.org or download a summary PDF of the 2018 report.

About the Union for Ethical BioTrade (UEBT)

UEBT is a non-profit association that promotes sourcing with respect. They support and verify companies’ commitments to innovation and sourcing that contribute to a world in which people and biodiversity thrive. More information can be found at: www.uebt.org

Beauty of Sourcing with Respect Conference

Since 2008 UEBT has been organizing the *Beauty of Sourcing with Respect Conference* annually. The conference is organized on a non-profit basis. This year's edition is supported by UEBT members like Natura, Symrise, Weleda, and partners like L'Oréal, ABS Capacity Development Initiative and the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD). For more information please visit the UEBT website: www.uebt.org

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The Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD)

Opened for signature at the Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro in 1992, and entering into force in December 1993, the Convention on Biological Diversity is an international treaty for the conservation of biodiversity, the sustainable use of the components of biodiversity and the equitable sharing of the benefits derived from the use of genetic resources. With 196 Parties so far, the Convention has near universal participation among countries. The Convention seeks to address all threats to biodiversity and ecosystem services, including threats from climate change, through scientific assessments, the development of tools, incentives and processes, the transfer of technologies and good practices and the full and active involvement of relevant stakeholders including indigenous and local communities, youth, NGOs, women and the business community. The Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety and the Nagoya Protocol on Access and Benefit Sharing are supplementary agreements to the Convention. The Cartagena Protocol, which entered into force on 11 September 2003, seeks to protect biological diversity from the potential risks posed by living modified organisms resulting from modern biotechnology. To date, 171 Parties have ratified the Cartagena Protocol. The Nagoya Protocol aims at sharing the benefits arising from the utilization of genetic resources in a fair and equitable way, including by appropriate access to genetic resources and by appropriate transfer of relevant technologies. It entered into force on 12 October 2014 and to date has been ratified by 107 Parties. For more information visit: www.cbd.int. For additional information, please contact: David Ainsworth on +1 514 287 7025 or at david.ainsworth@cbd.int; or Johan Hedlund on +1 514 287 6670 or at johan.hedlund@cbd.int
