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COUNTDOWN
2010
SAVE BIODIVERSITY

Save Biodiversity 03/09 - Update from Countdown 2010

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^ Dear Countdown 2010 Partners, Dear Readers,



Happy Biodiversity Day to all of you! Today everywhere in the world people are celebrating the International Day for Biological Diversity. This year's theme is [Invasive Alien Species](#). The [Convention on Biological Diversity](#) has released a video on the role of local actors in tackling invasive alien species. Click [here](#) to learn more.

In preparation to the [Countdown 2010 Partners' Assembly 2009](#) which will take place in Brussels on 24 June, this newsletter lays the ground for some of the key issues that will be discussed during this year's meeting. The Feature section focuses on communicating biodiversity and the International Year of Biodiversity with some examples for successful tools for engagement. To find out more about the agenda of the Partners' Assembly click on the [Internal article](#).

Upcoming Events

16-22 May 2009
[Biodiversity Week](#)
(China and across the world)

21-22 May 2009
[VI Foro de Biodiversidad](#)
(Vitoria-Gasteiz, Spain)

22 May 2009
[The International Day for Biological Diversity 2009](#)
(various locations)

27-28 May 2009
[Conference on Wilderness and Large Natural Habitat Areas in Europe](#)
(Prague, Czech Republic)

3 June 2009
[First Global Private Donor Forum on](#)

Countless events will take place in 2010. How to keep track of them? Check the [Biodiversity Year Schedule of Events 2010](#) on the Countdown 2010 website! Add your events and share them with other Countdown 2010 Partners. More in the [Do it Yourself](#) article.

Today's celebrations are also a means to remind people of the continued decline of biodiversity. The [Red List Assessment of European Amphibians and Reptiles](#) published today reveals that about one quarter of the species of these groups are threatened with extinction. Read more in the [State of Biodiversity](#) article.

On 19-20 May, Lima (Peru) hosted a high-level meeting of the South American CBD National Focal Points, regional bodies and other parties to discuss the 2010 biodiversity challenge and post-2010 prospects in South America. Currently there are 17 Countdown 2010 partners, including 5 governments, in the South American Hub. Read the [news story](#) on the meeting.

Enjoy reading!



[Sebastian Winkler](#)
[Head of Countdown 2010](#)
May 22, 2009

^ Feature: Communicating the 2010 biodiversity target



According to the [Eurobarometer survey](#) in 2007, only 20 % of Europeans know what biodiversity means. Too often the terminology used to communicate biodiversity is overly scientific and not easily understandable by a general audience. The term "biodiversity" itself is not easy to understand, since it describes a very complex scientific concept. The complexity of the message is one of the major difficulties that communicators encounter when trying to convey the 2010 target to their audiences.

This is not all. The 2010 biodiversity target carries in itself a negative message referring to "*halting the loss of biodiversity*". Negative communications can discourage audiences from engaging. The vast scale

[Biodiversity](#)
(Berlin, Germany)

5 June 2009
[World Environment Day](#)
(various locations)

6-7 June 2009
[Festival of Nature](#)
(Bristol, UK)

8-10 June 2009
[Nature Directors' Meeting](#)
(Prague, Czech Republic)

11-13 June 2009
[Urban Nature – ICLEI World Congress](#)
(Edmonton, Canada)

14-17 June 2009
[ICLEI World Congress](#)
(Edmonton, Canada)

18-19 June 2009
[Biodiversity monitoring and conservation: bridging the gaps between global commitment and local action](#)
(London, UK)

23-26 June 2009
[EC Green Week](#)
(Brussels)

24 June 2009
[Countdown 2010 Partners' Assembly](#)
(Brussels)

30 June 2009
[L'Ile de France se mobilise pour le](#)

of the problem of biodiversity loss can be perceived as insurmountable which stops people from taking action. While on one side the loss of biodiversity cannot be denied, communication can sometimes be more powerful in bringing about action and inspire people if it focuses on positive messages, rather than only negative ones.

Too often the communication on biodiversity and the 2010 challenge is targeted at the “converted” – those who already understand and care about nature. In this way, we fail to reach a wider audience and attract new people to the biodiversity cause. After the great impact of climate change campaigns on the general public, it is now hard to convince people that there are other important conservation issues.

These are some of the key results of the workshop “Communicating biodiversity: what works and what doesn’t” which was held at the World Conservation Congress in Barcelona last year. At the event, Ed Gillespie, Director of [Futerra Sustainability Communications](#), presented the experience of his company in overcoming the obstacles of communicating biodiversity. Ed will give a speech on the topic at the Countdown 2010 Partners’ Assembly 2009. See the [agenda](#) of the Partners’ Assembly.

[International Year of Biodiversity: Let’s rock!](#)



The year 2010 is, more than any other time, an opportunity for you and us to raise awareness of the importance that biodiversity has in everybody’s life. The momentum created around the 2010 target and biodiversity all over the world thanks to you will now culminate in the UN International Year of Biodiversity (IYB) in 2010 to further promote engagement of the public and other actors while reminding people of the urgency to stop biodiversity loss.

IYB will start with the official launch by the [CBD COP9 Presidency](#) in Berlin which will be followed by an event in Paris where a dedicated exhibition by [UNESCO](#) will be presented. This will be followed by an international consultation on the post 2010 target in [Trondheim](#), Norway, which will be supplemented by various events around the globe to advance the biodiversity agenda and to mark the International Year of Biodiversity. In September, Heads of State and Governments will meet in New York at the [United Nations General Assembly \(UNGA\)](#) to set the post 2010 target. The official Closing Ceremony will be held in Japan by the CBD COP10 Presidency.

Along with seeking to increase public awareness, IYB also coincides with the expiry of the 2010 target; governments will be asked to report on the activities undertaken to deliver on their pledge.

[Compte-à-Rebours 2010 pour la Biodiversité](#)
(Paris, France)

5-9 July 2009
[Second International Youth Symposium for Biodiversity](#)
(Ottawa, Canada)

6-8 July 2009
[Expert Workshop on the 2010 Biodiversity Indicators and Post-2010 Indicator Development](#)
(Reading, United Kingdom)

31 August -4 September 2009
[3rd World Climate Conference](#)
(Geneva, Switzerland)

15-18 September 2009
[2009 Global Mayors Forum](#)
(Hong Kong & Shenzhen, China)

6-13 November 2009
[9th World Wilderness Congress](#)
(Merida, Mexico)

17-19 November 2009
[Lessons for Sustainable Development](#)
(Malaysia)

18-20 November 2009
[Meeting of the Global Partnership](#)

How to ensure a powerful message in 2010? Only through a unified message and coordinated communication efforts, Countdown 2010 Partners and all other actors involved in the celebrations will be able to spread the message of biodiversity outside the environmental community. [Countdown 2010 Partners' Assembly 2009](#) will be a unique opportunity to get actors together to share plans and experiences, and come up with the best strategy for IYB. David Ainsworth, from the [Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity](#), will present the CBD plans for IYB and facilitate the debate in one of the breakout sessions of the Partners' Assembly.

[Connect2earth: web-based platform on green issues](#)



The use of new technologies to communicate biodiversity is one of the most powerful tools to reach a wide public. Websites, web-portals, blogs and so on have the ability of attracting large amounts of people, especially young generations. Nokia, IUCN and WWF have come together to provide the youth with a platform to debate and share experiences on environmental issues.

This year the popular online community [connect2earth.org](#) has launched a new service that links young people directly with the world's top environmental experts to talk about headline-grabbing topics that they care about such as climate change, the energy crisis, and species loss.

Community members can debate by posting text, images, audio, video and then follow the discussion live as it plays out on the web or on their mobile phone. Connect2earth community members, together with a jury of green experts, will then pick a winning contribution, giving the winner an opportunity to take even more action. The winner can snag a trip to be part of an official delegation to the United Nations climate negotiations in Copenhagen later this year, or even get hands-on experience in a real on-the-ground conservation project somewhere in the world.

Julia Marton-Lefèvre, IUCN Director General, welcomed the launch of this new service of connect2earth and said "connect2earth is a great way for young people to engage with environmentalists, but also for us to learn from young people. They are the future of our planet and they need a voice in the global debate – in both the corridors of power and on the ground".

- [Connect2earth.org](#)

[on Cities and Biodiversity](#)
(Curitiba, Brazil)

News from Countdown 2010

22 May 2009 [Europe's amphibians and reptiles under threat](#)

14 May 2009 [More Critically Endangered birds on IUCN Red List than ever](#)

13 May 2009 [The 2010 challenge in South America](#)

8 May 2009 [Climate Change has the IPCC – does biodiversity need IPBES?](#)

30 April 2009 [Barroso sets EU priorities for biodiversity](#)

28 April 2009 [Finland divided over the protection of native lake seal](#)

27 April 2009 [A boost for biodiversity: G8+ Environment Ministers show leadership on the post 2010 target and make progress on climate change](#)

22 April 2009

Home: We all have a date with the planet!



The power of movies in conveying ideas and influencing people's way of thinking and acting is well known. "[An inconvenient truth](#)" by Al Gore shook the entire world when it was released and it played a major role in shaping people's attitudes and habits. Climate change finally became an issue that everybody would debate and care about.

On 5 June Yann Arthus-Bertrand, the creator of the world's renowned photographic exhibition "Earth from above" will release his new movie "[Home](#)" in more than 50 countries. The movie will be launched on Youtube at <http://www.youtube.com/homeproject>.

Through stunning images and videos shot from the sky around the whole world, Yann Arthus-Bertrand tries to raise awareness of the need to act and start rebuilding what humanity has destroyed over the last 200,000 years: "Humanity has barely ten years to reverse the trend, become aware of the full extent of its spoliation of the Earth's riches and change its patterns of consumption" reads the website.

The author hopes that the Youtube release will reach and motivate to action a huge number of people by creating a viral effect. We have worked with numerous of our local authority partners on disseminating the movie on 5 June and should you be interested in staging it in your city feel free to contact us.

Also don't miss "[The end of the line](#)", the first major feature documentary film on the impact of overfishing on our oceans, to be released on 6 June. Visit <http://endoftheline.com/>

- [Home](#)
- [The end of the line](#)

Do it yourself: Share your calendars on BYSE 2010!



Do you want to know what activities are planned for 2010? Would you like to promote your initiatives for the International Year of Biodiversity but you don't know how? The [Biodiversity Year Schedule of Events 2010 \(BYSE 2010\)](#) is the right tool for you.

Countdown 2010, together with [Edit Public Awareness](#), has created a

[European Minerals Day on biodiversity](#)

17 April 2009 [Less biodiversity in the north](#)

10 April 2009 [Living Diversity](#)

1 April 2009 [1 million Euros for biodiversity!](#)

25 March 2009 [Espoo wins second edition of Finnish Countdown 2010 competition](#)

23 March 2009 [Switch off your lights for Earth Hour](#)

20 March 2009 [A Boost for the Bbbbs...Bonn, Brussels, Berlin for biodiversity!](#)

11 March 2009 [It's time for post-2010 choices](#)

24 February 2009 [Building on long standing foundations: Strategic Partnership Agreement signed between IUCN and Belgium](#)

[More news](#)

New Partners

Countdown 2010

calendar to allow partners and other stakeholders to search for events in 2010 and beyond. This calendar contains all biodiversity-related activities scheduled for 2010 organized by museums, zoos, science centres, research institutes, NGOs, local and national governments, businesses, etc. from all over the world! Possible events include: temporary exhibitions, galleries openings, seminars, workshops, expeditions, educational activities,... or any other awareness-raising activity promoting biodiversity knowledge and conservation.

Add your events and let others know what you plan for the International Year of Biodiversity!

- [BYSE 2010](#)

Internal: Have you registered for the Partners' Assembly 2009?



This year more than ever your input is needed at the annual Assembly of Countdown 2010 Partners. The International Year of Biodiversity and communicating biodiversity will be the main themes on the table this year. In addition, you will participate in fruitful discussions on the post-2010 framework and you will have your say on the future of our Countdown 2010 initiative.

Win the [2010 Activity Award](#): send us your poster with your best communication project for biodiversity by 10 June. Learn how to attract the attention of the press in the [Media Training](#) course which will run parallel to the meeting: register at office@countdown2010.net. The Partners' Assembly 2009 is your opportunity to share your experiences and successes for the 2010 biodiversity target with the Countdown 2010 team and numerous other partners committed like you to help save biodiversity.

The year 2010 will be a crucial year. Not only is it the final year for the biodiversity target and the final stretch of the Countdown 2010 initiative, but it is also the year when world attention will be drawn to biodiversity thanks to the celebrations for the International Year of Biodiversity. The year 2010 is your opportunity to act and boost your outreach! Come to the Partners' Assembly 2009 and let's plan together a successful 2010.

The Partners' Assembly will take place in Brussels on 24 June. You can find all the information on the [Countdown 2010 website](#).

- [Agenda](#)
- [Registration form](#)
- [2010 Activity Award](#)

would like to welcome its new partners:

[British Science Association](#)

[CESTRAS Centro de Estudos e Estratégias para a Sustentabilidade](#)

[Conservation Himalayas](#)

[Finnish Association for Nature Conservation](#)

[Forum Florestal - Estrutura Federativa da Floresta Portuguesa](#)

[Fureso Kommune](#)

[Grupo Empresarial de Obras Civiles, S.L.](#)

[Hero Productions](#)

[IVN - Oirschot](#)

[Mass Extinction Memorial Observatory LTD \(MEMO\)](#)

[Medmaravis](#)

[NatureGate LTD](#)

[Region de Bruxelles-Capitale](#)

[Stjordal Kommune](#)

[Swarovski Optik](#)

- [Media Training](#)

^State of Biodiversity: Europe's amphibians and reptiles on the decline



One fifth of Europe's reptiles and nearly a quarter of its amphibians are threatened with extinction, according to a European assessment by the [IUCN Red List of Threatened Species™](#).

The study, commissioned by the European Commission, shows that the population trends are equally alarming. More than half of amphibians (59%) have declining populations and 42% of reptiles are declining. For 23% of amphibians and 21% of reptiles, the situation is so severe that they are classified as threatened in the [European Red List](#).

Europe is home to 151 species of reptiles and 85 species of amphibians. Of these, six reptile species have been classified as Critically Endangered on the IUCN Red List, including the Tenerife Speckled Lizard (*Gallotia intermedia*), 11 as Endangered and 10 as Vulnerable. Two amphibian species have been classified as Critically Endangered, five as Endangered, including the Appenine Yellow-bellied Toad (*Bombina pachypus*) – in the picture – and 11 as Vulnerable.

The results show that reptile biodiversity increases from north to south in Europe, with the highest species richness found on the Balkan peninsula. The Iberian and Italian peninsulas are all important centres of diversity, as are the Mediterranean and Macaronesian islands. For amphibians, there is high diversity in France, Germany and the Czech Republic, as well as in the south and on islands.

Habitat loss is the greatest threat to both reptiles and amphibians in Europe. Other major threats include pollution, invasive alien species and deliberate persecution, particularly for snakes. Read more on the [IUCN website](#).

Two events on monitoring biodiversity and developing indicators will take place in the UK in the next few months. The meeting on 18–19 June in London on [Biodiversity monitoring and conservation: bridging the gaps between global commitment and local action](#) organized by the Zoological Society of London will be followed by the [Expert Workshop on the 2010 Biodiversity Indicators and Post-2010 Indicator Development](#) on 6–8 July in Reading.

- [IUCN newsstory](#)

[The Natural History Museum](#)

[Tronçais...Patrimoine de l'Humanité](#)

[All partners](#)

You want to join as well? See [here](#) or speak to the [Secretariat!](#)

- [European Red List](#)

^Focus on: Natureparif



Preserving and restoring biodiversity represents a major ecological, economic and social responsibility challenge for [Natureparif](#). Being among the first agencies in Europe exclusively dealing with biodiversity conservation at regional level, Natureparif is part of the Ecoregion project launched by the Regional Council and it participates, within this framework, in the Countdown 2010 initiative to halt biodiversity loss in Europe by 2010.

At a regional level, Natureparif fosters dialogue between the various stakeholders, local governments, naturalist associations, enterprises, researchers, the State and the Regional council of Ile-de-France acting in the field of monitoring and protecting biodiversity, in particular in the context of climate change. Last January 2009, Natureparif organized the [Countdown 2010 signing ceremony](#) of 13 municipalities in the Ile-de-France Region which are among the first local governments to sign the Countdown 2010 Declaration in France. The event had good media coverage and an article on Countdown 2010 was published in the [Metro](#) newspaper.

During the International Year for Biodiversity 2010, Natureparif commits itself to raise awareness of biodiversity issues and to communicate them among French stakeholders. Indeed, the compilation and networking of all the information and expertise related to biodiversity in Ile-de-France, the establishment of a regional biodiversity observatory, the provision of information to the general public on the realities of biodiversity in the Ile-de-France are actions that Natureparif will lead. The perspective of its action is also oriented towards the support of institutions, particularly in terms of regional development policy and inclusion of biodiversity considerations in economic planning, in order to promote the conservation and more rational use of natural resources.

Have a look at [Natureparif's page](#) on Countdown 2010 website or at the [agency's website](#)!

- [Countdown 2010 and Natureparif article in Metro](#)
- [List of Countdown 2010 partners from Ile-de-France Region](#)

^LARA: Cities celebrate biodiversity day



In 2007, the world became essentially an urban planet with majority of its population living in cities. The impact of cities on biodiversity is constantly increasing which in turn increases their responsibilities to protect and conserve their surroundings. Cities must be on board if we want to make a difference for biodiversity.

The [Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity \(CBD\)](#) has released a video on the initiatives for the International Year of Biological Diversity carried out by several cities within the [Global Partnership for Cities and Biodiversity](#) launched last year. The celebrations are a great opportunity for local governments to inform their citizens about biodiversity and in particular about [Invasive Alien Species](#), the main theme of the International Year for Biological Diversity 2009.

Invasive Alien Species are plants, animals and other organisms that are non-native to an ecosystem. They represent the third biggest cause of biodiversity loss, as they can out-compete native organisms for food and habitat and thus cause their extinction. It is estimated that at least 10-15% of invasive species have a negative economic or ecological impact. Increased measures are needed to regulate the spread of these species and ensure ecosystems are healthy.

Cities have a role to play in curbing the spread of invasive species by designing local landscapes to accommodate native species. Also, citizens can select native ornamental plants, control the spread of exotic plants, not allow exotic pets to escape, and follow biosafety rules when traveling to halt the spread of invasive species.

A brochure listing the activities organized by the cities of the Global Partnership for Cities and Biodiversity can be found [here](#). Let us know what your local government has organized for this year's celebrations!

- [International Day for Biological Diversity](#)
- [Global Partnership for Cities and Biodiversity](#)
- [Brochure](#)

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This newsletter is issued bi-monthly by Countdown 2010. We welcome comments, feedback and contributions to info@countdown2010.net. Previous issues of this newsletter can be found at www.countdown2010.net/article/newsletter.