



Biodiversity and Business
Convention for Biological Diversity
Third Business and the 2010 Biodiversity Challenge Conference
In Conjunction with the
UNEP Business and Industry Global Dialogue
Jakarta, Indonesia

**DAY 1 - Session 3.A – Monday 30 November 2009 15:00-18:00 – Parallel session
TOURISM**

BACKGROUND

Tourism may be the world's largest industry, and in 2008, tourism contributed 9.5% of global GDP, one in 13 of all jobs worldwide, and provided services to nearly 700 million international travellers, and up to perhaps 10 times the number of domestic travellers¹. Tourism is important at global scales given its reach across virtually all countries, where it is seen as a force for peace and better international understanding and cooperation. Within countries, tourism can contribute to national economic growth and development, environmental protection, and poverty reduction. It is especially important for developing countries, and is one of the top 5 foreign exchange earners for 83% of countries. At local scales, especially in poorer countries or regions, tourism can provide jobs and income from goods and services that support poverty reduction.

Tourism competitiveness has been highly related to environmental sustainability and to the competitive advantage offered by countries and areas with healthy biodiversity and ecosystems. Nature-based tourism has been growing rapidly, with increases of 20%- 30% annually since the 1990s, becoming an especially important source of revenue for developing countries, sometimes supporting biodiversity and protected areas. Ecotourism (small-scale nature-based tourism that also supports local communities), has also grown rapidly, and has become a vital source of revenue, especially in more remote areas of high-biodiversity developing countries.

Despite its global importance as an industry, as tourism has grown, its impacts on biodiversity, both positive and negative, have been overlooked. On the negative side, unmanaged and unregulated tourism has led to habitat destruction, pollution, water scarcity, and other actions that directly harm biodiversity. Yet when carefully managed, tourism has provided an economic and political justification for conservation, both at local scales by offering income and livelihood linked to conservation, and at regional and national scales, often attracting large numbers of tourists and bringing in money that then flows through economies. At broad scales however, tourism is not reducing biodiversity loss; its relationship with biodiversity is less than

¹ <http://www.unep.org/PDF/Tourism-and-biodiversity.pdf>



one would expect given its global reach and revenue. Across all industries, there is a growing view that the private sector needs to embrace sustainability principles by addressing what is known as the triple bottom line – jointly dealing with economic, environmental and social issues – to stay competitive over the long term. Aiming for this triple bottom line – with a attentive focus and rapid action on reducing biodiversity loss, is of fundamental importance for the long-term sustainability of the tourism sector itself, as well as for global biodiversity. Finally, better coordination between tourism and biodiversity conservation could help both to mitigate and adapt to the coming impacts of climate change. It is in the best interests of the tourism sector to embrace sustainability quickly and at significant scales, since tourism may be one of the economic sectors most affected by both biodiversity loss and climate change.

PURPOSE AND ISSUES TO ADDRESS

In this session, stakeholders from around the world will identify the necessary actions and partnerships to:

- rapidly engage the tourism industry to embrace a “triple bottom line” -- jointly dealing with economic, biodiversity and environment, and social issues.
- measure, monitor, and (a) reduce negative impacts of tourism on biodiversity and natural areas; and (b) enhance tourism’s positive contribute to biodiversity conservation, through improving funding for conservation and building constituencies for conservation;
- identify and support the right type and scale of tourism, nature-based tourism, or ecotourism for a given context to maximize benefits.

MODERATOR

- Katrina Brandon, Ph.D. Senior Technical Advisor, Conservation International, China

PANELISTS

- Albert Teo, Managing Director, Borneo EcoTours, Malaysia
- Ary Suhandi, Executive Director, Indonesian Eco Tourism Network, Indonesia
- Anthony Wong, Managing Director, Asian Overland Services, Malaysia
- Robert Lee, Deputy Director, UNESCO Office, Jakarta & Head of Environmental Sciences, Regional Science Bureau for Asia & Pacific, Indonesia

RAPPORTEUR

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