



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 2 - Session 5.B - Tuesday 1 December 2009 16:15-18:00 – Parallel session
STANDARDS AND CERTIFICATION

BACKGROUND

Standards have significantly evolved since the early 1980s. They have gone from being mere codes of conduct to which adherence is self-declared, to sophisticated instruments developed through participatory processes, accompanied by independent verification mechanisms. Their market impact has also changed significantly. While the first instruments put in place did not fully convince the public, certification schemes have now encountered the favour of consumers, notably those promoted by NGOs. Some of them have gained so much importance that they have gone from indirect incentives bringing a premium, to being important conditions to access certain markets.

Standards are also increasingly recognised as an important tool for biodiversity, though their potential remains largely untapped. A 2006 CBD decision (COP VII/17) invited businesses and relevant organizations and partnerships to develop and promote the wider use of good practice guidelines, benchmarks, certification schemes and reporting guidelines and standards, in particular performance standards in line with the 2010 indicators. Parties acknowledged that certification schemes that reflect the full range of biodiversity-related issues may contribute to the implementation of the Convention. But, as noted by the CBD COP-IX, biodiversity needs to be integrated further into industry standards, certification schemes, and guidelines.

Further consideration and discussion of ways to integrate biodiversity into private standards is also necessary. Decision 26 of CBD COP IX invited the International Social and Environmental Accreditation and Labelling Initiative (ISEAL) to collaborate on compiling information on the use and impact of international voluntary certification schemes towards the implementation of the CBD and develop knowledge sharing and technical assistance tools to encourage the wider uptake of best practice.¹ Most of the standards associated to ISEAL address issues related to biodiversity, albeit to different extents, with a range of issues addressed, including agriculture, forestry, fisheries and aquaculture, and climate change. Involving and considering other existing and evolving standards in discussions on biodiversity is also important.

¹ ISEAL is an association of practitioners of standards systems – systems that include the development of standards, the independent verification of compliance and where relevant the certification and labeling of products that comply with the standards. Its full members include FairTrade Labelling Organizations International (FLO), Forest Stewardship Council (FSC), International Federation of Organic Agriculture Movements (IFOAM), Marine Aquarium Council (MAC), Marine Stewardship Council (MSC), Rainforest Alliance / Sustainable Agriculture Network (RA/SAN), Social Accountability International (SAI) and the Union for Ethical BioTrade (UEBT).



Full ISEAL members standards focusing on biodiversity businesses	
Agriculture	IFOAM Basic Organic Standards, Rainforest Alliance/Sustainable Agriculture Network, Union for Ethical BioTrade
Forestry (inc NTFPs)	Forest Stewardship Council, Union for Ethical BioTrade
Fisheries and Aquaculture	Marine Stewardship Council, Marine Stewardship Council
Climate change	Rainforest Alliance/Sustainable Agriculture Network

Another important issue in regards to standards is the need for consultation practices that allow adequate consideration of the range of topics and perspectives linked to biodiversity. ISEAL members, for example, are committed to following good practices for setting standards, ensuring that the application of their standard results in measurable progress towards their social and environmental objectives, without creating unnecessary hurdles to international trade. Stakeholder consultation processes, including with local and indigenous communities and private sector, are important in ensuring standards take effective steps towards the implementation of the objectives of the CBD.

PURPOSE AND ISSUES TO ADDRESS

This session seeks to address ways and means to increase the contribution of standards and certification schemes towards the implementation of the CBD. The following issues will be looked at:

- How existing standards incorporate biodiversity related issues, and identification of major gaps.
- Ways to incorporate more biodiversity related issues in the standards of voluntary certification/verification schemes, including potential areas of cooperation between the CBD and such schemes.
- Ways to improve consultation of biodiversity related stakeholders in standard development processes.
- Complementarity between voluntary schemes and legislative approaches in support of the CBD objectives.

MODERATOR

- Sharon Elizabeth Brooks, Program Officer; Business, Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services, UNEP World Conservation Monitoring Centre.

PANELISTS

- Alan Smith, Network Coordination, Forest Stewardship Council (FSC), Bonn, Germany
- Mohammad Rafiq, Senior Vice President of Programs, Rainforest Alliance, New York, USA
- Ricardo Gomez Luiz, Liaison Officer, Instituto LIFE, Brazil
- Rik Kutsch Lojenga, Executive Director, Union for Ethical BioTrade, Geneva, Switzerland
- Sergio Talocchi, Rural Suppliers (and traditional communities) Relationship Manager, Natura Cosmetics, Sao Paulo, Brazil

RAPPORTEUR

- Gus Le Breton, CEO PhytoTrade Africa, Harare, Zimbabwe

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