

Life Web

Global Initiative on Protected Areas to be launched at CBD COP 9 in Bonn

Protected areas are the foundation for safeguarding ecosystems, species and genes in all their abundance and diversity. Protected areas are the backbone for the stability and functioning of ecosystemic processes and the provision of ecosystem services such as natural carbon storage, water cycles, pollination, control of diseases and flood control. Properly designed and managed protected areas support livelihoods of local communities and strengthen local and national economies. Protected area networks are our “*Safety-Nets for Life on Earth*”. Thus the establishment and long-term maintenance of protected areas is in the interest of humanity and requires a common effort of the global community. The CBD Programme of Work on Protected Areas is a global framework for the establishment of comprehensive, representative and effectively managed national and regional protected area systems. Parties agreed to close the gaps in the existing systems, enhance management effectiveness and secure adequate financing.

The “*Life Web Initiative*” aims at supporting the implementation of the CBD Programme of Work on Protected Areas through enhancing partnerships at a global level. The purpose of the initiative is to match voluntary commitments for the designation of new protected areas and the improved management of existing areas with commitments for dedicated (co-)financing of these areas.

Life Web - How it works:

- Eligible Parties are invited to notify to the CBD Secretariat ‘candidate sites’ needed for the completion of their representative systems of protected areas which they would be willing to protect if adequate financing and capacity could be secured. Parties could also notify highly underfunded existing sites.
- These sites will be added to the existing UN List of Protected Areas (conducted by UNEP-WCMC) as “candidates”.
- In return countries as well as multilateral and nongovernmental organizations and the private sector are invited to allocate additional and preferential financial resources to meet the financial needs for the establishment and sustainable management of the notified sites on a co-funding basis.
- Partners could join in through existing mechanisms and institutions and could build partnership on a bilateral basis.
- Partners joining the initiative may decide to have informal meetings or other means of communication to allow for an open and flexible coordination and possible cooperation between multiple partners.
- Partners of the initiative may wish to develop the initiative further and to decide on efficient ways and means of coordination / cooperation.

Life Web - What it is:

- The Initiative acts as a “Clearinghouse”. The list of “candidate sites” should help parties to highlight their needs and potential donors get guidance for dedicated support. The list should help to build partnerships.
- The initiative is a way to communicate mutual commitments and the willingness of the partners to engage in joint efforts.
- The initiative is voluntary, open and, flexible.
- It allows everyone to join in through existing instruments and mechanisms as well as through new instruments and sources.
- The initiative should mobilize additional resources and should not take away financing from existing sites.

Life Web - What it is not:

- The initiative does not create new complicated structures. It does not create a new list.
- It does not duplicate, but enhances and focuses ongoing work.
- The initiative is not mandatory.

Life Web - How it adds to existing mechanisms:

- The initiative builds on the Johannesburg commitment for enhanced funding.
- It facilitates communication and coordination.
- It enables non-governmental organisations and the private sector to join in.
- It complements the GEF. Whilst the GEF Focal Strategy for Protected Areas is directed towards strengthening overall protected area systems the initiative adds support to specific sites.

Life Web - The Launch at COP 9:

The aim is for COP-9 to establish the voluntary Life Web Initiative with concrete commitments of parties at the High Level Segment. Parties who are willing to do so are invited to commit to the expansion and strengthening of their protected areas systems whilst donor countries and other donors who are willing to would commit themselves to support these efforts. A first version of the list of “candidate sites” and the supporting donors should be published at the High Level segment.

A letter of invitation has been sent to the Environmental Ministers in which they are encouraged to participate in the initiative.

Interested partners are invited to contact members of the German delegation during the Working Group of Protected Areas and SBSTTA 13. Contact at the Federal Ministry for the Environment: Axel Benemann, Tel.: +49-228-3052615; axel.benemann@bmu.bund.de



Federal Ministry for the
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