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24. Calls on the Commission to introduce a rigorous and mandatory framework for company disclosure regarding environmental, social and governance practices, and to consider measures to enhance the engagement of institutional investors with companies regarding the investment risks of poor environmental practices;

25. Notes the report by the UK Health and Safety Executive about working conditions in the North Sea, which shows that fatal and major injury rates doubled over the past year; calls on the Commission to investigate these allegations and to take action to ensure high levels of health and safety for those working in offshore drilling;

26. Calls on the Commission to play an active role in ensuring that activities carried out by third countries and oil extraction projects comply as fully as possible with strict environmental standards and to make provision for specific mechanisms to compensate for any damage caused by third-country offshore oil operations that border the EU;

27. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council, the Commission and the governments and parliaments of the Member States.

Conference on Biological Diversity - Nagoya 2010

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European Parliament resolution of 7 October 2010 on the EU strategic objectives for the 10th Meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), to be held in Nagoya (Japan) from 18 to 29 October 2010

(2011/C 371 E/04)

The European Parliament,

- having regard to the 10th Meeting of the Conference of the Parties (COP 10) to the UN Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), to be held in Nagoya (Japan) from 18 to 29 October 2010,
- having regard to the questions to the Commission and to the Council on the EU strategic objectives for the 10th Meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), to be held in Nagoya (Japan) from 18 to 29 October 2010 (O-0111/2010 – B7-0467/2010 – O-0112/2010 – B7-0468/2010),
- having regard to the European Summit in Gothenburg in 2001 where it was agreed to halt the loss of biodiversity by 2010 as part of an EU Sustainable Development Strategy,
- having regard to the European Council Conclusions of 25-26 March 2010, in particular paragraph 14,
- having regard to the Report of the Ad Hoc Open-ended Working Group on Review of Implementation of the Convention on Biological Diversity on the work of its third meeting from 24 to 28 May 2010 and the draft Post-2010 Strategic Plan,
- having regard to the Reports of the Ninth meeting of the Ad Hoc Open-ended Working Group on Access and Benefit-sharing, held from 22-28 March 2010, and the draft ABS Protocol (the Cali and Montreal Annexes),
- having regard to Rules 115(5) and 110(2) of its Rules of Procedure,

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- A. whereas the CBD is the largest global agreement on the protection of biodiversity; whereas it has been signed by 193 parties, including the 27 EU Member States and the European Union,
- B. whereas the United Nations Year of Biodiversity should offer the political momentum to strengthen implementation of all three objectives of the CBD: conservation of biodiversity, sustainable use of biodiversity, and fair and equitable sharing of the benefits arising from the use of genetic resources,
- C. whereas the World Bank estimates that 60 million indigenous people are totally dependent on forests; whereas deforestation constitutes a major impediment to the attainment of the Millennium Development Goals, owing to the loss of ecosystem services provided by forests (such as rainfall, prevention of soil erosion, and water purification),
- D. whereas the Blue Carbon Report (released by the FAO, the UNEP and the IUCN in October 2009) demonstrates that the degradation of coastal areas (through overfishing, the destruction of mangroves and eutrophication) and the destruction of marine habitats constitute a substantial threat to the ocean's capacity to absorb carbon, and are therefore a very significant source of concern for climate policy,
- E. whereas significant implementation gaps in the working programmes of the CBD need to be filled,
- F. whereas the protection of biodiversity is a key component in the attainment of the Millennium Development Goals, and whereas the 2010 biodiversity target was incorporated as a new target in 2006 under Millennium Development Goal (MDG) 7 ('Ensure environmental Sustainability'),
- G. whereas the United Nations General Assembly declared 2010 the International Year of Biodiversity; whereas the theme of the 2010 International Day for Biological Diversity is 'Biodiversity for Development and Poverty Alleviation',
- H. whereas 70 % of the world's poor live in rural areas and depend directly on biodiversity for their survival and well-being, and whereas the urban poor also rely on biodiversity for ecosystem services such as the maintenance of air and water quality and the breakdown of waste,

Urgency to act

- 1. Is extremely concerned that neither the global 2010 biodiversity target to significantly reduce the rate of biodiversity loss nor the EU target on halting biodiversity loss have been met;
- 2. Is deeply concerned about the absence of a sense of the urgency of halting the loss of biodiversity on the international political agenda;
- 3. Is alarmed over the steady increase in the illegal use of genetic resources and widespread biopiracy occurring on a global scale;
- 4. Emphasises that with adequate resources and political will, the tools exist for the loss of biodiversity to be reduced on wider scales; is convinced that there are many synergies in protecting the climate, achieving Millennium Development Goals and halting the loss of biodiversity;
- 5. Calls for the Commission and the Member States to play a leadership role at COP 10 in order to convince all Parties that it is now urgent to act; calls therefore upon the Commission and Member States to make public their positions as soon as possible in advance of COP 10;
- 6. In order to be able to play such a leadership role, strongly urges the Commission and the Member States to speak with one voice and to improve the speed and efficiency of their internal decision-making procedure so as to be able to agree quickly on an internal EU position for COP 10 and to devote more resources and time to their diplomatic efforts vis-à-vis third countries;

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7. Finds it inconsistent and regrettable that the host country Japan has prevented important advances in the protection of threatened marine species such as bluefin tuna and whales in the context of other fora, such as CITES and IWC;

Economics

8. Underlines that ongoing studies, such as the study 'The Economics of Ecosystems and Biodiversity' (TEEB), estimate that the welfare loss from biodiversity loss is currently around EUR 50 billion per year (just under 1 % of GDP), rising to EUR 14 trillion or 7 % of estimated GDP per year in 2050; underlines that, according to the TEEB study, the return on biodiversity conservation investment is up to 100 times more;

9. Takes the view that the decisions to be taken at COP 10 need, in particular, to reflect the findings of the TEEB study and build on its recommendations, i.e. that the costs of biodiversity loss and the value of biodiversity need to be reflected in national accounts; underlines that otherwise it will not be possible to monitor the financial and economic consequences which the current biodiversity crisis will have on the economy; underlines that more regard should be given to investigating and approving market instruments, such as habitat banking and payment for ecosystem services, to help ensure adequate financial resources for biodiversity;

10. Stresses the importance of developing and refining methods to accurately assess the financial value of eco-services and to thus determine the cost of biodiversity loss; considers that this would provide valuable data to inform policy makers, develop awareness-raising campaigns and contribute to the wider public debate;

11. Underlines that biodiversity and ecosystems deliver collective benefits and must be regarded as common goods; notes with concern, however, that local communities often receive little or no payment for the services they help to generate, despite being those hit hardest by the loss of biodiversity and the collapse of ecosystem services; urges decision-makers in Nagoya, therefore, to define policy tools aimed at addressing this unequal distribution of benefits derived from nature, and to develop ways of providing financial and technical support to communities and individuals committed to sound management of natural resources;

CBD Strategic Plan

Overall Mission by 2020 and Vision for 2050

12. Urges the Commission and the Member States to support an ambitious overall CBD Mission for 2020: to halt the loss of biodiversity and to share the values and benefits of biodiversity and ecosystem services equitably; urges the Commission and the Member States to commit to a Vision for 2050 ensuring that ecosystems are protected, valued and restored;

Strategic Goals and the 2020 Headline Targets

13. Calls on the Commission and the Member States to support measurable, ambitious, realistic and time-bound sub-targets, in particular to ensure that by 2020:

- everyone is aware of the value of biodiversity and what steps they can take to protect it,
- the values of biodiversity and the opportunities derived from its conservation and sustainable use are integrated into national accounts and development and poverty reduction policies and strategies,
- subsidies harmful to biodiversity are eliminated,
- parties have formulated and implement plans to increase resource efficiency, reduce waste and maintain the use of resources within ecological limits,

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- there is zero net deforestation, the loss and degradation of natural habitats is halted, and developing countries are supported in managing their forests sustainably,
- pressure on marine ecosystems through overfishing is halted and destructive fishing practices are eliminated,
- the introduction and establishment of invasive species are halted,
- at least 20 % of land, fresh water and sea areas are protected,
- the contribution of biodiversity and terrestrial, freshwater and coastal ecosystems to sequestering and retaining greenhouse gases is enhanced,
- the extinction of known threatened species is prevented,
- 15 % of degraded ecosystems are restored,
- benefits arising from the use of genetic resources are shared and an access and benefit sharing fund is operational,
- participatory planning, knowledge management and capacity building are implemented and systems are in place to protect traditional knowledge, the practices of indigenous peoples and customary practices for the sustainable use of biodiversity,
- capacity (human resources and financing) for implementing the Convention is increased,
- the loss of genetic diversity of cultivated plants and domestic farm animals in agricultural ecosystems and of wild relatives is halted;

Indicators

14. Underlines the necessity to adopt concrete indicators based on scientific data in order to measure the progress towards the strategic goals and targets;

15. Welcomes the implementation within the EU of tools like the Biodiversity Information System for Europe (BISE) portal and the Biodiversity Baseline established by the European Environment Agency; takes the view that they are comparable tools that could increase the efficiency of international agreements and action taken under the Convention;

Access to genetic resources and benefit sharing (ABS)

16. Notes that, without a successful conclusion of negotiations on the international ABS regime at COP 10 resulting in a Protocol to the CBD with legally binding and non-binding provisions, a wider agreement on the Post-2010 Strategic Plan of the Convention may not be achieved;

17. Reconfirms the principle that life forms and living processes must not be subject to patents; underlines, therefore, the need to maintain a 'breeders' exemption' in accordance with the UPOV Convention;

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18. Emphasises that the ABS Protocol must provide for transparency, legal certainty and predictability as regards access to genetic resources, and fair and equitable sharing of the benefits arising from the utilisation of genetic resources, their derivatives and traditional knowledge associated with genetic resources;

19. Calls on the Commission and Member States to support the inclusion in the Protocol of the principle of free, prior and informed consent of indigenous and local communities regarding access to traditional knowledge associated with genetic resources;

20. Recognises that traditional knowledge associated with genetic resources is relevant to the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity as well as for the fair and equitable sharing of the benefits arising from the utilisation of genetic resources and therefore needs to be adequately addressed in the ABS Protocol, in line with the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples;

21. Calls therefore upon the Commission and the Council to accept the Cali draft text on benefit-sharing arising from publicly available traditional knowledge, on benefit-sharing from the use of derivatives of genetic resources, on the monitoring, tracking and reporting the utilisation of genetic resources as well as the provisions on mutually agreed terms between users and providers of genetic resources;

22. Acknowledges the interdependence of countries with regard to genetic resources for food and agriculture and their importance for worldwide food security and therefore the need to take into account these genetic resources in the negotiations on the international ABS regime;

23. Recognises the differences in views regarding the retroactive application of future ABS protocol and urges the Parties to find practicable and fair solutions in order to accommodate legitimate concerns;

Thematic programme of work – marine and coastal biodiversity

24. Calls on the Commission and the Member States to strongly advocate the importance of making further progress in identifying and protecting ecologically or biologically significant areas and species in marine areas within and beyond national jurisdiction;

Thematic programme of work – protected areas

25. Recognises that there has been substantial progress in the implementation of the Programme of Work on Protected Areas (PoWPA); underlines nevertheless that much remains to be done to fully implement this programme;

26. Urges the Commission and the Member States to ensure that at COP 10 priority is given to strengthening adequate support and management of protected areas, as well as to communicating the benefits of protected areas to key decision-makers and to request, if appropriate, an increase of funds;

27. Emphasises that, as a principle included in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the European Commission, the UN and the states involved in the legal protocols for the assignment of natural parks and protected areas, should include a legal provision that guarantees juridical and legal protection for the land property rights of indigenous people as traditional land owners, the preservation of their social activities and the traditional use of their land and gives formal recognition to their rights in current management models;

28. Emphasises that in the declarations for protected areas and in the strategies for conservation it is necessary to create a protocol which includes the definition of the integral tropic systems, including water;

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Biodiversity and climate change

29. Emphasises the need to include biodiversity safeguards in climate policies and to maximise co-benefits between the two objectives; stresses, further, that financial contributions for biodiversity conservation have a positive effect in practice on climate change adaptation and mitigation strategies, especially as most national adaptation plans submitted in the context of the UNFCCC, and especially those of developing countries, give emphasis to ecosystem resilience; therefore calls for further efforts to enhance synergies and links between biodiversity and climate policies, in particular between the UNFCCC and the CBD; in this context calls for the CBD secretariat to be given a mandate to contribute to the work under the UNFCCC;

30. Confirms the vital importance of biodiversity and resilient ecosystems for climate change mitigation and adaptation, given the fact that terrestrial and marine ecosystems currently absorb around half of anthropogenic CO₂ emissions;

31. Emphasises the need to protect ecosystem resilience by taking measures to prevent the widespread release of genetically modified organisms, taking into full account the provisions of the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety;

Integrating biodiversity into development policy

32. Welcomes the establishment of an Intergovernmental Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES), which should follow the model laid down by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC);

33. Emphasises that programmes aimed at the protection of biodiversity and poverty reduction must address the priorities of the poor and put more emphasis on locally based environmental management, guaranteed access to biodiversity resources, land reform and acknowledgement of customary tenure;

34. Calls on the Member States and the Commission to give new impetus to the Global Climate Change Alliance and its support facility in order to boost developing countries' capacity-building and knowledge base on the expected impacts of biodiversity loss, and to integrate it effectively into development plans and budgets; calls on the EU to make full use of the Millennium Ecosystem Assessment in its development cooperation strategy;

35. Recalls that 80 % of the people in the world rely on traditional, plant-based medicine, and that biodiversity can help alleviate the national costs of providing medical supplies in many developing countries, since it offers the necessary basis for traditional medicines and many synthetic drugs; urges COP-10, therefore, to take steps to counter biopiracy; underlines that protection of biodiversity is directly linked to the achievement of Millennium Development Goal (MDG) 6;

36. Calls for the Commission's regional and country strategy papers to include specific measures aimed at the formal recognition of rural and indigenous peoples' right to manage natural resources and benefit from them;

37. Is convinced that the reform of subsidies (in the agriculture, fisheries and energy sectors) within the EU is pivotal for development policy coherence, in order to avoid harming biodiversity and ecosystem services; recalls, at the same time, that the potential for removing harmful subsidies in developing countries (especially in the fuel, food and water sectors) must be coupled with compensatory mechanisms for the poor, who may be adversely affected by their immediate removal;

38. Supports the use of the national biodiversity strategies and action plans (NBSAPs) in order to integrate the contribution of biodiversity to development and poverty alleviation;

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39. Underlines the importance of biodiversity in mitigating the incidence of diseases such as malaria, which has been demonstrated to be less prevalent in still-forested areas, where there is a greater variety of birdlife;

40. Underlines that organic production contributes to soil, water and biodiversity conservation, while providing the diversity necessary for healthy nutrition; urges, therefore, that investment in sustainable agriculture be increased with a view to improving food security and reducing poverty;

Biofuels

41. Underlines the need for a recommendation on biofuels to be adopted at COP 10; recalls that is extremely important to assess direct and indirect impacts of biofuels on biodiversity; underlines, further, that certification and sustainability criteria need to be established for biofuels;

Invasive alien species

42. Where urgent measures are concerned, draws attention to the need to prioritise action against invasive species, which are already causing severe imbalances in ecosystems, with extremely negative consequences for biodiversity as a whole;

Financing

43. Underlines the need to drastically increase the global funding for biodiversity, notably through existing funding sources, as well as new and innovative sources, including new and innovative market-based instruments;

44. Calls therefore upon the Commission and Member States to publicly announce their financial commitments for the implementation of the objectives of the CBD well in advance of COP 10;

45. Is convinced that public spending alone will not suffice to reach the CBD biodiversity target and underlines the importance of corporate social responsibility to also take into account biodiversity;

46. Given the findings of the TEEB study, calls for COP 10 to also be used as an opportunity to send a message to the private sector about the economic benefits of joining in the fight to preserve biodiversity;

47. Stresses, however, that the Decision on Business Engagement should include not only voluntary commitments but also obligations, especially for the provision of and access to information and for the consideration of indigenous peoples and local communities in the establishment of ongoing dialogue;

48. Urges the Commission and the Member States to develop innovative systems for payment for ecosystem services and mobilising private financing, and to implement these systems whilst ensuring a maximum level of protection for the ecosystems concerned;

49. Stresses, however, that such systems should be informed by the lessons of the recent financial crisis, as well as the shortcomings of carbon emission trading schemes; stresses, further, that consideration of these limitations should be explicitly mentioned in the mandate of the Special Working Group on Financial Innovation;

50. Takes the view that climate funding instruments, such as REDD+, fast-track financing, CDM and JI should be reformed to contain biodiversity and human and indigenous rights safeguards and to provide for biodiversity co-benefits where possible;

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51. Stresses, further, that reforms must include new UN definitions for forests on a biome basis, reflecting the wide-ranging differences in biodiversity as well as carbon values of different biomes, while clearly distinguishing between native forests and those dominated by tree monocultures and non-native species; urges, therefore, the Commission and Member States to work in this direction in the Subsidiary Body for Scientific and Technological Advice (SBSTA);

52. Underlines the need to find solutions to integrate external costs, such as the damage done to biodiversity or the costs incurred to support biodiversity, in the final price of products on the market;

Synergies between the three Rio Conventions

53. Takes the view that synergies between the three Rio Conventions on Biodiversity (CBD), Climate Change (UNFCCC) and Desertification (UNCCD) should be enhanced;

54. Calls on the Commission and Member States to actively support the idea of having a high-level meeting of the three Rio Conventions as part of the Rio+20 summit in 2012;

Intergovernmental Science Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES) and knowledge sharing

55. Welcomes the agreement reached by governments in June 2010 in Busan to create an Intergovernmental Science Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES); calls on the Commission and the Member States to ensure that the IPBES is effectively established as early as possible in 2011; considers that, as the contribution of IPBES will depend on the quality of research undertaken in the EU and internationally, it is of the utmost importance that the EU and the Member States ensure sufficient resources for biodiversity research;

56. Calls for improving and better sharing of knowledge and technologies relating to biodiversity, its value and functioning;

A coordinated approach

57. Insists that in international trade agreements sustainability of the products being traded is a key element; underlines in this regard the need to integrate 'non-trade concerns', including production methods and respect for biodiversity, in any future WTO agreement;

58. Encourages the Commission and Member States to integrate the environmental element in their relations with third countries and to continue the 'Green Diplomacy';

59. Urges the Commission and Member States to ensure that the updated '2010' headline target from the CBD Strategic Plan, to be adopted at CBD COP 10 in Nagoya, is further incorporated as the updated target for Millennium Development Goal (MDG) 7 and supported as integral to achieving these vital goals by their 2015 deadline; emphasises that it is vital that the Commission and Member States recognise the many synergies and interdependencies between all the MDGs and treat them as one package;

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60. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council, the Commission, the governments and parliaments of the parties to the CBD and the CBD Secretariat.
