



COUNTDOWN
2010
SAVE BIODIVERSITY

Biodiversity is essential
and it is in **danger**

Governments have promised
to save biodiversity

by **2010**

It is **time** to move
from words to **action**

**This is why the
2010 biodiversity
target matters**

www.countdown2010.net

Countdown 2010: No t

Biodiversity loss threatens livelihoods and well-being

Tasty food and essential medicine, fresh air and clean water, protection from natural disasters and the pleasure of walking through a forest in spring time: Without biodiversity, our lives would look a lot bleaker and more barren.

However, humanity is increasingly exploiting this natural wealth. Consequently biodiversity is lost and natural resources are being degraded at an alarming rate. Recent findings show that two thirds of all ecosystem services are deteriorating and species are becoming extinct at

up to 1.000 times the normal rate. The web of life is becoming weak. It is more important than ever that we reverse this trend.

Governments have promised to save biodiversity by 2010

The European Union's Heads of State have promised *to halt the loss of biodiversity by 2010* at the Gothenburg Summit in 2001. This 2010 biodiversity target is the first overall conservation target, and has

been followed by a similar decision by European countries outside the EU in Kiev 2003. Reaching these targets will require unprecedented action from all governments, at every level.

Governments increasingly recognise that species extinction and ecosystem degradation threaten our resources, way of life and global ecosystem functioning. They understand there



Time to lose for biodiversity

is a serious lack of concrete action and implementation that needs to be addressed.

Engage and make it happen

Countdown 2010 is a powerful network of active partners working together to inform and engage the public on the 2010 biodiversity target, assist governments and administrations in the implementation of the 2010 biodiversity target and to monitor and

assess the progress made by European governments on an annual basis.

While it is the responsibility of governments to fulfil the 2010 biodiversity target, the political reality shows that it takes more to make the decisive step forward in saving biodiversity. You can help making it happen: A Europe that

provides sufficient space for nature, uses its natural resources in a sustainable manner and consistently reduces pollution. By working together, we can overcome implementation inertia.

Join Countdown 2010, it is your Europe too.



By becoming a State Member, Italy volunteers to promote Countdown 2010 and the importance of the 2010 biodiversity target.

We believe that the target should be considered as a starting point for the development of a new approach to environment as a real cross-cutting issue in the national agendas, harmonised in a common vision.

Aldo Cosentino, Director General for Nature Protection, Ministry for the Environment and Land Protection, Italy

*Launching Countdown 2010
May 2004, Malahide, Ireland*



Achim Steiner, Director General, IUCN - The World Conservation Union

Can we reach the 2

A promise has been made: by 2010 we will significantly reduce the loss of biodiversity.

It is an ambitious goal. Some even say it is unrealistic.

The latest evidence seems to show that we are going full speed in the wrong direction. The IUCN Red List of Threatened Species, the Millennium Ecosystem Assessment and the Global Biodiversity Outlook are stark reminders that present rates of ecological

destruction are unprecedented in the history of humanity and that we are in danger of undermining our own life support systems.

Are we fighting a losing battle? Are we merely slowing down an inevitable process of human induced extinction and degradation? These are fundamental questions that can only be addressed by first demonstrating the vital role that biodiversity plays

in supporting and improving the quality of life on earth.

The conservation and sustainable use of our natural wealth is not only a moral obligation but an essential ingredient to development and a precondition to poverty reduction. We need to set aside certain areas, manage them effectively, and promote major changes in the way humanity does its business. This involves all sectors of society,

2010 biodiversity target, Mr Steiner?

and entails a fundamental shift in the way we consume and produce.

It is a governments' responsibility to fulfil their promise to save biodiversity by 2010. But we, the conservation community, can help them succeed in their efforts. We have clear priorities and approaches. We have demonstrated cases and initiatives that work. There are examples of how we can save species, how biodiversity conservation

can offer income opportunities to people, how the powers of markets can be harnessed, and how partnerships can deliver truly sustainable development.

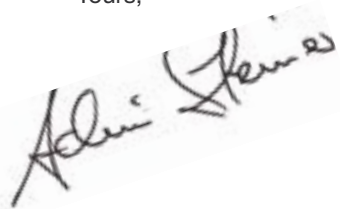
But most importantly, we are slowly but surely reaching the point where our efforts clearly show society that behind our overarching message there is hard evidence to support our claims: that we can build roads

without ruining an entire forest, that we can provide a better life to people without turning a wetland into an irrigation scheme, and that we can have economic growth without destroying the unique landscapes of our homes. The more we can show that conservation is a necessary component of development, the more people will listen.

In the end, people can argue about ideas. But they cannot argue with reality.

For this very reason, the World Conservation Union (IUCN) has decided to launch the Countdown 2010 initiative. I would be happy to see you on board as well.

Yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Adnan Steiner". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style and is positioned at the bottom right of the page, overlapping the "Yours," text.



A target

**16 June 2001,
Gothenburg, Sweden:**

*biodiversity decline
should be halted
with the aim of
reaching this
objective by 2010*

Under the Swedish Presidency, Heads of State of the European Union agreed on the EU strategy for sustainable development. Mentioned for the first time, the 2010 biodiversity target became one of its headline objectives for managing natural resources.

**19 April 2002,
the Hague, the
Netherlands:**

*to achieve by 2010 a
significant reduction
of the current rate of
biodiversity loss*

The 188 parties of the Convention on Biological Diversity made the 2010 biodiversity target the key mission to achieve their objectives: the conservation of biodiversity; the sustainable use of its components; and the fair and equitable sharing of benefits arising from genetic resources.

90% of Flemish biodiversity is present in Limburg, and every fourth species is found nowhere else. Thus, Limburg faces a particular challenge in halting the loss of biodiversity.

The province takes species conservation very seriously. We aim to save our endemic species and improve their environment, build public support and create a nicer and more diverse environment for the people in Limburg.

Limburg is committed to contribute to the efforts of all the partners to halt the loss of biodiversity by 2010.

The Countdown begins...

**Frank Smeets, Deputee of Nature and Environment,
Province of Limburg, Belgium**

t springs to action

**4 September 2002,
Johannesburg, South
Africa:**

*the achievement
by 2010 of a
significant reduction
in the current rate
of loss of biological
diversity*

The UN World Summit on Sustainable Development, held to increase efforts to reverse environmental degradation and combat poverty, identified the critical role of biodiversity and endorsed the 2010 biodiversity target.

**23 May 2003, Kiev,
Ukraine:**

*reinforce our
objective to halt the
loss of biological
diversity at all levels
by the year 2010*

Environment Ministers and Heads of delegation from 51 countries in the UNECE region adopted the Kiev Resolution on Biodiversity at the fifth Ministerial Conference “Environment for Europe” and defined key objectives to achieve the 2010 biodiversity target.

Threats to Biodiversity in Europe

Many species remain threatened in Europe: 43% of avifauna has an unfavourable conservation status; 12% of the 576 butterfly species are endangered or declining seriously on the continent; up to 600 plant species are considered extinct in the wild or critically endangered; 45% of reptiles and 52% of freshwater fish are threatened. Some species such as the Iberian lynx, the slender-billed curlew and the Mediterranean monk seal are on the verge of extinction in the wild. Even once-common species such as skylarks have seen populations drop dramatically in recent years.

The Millennium Ecosystem Assessment, an assessment of the state of the planet's ecosystems carried out by nearly 1400 leading experts from 95 countries, documents that some 60% of the planet's ecosystems are degraded or unsustainably managed. It also notes that species variety and number are declining faster than ever.



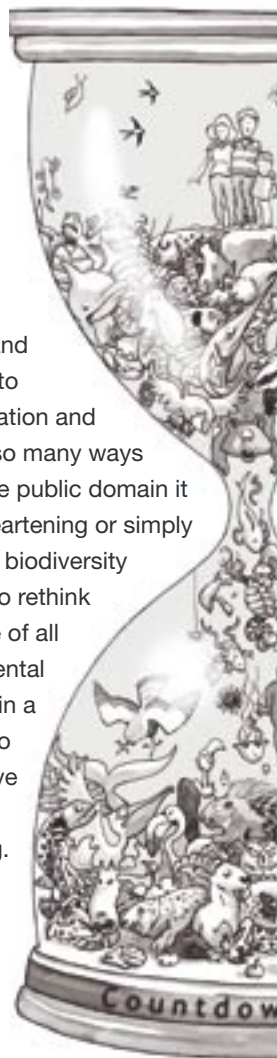
Time is running

2010 is our chance. It gives us focus, direction and the means to act together. Signed at the highest political level – it should be efficient, but ultimately it is urgent! Inaction means further loss and extinction. Extinction is forever. Today we have the knowledge and means to reverse the trend of biodiversity loss.

So far, the environmental community has

been like an orchestra but with its instruments playing from different sheets of music. We have different scientific and institutional approaches to biodiversity and conservation and we classify the world in so many ways today that for many in the public domain it is either confusing, disheartening or simply incapacitating. The 2010 biodiversity target is an opportunity to rethink how to unify the purpose of all these different environmental activities and messages in a way that allows society to see the common objective under which there are different ways of working.

So, here is a major challenge to everyone active in biodiversity conservation: how to



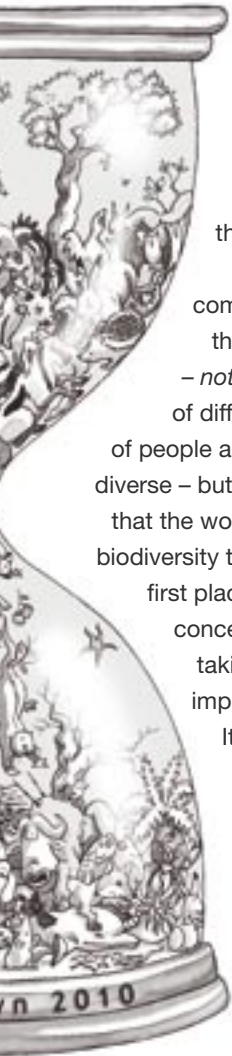
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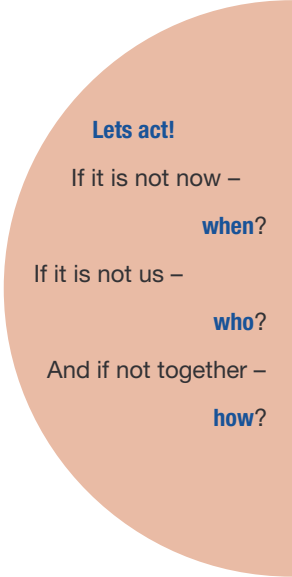
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out for biodiversity

work with the many voices, the many different entry points in biodiversity, and how to communicate them in a way that the rest of society can relate to – *not* as an orchestra of hundreds of different voices, but as a chorus of people and institutions – different and diverse – but with messages and answers that the world will understand. The 2010 biodiversity target - a visionary idea in the first place - provides a framework for concerted and collective action by taking a global commitment and implementing it at the local level. It has the potential to become the new unifying force. Together, we can make a quantum leap to influence policy and help society choose a path more aligned to our common vision of a just world that values

and conserves nature. Not only by criticising society's slow response to the challenges ahead, but also by rethinking our own premises and strategies of engagement. The next years will be critical in putting the environment back on the political agenda and to increase environmental action on the ground.



Lets act!

If it is not now –

when?

If it is not us –

who?

And if not together –

how?

TICK TOCK

TICK TOCK

TICK TOCK

TICK TOCK

TICK TOCK...

What is needed t

The 2010 biodiversity target is just around the corner. These are the priority areas to halt the loss of biodiversity within the next couple of years:

1. Species and ecosystems need space to develop and recover. 10% of all area should be under protection to maintain nature and natural landscapes.

2. Without biodiversity there will be no agriculture. Farming practices should not jeopardize species survival: Improving farmland diversity and reducing pesticides and fertiliser use are key to saving biodiversity. Organic agriculture practices can serve as an example in many areas.

3. 75% of all fisheries are fully exploited or overfished. Species like cod, haddock and halibut are already threatened. If we do not move towards sustainable use, there will be no fish left for our grandchildren.



o reach the 2010 biodiversity target

4. Roads, factories and housing destroy habitats for animals and plants. If urban and rural development continues to ignore nature, our surroundings will be dominated by concrete and pollution.

5. Climate change is considered to be the greatest challenge for humanity. With changing conditions, ecosystems and habitats will change as well. It is an obligation to fight climate change and make sure that species can migrate or adapt to new surroundings.

6. If you release a species outside its usual habitat, it might simply die. In other cases, the so-called 'alien invasive species' have thrived and destroyed local flora and fauna. As you never know how things turn out, reducing these invasions is crucial.

7. Biodiversity is the foundation for sustainable development. Its ecosystem services provide the basis for all economic activity. Biodiversity concerns need thus be integrated into all areas of policy-making. Measures include market incentives, development assistance, biodiversity-friendly trade and international governance processes.



With Countdown 2010, we can shape the future

Halting the loss of biodiversity is central to RSPB's mission. We supported the Countdown 2010 initiative from the beginning because it gave a much-needed higher profile for this goal and rallied many more organisations behind achieving it.

Alistair Gammell, Royal Society for the Protection of Birds, United Kingdom

Goal of Countdown 2010

ALL EUROPEAN GOVERNMENTS AND MEMBERS OF CIVIL SOCIETY, AT EVERY LEVEL, HAVE TAKEN THE NECESSARY ACTIONS TO HALT THE LOSS OF BIODIVERSITY BY 2010.

Countdown 2010 is a powerful network of active partners ranging from governments, local authorities via civil society organisations to private businesses. By signing the Countdown 2010 declaration, each organisation commits itself to promoting the 2010 biodiversity target and to working towards its achievement.

COUNTDOWN
2010
SAVE BIODIVERSITY

Step 1: Implement

ENCOURAGE AND SUPPORT THE FULL IMPLEMENTATION OF ALL THE EXISTING BINDING INTERNATIONAL COMMITMENTS AND NECESSARY ACTIONS TO SAVE BIODIVERSITY.

Most countries and some regions have defined their way towards the 2010 biodiversity target with a Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan. Countdown 2010 partners work together to strengthen these plans, mainstream biodiversity conservation into other sectors and make sure that appropriate action is taken.

Step 2: Assess

DEMONSTRATE CLEARLY WHAT PROGRESS EUROPE MAKES IN MEETING THE 2010 BIODIVERSITY TARGET.

At the same time as Countdown 2010 encourages and supports action towards the 2010 biodiversity target, it also assesses and measures progress made by governments and regions. Countdown 2010 celebrates efficient implementation and innovative approaches, but also shows inaction.

Step 3: Communicate

GAIN MAXIMUM PUBLIC ATTENTION ACROSS EUROPE FOR THE CHALLENGE OF SAVING BIODIVERSITY BY 2010.

Biodiversity is not a remote or abstract issue; it influences and improves the daily lives of every citizen. Countdown 2010 helps its partners to make this connection and to promote the 2010 biodiversity target. The website Countdown2010.net serves as a central information repository and a hub for activities of all partners.



As an internationally operating forest enterprise it is an obligation for us to use our resources in a sustainable manner. We devote a lot of effort to protect and conserve biodiversity. Thus we support Countdown 2010 with numerous projects such as promoting dead wood deposits, protecting longhorn beetles and wood grouses and connecting habitats in our forests.

**Georg Erlacher, Board
Director Österreichische
Bundesforste**

Moving towards 2010: Get active!

You can join Countdown 2010 by signing the declaration (see back). Here are some ideas what to do next:

Contribute to Countdown 2010

- Tell everyone that you've joined Countdown 2010: Place an article in your newsletter, issue a media release, use the logo on your homepage or in publications.
- Encourage your members and partners to join

as well: Ask them personally, bring the issue up in meetings, refer to Countdown 2010 in your presentations.

- Tell us about your activities and help us spread success stories.
- Take part in Countdown 2010: Come to meetings of the Steering Group, contribute your expertise to thematic working groups or link up with others in your country.

Take action to save biodiversity

- Is there a Biodiversity Strategy for your area? If yes: Does it have gaps? What are the greatest obstacles for its implementation? What can you do to help overcome them?
- Maybe you even want to apply the Countdown 2010 Assessment Tool and find out how your area is doing in respect to biodiversity?

- If you communicate with a lot of people through your work: How can you make them aware of the importance of biodiversity? Can they take action towards the 2010 biodiversity target?
- Why don't you look at the ecological footprint of your organisation and take steps to reduce it?

Please use this postcard to join Countdown 2010 or to order further information.

- Yes, we want to sign the Countdown 2010 Declaration.
- Please send us more information.

Organisation: _____

Name: _____

Address: _____

Email: _____

Phone/Fax: _____

Website: _____



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SAVE BIODIVERSITY!

Credits

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The Countdown 2010 Declaration

Biodiversity - the web of life on earth - is essential to the quality of human well-being, and it is a crucial element in sustaining the social, economic and spiritual dimension of all Europeans. Yet, biodiversity continues to decline. Political

commitments have been made to stop this trend by 2010. Further steps need to be taken to honour this commitment and to translate it into action.

We the undersigned will take every practical opportunity to:

1. Support the commitments to halt or significantly reduce the current rate of biodiversity loss by 2010.

2. Encourage European decision makers at all levels, in both the public and the private sector, to contribute to these commitments.

3. Commit ourselves to encourage and assist decision makers and European societies in achieving the 2010 biodiversity target.

In particular, we will:

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Partners of Countdown 2010 include ARKive, BirdLife International, UK Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, English Nature, Europarc Federation, European Commission, European Environmental Bureau, Fundación Biodiversidad, ICLEI - Local Governments for Sustainability, International Federation of Organic Agriculture Movements, Italian Ministry of the Environment and Land Protection, Legambiente, Norwegian Ministry of Environment, Österreichische Bundesforste, Plantlife International, Province North Brabant, United Nations Environment Programme, WAZA - The World Association of Zoos and Aquaria, WWF International and others.

Countdown 2010 is hosted by

IUCN
The World Conservation Union

www.countdown2010.net