



The Global Forum on Oceans, Coasts, and Islands

Reports from the Third Global Conference on Oceans, Coasts, and Islands

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RESULTS OF THE DIALOGUE ON ISLAND BIODIVERSITY

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This session was co-sponsored by the Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity, the UNEP/Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals (CMS), the Secretariat for the Pacific Regional Environment Program (SPREP), The Nature Conservancy, and the IUCN/WCPA Taskforce on Islands Conservation and Protected Areas (TAFICOPA).

We have a vision. We have agreed goals. We have great knowledge and ever-greener technologies. What we need is high-level political commitment for marine conservation and protection areas....

Let us work together: to protect the oceans and coastal zones; to help small islands survive and prosper; and to ensure that all people enjoy a sustainable future.

Kofi Annan, Port Louis, 13 January 2005

Significance of Island Biodiversity

The Earth is home to more than 130,000 islands, which host more than 500 million people. They are stewards for more than one-sixth of the Earth's total area. Half of the tropical marine biodiversity is found in islands, with 12 of the 18 centers of marine endemism and seven of the ten coral reef hotspots surrounding islands. Terrestrially, islands are home to half of the

recognized Endemic Bird Areas, a quarter of the terrestrial Global 200 Ecoregions, and a third of the biodiversity hotspots. Islands also claim the greatest number of extinctions in the world and today island species are often highly threatened. Small Island Developing States are home also to great diversity of cultures that depend on island biodiversity for their livelihoods and development. They face particular challenges in the conservation and sustainable use of island biodiversity.

Recommendations

To advance the conservation and sustainable use of island biodiversity, the Dialogue identified the need to:

- Develop a 'global vision for local action' for the implementation of the global policy processes at the local/national level through a **Global Island Partnership** – a linked collection of partnership activities at local, national, and international levels and built upon existing networks, institutions, and initiatives – that will:
 - a) Address the CBD Program of Work on Island Biodiversity and implementation constraints or issues faced by SIDS and elaborated in the Mauritius Strategy, as key drivers for partnership and implementation at the local level;
 - b) Facilitate understanding and action to address local needs, concerns, and interests in the conservation and sustainable use of island biodiversity;

- c) Assist in achieving the biodiversity targets of WSSD and CBD, related MEAs and their regional agreements, and the Regional Seas Programmes;
- d) Develop and strengthen networks and initiatives, such as TAFICOPA, IUCN Species Survival Networks, the International Coral Reef Initiative, and Micronesians in Island Conservation network, to enhance coordination, information sharing, and catalyze action in islands and within and among SIDS;
- e) Develop connections between conservation networks (e.g. Small Islands Voice (SIV), Youth Visioning for Island Living, and networks with a social, cultural, and economic focus relevant to islands;
- f) Identify and support island leaders championing major conservation and sustainable livelihood initiatives;
- g) Stimulate common pathways for action between governments and civil society;
- h) Improve access to adequate financial resources and capacity building mechanisms;
- i) Facilitate better integration and appropriate use of MEAs as instruments for local and regional implementation, through species, place, or issue focused agreements and projects, and, in particular, recognize the potential benefits of both CMS and World Heritage;
- j) Enhance policy integration at the national and regional level through mainstreaming biodiversity conservation into existing national policies like National Sustainable Development Strategies or the Regional/National Oceans Policies;
- k) Encourage UN system and other international organisations and programmes (for example WCMC) to give priority to actions that support the collection and management of information in support of the effective conservation and sustainable use of island biodiversity;
- l) Utilize international events to promote and recognize island conservation leadership in the conservation and sustainable use of island biodiversity.

More broadly, it was agreed:

- 1) To recognize many international instruments to SIDS but that island representation and participation within international processes and UN presence in countries is not sufficient to link the international level to on-ground communities;
- 2) A global body or effective enforceable regime for Seamount protection, including the support for a total ban of unregulated high sea bottom trawling;
- 3) The need for the strengthening of national capacity for follow-up and implementation, and, in particular, the lack of access to financial resources;

- 4) To recommend that UNEP consider elaborating its 'Global Program of Action for the Protection of the Marine Environment from Land Based Activities' to give special attention to the needs of SIDS, and, in particular, the protection of coral reefs from land based sources of pollution.

With specific reference to the upcoming Eighth Conference of the Parties (COP8) to the Convention on Biological Diversity, it was agreed to recommend that Parties to COP8:

- a) Adopt a strong Programme of Work on Island Biodiversity;
- b) Ensure that the strong links between sustainable livelihoods and poverty reduction that are fundamental to island conservation are an integral part of the implementation of the Programme of Work;
- c) Call upon the GEF during its 'Resource Allocation Framework' readjustment, should give consideration to providing a special window and develop appropriate access and implementation procedures for SIDS in relation to island biodiversity conservation;
- d) Take advantage of the opportunity presented within the Island Dialogue for community leaders and delegates to identify approaches for partnerships that will advance the conservation and sustainable use of island biodiversity;
- e) Support opportunities offered at the regional level, such as the Island Life Campaign in the Pacific Islands Region, to enhance implementation of the conventions programs of work at the national level;
- f) Welcome the 'Micronesian Challenge' as an important contribution to implementing global policy at the local and regional level and to the CBD 2010 targets;
- g) Identify the ways and means for the effective integration of the Mauritius Strategy into CBD Programs of Work, in particular the PoW on Island Biodiversity;
- h) Comprehensively integrate the ecosystem approach into the PoW on Island Biodiversity;
- i) Request that UNEP WCMC, in collaboration with TAFICOPA and other relevant organizations, develop a global database for island biodiversity on the level of ecosystems and species in order to facilitate decision-making, comparative studies, and sharing of homogeneous information.

The Dialogue was guided by brief statements from representatives of the UNEP/CBD, Tuvalu on behalf of AOSIS, Seychelles, Palau, TAFICOPA, UNEP/CMS, UNESCO/WHC, SPREP, and The Nature Conservancy.

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