



World Business Council for
Sustainable Development

WBCSD statement to the Eighth Meeting of the Conference of the Parties (COP 8) to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), Curitiba, Brazil, 20-31 March 2006

World Business Council for Sustainable Development (WBCSD)

The WBCSD is a coalition of some 200 international companies united by a shared commitment to sustainable development via the three pillars of economic growth, ecological balance and social progress. Representing a turnover of US\$ 5,200 billion and 12 million employees, WBCSD member companies touch the lives of 3 billion customers a day with their products and services. We also benefit from a global network of some 55 national and regional business councils and partner organizations. In Brazil, the host of COP 8, our partner organization is the Business Council for Sustainable Development Brazil (CEBDS).

The WBCSD's mission is to:

- Provide business leadership as a catalyst for change towards sustainable development;
- Support the business license to operate, innovate and grow in a world increasingly shaped by sustainable development issues.

The WBCSD, Biodiversity & Ecosystems

The WBCSD believes that business can not function if ecosystems and the services they deliver – like water, biodiversity, food, fibre and climate – are degraded or out of balance.¹

The Council and its members take a proactive stance on this issue, including:

- 1) Preparation of two publications for business on biodiversity management and a case study resource illustrating company responses²;
- 2) Productive relationships and joint initiatives with leading environmental organizations, such as:
 - a) *The Greenhouse Gas Protocol Corporate Accounting and Reporting Standard* produced with the World Resources Institute (WRI)³
 - b) A Memorandum of Understanding with the IUCN signed in April 2005 aiming to intensify collaboration on the role of markets and business in ecosystem stewardship, biodiversity conservation and the sustainable use of ecosystem services.
- 3) Active participation at the Third IUCN World Conservation Congress, Bangkok, November 2004, based on the theme of partnerships between NGOs and corporations that deliver enhanced business and biodiversity benefits⁴;
- 4) Development of sector specific approaches to biodiversity management via its forestry, cement, mining & minerals and water projects;
- 5) Active participation in UNFCCC processes, including COP 11 in Montreal in December, highlighting key actions of the private sector towards combating climate change;
- 6) Provision, since 2002, of private sector linkages and inputs to the Millennium Ecosystems Assessment (MA), including:
 - a) Support for the preparation and release of the MA's synthesis report for business and industry in July 2005;
 - b) Preparation of an Issue Brief, "Sustaining ecosystems and ecosystem services", to inform member companies and the business sector about the MA findings and implications for industry⁵.



- 7) Establishment, in November 2005, of the Ecosystems Champions Group of WBCSD member companies to catalyze the business sector response to ecosystem opportunities and challenges outlined in the MA;
- 8) Joint development with IUCN, Earthwatch Institute and WRI of a new publication, *Ecosystems & Business Facts, Trends and Tools*, focusing on best practice mitigation and market innovation for the sustainable management and use of ecosystems and services – targeted for release in October 2006.

The WBCSD at COP 8

The BCSD Brazil (CEBDS) and some member companies will represent the WBCSD at COP 8. The CEBDS is supporting a number of side events including: the Global Biodiversity Forum (coordinated by IUCN); UNESCO's Landscape Level Planning Initiative; Business and Biodiversity Partnerships (Brazil BCSD); and the Biodiversity Offsets workshop (coordinated by Forest Trends and Conservation International with support from several other NGOs, private companies and government agencies).

In addition, the WBCSD has prepared this statement to inform the COP of its views on the following two agenda items:

Business engagement with the CBD (UNEP/CBD/COP8/25/Add.1)

In 2005, the WBCSD supported the multi-stakeholder "Business and the 2010 Biodiversity Challenge" meetings organized in London and São Paulo, and welcomes the outcomes that emerged from them.

The WBCSD positively acknowledges the message to business and industry from Dr. Ahmed Djoghlaif, Executive Secretary of the CBD. Overall, we support the proposal for greater engagement between the private sector and the CBD because the WBCSD believes that business can make an effective contribution towards the objectives of the CBD. The WBCSD fully supports the draft decision on Engagement of the Private Sector.

The WBCSD and its member companies are willing to collaborate with CBD stakeholders in the following ways:

- Sharing best practice business strategies and market innovations for ecosystem stewardship, biodiversity conservation, the sustainable use of ecosystem services and impact mitigation;
- Championing efforts to standardize ecosystems measurement and impact assessment that improves business decision-making and biodiversity outcomes;
- Advising on the design of enabling policy frameworks that maximize the positive contribution of business;
- Fostering stakeholder dialogue, partnership and action for the sustainable management of ecosystems and use of ecosystem services;
- Encouraging companies to participate on national delegations to CBD processes including the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice (SBSTTA), COP and other intergovernmental meetings, and in technical expert groups;
- Facilitating the development of additional sector-specific strategies;
- Encouraging companies to align their policies and practices more explicitly with the goals and targets of the Convention.



The WBCSD believes the business sector has specific skills to provide technical expertise to assist the CBD, national governments and other stakeholders in their work on:

- Developing options for valuing biodiversity and environmental/ecosystems services;
- Integration of the values of biodiversity resources and functions and associated ecosystem services into decision-making;
- Capturing the calculated values through the careful design of markets for ecosystem services;
- Ensuring positive incentive measures to avoid perverse outcomes.

Implications of the MA (UNEP/CBD/COP/8/3)

As indicated earlier, the WBCSD and many of its member companies were participants in the Millennium Ecosystem Assessment (MA) and are actively responding to the opportunities and challenges it outlined.

The WBCSD recognizes that policy frameworks for ecosystems and services require constructive collaboration and innovation between business, governments and NGOs as this will deliver better outcomes for business, society and nature. The WBCSD is prepared to work with governments, other industry associations with an ecosystems focus and CBD stakeholders to address linkages between sustainable development, ecosystem stewardship, biodiversity conservation, the sustainable use of ecosystem services and impact mitigation.

Björn Stigson
President
WBCSD
17 March 2006

For further information please contact:

James Griffiths, WBCSD
Director – Sustainable Forest Products Industry; Sustaining Ecosystems Initiative
Tel: ++41 (22) 839 3114
Mobile: ++41 79 205 26 13
Griffiths@wbcsd.org

Fernando Almeida, BCSD Brazil
Executive President
Tel: +5521 3139-1250
Fax: +5521 3139-1254
falmeida@cebds.org

References:

¹ *Annual Review*. WBCSD. 2004. *Ecosystems and Human Well-being: Opportunities and Challenges for Business and Industry*. Millennium Ecosystem Assessment. 2005.

² *Business & biodiversity: A guide for the private sector*. WBCSD and IUCN, 1997. *Business & biodiversity: The handbook for corporate action*. WBCSD, IUCN and Earthwatch Institute. 2002.

³ *The Greenhouse Gas Protocol – Corporate Accounting and Reporting Standards*. WBCSD & WRI. 2005.

⁴ *Sustain - Business and Biodiversity*. WBCSD. November 2004.

⁵ "Sustaining Ecosystems and Ecosystem Services – Issue Brief". WBCSD. 2006.