



## INITIAL ANNOUNCEMENT

# Safeguarding ecosystems

- **provide development and security**
- **support the Millennium developments goals**
- **reduce loss of biodiversity by 2010 and beyond**

*Trondheim, Norway, 29 October – 2 November 2007*

The Trondheim Conferences on Biodiversity provide an opportunity for policy makers, managers and scientists to have an open and constructive dialogue and to provide a transparent and scientifically sound basis for key decisions to be taken under the Convention on biological diversity (CBD).

The fifth Trondheim Conference on Biodiversity will be held 29 October – 2 November 2007, and will be hosted by the Norwegian government in collaboration with the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP).

The conference will in particular contribute with input to the CBD and its preparations for its ninth Conference of the Parties in Germany in 2008. Focus will be on the critical role of biodiversity and its ecosystems in providing goods and services that are necessary for human well-being and security and for economic development. The conference aims at a transparent, positive and constructive atmosphere, and key objectives will be to:

- Illustrate and highlight the role of biodiversity in poverty alleviation and in reaching the United Nations' Millennium Development Goals (MDG)
- Consider progress on the goal to achieve by 2010 "a significant reduction of the current rate of biodiversity loss at the global, regional and national level as a contribution to poverty alleviation and to the benefit of all life on earth"
- Provide insights and inspiration for enhanced implementation of CBD's Strategic Plan

### **Focusing on the importance of biodiversity and ecosystems for development and well-being**

The Strategic Plan for the CBD states that "biodiversity is the living foundation of sustainable development". However, the Millennium Ecosystem Assessment (MA) states in its Biodiversity Synthesis that biodiversity is being lost at rates unprecedented in human history. These losses of biodiversity and decline of ecosystem services constitute a major concern for human well-being, especially for the well-being of the poorest.

The eighth Conference of Parties (COP-8) to the CBD in March 2006 in Brazil noted in its decision VIII/9 that the MA "finds that the degradation of ecosystem could significantly increase in the first half of this century, and that this is a key barrier to achieving the United Nations Millennium Development Goals, and that, at the same time, many of the actions being undertaken to promote economic development and reduce hunger and poverty could contribute to the loss of biodiversity" and emphasized "that the MDGs, the 2010 target of significantly reducing the rate of biodiversity loss, and other internationally agreed targets related to biodiversity, environmental sustainability and development need to be pursued in an integrated manner".

The 2007 Trondheim Conference will provide illustrative examples of the linkages between biodiversity and the MDGs and possible policy trade-offs, and will introduce ways and means of overcoming identified obstacles to the Strategic Plan. Scientific studies, policy presentations and practical case studies will provide participants with examples and models that will provide insights and inspiration for enhanced efforts in countries and in the CBD.

### **Contributing to the Convention on biological diversity (CBD)**

Progress in the implementation of the Strategic Plan and follow-up on progress towards the 2010 target and relevant MDGs will be discussed as a key strategic issue for the CBD at the ninth Conference of the Parties of

the CBD (COP-9) in Germany in 2008. COP-9 will also consider the need to review and update targets as part of the process of revising the Strategic Plan beyond 2010.

A key objective of the Trondheim conference will be to contribute to further progress on these issues at COP-9. This will be done through providing useful input to the thirteenth meeting of CBD's Subsidiary body on scientific, technical and technological affairs (SBSTTA-13), scheduled to be held 18 - 22 February 2008 in Rome, which will present recommendations for decisions to be made on these issues at COP-9.

Expected outputs include (1) Proceedings of the Conference in the form of an un-refereed technical report, (2) a shorter summary report aimed as input to SBSTTA-13 and (3) other relevant material to be made available to the participants and on the Internet.

### **Participation and information**

Participation will be by invitation only, and invitation letters will in due course be sent by the Norwegian Ministry of the Environment to all members of the United Nations, CBD Focal Points, as well as relevant UN agencies. In addition, a number of organisations and institutions working on issues related to the theme will be invited to attend, including a number of key international instruments and non-governmental organisations.

The 2007 Trondheim Conference will take place at the Royal Garden Hotel in the centre of the City of Trondheim, with necessary facilities and attractions and all being close. Due to the size of the conference facilities, participation will be limited to a maximum of 300 participants, and countries and organisations/institutions will have to limit their delegations. The conference language will be English.

The Norwegian government is prepared to provide travel support for a limited number of participants from countries eligible for such support according to criteria under the CBD.

Information on the conference will be made available on the home page of the Directorate for nature management at [www.dirnat.no](http://www.dirnat.no), and you may also contact the directorate by email through [postmottak@dirnat.no](mailto:postmottak@dirnat.no).

### **Organising and preparing the conference**

This will be the fifth Trondheim Conference on Biodiversity, and is being hosted by the Norwegian government in collaboration with UNEP. The organisation and sponsoring of the conference is a joint venture between the Ministry of Environment (MD), the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (UD) and relevant sector ministries in Norway.

An international advisory committee is being established for the conference, and will include UNEP, the CBD secretariat, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the United Nations Food and Agricultural Organisation (FAO) and the International Conservation Union (IUCN).

The conference will be organised by the Norwegian Directorate for Nature Management (DN), which is the executive and advisory agency on biodiversity management under the Ministry of the environment. This will be done in cooperation with the Norwegian Institute for Nature Research (NINA), the Norwegian University of Science and Technology (NTNU) and the City of Trondheim.

Chairman of the conference will be Peter Johan Schei, Director of the Fridtjof Nansen Institute (FNI), who has a significant track record with the CBD and the Trondheim Conferences. Project manager and Conference Director will be Finn Katerås of DN, who will be assisted by a Conference Secretariat. The program for the conference will be developed by a Conference Program Committee, chaired by Dr Odd Terje Sandlund of NINA.

### **Background of the Trondheim Conferences on Biodiversity**

The first Trondheim Conferences on Biodiversity in 1993 provided input to the first Intergovernmental Committee meeting of the signatories to the CBD later that year. The second Conference in 1996 focused on problems related to alien invasive species, and provided input to the SBSTTA meeting in 1996 and to the development of the Global Invasive Species Program (GISP). In 1999, the third Conference discussed the ecosystem approach for sustainable use of biological diversity, and provided input to SBSTTA and to the later adoption of the Principles for Ecosystem Approach at COP-6 in 2002. The fourth conference in 2003 focused on technology transfer and capacity building, and provided input to the SBSTTA meeting in November 2003 and to UNEP and its in-

tergovernmental strategic plan for technology support and capacity building to developing countries. In 1997 a workshop was held on biodiversity in freshwater, providing scientific input to the SBSTTA meeting in 1997.