



***PAN-EUROPEAN BIOLOGICAL AND LANDSCAPE  
DIVERSITY STRATEGY***

Geneva and Strasbourg, 9 September 2005

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**BUREAU OF THE COUNCIL FOR THE PAN-EUROPEAN  
BIOLOGICAL AND LANDSCAPE DIVERSITY STRATEGY**

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Twelfth meeting  
16 September 2005  
Palais des Nations, Geneva

**Future of the PEBLDS  
Results of a brainstorming meeting of friends of the Chair**

*Document prepared by  
the Joint Secretariat for PEBLDS*

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**Friends of the Chair Meeting  
International Environment House, Room 4  
1 July 2005, 9.00 to 17.00**

**Minutes**

Present:

Ms. Sylvi Ofstad (Norway)  
Mr. Peter Bos (Netherlands)  
Mr. Rob Wolters (European Centre for Nature Conservation-ECNC)  
Mr. Robert Lamb (Switzerland)  
Mr. Eladio Fernandez-Galiano (Council of Europe)  
Ms. Ivonne Higuero (UNEP)  
Mr. Frits Schlingemann (UNEP)  
Mr. Dan Kuhnau (UNEP)

Apologies:

John.Angell (United Kingdom)

1. In general the participants were concerned about the lack of broad political and financial support from the governments for the PEBLDS process and Kyiv Action Plans.
2. There was a suggestion from UNEP/ROE for the PEBLDS to again be run by the CO-DBP under the Council of Europe because of the lack of contributions to UNEP/ROE for the running of the Secretariat. It was announced that the Council of Europe was undergoing staff changes: Mr. Gianluca Silvestrini would no longer work with the PEBLDS and Mr. Eladio Fernandez-Galiano would also be changing posts.
3. The participants agreed that the activities with the EEA (indicators and agriculture); MCPFE (forests); EBRD, ECNC and others (financing biodiversity); Berne Convention (invasive alien species); and the PEEN (protected areas and ecological networks) were going well although most lacked committed leadership and financial support from the governments.
4. However, most participants agreed that the PEBLDS was too ambitious and should slim down, prioritise and focus on only a few successful and appealing activities that provide added value. And that it should continue to organise the Biodiversity in Europe conferences.
5. The participants questioned the need for PEBLDS with 25 countries now members of the EU and what would be the new focus and strategy given the mandate to continue to work with the non-EU countries in the East. There also seemed to be a lack of urgency with regards to the 2010 targets at all levels.
6. The participants agreed that the whole of Europe is in a process of transformation. Is there a role for a PEBLDS process in this new environment and does the constituency believe that it is a viable process. The participants suggested finding out what motivates/demotivates countries to participate in the PEBLDS process.

7. It was necessary also to continuously communicate what PEBLDS is doing at the pan European level and implement the external communication strategy.
8. Some participants suggested moving even closer to the CBD and the EU and moving away from the Environment for Europe process but others thought this might be difficult.
9. The participants agreed that a few scenarios should be prepared for the Governments to decide which they thought should be chosen as the future for the PEBLDS. The participants discussed a number of elements of the scenarios for adapting the institutional structure of the PEBLDS:
  - The Council of Europe and UNEP would cease to provide the institutional structure for the PEBLDS process.
  - PEBLDS to be less ambitious and focus on only a few issues without attention to regional processes.
  - Make the PEBLDS less bureaucratic and eliminate the Council and Bureau meetings and focus on the cooperation with the non-EU member countries in the Eastern Europe, Caucasus and Central Asia region.
  - UNEP to no longer form part of the Joint Secretariat but as a PEBLDS participating agency responsible for Biodiversity in Europe Conferences in collaboration with the Council of Europe as well as the implementation of a suite of activities consistent with its global mandate.
  - Link closer with the CBD and remove the PEBLDS from the Environment for Europe process.
  - Continue to be linked with both the CBD and the Environment for Europe and have the Biodiversity in Europe Conferences report to both processes on the implementation of their guidance.
  - PEBLDS to continue to work with the European Union to provide a link with the EECCA countries on biodiversity issues.
  - Focus on regionalisation and implementation of activities that promote regional cooperation.
  - Continue the Biodiversity in Europe Conferences but Council meetings would focus on the preparation of the conferences in a more interesting manner to bring countries together.
  - Less centralisation of the process in the Joint Secretariat. Governments could voluntarily offer to host and organise Council meetings to take stock of the implementation of biodiversity activities in a dynamic way focusing on issues for discussion at the meeting.

## Annex: Scenarios

### Background

The Third *Environment for Europe* Ministerial Conference endorsed the Pan European Biological and Landscape Diversity Strategy (PEBLDS) in Sofia, Bulgaria in 1994. Therefore the PEBLDS is an intergovernmental process under the broad auspices of the *Environment for Europe* Ministerial Conference. The implementation of the PEBLDS and its further development is a responsibility of the Governments participating in this process. The PEBLDS legal framework or institutional structure is based on an agreement between the Council of Europe and UNEP. An intergovernmental Council sets the policy under the PEBLDS and the Council of Europe and UNEP have jointly been providing the Secretariat services to this Council.

Meetings and services under the PEBLDS are financed from a budget comprised of voluntary contributions by Governments and the Joint secretariat partners. However, for some time now, there is a lack of broad political support and interest from the governments at the EU and non-EU level for the PEBLDS as well as a lack of leadership and financial support for the Kyiv action plans. The Governments also have been unable to commit to providing a stable and predictable funding for the Joint Secretariat.

In view of the increasingly difficult situation faced by the institutions providing the structure to the PEBLDS, two scenarios are envisioned for the future implementation of the PEBLDS. The Scenarios assume the *status quo* remains the same.

#### ***Scenario 1. Dissolution of the institutional structure of the PEBLDS***

The PEBLDS Joint Secretariat would be dissolved through an exchange of letters between UNEP and the Council of Europe.

The PEBLDS Council and Bureau would cease to exist eliminating the need to organise PEBLDS Council and Bureau meetings.

UNEP and/or the Council of Europe would independently continue implementing activities to conserve and sustainably use biodiversity in the pan European region under their respective mandates.

The implementation of the PEBLDS and its further development would continue to be a responsibility of the Governments participating in the PEBLDS. Individual Governments and organisations would independently report on implementation of the Kyiv Resolution on Biodiversity at the Environment for Europe process.

UNEP and/or the Council of Europe, with relevant partners, could continue to organise the Biodiversity in Europe Intergovernmental Conferences as the regional preparatory meeting for the Meetings of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity, as long as Governments in the pan-European region provide the necessary financial and substantive support to do so.

UNEP and/or the Council of Europe, with relevant partners, could continue to organise *ad hoc* meetings to prepare the input for the Environment for Europe Ministerial Conferences, and to report and monitor the implementation of the Kyiv Resolution on Biodiversity, as long as Governments in the pan European region provide the necessary financial and substantive support to do so.

The MCPFE (forest biodiversity activities) and EEA (biodiversity indicators and high nature value farmland activities) would report directly on progress at the Environment for Europe Ministerial Conference but there would no longer be a counterpart (Joint Secretariat) to work with them on implementation. UNEP and/or the Council of Europe would continue to contribute to these processes in areas within their mandate and available resources.

***Scenario 2. The PEBLDS institutional structure would be provided only under the Council of Europe leadership as a part of the Environment for Europe process.***

The PEBLDS Joint Secretariat would be dissolved through an exchange of letters between UNEP and the Council of Europe.

The PEBLDS Council and Bureau would be supported wholly through the Council of Europe.

UNEP would become a contributing partner to the PEBLDS process with a suite of activities in support of the PEBLDS and report to the Council and Bureau on their activities consistent with its global mandate.

UNEP and/or the Council of Europe, with relevant partners, could continue to organise the Biodiversity in Europe Intergovernmental Conferences as the regional preparatory meeting for the Meetings of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity, as long as Governments in the pan-European region provide the necessary financial and substantive support to do so.

UNEP and/or the Council of Europe, with relevant partners, could continue to organise *ad hoc* meetings to prepare the input for the Environment for Europe Ministerial Conferences, and to report and monitor the implementation of the Kyiv Resolution on Biodiversity, as long as Governments in the pan European region provide the necessary financial and substantive support to do so.

The MCPFE (forest biodiversity activities) and EEA (biodiversity indicators and high nature value farmland activities) would report directly on progress at the Environment for Europe Ministerial Conference but there would no longer be a counterpart (Joint Secretariat) to work with them on implementation. UNEP and/or the Council of Europe would continue to contribute to these processes in areas within their mandate and available resources.