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Ladies and Gentlemen,

Do you know the Gastric-brooding frog?

It is not a well known or popular Frog, being inconspicuous with greyish-brownish colour, only about one or two inches long, so:

Why am I telling you about this frog?

The **Gastric-brooding frogs** or **Platypus frogs** were a genus of frogs native to Queensland in eastern Australia. The genus was unique because it contained the only two known frog species that incubated the prejuvenile stages of their offspring in the stomach of the mother. The tadpoles secreted a substance, which stopped the disintegration by the gastric acid. First investigations procured hopes for a new drug to treat gastric ulcer from this substance. However, the studies could not be continued because the frogs became extinct. We lost the medicinal secrets these frogs might have provided for human kind.

This sad example clearly shows that mankind is directly influenced by the loss of biodiversity. Through the extinction of species we loose possibly crucial opportunities and solutions to problems of our society.

As you all know, nature is a teacher for a lot of technical solutions. Byssus-filaments are the inspiring example for water-tight glue. Burdocks have been the example for Velcros. The leaves of the Lotus plant inspired scientists to develop a paint, which

cleans itself. All of these inventions are helpful in our society and are also economically profitable.

But biological diversity not only provides us with clever business ideas.

Biodiversity provides us directly with essentials like clean water and air, fertile soil, protects us from floods and avalanches. These aspects can all be economically valued. It is a difficult and complex task, but through this valuation it becomes clear how important they are for human well being and economic development.

An example: There are about 100,000 terrestrial Protected Areas on Earth, covering 11% of the land mass of our planet. These protected areas provide ecosystem services and biodiversity benefits to people valued at US\$ 4,4 Trillion to US\$ 5,2 Trillion (that is a million millions) per annum. If you want a comparison, that's more than the revenues of the global automobile sector, steel sector and IT services sector - combined! This impressive example has been presented by Pavan and his team in the study „The Economics of Ecosystems and Biodiversity“ which was initiated by the European Commission and our Ministry for Environment.

Germany's Federal Ministry for Environment and the EU-Commission have initiated the study on the cost of loss of biodiversity to show that diversity is crucial for survival and the importance of biodiversity for economic development. Pavan was resourceful and brave enough to take up this challenge. With the joint cooperation of a number of partners (e.g. European Environment Agency, IUCN, WCMC, UK, FRA, UFZ) a framework and a working structure for the study have been established so far. The study team has collected and sifted through evidence from existing studies, while initiating a number of independent studies financed by European Commission and Germany's Ministry for the Environment.

Authorities and organisations from economy and ecology from the G8+5 countries and from all over the world are providing the study team with survey results, data and advice. This global support is of utmost importance for the establishment and sustainable impact of the study results. First results from the Phase I of the study were presented at CBD-CoP9.

It might be possible to substitute some of the ecosystem services I mentioned earlier by human-made technologies, but, without wanting to take away Pavan's presentation highlights, the study results clearly show that it is often cheaper to invest in the conservation of biodiversity than to invest into new technologies to substitute the services nature provides for us.

Therefore it is essential for the safeguarding of our natural resources to jointly create a coordination of economic interests. An important step in this direction was taken at the CBD-CoP9 last week when we reached substantial progress in establishing an international regime of access and benefit sharing to genetical resources. We need to give the ecosystem services of biodiversity a market value to create incentives for developing countries to conserve their biodiversity.

Market-based instruments like the ABS-Regime are helpful to give the peoples of the world a chance to secure the natural resources and secure their livelihood simultaneously.

In this context the inclusion of the private sector into the process of conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity has high priority. The goals of conservation and sustainability will only be achieved if the main drivers of ecosystem and biodiversity loss are actually addressed through appropriate intervention and response based on credible valuations. Businesses have to accept biodiversity as the indispensable resource which it is and have to treat this resource with respect and care. Therefore BMU has furthermore initiated a Business&Biodiversity Initiative, which links the conservation of Biological diversity with business activities. We would like to point out the important role businesses can play in reaching the 2010 target on national, European and on global level.

The aim of the initiation of TEEB and the engagement of the private sector is ultimately to improve decision-making. I do not have to stress here that the conservation of biodiversity is supported by a number of good reasons, ethical or

spiritual for example, which should give biodiversity a higher priority in our decision making. However we believe that realising the economic value of biodiversity can provide us with additional irresistible arguments for the conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity for future generations.