



Call for Interest for the European Business and Biodiversity Platform

The global loss of biodiversity has become one of the major environmental challenges of the 21st century. The concern for biodiversity is integral to sustainable development, competitiveness, economic growth and employment, and improved livelihoods. Many of the services that biodiversity and ecosystems provide are currently threatened. These are timber production, water supply, waste treatment, natural hazard protection, regulation of air quality, regulation of regional and local climate, regulation of erosion, etc. In the long run, the loss of ecosystem services threatens business opportunities as well.

Companies have started getting more and more involved in dialogues with governments and conservation organizations. In 2007, The High Level European Conference on Business and Biodiversity in Lisbon called on businesses, governments, the EU and NGOs to:

- Continue raising awareness of the strong competitive advantage to be gained by conserving biodiversity;
- Promote the use of a wide range of market mechanisms, corporate responsibility and regulatory schemes to conserve biodiversity;
- Support large and small businesses with operational tools for conservation of biodiversity and measuring their performance in meaningful ways;
- Encourage new incentives to develop and strengthen partnerships between companies, governments at all levels, NGOs and universities/scientific world.

To reach these objectives, the European Commission took the initiative to engage with businesses, from SMEs to larger organizations, to set up a technical platform on Business and Biodiversity (B@B) in order to:

- Facilitate the business and biodiversity initiative;
- Develop with businesses and other stakeholders means to establish pro-biodiversity businesses;
- Help businesses find solutions to biodiversity challenges related to their activities ensuring a fair income and sustainable growth, while providing benefits for biodiversity and ecosystems;
- Encourage the development of consumer awareness with an EU wide award scheme, acknowledging the good practice of the best performing businesses.

Following the work already performed in some countries, the European B@B initiative, will be the first initiative of this magnitude worldwide. Once again, Europe has a chance to be the leader in setting the scene for the rest of the world to follow.



The partnership of IUCN, PwC, ECNC, ELO and Blue 4You on behalf of the European Commission, invites you to join in and get actively involved in the European Business and Biodiversity Platform.

The B@B platform aims at supporting all businesses integrating biodiversity into their core activities. The 6 following sectors have been prioritized by the European Commission for the first year (2010): **agriculture, food supply industry, forestry, extractive industries, financial sector and tourism**. A website hosted by DG Environment of the European Commission will be launched in June 2010. The B@B Platform will facilitate information and knowledge exchange among different actors, will host a resource centre, provide links to information available on the topic and outline existing best practices. It will also liaise with other related on going Business and Biodiversity initiatives. The website will be frequently updated and will publish all materials delivered throughout the B@B Platform.

We count on businesses to get involved in a set of actions carried out through this project:

- Preparing sectoral work programmes to demonstrate the feasibility of the platform becoming self-sufficient;
- Identifying best practice examples;
- Developing guidance documents on how to set up and run businesses that contribute to their business sustainability and biodiversity;
- Developing benchmarking and an award system to recognise outstanding contributions to biodiversity conservation

To complete those actions, sectoral workshops will be organized from May 2010 onwards encouraging active Business participation.

If you wish to join the European B@B Platform, please forward your details: Company, Industry sector, Address, name, position, telephone and fax to ecbb@iucn.org



The Partnership

IUCN

IUCN, International Union for Conservation of Nature, helps the world find pragmatic solutions to our most pressing environment and development challenges. IUCN supports scientific research, manages field projects, and brings governments, NGOs, the UN and companies together to develop policy, laws and best practice.

<http://www.iucn.org>

PriceWaterhouseCoopers

The French SBS practice (www.pwc.fr/dd), member of PricewaterhouseCoopers Advisory France and a part of PricewaterhouseCoopers Sustainable Business Solutions (SBS) network (<http://www.pwc.com/sustainability>) is dedicated to providing clients with environmental/sustainability advisory services.

ECNC

The ECNC-European Centre for Nature Conservation working for the conservation and sustainable use of Europe's nature, biodiversity and landscapes, developing partnerships with organizations, institutes and businesses.

<http://www.europeanlandowners.org>

ELO

ELO, European landowners' organization is committed to promoting a sustainable and prosperous countryside and to increasing awareness relating to environmental and agricultural issues.

<http://www.ecnc.org>

Blue4You

Blue4 You is an agency specialising in online communication and development of dynamic applications. Blue4You gathers the strategic, technical and graphic expertise to create powerful institutional interactive campaigns.

<http://www.blue4you.com>