



THE 2010 GUIDE

Let's make 2010
a successful year
together!

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Foreword

Dear partner, supporter and friend of Countdown 2010,

This 2010 Guide is designed to introduce you to Countdown 2010's activities for the year 2010 and the efforts the Countdown 2010 team will undertake to further engage its partners in successful celebrations for the International Year of Biodiversity. In addition, this Guide will give you a detailed description of how the Countdown 2010 network works and how its partners are acting together to reach the 2010 biodiversity target.

The year 2010 will hopefully go down in history as the year when international leaders will not only reiterate that biodiversity is a fundamental element for human well-being, but also will take concrete action for its conservation. The year 2010 is the International Year of Biodiversity as declared by the United Nations, but also a crucial year for policy developments on biodiversity conservation. The 2010 biodiversity target set by world leaders in 2002 will expire in 2010 and a possible post-2010 target(s) will be agreed by the international community.

Countdown 2010 with its partners will enhance and further strengthen action towards the 2010 biodiversity target and will continue promoting a coherent approach towards the 2010 biodiversity target. This synergic effort is essential to make a difference for biodiversity.

In less than five years, in Europe and across the world, more than 900 partners have come together in the Countdown 2010 network to take up the 2010 challenge. More are joining every day.

Halting biodiversity loss by 2010 may seem an impossible task. Without a doubt, this requires all stakeholders to make unprecedented efforts to take biodiversity into account in their daily lives and business activities.

The 2010 biodiversity target was created both as a powerful communication tool and a means to activate efforts in favour of biodiversity conservation. It aims to raise awareness of the importance that biodiversity has in everybody's life and provide us with a unique opportunity to unify the purpose of many different initiatives, both in the conservation community and beyond, towards the common objective of saving biodiversity.

This Guide will inform you on why the Countdown 2010 initiative was set up and what it has achieved so far. But most importantly, it will guide you through the celebrations for the International Year of Biodiversity and the policy processes for a new biodiversity target.

We invite you to work with us to strengthen our network, helping it become a chorus of different voices united by a common goal, saving biodiversity by 2010.

Whether you are already well underway or just getting started, we are confident that this Guide will provide you with more ideas for action and information on the 2010 biodiversity target and the International Year of Biodiversity.

Join our network and make sure your organisation and its activities respect and celebrate the diversity of life on earth.

Best regards,



Sebastian Winkler
Head of Countdown 2010

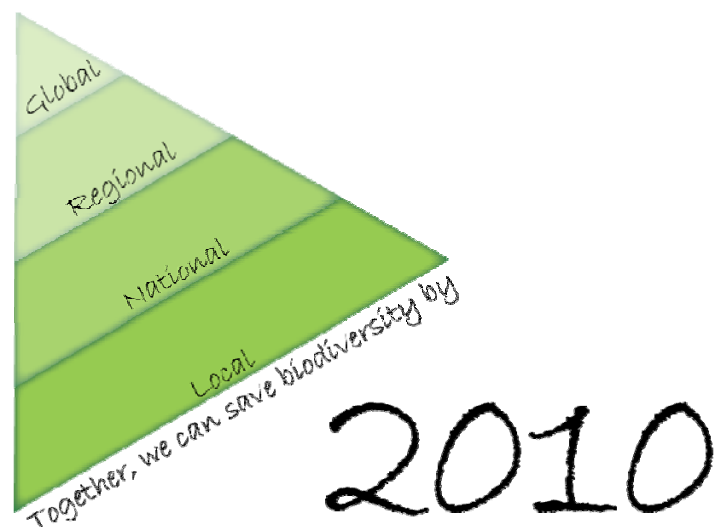


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Introduction

Why is biodiversity so important?

Have you ever considered that the glass of clear, cold, clean water drawn from your faucet may have been purified for you by a wetland or perhaps the root system of an entire forest? Too often people take the availability of products and goods for granted. If we follow the chain of production for many products back to the source, more often than not we arrive back at biodiversity.

Continued loss of biodiversity will result in a rapid decline of the Earth's natural wealth and a dramatic reduction of future ecosystem services. Agricultural production will dramatically decrease if bacteria and fungi, which make soil fertile and breakdown wastes disappear. The same will happen if insects, bats and birds – which ensure flower pollination – reduce in numbers. With 42% of anti-cancer drugs coming from natural sources, biodiversity loss will force us to face unprecedented challenges.

We are losing both the beauty and richness of our natural environment as well as destabilising the very ecological processes on which we depend. There can be no life on Earth without biodiversity.

To fight the continuous loss of biodiversity which is threatening the survival of the world as a whole, in 2002 world leaders committed to reduce this loss by 2010, following the pledge EU countries had already made in 2001.

Facts and Figures

- The abundance of species has declined by 40% between 1970 and 2000. Species present in rivers, lakes and marshlands have declined by 50%.
- Declines are alarming in amphibians, mammals, birds in agricultural lands, corals and commonly harvested fish species.
- In the North Atlantic, fish have declined by 66% in the last 50 years.
- Since 2000, 6 million hectares of primary forest have been lost each year.
- In the Caribbean region, hard coral cover has declined from 50% to 10% in the last three decades.
- 35% of mangroves have been lost in just 20 years.
- The value of global ecosystem services is estimated at \$16-\$64 trillion.



The year 2010

The year 2010 is a milestone year for biodiversity. In 2010 the 2010 Biodiversity expires and a new international commitment will be agreed by world leaders; 2010 is also the United Nations International Year of Biodiversity, the greatest opportunity ever for biodiversity to get its steady place on the international agenda.

Yet, that's not all. The year 2010 also marks the final year for the Countdown 2010 initiative which was set up to help governments achieving the 2010 Target by mobilizing local actors towards biodiversity conservation.

This threefold scenario offers an unprecedented opportunity for biodiversity, but at the same time it presents us with a great challenge. The momentum which accompanied the years after the Target was set made it possible to unite the efforts of hundreds of actors worldwide. This momentum not only has to be kept in 2010, it has to be boosted so that the impact of our efforts is even greater.

What is the 2010 biodiversity target?

More than one decade after the implementation of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), the recognition of biodiversity loss gained high political profile both at global, national and regional levels. This resulted in ambitious commitments for action by heads of states, initiated in 2001 in the European Union.

The goal of halting the loss of biodiversity by 2010 is the subject of several key international agreements. Each recognises the rapid degradation of ecosystems and habitats, the increasing threat to many species populations and the urgent need to take action that will halt the decline in irreplaceable natural resources.

While at global level, the Target is "to achieve a significant reduction of the current rate of biodiversity loss", the one addressed at EU and Pan-European level is even more ambitious as to "halt the loss of biodiversity". Since 2007,

the 2010 biodiversity target is fully integrated into the Millennium Development Goals.

In political terms, this commitment represents a radical departure from previous approaches. For the first time, an overall conservation target has been adopted rather than generally formulated objectives or specific measures that may or may not have the desired conservation effect. In that sense, the significance of this agreement cannot be overstated.

However, given the current rapid decline in biodiversity, both in Europe and worldwide, and the ever-increasing extent and intensity of many human activities, the objective of halting the decline in biodiversity by 2010 will require unprecedented efforts in adapting our activities to the needs of natural systems.

Milestones

16 June 2001, Gothenburg, Sweden

"biodiversity decline should be halted with the aim of reaching this objective by 2010"

4 September 2002, Johannesburg, South Africa

"the achievement by 2010 of a significant reduction in the current rate of loss of biological diversity"

23 May 2003, Kiev, Ukraine

"reinforce our objective to halt the loss of biological diversity at all levels by the year 2010"

22 May 2006, Brussels, Belgium

"to deliver the 2010 biodiversity target and put biodiversity on course to recovery"

22 May 2007, New York, USA

The 2010 biodiversity target is now fully integrated into the framework of the Millennium Development Goals.

8 October 2008, Barcelona, Spain

“G8+5 countries show medium to low performance in achieving the 2010 biodiversity target”

11 February 2009, Brussels, Belgium

“the EU will not reach the 2010 target. We need to reinforce our efforts to sustain the variety of life”

The 2010 biodiversity target expires

The year 2010 marks the expiry of the 2010 biodiversity target which was endorsed by world leaders in 2002 during the World Summit on Sustainable Development in Johannesburg.

Several studies are underway to determine what progress has been made to achieve the Target. Among these, the Global Biodiversity Outlook 3 will be published in mid-2010 by the Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity.

While at international level the Target is to reduce the rate of loss of biodiversity by 2010, the Heads of State of the European Union Members States committed to halt the loss by 2010. If internationally there has been so far no official statement on the likelihood of not achieving the Target, the leaders of the EU already seem to agree that the Target will not be reached.

In the year 2010, governments will officially announce what they have been able to achieve within the timeframe of the Target and also prepare for defining the post 2010 framework.

Countdown 2010 works at governmental level by monitoring countries' responses to the 2010 biodiversity target through its Readiness Assessment tool (<http://www.countdown2010.net/assessing-progress-towards-2010>). The study measures the progress made by governments towards the 2010 target. The outcomes

carried out within the framework of this study will be instrumental for the adoption of a future target(s) for biodiversity after 2010.

The International Year of Biodiversity (IYB)

The UN declared 2010 the International Year of Biodiversity (IYB). Throughout the year countless initiatives will be organized to disseminate information, promote the protection of biodiversity and encourage organizations, institutions, companies and individuals to take direct action to reduce the constant loss of biological diversity worldwide.

At local level Countdown 2010 has mobilised local actors towards concrete actions for biodiversity. In only a few years of activity, Countdown 2010 has been able to mobilize an increasing number of actors ranging from local authorities and businesses to civil society organizations. With a powerful network of more than 900 partners, Countdown 2010 is one of the leading initiatives mobilizing action for the 2010 biodiversity target.

Through its wide and well-established network, Countdown 2010 will be a key global actor for IYB in Europe and around the world. Countdown 2010 partners will provide one of the main information channels and will be a major vehicle for reaching target groups worldwide.



Objectives of IYB

- Raise awareness of the importance of conserving biodiversity for human well-being and promote understanding of the economic value of biodiversity
- Enhance public knowledge of the threats to biodiversity and means to conserve it
- Engage an increasing number of people
- Celebrate the achievements by governments and Countdown 2010 partners
- Report on possible failures to achieve the Target
- Use momentum to trigger even more action for biodiversity
- Begin to communicate the post-2010 target(s)

Countdown 2010 celebrates the IYB

Countdown 2010 is organising a number of events to bring partners together to coordinate their actions, events and messages for the International Year of Biodiversity (IYB) in 2010. Among the numerous initiatives planned for next year:

Viral video. To kick start the IYB, a viral video will be sent to partners and supporters.

2010 Success Stories. Countdown 2010 partners' achievements in biodiversity conservation will be featured in a series of "2010 Success Stories" which will be featured in multimedia formats on the Countdown 2010 website.

Key international events. In the run-up to 2010 and during IYB, Countdown 2010 will participate in key international events and organize several events on the 2010 Target and the post-2010 framework. It will also actively support the Secretariat of the CBD (SCBD) for its events and the celebrations of international days in 2010. Countdown 2010 will be present at, among others:

- Launch of IYB by COP 9 President, Berlin, Germany in January
- Opening of the IYB, launch of the UNESCO exhibition, Paris, France in January

- Trondheim conference, Norway in February
- FIFA World Cup, South Africa in June
- United Nations General Assembly, New York, USA in September
- 10th Conference of the Parties, Nagoya, Japan in October
- Closing of the IYB, Kanazawa, Japan in December

2010 Biodiversity Year Schedule of Events. Countdown 2010 hosts a calendar of events happening in 2010 and beyond. The calendar will be linked to the SCBD calendar and will focus on public awareness events organized by partners and other stakeholders.

Exchange ideas. A special section will be created on the Countdown 2010 website for idea exchanges on IYB initiatives among partners. Partners will be able to share their projects and further collaborate.

Engagement with business. Special projects will be developed with the Countdown 2010 business partners. In addition, companies will be asked to undertake a specific 2010 commitment for biodiversity.

Mobilizing local authorities. Events on local authorities' contribution to the 2010 Target and post-2010 framework will be organized in partnership with Countdown 2010 partners.

Global action for IYB. Countdown 2010 Multiregional Hubs in South America, Africa and Asia are planning their celebrations for IYB. They will replicate some of the initiatives carried out at European level and undertake several more of their own.

Closing Countdown 2010. A closing ceremony will be organized during the CBD COP 10 in Nagoya in October 2010. The future of the initiative will be revealed.

Ambassadors

Countdown 2010 Ambassadors are an esteemed group of influential decision-makers coming from any sector, level or country. They are strongly committed to the 2010 biodiversity target and act to help reduce, or stop altogether, the loss of biodiversity in their personal capacity.

As Countdown 2010 Ambassadors they:

Commit to

- Promoting the 2010 biodiversity target and to support Countdown 2010 partners
- Providing strategic input in identifying allies and partners
- Making recommendations for engaging high level decision makers in developing solutions to issues relevant to Countdown 2010's mission
- Representing Countdown 2010 at relevant meetings

Support

- Commitments by World Heads of State to significantly reduce the current rate of biodiversity loss
- Commitments by Countdown 2010 partners to significantly reduce the current rate of biodiversity loss

Encourage

- Public awareness and participation in biodiversity conservation
- The promotion of activities towards the 2010 biodiversity target
- Better integration of biodiversity considerations into all relevant sectors of public policy and economy
- Efforts to adapt human activities to the needs of natural systems

List of Countdown 2010 Ambassadors:

- Aldo Cosentino, Italian Ministry of the Environment
- Achim Steiner, Executive Director of United Nations Environment Programme
- Jostein Gaarder, Norwegian philosopher and author of the bestseller *Sophie's World*
- Peter Johan Schei, Director of Fridtjof Nansen Institute
- Yolanda Kakabadse, Senior Adviser of Fundación Futuro Latinoamericano

Partners are encouraged to suggest new Ambassadors.

The Countdown 2010 initiative

Countdown 2010 was launched at the stakeholder conference “Sustaining Livelihoods and Biodiversity: Attaining the 2010 Target in the European Biodiversity Strategy” in Malahide, Ireland in 2004. This conference resulted in the Message of Malahide which today forms the foundation of the European Commission’s Biodiversity Communication.

Countdown 2010 is a powerful network of active partners working together towards the 2010 biodiversity target. Each partner commits to specific efforts to tackle the causes of biodiversity loss. The Countdown 2010 Secretariat – hosted by the IUCN Regional Office for Pan-Europe – facilitates and encourages action, promotes the importance of the 2010 biodiversity target and assesses progress towards 2010.

Our mission

Governments alone will not achieve the 2010 Target. Countdown 2010 is a unique and time-bound platform that brings together governments, NGOs, international institutions and agencies, companies and local communities who make additional commitments in order to move closer towards achieving the 2010 biodiversity target. Countdown 2010 catalyzes and facilitates actions of its partners, creating a joint momentum to achieve the 2010 biodiversity target. The Secretariat initiates and supports actions of its partners to:

Support and encourage the full implementation of governments’ commitments to the 2010 biodiversity target

Amplify the signal to increase awareness of the importance of biodiversity for human well-being

Verify if governments are taking measures towards their promise of saving biodiversity by 2010

Empower partners to share information, mobilize action and ensure effective cooperation

Goals and Objectives

Countdown 2010 mobilizes action to ensure that all governments and members of civil society, at every level, have taken the necessary actions to halt the loss of biodiversity by 2010.

Objectives

- Gain maximum public attention for the challenge of saving biodiversity by 2010;
- Encourage and support the full implementation of all the existing binding international commitments and necessary actions to save biodiversity, also through the Readiness Assessment;
- Demonstrate clearly what progress the world makes in meeting the 2010 biodiversity target.

Principles

- Sound science: all Countdown 2010 work is underpinned by sound science and/or relevant practical conservation experience and is carried out to the highest possible standard.
- Transparency: Countdown 2010 is committed to the principle of transparency in process and decision making. It ensures public access to information, while respecting individual privacy and institutional confidentiality, as appropriate.
- Subsidiarity: the Countdown 2010 Secretariat works at the most appropriate level (local, national, regional, multi-regional) and it undertakes only those Countdown 2010 activities that partners are unable to.
- Autonomy: Countdown 2010 is an independent alliance. It is governed by the will of its partners through the institutional mechanisms in place.

Structure of Countdown 2010

Countdown 2010 is a strategic alliance with a minimum amount of bureaucratic structure and processes and a clear timeline to 2010. It operates through a highly decentralised system of partnerships, relying on existing environmental fora, local Agenda 21-processes and IUCN national committees for the implementation of activities aimed at saving biodiversity. Though mainly active in Europe, Countdown 2010 is currently expanding its activities to other regions of the world.

A broader Countdown 2010 partners' Assembly meets annually to review the overall direction of Countdown 2010. In its implementation, Countdown 2010 is guided by a core Advisory Board. The day-to-day work of the initiative lies with the Secretariat

Secretariat

A small Secretariat is responsible for the management and coordination of the Countdown 2010 network. At its first meeting in February 2004, the partners' Assembly requested the IUCN Regional Office for Pan-Europe (ROfE) to host the Countdown 2010 Secretariat. In its action, the Secretariat applies the principle of subsidiarity: it only undertakes those activities that the partners are not able to undertake by themselves. It profiles and builds on existing initiatives and products, adding value through communication, facilitation, coordination and profiling the work of its partners.

The Secretariat therefore seeks to involve as many organizations and to form as many strategic partnerships as possible in order to achieve the objectives of Countdown 2010. The Secretariat performs the following functions:

- strive to increase the number of participating organizations throughout Europe and beyond;
- keep an updated database on partners and project implemented under the Countdown 2010 umbrella;

- invite individuals in participating organizations to become members of the Advisory Board;
- communicate intensively with partners to build their understanding and ownership of Countdown 2010;
- promote long and short-term secondments of staff and interns from partners to the Secretariat;
- develop and implement the communications and media strategy;
- help prepare events and organize ad-hoc conference and workshop on Countdown 2010 issues;
- authorise use of the Countdown 2010 logo for fundraising purposes;
- undertakes financial and human resource administration of the initiative;
- provides overall day-to-day coordination of Countdown 2010.

The Countdown 2010 Secretariat often organizes events on biodiversity-related topics. At EU level, The Secretariat works with each Presidency of the Council of the European Union to make sure biodiversity is kept high on the agenda of the EU.

Countdown 2010 is engaged in several joint projects which aimed to raise awareness of biodiversity loss.

The Countdown 2010 Secretariat also hosts Tematea, an IUCN-UNEP partnership on issue-based modules for a coherent implementation of biodiversity-related conventions.



Advisory Board

Countdown 2010 is guided by a core Advisory Board, whose members are appointed by the Secretariat, based on proposals from the partners' Assembly. The Advisory Board performs the following functions:

- give strategic guidance to the Secretariat and oversee the achievement of the programme;
- provide evaluation and quality control;
- decide on themes to be promoted during each EU Presidency;
- identify future Countdown 2010 activities;
- advise and assist the Secretariat on communication and on financial aspects;
- when requested by the Secretariat, decide on the use of the Countdown 2010 logo for activities by Countdown partners and other organizations;
- revoke the partnership status of organizations that no longer meet partnership criteria or have misused the Countdown logo;
- serve as Ambassadors for Countdown 2010.

The Members of the Advisory Board serve for one year in their personal capacity and may be invited by the Secretariat to serve for further terms. The numbers of members may change if instrumental in the achievement of the Countdown 2010 goal. The first Advisory Board meeting took place in April 2004 in Brussels and since then the Board meets regularly 2-3 times a year. Members are expected to attend all its meetings at their own expense.

Members of the Countdown 2010 Advisory Board (as of June 2009)

- Sue Collins, Butterfly Conservation
- Peter Carter, European Investment Bank
- Ahmed Djoghlaif, Secretariat of Convention on Biological Diversity
- Zoltan Waliczky, RSPB

- Mark Halle, International Institute for Sustainable Development
- Rolf Hogan, WWF
- Robert Lamb, MoE Switzerland
- Carlos Martin-Novella, MoE Spain
- Ignace Schops, Regionaal Landschap Kempen en Maasland
- Rob Wolters, ECNC
- Monika Zimmermann, ICLEI
- Despina Symons, EBCD
- Federico Cinquepalmi, MoE Italy
- Suzanne Wegefelt, DG Environment
- Hans Friederich, IUCN ROE

Multiregional Hubs

In June 2001, EU Heads of State at the Summit in Göteborg, Sweden, decided that “biodiversity decline should be halted with the aim of reaching this objective by 2010”. A year later, nearly all countries promised to “achieve by 2010 a significant reduction in the current rate of loss of biological diversity” at the World Summit on Sustainable Development.

Countdown 2010 was initially established as a European initiative. Yet, as the expiry of the target came closer and requests for support started coming from regions outside Europe, the Countdown 2010 network expanded to the other continents of the world.

The Countdown 2010 Multiregional Hubs assess the specific threats to biodiversity and possible approaches to alleviate them in their region. They promote the 2010 biodiversity target and mobilize existing and potential partners while working with other stakeholders to increase the level of action towards the Target.

Currently, Countdown 2010 Multiregional Hubs are active in Europe, Asia, Africa and America.

Europe

In addition to the Countdown 2010 Secretariat based in Brussels, a dedicated Hub was created in Georgia to follow biodiversity conservation in the Caucasus. In 2006, stakeholders from Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia met to discuss an action plan to reach the 2010 biodiversity target in the region. The Countdown 2010 Hub for the Caucasus implements priority projects developed in the ‘Message from Gudauri’.

Asia

Countdown 2010 is present in Asia through its Hubs in Lower Mekong and China.

The Mekong is one of the world’s great rivers, sustaining million of people with its rich fishery and fertile flood plains. Home to an estimated 1,300 species of fish, the wealth of its biodiversity is comparable to that of the Amazon River. The Countdown 2010 Hub for the Lower Mekong works with the governments of Lao, Cambodia and Vietnam and other organizations to develop and implement laws address the threats to this ecoregion.



The emergence of China as one of the world's biggest economies has immense consequences for people and the environment. Members of the Countdown 2010 Hub for China are working with government, communities and business to find ways for this vast country to reduce its impact on biodiversity while improving the livelihoods of its people.

Africa

Southern Africa harbours a vast range of plants and animal species. The region features a number of biodiversity hotspots of global significance. Despite the impressive range of biological resources and many centres of endemism, biodiversity in Southern Africa is experiencing increasing pressure due to a number of factors. The Countdown 2010 Hub for Southern Africa helps governments and stakeholders prioritize action towards the 2010 biodiversity target. Working with the Southern Africa Development Community (SADC) and key stakeholders, a regional biodiversity strategy, providing a regional framework has been produced. In cooperation with the city of Cape Town and ICLEI, Countdown 2010 explores best ways for local governments to engage in effective biodiversity protection. The Countdown 2010 Hub for Southern Africa is also working with the Johannesburg City Parks on a 2010 Greening Soweto initiative, focusing on urban biodiversity restoration.

America

South America is the most biodiverse continent in the world. Poverty and unequal social conditions are widespread and cause constant threats to biodiversity. The Countdown 2010 Hub for South America engages the active civil society of the region in Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Colombia, Chile, Ecuador, Paraguay, Peru, Uruguay and Venezuela, and the CBD Focal Points in the region upon the 2010 Target and the conception of a Post-2010 Target vision coming from this region. Together with several initiatives, including the Alliance for Zero Extinction, it uses flagship species and ecosystems to pinpoint biodiversity loss.

A network of active partners

Partners from all sectors come together in the Countdown 2010 network to support the commitment made by world leaders to save biodiversity by 2010. The combined efforts of governments and Countdown 2010 partners contribute to biodiversity conservation and awareness raising worldwide.

Public institutions of all kinds – national, regional and local governments and municipalities – businesses and local and national NGOs have joined the Countdown 2010 network. By becoming part of the network, they have brought their local issues into the global biodiversity agenda and are involved in the international debate on the 2010 Target and post-2010 process.

Countdown 2010 partners are located in more than 60 countries worldwide. Several Hubs have been established in Europe and elsewhere to coordinate and boost action. Currently there are Multiregional Hubs in Asia, America and Africa.



The role of partners

As a partner of Countdown 2010, you take direct action to save biodiversity. It is the actions of all organisations involved in Countdown 2010 and similar initiatives that will generate the momentum to reach the 2010 biodiversity target and post-2010 commitments.

The 2010 biodiversity target provides a unique opportunity, both in its ambition and in the diversity of issues it touches upon. Just as biodiversity depends on the variety of ecosystems, of species and genes, the success of Countdown 2010 rests to a large extent on the diversity of its partners and their work.

Our claim is broad and simple, providing the space for organisations to continue their work with the tools and issues that are closest to their own core capacity and objectives. Zoos might focus on environmental education, forestry enterprises on how to reduce their own impact on biodiversity, and some non-governmental organisations will campaign for better implementation of nature legislation worldwide.

Even if your core competencies are not linked to nature conservation, there is plenty of room for your organisation to get involved – we just ask that you take account of biodiversity in your activities under the Countdown 2010 banner.

Why joining the network?

The Countdown 2010 Secretariat is your key partner in helping you achieve your conservation goals by 2010 and beyond. The team is always ready to advise you on how to implement your objectives and communicate effectively. Countdown 2010 can assist in developing your activities and encourages you to be pro-active at both global and local levels.

Joining Countdown 2010 can help you build partnerships with other stakeholders. Also, through its website and network of partners, Countdown 2010 is your platform to

communicate to a global audience. The UN International Year of Biodiversity in 2010 is a unique opportunity to unite all stakeholders' efforts and to involve the public.

Being part of Countdown 2010 is a great opportunity to actively engage in shaping the post-2010 framework. Countdown 2010 regularly organizes events and consultations on post-2010. Join us in mobilizing a wider audience around the 2010 Target and in shaping the post-2010 framework!

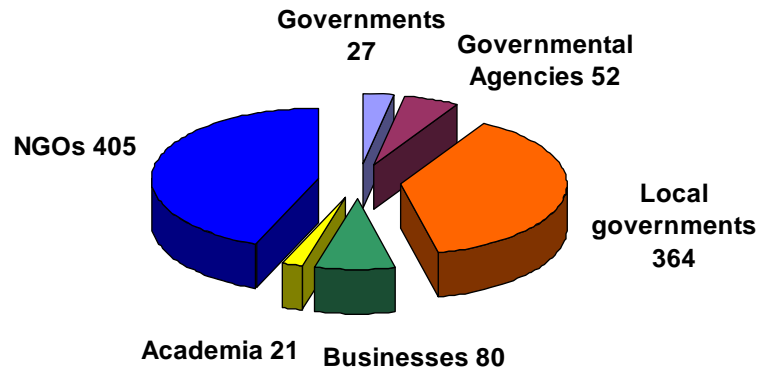
In particular, partners benefit from:

- The use of a persuasive communications platform, useful for sharing knowledge about the 2010 biodiversity target, but also for communicating your own efforts;
- Links to Countdown 2010 partner initiatives in other countries, regions and cities;
- Involvement in projects undertaken by the Secretariat;
- Communication of your objectives and achievements to a global audience;
- Access and support to other Countdown 2010 products, including best practice examples.

A diverse partnership

Partners from all walks of life come together in the Countdown 2010 network to support the efforts made by world leaders. Their combined efforts contribute to biodiversity conservation. The Countdown 2010 network enables partners to communicate their activities to a global audience. There are now regional hubs in Africa, Asia, the Americas and Europe.

Countdown 2010 partnership is very diverse. Governments, local authorities, businesses, museums, NGOs, community groups, academic institutions and so on have joined the network. For simplicity purpose, only the main categories are described here.



(as of September 2009)

Governments

Governments from all over the world have joined Countdown 2010 to strengthen their commitments to the 2010 Target. Countdown 2010 plays a crucial role in helping leaders move from words to action by jointly developing specific measures for biodiversity conservation. For instance, in Europe, Countdown 2010 works closely with each Presidency of the EU Council to ensure that biodiversity is kept high on the political agenda while in South America it acts through the Andean Community of Nations.

Local Authorities

Although the 2010 Target is a global challenge, the solution and responses will be found through local action. Local governments – from cities to regions and municipalities – are responsible for decisions that shape people's daily life. Including biodiversity conservation in their work, through land, water and waste management, infrastructure development, the creation and management of natural, protected and green areas, public procurement and monitoring, is key to protecting the diversity of life forms in local regions.

Several international initiatives have been established to enhance the role of local authorities. Countdown 2010 with its partners has launched a Global partnership for Cities and Biodiversity, actively collaborates with the ICLEI - Local Governments for Sustainability in implementing a programme on Local Action for Biodiversity and is building strategic partnerships with other key actors, including UNESCO, UNSCB and researchers' networks

Business

As drivers of the economy, businesses must be onboard to ensure a real reduction in biodiversity loss. A broad spectrum of businesses have joined forces under the Countdown 2010 umbrella, committing to individual actions for saving biodiversity.

Countdown 2010 supports businesses in mainstreaming biodiversity into their operations to reduce their environmental impact and protect the land on which they work. In addition, Countdown 2010 business partners contribute to raising awareness by spreading the message across their industries.

Civil society

Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs), museums, science centres, research groups and other civil society organisations are integral to the Countdown 2010 mission. They promote and communicate the importance of biodiversity conservation through stimulating policy action and providing reliable scientific information. They play a unique role in engaging local communities through biodiversity-targeted initiatives, and organize and participate in events to ensure widespread communication.



How to become a partner?

Partnership of Countdown 2010 is open to governments, local authorities, civil society, private sector organizations or any other organization which demonstrates a clear commitment to contribute toward the achievement of the 2010 biodiversity target. Becoming a partner is free of charge.

To join Countdown 2010, partners are requested to undersign the Countdown 2010 Declaration stating their own specific commitments and the endorsement of Countdown 2010 principles and objectives. The Declaration asks three steps from your organisation:

- Support the 2010 biodiversity target;
- Encourage decision makers to take action;
- Commit yourself to reducing biodiversity loss.

As all organisations are different, Countdown 2010 has no one-size-fits-all recipe on how you can reduce biodiversity loss within the capacity of your organisation. However, we encourage you to define some specific commitments for your organization in addition to the ones included in the Declaration. These commitments are published on each partner's page, and the best projects are featured on the website and in print.



What can your organization do within the Countdown 2010 network?

Contribute to Countdown 2010

- Tell everyone that you've joined Countdown 2010: place an article in your newsletter, issue a media release, use the logo on your homepage or in publications.
- Encourage your members and partners to join as well: ask them personally, bring the issue up in meetings, refer to Countdown 2010 in your presentations.
- Tell us about your activities: send us links, articles and newsletters on Countdown 2010 and let us know what you are up to.
- Take part in Countdown 2010: come to the partners' Assembly, contribute your expertise to thematic working groups or link up with others in your national platform.

Take action to save biodiversity

- Is there a Biodiversity Strategy for the area you are working in? If yes: Does it have holes? What are the greatest obstacles for its implementation? What can you do to help overcome them?
- Start projects to protect a specific species or area in your city or region.
- Use the Readiness Assessment results on how your country is doing in respect to biodiversity.
- Look at the ecological footprint of your organisation and take steps to reduce it.

Take action to raise awareness

- Organize events in your local area to tell people about the role biodiversity play in everybody's life. Boost efforts for the International Year of Biodiversity.

- Promote your events on the 2010 Biodiversity Year Schedule of Events, which can be found here: <http://www.countdown2010.net/byse>.
- You might be communicating with a lot of people through your work. Find innovative ways to make them more aware of the importance of biodiversity.

Participation

All partners are expected to actively promote the alliance and contribute with actions towards reaching the 2010 biodiversity target. partners will have the opportunity to participate in different structures, according to their specific interest, core business or mandate.

The Partners' Assembly

Countdown 2010 partners meet yearly in an Assembly to review the overall direction of Countdown 2010. All partners of Countdown 2010 are cordially invited to contribute. Since its first meeting in February 2004, the partners' Assembly performs the following functions:

- provides partners with the opportunity to regularly meet and share their experiences;
- presents ideas for themes for the attention of the Advisory Board and Secretariat;
- serves as a forum for all partners of Countdown 2010, bringing together different types of stakeholders;
- identifies other matters that require the attention of the Advisory Board and the Secretariat;
- proposes some of its members to join the Advisory Board.

It is not compulsory for partners of Countdown 2010 to attend the partners' Assembly. If they do so, partners are generally required to meet all the expenses of their attendance. Those partners that are unable to attend

meetings will be encouraged to participate actively through other channels of communication.

Focal Points

All partners are expected to actively promote the network and contribute with actions towards reaching the 2010 biodiversity target. To help partners in their efforts, the Countdown 2010 Secretariat benefits from the invaluable help of a number of committed individuals who serve as Countdown 2010 Focal Points in their country.

Countdown 2010 Focal Points:

- represent Countdown 2010 at national level and thus are the first point of contact for partners and interested organisations in their country;
- are the first point of contact for the Countdown 2010 Secretariat at country level and therefore report on partners' progress towards the 2010 Target and coordinate action for the International Year of Biodiversity.

In addition, Focal Points work to strengthen the Countdown 2010 network in their country by translating material into local languages, recruiting additional partners and helping partners to make their commitments a success. A good Focal Point helps to connect and motivate partners, and delegates necessary work. The contact details of each Focal Point are published below. Focal Points are also present for Countdown 2010 Multiregional Hubs and for each partner Category.

Partners are invited to put forward their name as Focal Point of their country or to suggest somebody else.

Communicating the 2010 Target

To help you spread the biodiversity message, the Countdown 2010 Secretariat has produced some printed materials and merchandise. All communications materials are free of use for partners.

Electronic copies can be found on the website at <http://www.countdown2010.net/resources/communications-material> or requested via email at office@countdown2010.net.

The Countdown 2010 Secretariat produces communications materials only in English. partners are invited to contribute to these by providing the translation of the materials available.

Website

The website www.countdown2010.net – relaunched in July 2009 – contains detailed information about the initiative and the 2010 biodiversity target and assembles latest news from partners and policy processes. Links to relevant studies and reports on biodiversity and related issues are also provided.

The Secretariat welcomes contributions by partners on their latest activities for the 2010 biodiversity target.

Newsletter

The Countdown 2010 Newsletter appears bi-monthly and is sent by email to more than 7,000 Countdown 2010 supporters. To subscribe, go to www.countdown2010.net/resources/newsletter.

Each issue of the Countdown 2010 Newsletter focuses on a specific subject related to biodiversity. The last editions to date dealt with:

- July 2009: Conservation beyond boundaries
- May 2009: Communicating the 2010 biodiversity target

- April 2009: Wilderness and Large Natural Habitat Areas in Europe
- February 2009: The roadmap for the post-2010 biodiversity target

Various tools

A large number of communications tools is available in the Resources section of the website:

- Brochure – updated in June 2009: a brief introduction on what Countdown 2010 does.
- Factsheet – updated in May 2009: Countdown 2010 and the 2010 Target in less than 1,000 words.
- Declaration: partners sign the Declaration and commit to its principles.
- 2010 Pocket Calendar: a pocket-size calendar to mark all your meetings until 2010.
- Videos: two videos on the importance of biodiversity.
- Power Point Presentation: a general presentation on the network.
- Electronic banner: a simple banner to promote Countdown 2010 on websites and print.
- Stickers, pins, pens, pull-ups

Special publications and products will be developed for the International Year of Biodiversity.



Assessing progress towards 2010

One of the objectives of Countdown 2010 is to monitor progress towards the achievement of the 2010 biodiversity target by governments. The Readiness Assessment tool was designed for this purpose.

After setting the 2010 biodiversity target, the next important challenge for governments is to put in place mechanisms to meet the target, and to track progress towards doing so. The Countdown 2010 Readiness Assessment 2008 analyses the policy responses of national governments in the G8+5 countries, and thus complements other processes, such as the 2010 Biodiversity Indicators partnership (2010BIP), the Global Biodiversity Outlook, or SEBI2010.

The Readiness Assessment measures response in terms of efforts taken within the environment sector, as well as national policies/initiatives to integrate biodiversity concerns and awareness rising across sectors and decision making processes. The objective of this project is to assess the policy response of national governments, towards the 2010 biodiversity target, of achieving a significant reduction of the current rate of biodiversity loss.

Leading by example? – The Readiness Assessment Desk Study

The Final Report of the Readiness Assessment is a short paper that analyses national activities per country in relation to the 2010 biodiversity target and biodiversity integration across sectors. The countries selected for this exercise are the G8+5 (Brazil, Canada, China, France, Germany, India, Italy, Japan, Mexico, Russia, South Africa, United Kingdom, and the United States).

The Readiness Assessment helps countries in reviewing their own progress towards achieving the 2010 biodiversity

target at an early stage. The results will also help countries in disseminating information on their good practices and success stories in implementing biodiversity-friendly policies.

The outcomes of the latest phase of the study were presented in October 2008 at IUCN's World Conservation Congress, held in Barcelona and are now available on the website. The Desk Studies on the G8+5 countries are available upon request.

The final report is available on the Countdown 2010 website: <http://www.countdown2010.net/assessing-progress-towards-2010>.

The future of the 2010 biodiversity target

Negotiations for a new climate change regime always grab the attention of the international community, however there is another target which is about to expire. The 2010 biodiversity target set by governments in 2002 is coming to an end. Governments will have to report on the progress made to achieve it.

But what will happen after 2010? Will the biodiversity target be renewed? Does the international community need another target?

Several events on the development of a post-2010 framework have already taken place worldwide and many will follow in the next months. Step by step the parties and stakeholders will share their views and come to an agreement on the future of biodiversity policy.

Join Countdown 2010 to be part of the process and share your views on the future of the 2010 biodiversity target! A Post-2010 Blog is available for opinion exchanges: <http://www.countdown2010.net/article/post-2010-blog>

Milestones

Countdown 2010 partners' Assembly 2009, 24 June 2009, Brussels, Belgium

Halting biodiversity loss will remain an issue for the near future, however on the long term efforts should be focused on restoration and rehabilitation. The future target has to be less ambiguous and more ambitious, realistic and achievable. It should be positively phrased, maybe by setting goals for increasing biodiversity rather than measuring loss. A baseline is essential for monitoring and progress assessment.

Biodiversity protection – Beyond 2010: Priorities and options for future EU Policy, 27-28 April 2009, Athens, Greece

The post-2010 target “should maintain the emphasis given to the intrinsic value of biodiversity while also recognising the value of healthy and resilient ecosystems and the services they provide”.

G8 Environment Ministers' Meeting, 22-24 April 2009, Syracuse, Italy

The world has changed since the adoption of the 2010 Target. All the drivers of biodiversity loss should be considered in the development of the post-2010 framework. A thorough communication strategy, fully engaging all the different sectors, as well as stakeholders, indigenous and local communities and the private sector also needs to be included. The integration of biodiversity and ecosystem services into all policies is essential.

High-level working group on the 2010 biodiversity target and post-2010 target(s), 9-10 March 2009, Bonn, Germany

The post-2010 target should be linked to the climate change agenda and ensure the sustainable use of ecosystems and biodiversity. It should be ambitious, but scientifically credible and easy to communicate. It should address all drivers of biodiversity loss and focus more on the value of ecosystem services.

The European Biodiversity Action Plan – Counting down to 2010: state of play and the post 2010 vision for Europe, 11 February 2009, European Parliament, Brussels, Belgium

The new international commitments should be more realistic and measurable. A cross-sectoral approach should be used and the target(s) should go beyond halting the loss of biodiversity and include restoration. Indicators and measurement tools have to be developed. The target must come from society. The European Commission wants the post-2010 process to have more ownership.

The Countdown 2010 Secretariat is involved in the organization of a number of regional consultations on the post-2010 framework. Some consultations have already taken place in South America. More information can be found on the Countdown 2010 website at <http://www.countdown2010.net/biodiversity/what-after-2010>.

A full list of the key events where the future of the 2010 biodiversity target will be discussed is also available on the Countdown 2010 website:
<http://www.countdown2010.net/biodiversity/what-after-2010>.



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