

## UN-led biodiversity plan aims to expand economy while protecting endangered species



UNDP Associate Administrator Rebeca Grynsan. Photo: UNDP

18 October 2012 – Launched today by the United Nations development agency, an ambitious new global strategy to combat unprecedented levels of biodiversity loss calls for “significant” increases in biodiversity investments in 100 countries – while at the same time aiming to foster economic growth and create jobs in addition to protecting endangered species and habitats.

Entitled ‘The Future We Want: Biodiversity and Ecosystems – Driving Sustainable Development,’ the strategy will see the UN Development Programme ([UNDP](#)) work with

national governments to protect biodiversity and manage ecosystems across 1.4 billion hectares of land and bodies of water, the agency said in a [news release](#).

UNDP said it will also help governments find new ways to finance biodiversity management through “domestic revenue, innovative financial mechanisms, and donor funding from a range of sources.”

“Human survival depends heavily on biodiversity and healthy ecosystems, yet in recent decades, the world has experienced unprecedented biodiversity loss and ecosystem degradation, undermining the very foundations of life on earth,” said UNDP’s Associate Administrator, Rebeca Grynspan. “As 1.2 billion people living in severe poverty depend directly on nature for their basic needs and livelihoods, this needs urgent international attention.”

UNDP unveiled the strategy at the 11th Conference of the Parties to the UN Convention on Biological Diversity (CDB COP 11), taking place in Indian city of Hyderabad. The Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) entered into force in 1993 and calls for conserving biological diversity, ensuring its sustainable use, and ensuring that benefits arising from any use are fairly distributed.

The Conference adopted the new strategy, which UNDP said is designed to help countries integrate biodiversity management with development planning, enable protected areas to contribute to sustainable development, and ensure that management and rehabilitation of ecosystems mitigate the effects of climate change.

“The launch of UNDP’s new Framework is very timely,” said CBD Executive Secretary Braulio Dias.

“I believe it will be vital in guiding UNDP’s support to countries to speed up implementation of the Aichi Biodiversity Targets,” he noted, in reference to 20 biodiversity conservation goals set by the 10th Conference of the Parties to the UN Convention on Biological Diversity in Japan, for achieving by 2020.

“We have a window of opportunity between now and 2020 to help countries shift the course of development to maintain and enhance their natural capital, and UNDP’s work will be crucial in this regard,” Mr. Dias added.

UNDP already manages the largest portfolio of biodiversity and ecosystems work in the UN system, overseeing 512 projects costing \$5 billion in 146 countries.

Some of that money is provided through CBD’s main financing channel, the Global Environment Facility, which partners 182 countries with public and private entities to address global environmental issues, and which UNDP said it will seek as a source to help governments fund projects in the new strategy.

“The funding will be used for projects that foster economic growth, create jobs, protect endangered species and habitats, and help build resilient communities that maintain natural areas

for agricultural support and as a buffer against natural disasters such as droughts and floods,” UNDP said in the news release.