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Business leaders worried about biodiversity loss, UN-backed report finds



13 July 2010 – One in four corporate titans worldwide view biodiversity loss as a threat to their business growth, according to a new United Nations-backed study released today.

It found that more than half of chief executive officers surveyed in Latin America and 45 per cent of their counterparts in Africa see biodiversity decline as detrimental to profits, compared to less than 20 per cent in Western Europe.

The publication also found that business leaders who do not include the sustainable management of 'natural capital' as part of their strategies may be at a disadvantage in the global market.

Compiled by The Economics of Ecosystems and Biodiversity ([TEEB](#)), a body hosted by the UN Environment Programme ([UNEP](#)), the study said that 80 per cent of consumers would stop purchasing products from companies that disregard ethical considerations in their sourcing practices.

"Through the work of the TEEB and others, the economic importance of biodiversity and ecosystems is emerging from the invisible into the visible spectrum," said Pavan Sukhdev, TEEB Study Leader and head of UNEP's [Green Economy](#) initiative.

The new report points to multinational mining giant Rio Tinto as one company that has committed itself to having a so-called "Net Positive Impact" on biodiversity, developing new methods of assessing the biodiversity values of its landholdings. It

has also started to apply biodiversity compensation in Madagascar, Australia and other countries.

Coca Cola, Walmart and BC Hydro are among corporations with similar commitments on softening biodiversity loss.

“We are entering an era where the multi-trillion dollar losses of natural and nature-based resources are starting to shape markets and consumer concerns,” said UNEP Executive Director Achim Steiner.

“How companies respond to these risks, realities and opportunities will increasingly define their profitability; corporate profile in the market-place and the overall development paradigm of the coming decades on a planet of 6 billion, going to over 9 billion people by 2050,” he added.

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