

## **PRESS RELEASE**

### **No more fish on the table. More fishermen are suffering all over the world due to environmental pollution and loss of income.**

#### **The Global Nature Fund leads the EU Business & Biodiversity Campaign and draws attention to the alarming consequences at SusCon 2010**

**Munich, 11 May 2010.** In the Gulf of Mexico, a strict ban on fishing reigns at the moment. The Deepwater Horizon spill has contaminated water and fishing grounds. The situation points out the dramatically growing environmental pollution that is destroying the livelihood of fishermen worldwide. On the Pulicat Lake, the second largest lake in India, which was declared “Threatened Lake of the Year 2010” by the Global Nature Fund (GNF) as part of their international Living Lakes network, 50,000 fishermen as well as a 100,000 people are affected. The situation in this region, once full of fish with its ecologically important mangrove forests north of the city Chennai, has reached critical mass. Deforestation, pollution, overfishing as well as the improper introduction of heavy metals from wastewater out of more than 25 industries have caused this catastrophic condition.

#### **SusCon 2010 presents finance session, “Financing Biodiversity”**

At SusCon 2010, the International Conference on Sustainable Business & Consumption on 15-16 June in Nuremberg, the Global Nature Fund (GNF) wants to make the financial side of such damage clear. GNF is now the coordinator of the newly launched European Business and Biodiversity Campaign.

Together with SusCon organisers, GNF has initiated a workshop session entitled “Financing Biodiversity – an investment in between profit and philanthropy”. This workshop focuses on, for example, decision-making criteria for financial service providers to examine the effects business activities have on biodiversity in terms of risk assessment, in particular when granting loans or investments. The motivating factors for companies who want to invest in biodiversity or conservation also play a role. Furthermore, discussions on how to better finance conservation and biodiversity in the future using innovative ideas (for example, biodiversity auctions from Triple E or the city of Nuremberg’s eco-account model) will take place at this workshop. Sustainability experts from Nestlé, Telekom, Hypovereinsbank- UniCredit Group, PricewaterhouseCoopers, European Aggregates Association, Triple E, UNEP-FI and the city of Nuremberg will report on and discuss the topics.

#### **Biodiversity checks for companies**

The EU Business & Biodiversity Campaign aims to emphasise the meaning of biological diversity and invite companies to get more involved in the protection and preservation of nature. “The campaign is set up for three years,” declared Stefan Hörmann, coordinator of the programme. “We offer sustainability managers and decision makers in companies information, consulting services and workshops to evaluate the impact their business activities have on biodiversity.”

At the official start of the International Year of Biodiversity January last year, German Chancellor Angela Merkel pointed out that protecting biological diversity is just as important as climate protection. "We need a trend reversal, not in the future, but right now."

### **Biodiversity will be an important criterion for the financial sector**

According to GNF, most companies only support biodiversity if their core business depends on it or is affected by it. Emphasis is on production companies from the manufacturing of raw materials in industries such as mining, oil and gas, tourism and food and agriculture. However, the topic is also gaining momentum in the world of finance, in particular due to the assessment of ecological risks in allocating loans or investments. Biodiversity must become an important part of corporate strategy in the future according to Marion Hammerl, executive director of the Lake Constance Foundation (Bodenseestiftung) and president of the GNF. At this time, different initiatives are committed to finding methods and assessment criteria for integrating biodiversity into corporate decisions.

### **Biodiversity as an investment object**

According to Stefan Hörmann from the Global Nature Fund, the majority of companies only endorse biodiversity when their business depends on it. This is evident in production companies in industries dealing with raw materials such as mining, oil and gas, tourism, food and agriculture as well as the pharmaceutical industry. The first valuations of ecosystem services from TEEB reveal how biodiversity has a real market value as a product or service. Fritz Lietsch, moderator of the SusCon finance session, asks the question, how we can develop a market-based financing mechanism from this knowledge. Approaches, similar to trading in emissions certificates, are already being discussed worldwide.

### **SusCon 2010**

This year the second "International Conference on Sustainable Business and Consumption" takes place in Nuremberg at the Nuremberg Trade Fair. From 15-16 June, businesses, NGOs and policy makers will exchange information about biodiversity in particular. The focus is on new business models such as social business, certifications, as well as concrete activities to preserve biodiversity. Supporters include IUCN, FAO, IFOAM, Rainforest Alliance, GTZ, cscp, Deutsche Umwelthilfe, Soil & More, as well as the Business & Biodiversity Initiative. Sponsors include Unilever, REWE Group, Neumarkter Lammsbräu as well as DEG/ KfW Banking Group. At the first event in 2009, prior to the international BioFach, The World Organic Trade Fair, around 200 people participated from the business and NGO sectors. For more information, go to [www.suscon.net](http://www.suscon.net).

### **Global Nature Fund (GNF)**

The GNF is an international foundation for the protection of environment and nature. It was founded in 1998 with the objective to foster the protection of nature and the environment as well as animals and species. One successful project of theirs is the international Living Lakes network, initiated in 1998 to protect lakes and wetlands worldwide. In alliance with businesses, GNF is developing practical solutions and environmental measures for sustainability in water pollution control, tourism, agriculture, renaturation and renewable energy. Since spring of 2010, the foundation is organising the EU Business and Biodiversity Campaign. For more information, go to [www.globalnature.org](http://www.globalnature.org)

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