



IUCN's Business & Biodiversity Initiative

Making capitalism work for conservation!

Since 1948, the World Conservation Union (IUCN) has been a global partnership of states, government agencies, NGOs, and experts. Active in over 150 countries, IUCN's mission is to influence, encourage and assist societies throughout the world to conserve the integrity and diversity of nature and to ensure that any use of natural resources is equitable and ecologically sustainable. With its new Business & Biodiversity Initiative, IUCN brings its mission to the private sector.

Biodiversity's triple-bottom-line

Biodiversity, as defined by the Convention on Biological Diversity, means the variability among living organisms. Over 180 governments have recognised the many ecological, economic and social values of biodiversity and its importance for maintaining life-sustaining systems. To manage biodiversity, they have adopted a "triple-bottom-line" approach- conservation, sustainable use and equitable benefit sharing- which is fully compatible with sustainable business.

Biodiversity plans for business

The Business & Biodiversity Initiative promotes triple-bottom-line biodiversity plans for business. Our focus is on biodiversity-based sectors such as tourism and agriculture, and also on biodiversity-impacting sectors such as mining and energy. Current activities include producing new business tools on biodiversity with the World Business Council for Sustainable Development. These products will be launched at the 2002 World Summit on Sustainable Development.

Business plans for biodiversity

Just as biodiversity plans are needed for business, business plans are needed for biodiversity. We are working with IUCN's World Commission on Protected Areas to promote business plans and financial strategies for protected areas and sustainable landscapes. This programme will be a major theme of the 2003 World Parks Congress.

Biodiversity business investments

Sustainable landscapes require both business plans for protected areas and biodiversity plans for productive areas. Hence we encourage investments in projects with triple-bottom line biodiversity business plans. In partnership with the International Finance Corporation, we are developing the Kijani Initiative, a new private equity facility for biodiversity business in Africa. Related investment projects are underway in central and eastern Europe.

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