



Business and Biodiversity

Nature means business

Mainstreaming biodiversity: best insurance for social and economic sustainable development

Nature and biodiversity are foundations of sectoral activity that guarantee long-term survival:

- Bio-fuels reduce greenhouse gases, and can be produced locally;
- Nature areas can act as carbon sinks;
- Nature and landscape takes people into the countryside, and has a cultural dimension too;
- Wise use of natural resources reduces costs for materials supply by avoiding waste;
- Recycling avoids pollution in the processing of raw materials and depletion of natural resources;
- Organic farming develops appreciation for good taste, and has an added value for health;
- Certified forestry encourages the protection of fauna and flora, and conserves water resources;
- Pro-biodiversity businesses are an attractive field of investment for banks to support.

Landscape identity can play a role in orienting entrepreneurial strategies, and biodiversity related investments will support economic development while at the same time preserving or enhancing the natural heritage.

Short-term economic thinking and non-ecological spatial planning miss golden opportunities

- European society may forego enormous potential rewards when deciding future orientations;
- Investments take place that ignore the added value of working *with* biodiversity;
- Human activities often have no ecological reference point for defining good practice;
- Indicators to monitor the degree of negative versus positive development are lacking;
- Seeking money for sound development comes up against the lack of financial resources;
- Assessing the value of landscapes and ecological features suffers from penury of methods;
- Targeting multifunctional land use is too often only in reference to the agricultural sector.

What ECNC can offer

ECNC wants to increase understanding by major economic operators to the effect of their actions on nature and biodiversity and obtain changes in their behaviour by providing help and advice to integrate biodiversity measures in its operational management, product chains or business plans. Also, ECNC has the ambition to increase knowledge on the interaction between globalization, biodiversity and businesses and the capacity to influence their inter-relationship. Last but not least, ECNC tries to increase the understanding on how the economic flows at the local scale affect nature and landscapes and how economic instruments can be used to improve nature conservation.

ECNC can:

- develop a biodiversity assessment of the operational management and its sustainability policies;
- give suggestions for monitoring, designing and management recommendations of your business park;
- offer training programmes for capacity development in biodiversity-related activities;
- support social responsibility activities.

Examples of activities as part of ECNC's 'Business and Biodiversity' programme

...ECNC works closely with the financial sector, for instance by setting up a European Biodiversity Finance facility in order to increase biodiversity-related investments. In Eastern Europe, ECNC facilitates the design of environmental micro-credit facilities as a means of making capital investment available for local entrepreneurs. ECNC also assists in developing business plans for pro-biodiversity businesses.

...ECNC develops indicators to measure and guide the attainment of sustainable development objectives. For instance, ECNC contributed to the building and testing of indicators to measure the respect for limits on sustainable land use for food, feed, fibre and fuel in Europe.

...ECNC coordinated the development of scenarios for the future of Europe's agriculture and the countryside, which provides building blocks for EU policy reviews and policy developments.

...ECNC demonstrates practical ways of supporting the marketing and branding of landscape identity and facilitates the exchange of expertise and experience between regions.

For more information contact: ECNC–European Centre for Nature Conservation
PO Box 90154, 5000 LG, Tilburg, the Netherlands, Tel.: +31 (0)13 5944 944
Email: ecnc@ecnc.org
www.ecnc.org

European biodiversity expertise centre for sustainable development