

31 May 2010

Bridging the Gap: Setup of the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES)

Dear Colleagues,

Germany and Japan – the current and subsequent holders of the presidency of the Convention on Biological Diversity – are convinced that a new, independent science-policy platform for biodiversity and ecosystem services is needed to facilitate better informed political decision-making on the conservation of global biodiversity.

Moreover, we are convinced that we need this instrument as soon as possible. For let us not deceive ourselves: 20 years after Rio, a trend reversal has still not been achieved. Biological diversity – the wealth of our planet – is still disappearing worldwide at a dramatic rate. The recently published Global Biodiversity Outlook 3 confirms that we have not achieved the 2010 target laid down by the heads of state and government, to significantly reduce global biodiversity loss by 2010.

The International Year of Biodiversity is the perfect time for a change of course. We believe this change of course is possible if certain key processes are successfully concluded before the end of this year. These include the adoption of a new Strategic Plan with post 2010 biodiversity targets as well as the finalization of the negotiations on an international ABS regime at the 10th meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the CBD in Japan and the negotiations to improve the science-policy interface for biodiversity.

In our view, simply strengthening existing instruments and processes is not enough to consistently and reliably provide political decision-makers with independent, credible and substantiated information on the status and trends of biodiversity which can serve as a basis for their decisions.

For this reason Germany and Japan actively support setting up a *new* mechanism for an enhanced science-policy interface in the field of biodiversity through the agreement on the establishment of such a mechanism at the intergovernmental UNEP Conference on IPBES in June 2010 in Busan, Korea.

We would be delighted to have you all as allies on this issue during this decisive phase of the IPBES process, so that in Korea we can reach consensus on setting up IPBES. Please help to further reinforce global biodiversity policy and initiate the urgently needed trend reversal in biodiversity loss!

Thank you very much for your trust and for our good cooperation!

The image shows two handwritten signatures in black ink. The signature on the left is 'Heide Röttgen' and the signature on the right is 'Junichi Ozawa'. Both are written in a cursive, flowing style.

Federal Environment Minister Röttgen and Environment Minister Ozawa