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CONVENTION ON THE CONSERVATION OF EUROPEAN WILDLIFE
AND NATURAL HABITATS

**Group of Experts
on Biodiversity and Climate Change**

Strasbourg, 2-3 July 2009

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REPORT

*Document
prepared by
the Directorate of Culture and Cultural and Natural Heritage*

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The Standing Committee is invited to:

1. Take note of the report of the meeting;
2. Examine and, if appropriate, adopt the following draft recommendation proposed by the Group:
 - Draft Recommendation on further guidance for Parties on biodiversity and climate change (to be finalised after the meeting).
3. Take note of the proposals by the Group for its future work.

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1. Opening of the meeting by the Chair

Mr Snorri Baldursson, Icelandic Institute of Natural History, welcomed participants at the fourth meeting of the Group of Experts on Biodiversity and Climate Change (a list of participants is included in Appendix 1), and asked them to introduce themselves briefly.

2. Adoption of the Agenda

The Secretariat explained that an updated draft agenda was available including all speakers names and sessions, as there has been some last minute apologies and changes. The agenda was adopted with these changes, as it appears in Appendix 2 to this report.

3. Introduction by the Secretariat

The Secretariat recalled the mandate of the Group of Experts to provide information and guidance to Bern Convention Parties on understanding climate change impacts and threats; as well as tools and support to develop adaptation measures regarding the species and habitats protected under the Bern Convention. The Secretariat further informed of the outcome of the Standing Committee meeting in 2008, which revised and adopted Recommendation 135 (2008) and agreed to giving this Group of Experts an indefinite mandate like the other Groups of Experts under the Bern Convention.

The Secretariat stressed the importance of keeping a close exchange of information and co-ordination with other biodiversity conventions and international organisations working on this issue, including the CBD and the European Commission, as well as with other institutions of the Council of Europe. Efforts will be continued to enhance links with the work of other Groups of Experts set up under the Bern Convention, including those on Invasive Alien Species; on Protected Areas and Ecological Networks; and on Island Biodiversity.

The Secretariat summarised the objectives of the meeting,: (i) to continue the exchange of information on key developments and initiatives on climate change and biodiversity at the international, regional and levels, as well as with other CoE institutions, and NGOs; (ii) to discuss three new draft reports on impacts of climate change on, respectively, Bern Convention plant species, invertebrate species, and protected areas; (iii) to discuss a draft recommendation on further guidance for Parties on biodiversity and climate change, with a view to submitting it to the Standing Committee meeting in November 2009; and (iv) to discuss next steps and future work for this Group of Experts.

4. Updates on biodiversity/climate change work in other fora

In the absence of Ms Jaime Webbe, Climate Change Programme Officer at the Secretariat of the UN Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), due to illness, Carolina LASÉN DIAZ, from the Bern Convention Secretariat, presented the recent work of the CBD Ad Hoc Technical Expert Group on Biodiversity and Climate Change, set up by COP-9 and aimed at providing biodiversity-relevant information to the UNFCCC. The Ad Hoc Group met in London in November 2008, and in Helsinki, in April 2009, and agreed on a number of “main messages” that were presented during the UNFCCC negotiating meetings in June 2009. These messages include: (i) the important role that biodiversity and ecosystem services have in providing cost-effective adaptation activities that generate additional environmental and societal benefits; (ii) the need to consider the possible positive and negative consequences of adaptation strategies for biodiversity and ecosystem services; (iii) the recommendation that all adaptation activities should aim to maintain or enhance and take advantage of the natural adaptive capacity of species and ecosystems, in order to increase effectiveness of adaptation and reduce risks to biodiversity from climate change; and (iv) the importance of accounting for the value of biodiversity and the ecosystems it supports in the decision-making process, as well as for providing incentives for societal adaptation to climate change. The full report has been subject to peer-review and it will be finalised by a drafting committee in late July 2009, before submission to UNFCCC COP-15 (December 2009) and CBD SBSTTA-14 (May 2010).

Ms Melanie Virtue, Inter-agency Liaison Officer at the Secretariat of the UN Convention on Migratory Species (CMS), presented the links between animal migration and climatic factors, highlighting that although many migratory species have successfully adapted to climate change, the speed of climate change is such that many populations are reaching the limit of their adaptive

potential. She reported the ongoing work of the CMS on this issue, including an assessment of which species are or will be most threatened by climate change, mandated by CMS COP-9 in December 2008, and which will be published in time for the Copenhagen climate change summit, and including recommendations for future action. Ms Virtue also informed about a database of scientific and grey literature on interactions of biodiversity and climate change where to search for CMS listed species and relevant climate change publications (www.bioclimate.org). Another key element of CMS work will be to address this threat and incorporate it into the CMS agreements and Action Plans, including the adaptation of monitoring regimes to pick up climate trends, adequate data collection, modelling, etc. Resolution 9.07 (2008) mandated Parties to reduce the climate change threat and consider the impacts of mitigation and adaptation activities. Furthermore, a workshop on climate change and migratory species is planned for 2010.

Ms Marie-Christine Grillo-Compulsione, Executive Secretary of the ACCOBAMS agreement, added the need to consider the effects of climate change on cetacea and the marine environment, linked to the decrease of food availability and the difficulties for cetacea to adapt to rapid changing conditions. She stressed that impacts exist already and that this issue is a priority for ACCOBAMS. She further informed the meeting about a workshop on whales and climate change, organised by the International Whaling Commission in February 2009, and whose draft report was available at the meeting.

Mr Atef Ouerghi, from UNEP's Regional Activity Centre for Specially Protected Areas (RAC/SPA), informed the Group of Experts of work undertaken under the Barcelona Convention and the Mediterranean Action Plan (MAP), including the "Almería Declaration" which calls on Parties to prepare a report, for each Meeting of the Parties to the Barcelona Convention, and also to the CBD, on the observed impacts of climate change on the biodiversity of the Mediterranean Sea and its coastal area. This has led to the preparation of an overview on vulnerability and impacts related to climate change on Mediterranean marine and coastal biodiversity, carried out by 18 countries grouped in three clusters in accordance to their common development specificities. The preliminary overview has identified threatened coastal and marine habitats in the Mediterranean, where the following key habitats may be critically affected by exposure to climate change: Wetlands; sea grass beds; coralligenous calcareous formations; and pelagic waters planktonic fringes. Some coastal and marine species in the Mediterranean Species have also been identified as more sensitive to climate change, given their proximity to climatic tolerance threshold, links to very specialised niches, and limited rate of movement and dispersion. Mr Ouerghi spoke of a "tropicalisation" of the Mediterranean, with migration of species towards the North and impacts on fish, birds, marine turtles, invertebrates, and alien species. He further described the vulnerability to warming of key productive habitats and species in the Mediterranean.

Ms Monica Zavagli, from the Secretariat of the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands, presented the key features of the Ramsar Convention, as the only treaty focusing on one ecosystem. She highlighted that the Millennium Ecosystem Assessment identified global wetland loss and degradation as occurring faster than for other ecosystems, while climate change increases the pressures on wetlands. Ms Zavagli reported the population status of wetland-dependent species, including globally-threatened species, and steps taken to address this issue, mainly through the work of the Convention's Scientific & Technical Review Panel (STRP) on wetlands and climate change; and wetland restoration, mitigation and compensation, and the synergies with other conventions and organisations. In November 2008, the Parties to the Ramsar Convention adopted Resolution X.24 on "Climate Change and wetlands", placing climate change in the context of biodiversity, water, and land management context, and emphasising the value of the restoration and wise use of wetlands. This Resolution also refers to climate change impacts on wetlands and their role in climate change, addressing scientific gaps and future work by the STRP, including on the role of wetlands in the global carbon cycle; a wetland vulnerability assessment, and methodologies for assessing the hydrological vulnerability of different wetland types to climate change scenarios; and climate change and wetland restoration.

Mr Barney Dickson, Head of the Climate Change and Biodiversity Programme at the UNEP-World Conservation Monitoring Centre, presented their activities which focus on providing decision-makers with policy-relevant information and analyses on biodiversity aspects of climate change, including on the impacts of climate change on biodiversity and ecosystems, the role of

biodiversity/ecosystems in climate change adaptation, and the role of biodiversity and ecosystems in climate change mitigation. Their current work includes a project on the impacts of climate change on Natura 2000 sites; work for the CBD AHTEG on Biodiversity and Climate Change, including scientific literature reviews and work on ecosystem-based adaptation; and projects on mitigation, including to address the role of protected areas in storing carbon; a demonstration atlas on carbon and biodiversity; the UN REDD Programme; and UNEP's 'Rapid Response Assessment: The Natural Fix?', addressing the role of ecosystems in climate change mitigation.

Ms Karin Zaunberger, from the European Commission (DG Environment), presented an update on EU activities on biodiversity and climate change since the previous meeting of the Group of Experts in September 2008. Ms Zaunberger informed that the White Paper "Adapting to Climate Change in Europe – Towards a European framework for action", was adopted by the European Commission on 1 April 2009. The White Paper includes a Chapter on 'Increasing the resilience of biodiversity, ecosystems and water' with references to the need to explore the possibilities "to improve policies and develop measures which address biodiversity loss and climate change in an integrated manner to fully exploit co-benefits and avoid ecosystem feedbacks that accelerate global warming". She further referred to the Commission's aim to draft guidelines to deal with the impact of climate change on the management of Natura 2000 sites, by 2010. Ms Zaunberger reported on the work of the 'EU Ad Hoc Expert Working Group on Biodiversity and Climate Change', which has met three times since November 2008 and is developing a discussion paper 'Towards a strategy on climate change, ecosystem services and biodiversity' covering the use of ecosystem-based approaches to achieve multiple benefits; the need to act now; engage with all sectors; communicate and collaborate with others; as well as increase understanding; and ensure appropriate funding. The Strategy Paper includes suggestions for concrete actions and more longer term recommendations, as well as information on issues such as ecosystem services, relevant EU legislation and political statements, and synergies between mitigation and adaptation. The document is to be finalised at the next meeting of the Ad Hoc Expert Group scheduled on 15 July 2009.

Mr Snorri Baldursson, also Chair of the SEBI 2010 Expert Group on 'Indicators of impact of climate change on biodiversity', reported on the work of this Group which has developed a climate change indicator with bird data from the Pan European Common Bird Monitoring Scheme and others; as well as ongoing work to prepare an alpine plant's indicator. The climate change indicator is built on 120 populations of common European birds, and it measures the relative divergence in population trends between species expected to be positively and negatively affected by climatic change, as 90 of them will decrease in range, while 30 will increase. He further informed about the need to wait for the political agreement on post-2010 targets, and announced an EIONET-NRC seminar to be held in September, dedicated to gathering feedback on SEBI.

Mr Nick King, Executive Director of the Global Biodiversity Information Facility (GBIF), explained the origin, structure and mandate of his organisation to "facilitate free and open access to biodiversity data worldwide, via the Internet, to underpin scientific research, conservation and sustainable development". He showed GBIF's Data Portal, highlighting the available data on Europe, as well as the number of European countries with voting rights in GBIF, and those with 'associated participants' status. Mr King recalled that the causes for biodiversity loss are multiple and data are patchy, with gaps in geo-spatial, taxonomic and thematic information. He pointed out to data inconsistency, limited access and 'interoperability' of datasets, which requires data sharing policies and protocols, harmonisation of methods and mobilisation of data. However, his message was that we cannot afford to keep complaining about data gaps, incompatibilities etc. as we need to use the potential of what technology allows to do. He presented several examples of information sources, such as the database of the Global Registry of Migratory Species. Overall, new threats and pressures such as climate change require new policy responses, and Europe needs to consider that its future is created from decisions taken now.

Ms Caroline Cowan, Chair of the Adaptation Interest Group within the Network of European Nature Conservation Agencies (ENCA), reported on a workshop on ecosystem based adaptation held in the island of Vilm (Germany) in June 2009. The workshop aimed to address the gap in practical examples about ecosystem-based adaptation, as Europe needs to address the issue of climate change, adaptation, and biodiversity within the broader context of implementing adaptation strategies. The

workshop in Vilm included members of the ENCA Network, researchers and international organisations, and explored the linkages between human adaptation to climate change, ecosystems management for human benefit, and the use of natural ecosystems against climate change. Participants discussed ecosystem-based approaches to climate change, including its nature as a cross-sectoral tool to be applied in a local context, in a participatory way, and as an element of adaptive management. The workshop also reviewed existing legal, policy and administrative frameworks within the EU. The next steps for the ENCA Adaptation Interest Group will be to provide input into the EU Strategy Paper and consider how to implement the adaptation approaches and linkages addressed in the workshop, together with other groups and conventions such as the Bern Convention. The full meeting report will be finalised by the end of July 2009 and published in the series of the German Federal Agency for Nature Conservation.

5. Brief updates on recent activities and initiatives on biodiversity and climate change since the previous meeting (September 2008)

The Secretariat informed about the draft compilation of national reports (document T-PVS/Inf (2009) 7) prepared for this meeting and asked Parties to submit their comments and editions in electronic format by 17 July 2009. Information is expected from the following countries which reported on new activities:

- **Czech Republic:** National Climate Protection Policy, which includes a chapter on adaptation and projected impacts of climate change on biodiversity. There will be a strategy for the adaptation of biodiversity to climate change as the National Adaptation Strategy will be available by October 2009, in both Czech and English. A special issue of the Journal on Nature Conservation, dedicated to climate change and biodiversity, is also planned.
- **France:** Their National Plan on Adaptation is under development, with a working group addressing biodiversity and climate change including direct and indirect impacts of climate change on biodiversity, and different adaptation sectors and synergies. A bibliographic study on the impacts of climate change on biodiversity in France will be ready in 2010. In addition, France is working on the development of 'green and blue Infrastructure'.
- **Germany:** Their framework adaptation strategy was adopted in December 2008, but the specific action plan will be developed by 2011. A full list of projects within their current climate change programme, including on ecological networks and adaptation to climate change, impact modelling, adaptation and floodplains, etc. will be sent for inclusion in the compilation of national reports.
- **Norway:** Their National Adaptation Strategy was adopted in 2008, including cross-cutting sectors. A related web-portal is available for local planners, while a report on impacts, vulnerability and adaptation will be ready in 2010. They continue working on monitoring systems for biodiversity and climate change, and have started a pilot project on butterflies. They have a big research project on climate change and adaptation, including a call for tenders by mid-October on climate change and the consequences of CO₂ increase on marine ecosystems. They have also issued a White Paper on climate change and agriculture, at the national level, which also affects biodiversity.
- **Serbia:** They took part in the development of a climate change framework for adaptation in South East Europe, including Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, Serbia and FYROM, which recognises synergies among all Ministries concerned. A draft strategy for the forest, agriculture and industry sectors will be integrated in a single document by October 2009, and it will include consideration of biodiversity and climate change.
- **United Kingdom:** A series of reports on climate change partnerships have been produced, including acidification, coastal impacts, etc. Climate projections have also been produced this year, including impacts and possible responses related to those projections. Scotland is considering a climate change bill including 80% reduction of greenhouse gases by 2050, and another bill on marine and coastal access. The roadmap to Copenhagen with the UK position includes little mention of biodiversity. The JNCC is reviewing the climate change and biodiversity activities by major environmental agreements, which it will be published shortly.

- **Albania:** Project in co-operation with the Italian Ministry of Environment to develop capacity for carbon markets and financing. Another project is addressing adaptation and response measures in the North Adriatic coast, including consideration of globally threatened species and migratory birds. The first wind turbines in the country have been approved, and there are also further development of hydro-power plants.
- **European Commission:** A revised version of the information included in the draft compilation of national reports has been sent to the Secretariat for inclusion in the final version. In addition, the Green Week took place in Brussels in late June 2009, including a session on biodiversity and climate change adaptation (see in meeting website: <http://greenweek2009.alligence.com/>).

The representative of GBIF informed about their governing board meeting in October 2009, and a symposium to be held just before, on how to use information related to biodiversity and climate change.

6. Brief presentations of climate change work at the Council of Europe

Ms. Elvira Cortajarena Iturrioz, Member of the Committee on the Environment, Agriculture and Local and Regional Affairs of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, welcomed her participation in the meeting and informed the Group that she is preparing a report on biodiversity and climate change which is to be finalised in 2010, the International Year of Biological Diversity. Ms Cortajarena informed the Group of Experts that in September 2009 the Parliamentary Assembly will hold a debate on the challenges of climate change and on the proposal to have an additional protocol to the European Convention on Human Rights concerning the right to a healthy environment. She recalled the Recommendations of the Parliamentary Assembly concerning climate change and supported the Recommendation No. 135 (2008) of the Standing Committee of the Bern Convention, on addressing the impacts of climate change on biodiversity. Ms Cortajarena outlined some of the recommendations to the Committee of Ministers that she is considering in her report, including a call for the implementation of Recommendation 135 (2008); the need for adequate policies and measures to conserve biodiversity and reduce the impacts of climate change; and evaluation systems to improve knowledge and understanding about the interactions between biodiversity, ecosystem functions and climate change responses.

Ms Marité Moras, Secretary of the Committee on Sustainable Development at the Congress of the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe, welcomed her participation in the meeting and the continued collaboration with the Group of Experts. She stressed the role of local and regional authorities in fighting climate change and addressing adaptation, and the importance of local and regional actions to contribute to reducing greenhouse gas emissions. She reported her Committee's participation in the "Local Government Climate Change Leadership Summit" in Copenhagen, on 2-4 June 2009, and their lobbying to get recognition for the role of local authorities to be included in the delegations to the climate change negotiations in December 2009.

The Secretariat informed of the work of the European and Mediterranean Major Hazards Agreement (EUR-OPA), at the Council of Europe, and the interest of the disaster and risk community on climate change issues and related events and disasters. A meeting is planned in Murcia (Spain) to address adaptation for natural disasters, and another took place recently in Ravello (Italy) for the promotion of protecting cultural heritage (built and archaeological heritage) against climate change impacts.

The Secretariat briefly presented a report prepared by a trainee earlier this year on the linkages between human rights and climate change, summarising the work of the UN Human Rights Council in the preparation of a report exploring this link. The report and a summary of a panel debate held in June 2009 will be submitted to the climate change negotiations in December 2009. The Secretariat added that the Council of Europe may consider this issue further but so far activities and initiatives related to climate change have been undertaken in a sectoral way (biodiversity, arts, cultural heritage, etc.).

The Secretariat further informed about the ongoing work under the Bern Convention on the implementation of the European Strategy on Invasive Alien Species (IAS) at the national and regional level, and the outcomes of the meeting of the Group of Experts on IAS. Two draft recommendations

prepared by that Group of Experts were presented to the meeting: one dealing with the use of potential invasive species used for biofuels, and the other on the need to reconsider the definition of 'alien species' regarding native species that spread to neighbouring areas due to climate change.

7. Impacts of climate change on plant species in Europe

The consultant, Mr. Vernon Heywood, from the School of Biological Sciences of the University of Reading, presented his draft report "The impacts of climate change on plant species in Europe" (document T-PVS/Inf (2009) 9). He focused on the following key points: the unique role of plants; the need to consider global change, and not just climate change; uncertainties concerning the baseline; areas of high risk from climate change; the advantages and limitations of niche modelling; the need for a broadly based conservation approach including protected areas, species conservation and recovery, and ex situ conservation; conservation outside protected areas; novel and controversial approaches such as human-assisted migration; and the issue of invasive alien species, as it is estimated that 80% of current invasive alien plants (including include Japanese knotweed (*Polygonum japonicum*), Rhododendron (*Rhododendron ponticum*), etc. were introduced as ornamental or agricultural plants.

The author stressed that species are predicted to be at serious risk in some coastal regions, high mountains and in the Mediterranean zone as a result of climatic and other elements of global change. He added that the plants and vegetation of the Mediterranean Europe will experience unique problems and the region will see a major increase in weedy, alien invasive and pioneer species with a loss of restricted endemics, especially in mountain habitats.

The discussion which followed the presentation touched on the following points: key research gaps; orphan species in seedbanks; availability of information for ecological niche modelling; links between connectivity and IAS; and the need to implement existing protected area networks.

8. Impacts of climate change on invertebrates in Europe

The consultant Mr. Robert Wilson, from the University of Exeter, presented his draft report "Impacts of climate change on European invertebrates, with reference to the vulnerability of Bern Convention species" (document T-PVS/Inf (2009) 8). He addressed the evidence of invertebrate responses to climate change, including life history, distribution, and diversity. The observed and modelled responses of invertebrates to climate change show a high sensitivity, with the least adaptive capacity in species which are also most vulnerable to other threats. The author concluded that the magnitude of climate change makes a marked difference to modelled future species distributions, and therefore mitigation of climate change remains fundamental, together with planned adaptation, given the existing levels of climate change.

The consultant's recommendations included the need to conserve heterogeneity in order to increase the adaptive capacity of natural and managed systems; conserve existing populations; and minimise threats to vulnerable systems, as climate change interacts with other threats to invertebrate biodiversity. The most vulnerable invertebrates are found in mountains, natural and semi-natural grasslands, old growth forests, Mediterranean habitats, freshwater and benthic systems; as well as in Atlantic and Mediterranean Islands, and southern and central European mountain ranges, which support many narrow range endemics. Additional recommendations included the need to facilitate range shifts, as landscape scale networks of habitat will be necessary for species to shift their distributions, and some monitoring and research needs identified by the author.

The discussion focused on range expansions and contractions; and the possibility of adding in the report some consideration of pollinators and soil invertebrates, as well as the spreading of invertebrate species as disease vectors.

9. IUCN work on biodiversity and climate change

Mr Yves de Soye, Climate Change, Energy and Biodiversity Officer at IUCN's Regional Office for Pan-Europe, gave an overview of IUCN's Climate Change Initiative, including work on impacts assessment; forests and REDD (reducing emissions from deforestation and forest degradation); and a number of projects linked to adaptation and management of ecosystems and local livelihoods. He further outlined IUCN's global policy priorities concerning UNFCCC, including the ongoing negotiations towards a post-2012 agreement, and consideration of ecosystem-based adaptation at the global and EU level. Other relevant IUCN work on this issue includes policy and projects on EU climate change, energy, and biodiversity.

Mr de Soye briefly presented the project "Biodiversity and Climate Change in relation to the Natura 2000 Network" which will be finalised by September 2009. The project, launched in January 2008, is carried out by several organisations: IUCN, AEA, Axiom-ESKA, IEEP, and UNEP-WCMC, and addresses four main tasks: (i) a review of evidence of impacts of climate change on Europe's biodiversity; (ii) a vulnerability assessment framework and identification of threats to Natura 2000 habitats, species and network; (iii) an assessment of the implications for EU of the '2010 and beyond' biodiversity target, and development of policy recommendations; and (iv) an examination of the effects of wind parks, hydroelectric schemes and tidal barrages on biodiversity and the Natura 2000 Network.

10. Protected areas and climate change in Europe

The consultant, Mr Miguel Araújo, of Spain's National Museum of Natural Sciences and the University of Évora (Portugal), presented his draft report on protected areas and climate change in Europe (document T-PVS/Inf (2009) 10), which covers terrestrial areas. He explained the outline of his report, which covers European protected areas and climate change; the mitigation of climate change impacts on the biodiversity of protected areas (including management of individual protected areas, of protected area networks, and off-protected areas management); and policies for adaptation of biodiversity in protected areas. His report concluded with a section on main conclusions and recommendations, based on the fact that European protected areas and European-wide networks of conservation areas, are severely threatened by climate change. The author stressed that protected-areas management needs to take a long-term view and include actions for adaptation of biodiversity to climate change, for up to 20 to 50 years. Adaptive management strategies are also recommended. In addition, wider countryside management is necessary to alleviate pressure on biodiversity and facilitate dispersal. Mr Araújo listed possible mechanisms to include top-down regulatory prohibitions and requirements, direct incentives for conservation on private land, market creation and improvement, and information and education instruments. He considered that a minimum-set of common standards, transboundary conservation policies, and shared climate-proofing policies for the wider-countryside would be advisable. Finally, he recommended to follow closely the development of inter-sectoral adaptation plans for climate change with specific adaptation measures for biodiversity.

Members of the Group of Experts raised the need to include in the report some consideration of ecosystem services in the wider countryside. Other issues discussed were: the availability and currency of data for planning and bioclimate modelling (which is usually insufficient for local patterns and specific protected areas, as well as for mountains); the need to address possible declassifications on a case-by-case basis and prioritise efforts on implementing existing protected area systems; the example of Portugal's nature reserves; the need to concentrate on the effectiveness of protected areas; the difficulties to identify displacement refugia due to individualistic species responses to climate change; the fact that good conservation work has also beneficial effects against climate change impacts; and the critical importance of improving information and education on these issues for all sectors concerned.

11. Presentation of the draft recommendation by the Secretariat

The Secretariat presented the draft recommendation on further guidance for Parties on biodiversity and climate change, which includes the main results of the work undertaken by this Group of Experts in 2009. The Secretariat outlined the sources and structure of the draft recommendation, linked to the reports discussed and reviewed by the Group of Experts at this meeting, and stressed the

links with the previous recommendation (Recommendation No. 135 (2008) of the Standing Committee, adopted on 27 November 2008, on addressing the impacts of climate change on biodiversity). She further informed that the Group of Experts may consider the possibility of merging and reviewing all related recommendations on this topic and include it in its future work.

12. Discussion of draft text

The Secretariat invited comments on the title and structure of the draft recommendation, as well as on the preamble, operational paragraphs and proposed actions listed in the appendix as further guidance for Parties.

The Group of Experts agreed to add five extra paragraphs to the Preamble, and two more operational paragraphs. The members of the Group of Experts provided specific comments to review the guidance of the appendix.

13. Next steps before the Standing Committee meeting

The Secretariat took note of the comments and informed the group that a revised version would be circulated by e-mail for further comments during the summer. The three draft reports will also be finalised in light of the comments made at this meeting. In addition, all PowerPoint presented at the meeting will be made available through the meeting website:

http://www.coe.int/t/dg4/cultureheritage/conventions/Bern/GoE_ClimateChange/StrasbourgCC_2009_en.asp#TopOfPage

The final version of the draft recommendation is to be finalised by the end of September 2009 at the latest, allowing time to be translated into French prior to submission to the Standing Committee for discussion and eventual adoption at its 29th meetings on 23-26 November 2009.

14. Future work of the Group of Experts

The Group agreed to continue its interaction with other Groups of Experts under the Bern Convention, as well as with other Council of Europe institutions, and relevant conventions and organisations. As regards areas of work for the future, the Group agreed to consider the following issues in the preparation of future guidance:

- Mountain biodiversity and climate change
- Island biodiversity and climate change
- Adaptation needs of Mediterranean ecosystems
- Forest biodiversity and fires
- Continued consideration of IAS and climate change
- Integrate and review all guidance in a single document
- Review existing national adaptation strategies for biodiversity
- Marine biodiversity and climate change in Europe (with other regional conventions).

The Secretariat informed that the next meeting of this Group of Experts is planned for June 2010, and that there could be an invitation from the government of Iceland to host that meeting (to be confirmed).

15. Any other business

None were raised.

16. Closing

The Vice-Chair (Mr Peter ZHELEV) thanked participants for their active contribution over the meeting, warmly thanked the secretariat and the interpreters, and formally closed the meeting at 5pm on Friday afternoon. The participants sent their condolences to the Chair of the Group of Experts (Mr Snorri BALDURSSON), who had to leave the meeting on Thursday afternoon due to a bereaved parent.

Appendix 1**LIST OF PARTICIPANTS
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Appendix 2



Group of Experts on Biodiversity and Climate Change

Palais de l'Europe, Room 11
Strasbourg, 2-3 July 2009

AGENDA

Thursday 2nd July

09:30 – 10:00 Welcome and opening
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1. **Opening of the meeting by the Chair** (Mr Snorri Baldursson)
2. **Adoption of the agenda**
3. **Introduction by the Secretariat** (Ms Carolina Lasén Díaz)

10:00 – 12:00 Biodiversity and climate change in other fora
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4. **Updates on biodiversity/climate change work in other fora:**
 - a. Convention on Biological Diversity
 - b. Convention on Migratory Species (Ms Melanie Virtue, Interagency Liaison Officer)
 - c. Barcelona Convention (Mr Atef Ouerghi, Expert on Marine Biology , RAC-SPA)
 - d. Ramsar Convention (Ms Monica Zavagli, Scientific & Technical Support officer)
 - e. UNEP-World Conservation Monitoring Centre (Mr Barney Dickson, Head of the Climate Change and Biodiversity Programme)

coffee break

- f. European Commission (Ms Karin Zaunberger, DG Environment)
- g. EEA (Mr Snorri Baldursson, Chair of the SEBI 2010 Expert Group on 'Indicators of impact of climate change on biodiversity')
- h. GBIF (Mr Nick King, Director)
- i. Network of European Nature Conservation Agencies (ENCA): Report of workshop on ecosystem based adaptation (Ms Caroline Cowan, Chair of ENCA's adaptation interest group)

12:00 – 12:30 National updates

5. **Brief updates on national activities and initiatives on biodiversity and climate change since the last meeting** (September 2008)

Lunch break

14:00 – 15:30 Climate change at the Council of Europe**6. Brief presentations of climate change work at the Council of Europe**

- a. Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (Ms. Elvira CORTAJARENA ITURRIOZ, Committee on the Environment, Agriculture, and Local & Regional Affairs)
- b. Congress of Local and Regional Authorities (Ms Marité Moras, Secretary of the Committee on Sustainable Development)
- c. Climate change and cultural heritage (Mr Eladio Fernández-Galiano, Executive Secretary of the EUR-OPA Agreement)
- d. Climate change and human rights (Ms. Carolina Lasén Díaz)
- e. Bern Convention's Group of Experts on Invasive Alien Species (Mr Eladio Fernández-Galiano)

15:30-15:45 - Coffee break

15:45 – 17:30 Presentation of draft reports and discussion

7. **Impacts of climate change on plant species in Europe** (Mr Vernon Heywood, University of Reading, UK)
8. **Impacts of climate change on invertebrates in Europe** (Mr Robert Wilson, University of Exeter, UK)

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A dinner booking has been made in the Alsatian restaurant "Renard Prechant" (34, rue de Zurich) at 8pm, for those wishing to get together in the evening. More information will be given during the meeting.

Please note that this is not an invitation from the Council of Europe.

Friday 3rd July

9:30 – 10:30 Presentation of draft reports and discussion (cont.)

9. **Presentation of EU-funded project on Natura 2000 and climate change** (Mr Yves de Soye, Climate Change, Energy and Biodiversity Officer, IUCN's Regional Office for Pan-Europe)
10. **Protected areas and climate change** (Mr Miguel Araújo, National Museum of Natural Sciences, Madrid, Spain)

10:30 – 11:00 Draft recommendation on further guidance for Parties in biodiversity and climate change

11. **Presentation of the draft recommendation by the Secretariat**
12. **Discussion of draft text**

11:00 – 11:15 Coffee break

11:15 – 12:30 Discussion on draft recommendation

Lunch break

14:00 – 16:00 Discussion on draft recommendation (cont.)

16:00 – 16:15 Coffee break

16:15 – 16:45 Next steps and future work

14. **Next steps before the Standing Committee meeting**
15. **Future work of the Group of Experts**

16:45 – 17:00 Closing

16. **Any other business**
17. **Closing**
