



Strasbourg, 17 October 2007
[tpvs21e_2007]

T-PVS (2007) 21

CONVENTION ON THE CONSERVATION OF EUROPEAN WILDLIFE
AND NATURAL HABITATS

Group of Experts on Biodiversity and Climate Change (Select Committee)

UK Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs

London, 12 October 2007

---ooOoo---

REPORT

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

The Standing Committee is invited to::

1. take note of the report of the meeting.

CONTENTS

1. Report of the meeting	4
2. Appendix 1: List of participants	6
3. Appendix 2: Agenda	8
4. Appendix 3: Draft work plan.....	9

1. Opening of the meeting

The Chair of the Group of Experts on Biodiversity and Climate Change, Ms Caroline Cowan opened the meeting and welcomed participants.

She recalled the first meeting of the Group of Experts, held at the Council of Europe premises in Strasbourg on 14-15 June 2007, and the main objective of this small select committee meeting, namely to finalise the work programme of the Group of Experts so that it can achieve its mandate to submit a set of draft guidance and recommendations to the Standing Committee of the Bern Convention in 2008.

Participants introduced themselves as there was a new member in the Group due to staff changes in the Nature and Biodiversity Unit of DG Environment in the European Commission.

2. Adoption of the Agenda

The agenda was adopted as it appears in appendix 2 to this report.

3. Introduction by the Secretariat

The Secretariat informed the Select Committee of the apologies received from the delegates from Iceland and Germany, as they were not able to attend the meeting. In addition, the representative of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, Ms Eva Garcia Pastor, was not able to participate in the meeting due to the cancellation of her flight that morning.

The Secretariat summarised developments since the June meeting of the Group of Experts, including circulation of a discussion note to all members of the Group of Experts, and the feedback received from RSPB/BirdLife International, Il Nibbio, and the Chair of the Group of Experts on Amphibians and Reptiles. Important meetings have also taken place since June 2007, including the Recommendation from CBD SBSTTA-12 to COP-9 regarding climate change and biodiversity, and the next phase of EEA's SEBI2010 process to streamline European biodiversity indicators, with a new working group on climate change and biodiversity to be chaired by Mr Snorri Baldursson, Vice-Chair of the Bern Convention's Group of Experts on Biodiversity and Climate Change.

4. Presentation of the revised draft work plan for the Group of Experts

The Chair reminded the Select Committee of the mandate of the Group of Experts as agreed by the Standing Committee in 2006. As the objective of the day was to complete the work plan of the Group, she proposed to build on the elements identified at the meeting of the Group of Experts in June 2007, focusing on two main sections: information needs and headline recommendations. The Select Committee agreed with the procedure of reviewing the main recommendations from the paper prepared by Professor Brian Huntley and presented at the June meeting, as it provides a good framework for some of the main issues that have been included in the draft work plan of the Group of Experts for 2008.

5. Discussion session

A number of issues were raised regarding the future work of the Group of Experts on Biodiversity and Climate Change, including the value that the Bern Convention can add in this area, bearing in mind the wide variety of other work being undertaken on managing biodiversity in a changing climate; the role of native forests in carbon sequestration; climate change impacts on marine ecosystems; and the increased development of biofuels. The select committee agreed that:

- the role of communities and ecosystems, as well as species, needs to be addressed when considering the links between biodiversity and climate change. In this sense, the select committee considered that the Group of Experts needs to develop principles covering species, habitats and ecosystems as the basis for the draft "advice and guidance for adaptation and management policies and actions for the conservation of the biological diversity" which its terms of reference require.

- it is vital to recognise the importance of a strong evidence basis and continued monitoring of species and habitats. In order to make effective conservation decisions we need a better understanding of the impacts and changes to biodiversity that climate change is causing.
- the definition of what is a “native” species needs to be reviewed in the context of climate change, as new species will become native as a result of climate change, including some which may become invasive and harm others.
- immobile species, such as long living plants, and species with reduced mobility such as amphibians and reptiles, need to be properly included in the work of this Group of Experts and explored through specific reports.
- communication will be critical, both with other organisations and institutions, as well as with the work of other Groups of Experts under the Bern Convention, and with other CoE institutions: the Parliamentary Assembly and the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities. The possibility of a joint CoE event should be explored.
- coastal and marine ecosystems need to be considered as part of future recommendations on habitat and protected area management. They are partially addressed through the Emerald Network.
- references to the 2007 Belgrade Declaration and the latest IPCC report should be included in the future work of the Group of Experts.

The draft work plan of the Group of Experts, as agreed by the Select Committee, is included as Appendix 3.

6. Next steps

The report of the meeting of the Select Committee, including the draft work plan, will be circulated by e-mail to all members of the full Group of Experts on Biodiversity and Climate Change so that final input from the Group can be gathered before submitting it to the Standing Committee in November 2007.

7. Any other business

None was raised.

Appendix 1

LIST OF PARTICIPANTS
/
LISTE DES PARTICIPANTS

I. CONTRACTING PARTIES / PARTIES CONTRACTANTES**CZECH REPUBLIC / REPUBLIQUE TCHEQUE**

Mr Jan PLESNIK, Chair of the Group of Experts on the Emerald Network, Agency for Nature Conservation and Landscape Protection of the Czech Republic, Nuselska 39, 140 00 PRAGUE 4
Tel: +420 241 082 114. E-mail: jan.plesnik@nature.cz

EUROPEAN COMMISSION / COMMISSION EUROPÉENNE

Ms Karin ZAUNBERGER, Policy officer, Directorate General Environment, European Commission, DG ENV B2, Nature and Biodiversity, Avenue de Beaulieu 5, B-1049 BRUXELLES / Belgium.
Tel : +32 2 2962172. Fax: +32 2 E-mail : Karin.Zaunberger@ec.europa.eu

SPAIN / ESPAGNE

Dr María Ángeles RAMOS, Vice-Directrice de la Recherche MNCN, Coordinatrice du Projet Faune ibérique, Museo Nacional de Ciencias Naturales (CSIC), José Gutierrez Abascal 2, E-28006 MADRID.

Tel : +34 91 411 13 28 ext. 1116. Fax : +34 91 564 50 78. E-mail : m.ramos@mncn.csic.es

SWITZERLAND / SUISSE

Mr Olivier BIBER, Head of International Affairs, Nature and Landscape, Office fédéral de l'environnement, des forêts et du paysage (DETEC), Worbentalstrasse 68, CH-3003 BERN
Tel : +41 31 323 06 63. Fax : +41 31 323 89 74. E-mail : olivier.biber@bafu.admin.ch

UNITED KINGDOM / ROYAUME-UNI

Ms Caroline COWAN, Climate Impacts and Adaptation , Defra , 3/B5 Ashdown House, 23 Victoria Street , LONDON, SW1E 6DE
Tel +44 (0)20 7082 8160. Fax +44 (0)20 7082 8143. E-mail: caroline.cowan@DEFRA.gsi.gov.uk

Ms Karen DICKINSON, JNCC, Joint Nature Conservation Committee, Monkstone House, City Road, GB PETERBOROUGH PE1 1JY
E-mail: karen.dickinson@jncc.gov.uk

II. OBSERVERS / OBSERVATEURS**European Public Law Centre**

Mr Eleftherios LEVANTIS, Senior Research Fellow, Achaiou Str./ 16, GR-10675 ATHENS / Greece.
Tel: +3 210 7258 801. Fax: +3 210 7258 040. E-mail: elan@otenet.gr. <http://www.eurpic.org>

III. COUNCIL OF EUROPE / CONSEIL DE L'EUROPE

Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe / Assemblée parlementaire du Conseil de l'Europe

Ms Eva GARCIA PASTOR, (*Sent her apologies*) Member of the Committee on the Environment, Agriculture and Local and Regional Affairs, Vice-Président, Commission de l'environnement, de l'agriculture et des questions territoriales

E-mail: Eva_Garcia@parlament.ad

IV. SECRETARIAT / SECRETARIAT

Council of Europe / Conseil de l'Europe, Directorate of Culture and of Cultural and Natural Heritage / Direction de la Culture et du Patrimoine culturel et naturel, F-67075 STRASBOURG CEDEX, France Tel : +33 388 41 20 00. Fax : +33 388 41 37 51

Ms Carolina LASÉN DÍAZ, Administrator of the Biological Diversity Unit / Administrateur de l'Unité de la Diversité biologique
Tel : +33 390 21 56 79. Fax : +33 388 41 37 51. E-mail : carolina.lasen-diaz@coe.int

Appendix 2



**Group of Experts on Biodiversity and Climate Change
(Select Committee)**

London, 12 October 2007

AGENDA

1. Opening of the meeting
2. Adoption of the agenda
3. Introduction by the Secretariat
4. Presentation of the revised draft work plan for the Group of Experts
5. Discussion session
6. Next steps
7. Any other business

Appendix 3

Draft Work Plan of the Group of Experts on Biodiversity and Climate Change

The select committee agreed on the following elements and indicative calendar to form the work plan of the Group of Experts on Biodiversity and Climate Change to meet its mandate to submit draft guidance and recommendations to the Standing Committee meeting in November 2008. In carrying out its work, the Group of Experts will exchange information and co-ordinate with other relevant conventions and organisations as listed in its terms of reference. In the same way, members of the Group of Experts should ensure that appropriate links are made with this work carried out under the Bern Convention when they participate in other fora. A calendar of relevant events related to the work of this Group of Experts will be prepared by the Secretariat to facilitate synergies.

Preamble/Introduction

The work programme of the group is built on the need to provide guidance and recommendations in order that the Contracting Parties can continue to carry out their functions in the face of climate change. It also seeks to identify where work carried out through the Bern convention can add value to the wider development of information and support for biodiversity conservation in a changing climate.

1. Information needs:

The Group recognises that nature conservation needs to be evidence-based. There is information available through different sources that need to be compiled and made available to Parties. The Group acknowledges the need for “primary information”, especially for certain groups of species and habitats where taxonomic information is either lacking or incomplete, such as invertebrates. The Group aims to consider both the impacts of climate change on the species and habitats protected by the Bern Convention, as well as impacts of responses to climate change that may have adverse effects on biodiversity.

Upon availability of the necessary resources, the Group of Experts will:

- 1.1 Review information on direct and indirect impacts of climate change on biodiversity (Bern species/habitats), by:
 - using a table/matrix format to gather and summarise information already available at the global, European, EU and country-level with a view to providing this information in an easily accessible single location;
 - liaising with other Groups of Experts under the Bern Convention (e.g. IAS, plants, amphibian and reptiles, invertebrates, etc.) to identify the most vulnerable species and habitats in the context of climate change, also drawing on available indicative lists such as the European botanist list of vulnerable species, the Fauna European list of endemic species and the list of vulnerable amphibian and reptile species in Europe. The list of most vulnerable species should be based on both the direct impacts of climate change and also on the impacts of response measures taken to combat climate change (adaptation and mitigation).
- 1.2 Develop parameters for monitoring species and habitats to help ensure consistency of approach across all Contracting Parties.
- 1.3 Review existing international and national guidance on adaptation to climate change, synthesise the findings and identify the key principles that can be used by Contracting Parties to fulfil their commitments under the Bern Convention in the face of a changing climate

1. Principles and recommendations:

The work of the Group of Experts will draw on the report “Climatic change and the conservation of European biodiversity: Towards the development of adaptation strategies” prepared by Professor B. Huntley, and the recommendations it included. The Group of Experts will also draw on the work of

other Groups of Experts under the Bern Convention, as well as on relevant international organisations and initiatives listed in its terms of reference (Recommendation 122 (2006)).

In particular, the Group of Experts highlights the following key issues and recommendations for the development of adaptation strategies which are likely to form the basis of the guidance developed as directed in the mandate of the group, as identified in the report by professor Huntley:

- The dynamism of species' geographical ranges needs to be recognised, which will require a re-evaluation of the management goals of protected areas; the basis for maintaining their protection; and the concept of native species in the framework of potential future range changes.
- The network of protected areas should be expanded where necessary in order to ensure it remains representative and to ensure the continued protection and appropriate management of existing protected areas. Appropriate management of the wider landscape will be essential to complement the protected area network.
- The goal of facilitating community and ecosystem changes resulting from climate change needs to be included in adaptation strategies. Landscape-scale approaches should be used to facilitate these dynamic processes.
- Buffer zones are a valuable tool to enhance resilience and therefore the effectiveness of protected areas. They contribute to building a functional network of sites.
- Adaptation strategies should aim to develop permeable landscapes that provide functional network of suitable habitats connected by stepping stones and corridors of various sizes. Protected areas will form the principal nodes in the functional network.
- Adaptation strategies should also focus on appropriate, biodiversity friendly management of these stepping stones which promote relatively fine-grained heterogeneity.
- Incentive schemes that promote lower intensity land management and the development of greater landscape heterogeneity need to be exploited and enhanced in the context of adaptation strategies.

Upon availability of the necessary resources, the Group of Experts will:

2.1 Identify gaps in knowledge and make recommendations to address them. Some of them are already evident, such as amphibians and reptiles and habitat fragmentation in Europe.

2.2 Develop guidance and headline recommendations and develop common principles for the Contracting Parties of the Bern Convention so that they can integrate climate change concerns in their implementation of the Convention. Initial views of the key areas where recommendations and guidance are needed are given below:

- Governance of protected areas, including management of protected areas to accommodate changes brought by climate change, and including new species and species that may be lost;
- Species conservation, including definition of native species and linkages to species that may become native and/or invasive as a result of climate change;
- Landscape-scale approaches, including the protection of habitats outside protected sites;
- Invasive Alien Species, including revisiting the concept of native species (see above), new links between native and invasive species, and interlinkages between climate change and IAS;
- Mitigation, including the impacts of measures taken to combat climate change. Synergies between mitigation and adaptation can exist in the context of protected areas, land management, etc. as reducing the loss of natural habitat and deforestation can have significant biodiversity conservation and resilience benefits;
- Monitoring, including select priority species and habitats in need of adequate monitoring, to develop parameters linked to "favourable conservation status" and its possible application to the Bern Convention, taking account of existing European monitoring schemes;

- Socio-economic drivers, including key policies that impact on ecosystem goods and services, as referred to in the terms of reference of this Group of Experts;
- Integration of biodiversity into other adaptation frameworks, as national and sectoral adaptation plans should incorporate biodiversity concerns and recognise the benefits that biodiversity can bring for human and societal welfare.

3. Communications

The Group recognises that it is vital to ensure that the guidance, information and recommendations are effectively communicated both to Contracting Parties and to other fora, as recognised in the Group's mandate. In order to achieve this, the Group will:

- Develop a set of key messages that can be used in engagement with other fora, ensuring that the objectives of the Bern Convention are being adequately recognised in the context of climate change;
- Develop a vision of conservation in a changing climate in order to ensure that Contracting Parties, and other fora, are able to clearly identify the impacts climate change will have on the objectives of the Bern Convention, and to communicate the need for changing conceptions of conservation;
- Continue to work with other fora to maintain a high priority for the objectives of the Bern Convention in the development of other activities across the region.

4. Implementation

A possible third phase of the work plan, dealing with the implementation of the advice and guidance addressed to Parties, the need to improve communication, and a revised "conservation vision" as a result of climate change, may be discussed at a later stage once the recommendations are discussed and eventually adopted by the Standing Committee in November 2008.

5. Calendar of meetings

As to the calendar of the two meetings of the Group of Experts on Biodiversity and Climate Change planned for 2008, the proposal is to aim for a first meeting in early 2008, and a second one in summer 2008, so that there is sufficient time to prepare and circulate draft guidance and recommendations to the Contracting Parties prior to the Standing Committee meeting in 2008.