



DIVERSITAS OSC2
BIODIVERSITY AND SOCIETY
UNDERSTANDING CONNECTIONS, ADAPTING TO CHANGE

Conference statement

The 700 scientists and policy makers who attended the DIVERSITAS 2nd Open Science Conference, entitled “Biodiversity and society: Understanding connections, adapting to change”, in Cape Town 14-16 October 2009, adopted the following conference statement:

As we approach the 2010 Year of Biodiversity, the DIVERSITAS second Open Science Conference confirms that the fabric out of which the Earth system is woven is unravelling at an accelerating rate. At the same time, we are discovering ever more about biodiversity and the benefits it provides to people. It is clear that biodiversity loss erodes the integrity of ecosystems and their capacity to adapt in a changing world. It represents a serious risk to human wellbeing and a squandering of current assets and future opportunities.

The biodiversity scientists gathered here commit themselves to finding practical solutions to this problem. They will do so by: increasing shared knowledge of biodiversity and its functions; helping to develop systems for monitoring the biodiversity of the planet; and being responsive to the knowledge needs of society with clear communication of findings.

The proposed mechanism for the ongoing evaluation and communication of scientific evidence on these issues is an Intergovernmental Panel on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES). We call on governments and non-governmental organisations to join us in establishing IPBES as soon as possible. We urge policy-makers to act swiftly and effectively on the already-established and future findings relating to ways of limiting further biodiversity loss and restoring ecosystem services.

Meeting current and future human needs must make adequate provision for the complex web of life of which people are an integral part. People everywhere must give effect to their shared desire for a biologically-rich and productive planet through their individual decisions and political voices.