



DIVERSITAS OSC2
BIODIVERSITY AND SOCIETY
UNDERSTANDING CONNECTIONS. ADAPTING TO CHANGE

Special issue dedicated to the DIVERSITAS Open Science Conference 2, December 2009

**“Biodiversity and Society: Understanding connections, Adapting to change”
Cape Town, S-Africa, 13-16 October 2009**

A - PRESENTATION

The second DIVERSITAS Open Science Conference attracted an international audience of 700 scientists and policy makers from about 70 countries representing many facets of biodiversity science and policy. About 40 % of these participants came from developing countries, and 30% were young scientists. This was made possible thanks to the generous support of the conference sponsors and the DIVERSITAS core sponsors, which allowed DIVERSITAS to support 380 participants. The conference received an important exposure in the media.

The main objectives of the DIVERSITAS OSC2 were to

- a. provide an overview of the latest biodiversity science,
- b. inform scientists, biodiversity managers and policy makers and promote human well-being and sustainable development
- c. strengthen biodiversity science by featuring a diversity of topics across countries and disciplines
- d. support the biodiversity science-policy interface
- e. strengthen and expand DIVERSITAS networks and forge new

The conference was entirely dedicated to biodiversity science and its connections to policy. It assembled many perspectives from the natural and social sciences to highlight the causes and consequences of biodiversity loss, and point the way towards a more sustainable use of biodiversity and ecosystem services.

New scientific knowledge was presented and a larger DIVERSITAS set of networks emerged as a result of the conference. A stronger base in the Africa region is developing thanks to initial contacts which were made in Cape Town.

The Programme is available [here](#)

The Book of Abstracts (symposium, oral, posters) is also available [here](#)

B - MAIN OUTPUTS

- [OSC2 statement](#)
- [Science-Policy position papers \(outcome of round tables discussions\)](#)
- [Scientific publications | Inaugural editorial of COSUST](#)
- [DIVERSITAS National Committees](#)

C - PLENARY SPEAKERS PRESENTATIONS

- Willem Van Riet: [Ecosystem services and the role of National Parks](#)

- Achim Steiner: [Bringing biodiversity at the forefront of political agendas: what do policy makers need from scientists ?](#)
- Harold A. Mooney: [Challenges and progress in biodiversity science](#)
- Gretchen C. Daily: [Ecosystem services in decision making: time to deliver](#)
- Charles Griffiths: [Marine biodiversity and biodiversity patterns in South Africa](#)
- Pavan Sukhdev: [TEEB and the colours of carbon: using nature to solve climate change](#)
- Andrew Dobson: [The ecological role of parasites and infectious disease in a changing world](#)
- George G. Brown: ["Unearthing" below-ground biodiversity: management and conservation implications](#)

D - DIVERSITAS CONFERENCE IN THE NEWS

The conference received an important exposure in the media. Media specialists present at the conference, coordinated the publication of press releases, and the organization of press conferences. Altogether, articles were published by more than 300 news organizations / sites in at least 11 languages in 31 countries.

[Summary of press coverage](#) – Please note tabs at the bottom of spread sheet

[Press articles](#)

[Blog of the Conference](#)

[Pre-conference press release](#)

[Post-conference press release](#)

E - THE FRANCESCO DI CASTRI YOUNG SCIENTIST AWARDS

These prizes, in honor of Prof. Francesco di Castri, one of the founding members of DIVERSITAS, celebrate the efforts of young scientists (early career scientists with a PhD, less than 35 years old in 2009) active in the field of biodiversity science and policy.

Best oral presentations by a young scientist

Christophe Randin, Switzerland

University of Basel

Symposium S13: Mining biodiversity databases: examples for mountain biota and conservation planning

“Using georeferenced databases to assess the effect of climate change on alpine plant species and diversity”

Adam West, South Africa

University of Cape Town

Contributed oral session O12: Drivers of biodiversity 2

“Drought responses in fynbos species: improving predictions for a highly diverse flora”

Best poster presentations by a young scientist

Swamy Savitha, India

Ashoka Trust for Research in Ecology and the Environment

Poster session P18, Managing for ecosystem services

“Neighbourhood parks and ecosystem services in Bangalore, India: does size matter?”

Cécile Albert, France

Joseph Fourier University of Grenoble

Poster session P07, Biodiversity and ecosystem functioning

“Intraspecific functional variability: quantification along environmental gradients and implications in vegetation modelling – An alpine study case”

Abstracts of the best oral and poster presentations

[More](#)

F - OSC2 SPONSORS

DIVERSITAS thanks the following institutions and organisations, which made this conference possible through their financial support:

- [Federal Ministry of Education and Research \(BMBF\)](#)
- [The Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency \(SIDA\)](#)
- [South African National Research Foundation \(SA NRF\)](#)
- [European Commission](#)
- [US National Science Foundation \(NSF\)](#)
- [Research Council of Norway \(RCN\)](#)
- [Asia-Pacific Network for Global Change Research \(APN\)](#)
- [German Research Foundation \(DFG\)](#)
- [UNESCO](#)
- [ICSU](#)
- [Bioversity International](#)
- [Swiss National Science Foundation \(SNSF\)](#)
- [Netherlands Organisation for Scientific Research \(NWO\)](#)
- [French Foundation for Research on Biodiversity \(FRB\)](#)
- [Centre de Coopération Internationale en Recherche Agronomique pour le Développement \(CIRAD\)](#)
- [The Royal Netherlands Academy of Arts and Sciences \(KNAW\)](#)
- [US National Academy of Sciences](#)
- [The Academy of Sciences for the Developing World \(TWAS\)](#)
- [Elsevier](#)
- [Science Magazine \(AAAS\)](#)

DIVERSITAS core funding sponsors

DIVERSITAS also thanks the following organisations for their core support to DIVERSITAS:

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Netherlands Organisation for Scientific Research (NWO)

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Research Council of Norway

Royal Netherlands Academy of Arts and Sciences (KNAW)
Slovak Academy of Sciences
Spanish Ministry of Science and Technology (MYCT)
Swedish Science Council (FORMAS)
Swiss National Science Foundation (SNF)

G - PICTURES OF THE CONFERENCE

Pictures of the conference can be found [here](#)