



The mission of the European Platform for Biodiversity Research Strategy (EPBR) is to ensure that research contributes to halting the loss of biodiversity by 2010.

## RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE WORKING GROUP ON BIODIVERSITY AND TOURISM

### EUROPEAN PLATFORM FOR BIODIVERSITY RESEARCH STRATEGY

Meeting under the Dutch Presidency of the EU  
Amsterdam, The Netherlands, 9–13 December 2004

*“Travel makes a wise man better, and a fool worse”*  
Thomas Fuller

#### ***The participants of this meeting place high priority on research to:***

1. Further investigate the roles of biodiversity, climate, environmental quality and policy in determining levels and types of tourism at different destinations;
2. Determine the contribution of biodiversity and ecosystem functions to the economic benefits, employment and social cohesion arising from the tourism industry, using participatory methods to ensure stakeholder knowledge and values are taken fully into account;
3. Further develop research and indicators of biodiversity, ecosystem function and resilience in tourism areas, considering the direct and indirect pressures on biodiversity and ecosystems resulting from tourism (e.g. use of water and other natural resources, waste and sewage, infrastructure and habitat fragmentation, transport-related infrastructure and emissions);
4. Model changes in tourism pressures in relation to changes in components of biodiversity, ecosystem function and resilience;
5. Develop and implement techniques for estimating limits of acceptable change for different tourism areas and ecosystems.
6. Assess effectiveness of different policies and management practices in moderating the effects of tourism on biodiversity and ecosystem function, including participatory research and management processes;
7. Undertake, analyse and disseminate results of case studies in the application of the Ecosystem Approach to sustainable development of tourism, from local to global scales.
8. Further investigate how tourists and tourism businesses respond to information provision, codes of conduct, industry accreditation and other measures aimed at influencing behaviour.

#### ***These conclusions have arisen from the following considerations***

- Tourism is a major source of economic benefit, employment and social cohesion;
- Tourism often depends on natural areas and ecosystem services, and on the biodiversity supporting them;
- Different types of tourism have different economic, cultural and environmental impacts, both within the tourist area and globally through transport, in particular air travel;
- There are many policy options for mitigating or abating the negative impacts of tourism, and for enhancing the positive effects, and we need to understand the costs, benefits, effectiveness and equity of these;
- Effects, values and policy options vary substantially across different areas. European research is needed to address these issues both within Europe and in developing countries to which European tourists travel;
- These issues must be understood if Europe is to achieve sustainable economic growth from tourism.