

**RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE WORKING GROUP ON  
BIODIVERSITY RESEARCH STRATEGY IN THE ACCEDING AND  
CANDIDATE COUNTRIES**

**EUROPEAN PLATFORM FOR BIODIVERSITY RESEARCH STRATEGY**

Bioplatform meeting in Poland in support of EPBRS  
Bialowieza, 5-9 July 2003

*The participants of this meeting agreed that the following key issues have high priority in biodiversity research in the Acceding and Candidate Countries:*

1. hypothesis-driven research on biodiversity in natural ecosystems, including its dynamics and functional aspects,
2. hypothesis-driven research on biodiversity in anthropogenic ecosystems, including ecological experiments and socio-economic studies,
3. research on the biodiversity of local domestic breeds, crops, medical and aromatic plants and methods of its conservation, especially *in situ*,
4. study of biodiversity patterns and processes that extend or operate across national borders,
5. maintenance and development of morphological and molecular taxonomy,
6. research on the influence on biodiversity of land use changes resulting from the introduction of EU legislation and from changing socio-economic drivers,
7. long-term studies on changes of biodiversity,
8. adaptation or design of biodiversity assessment and monitoring tools for conditions in the enlarged EU,
9. research on non-native, invasive or potentially invasive species and their impact on native communities,
10. development of methods for the conversion of abandoned land into habitats of conservation value,
11. multidisciplinary research on integrating biodiversity conservation with cultural diversity and community development.

*To develop high quality and policy relevant research on these priority areas, the participants of this meeting recognize the crucial importance of:*

- multi-national and multidisciplinary research collaboration,
- stakeholder participation in biodiversity conservation and management,
- education and awareness of the general public,
- development, strengthening and modernization of the research infrastructure in the ACC.

***The participants of this meeting note that Acceding and Candidate Countries are characterized by particularly rich and unique biodiversity resulting from and connected with:***

- well preserved natural forests, grasslands, wetlands, unregulated rivers, sea shores and other natural and semi-natural ecosystems,
- historical land use that created and maintained ecosystems and habitats in rural areas,
- cultural diversity linked with the use of biological resources,

***and recognize that recent and current political and economic changes have affected and will continue to influence biodiversity through, for example:***

- abandonment of arable land, pastures, and other historical land use or their replacement by intensive industrial farming,
- exploitation and insufficient protection of the remaining pristine habitats,
- fragmentation, loss and impoverishment of habitats due to development of transport networks and urban areas,
- heavy use of natural areas for tourism and recreation, including especially the urbanization of waterfronts,
- intensified invasion by non native species,

***but also through***

- implementation of EU environmental legislation,
- development of a common biodiversity research strategy.