



BIODIVERSITY RESEARCH,
a key to our future



SCRIPT of the video “Biodiversity Research, a key to our future”

The modern definition of biodiversity encompasses more than just birds, butterflies and pretty flowers. Biodiversity delivers things that people really care about; apart from the aesthetic beauty of biodiversity, but also the impact on their lives, through food, the air quality, water quality and the so-called ecosystem services.

Almost everything on which we depend traces itself back to ecosystems at some point, whether that is, the building of the materials that we use are made out of timber, the food that we eat, come out of ecosystems

(Dr Robert Scholes, Chair of GEOBON Scientific Committee and Council for Scientific and Industrial Research, South Africa)

Biodiversity is the tool box for resilient societies, a tool box for a society that can deal with shocks and stresses in a world that is increasingly turbulent.

So biodiversity is not an environmental issue, biodiversity is a security issue, is a foreign policy issue, is an economic issue. It's something that should be at the realm of the Ministries of Finance, the Heads of States.

(Dr Johan Rockström, Executive Director of the Stockholm Resilience Centre and the Stockholm Environment Institute, Sweden)

Biodiversity is fundamentally a global public good and the value proposition in global public good, is not so much about generating a new technology stream, it's about avoiding costly mistakes.

(Dr Robert Scholes, Chair of GEOBON Scientific Committee and Council for Scientific and Industrial Research, South Africa)

So the mind shift is really to position the economy inside the biosphere and forcing the economy therefore to abide to and respect the rules of the biosphere. So the economy becomes a subset of a functioning biosphere.

(Dr Johan Rockström, Executive Director of the Stockholm Resilience Centre and the Stockholm Environment Institute, Sweden)



BIODIVERSITY RESEARCH,
a key to our future



When we talk about corporate social responsibility for instance, the way in which people do business or the way the technology they use to produce products. Biodiversity may come to say, look, if you are going to set up this industry, and you are going to log off this forest for doing that, it's not good enough that you plant those 10.000 trees somewhere else because what you are destroying is an ecosystem. And you can't really re-create the system.

(Dr Bina Agarwal, President of the International Society for Ecological Economics (ISEE) and Director and Professor of Economics, Institute of Economic Growth, Delhi University, India)

So in order to earnest the force of globalization, you need to design some market-based demand driven mechanisms. That would influence land use decisions and lead to a conservation of ecosystems.

(Dr Eric Lambin, Professor at Stanford University, USA and at the University of Louvain, Belgium)

Technology, a substitute for biodiversity?

Biodiversity Research is not anti-technology. There is a role for technology for fixing some of the problems that we face today, but it's not a total role.

(Dr Robert Scholes, Chair of GEOBON Scientific Committee and Council for Scientific and Industrial Research, South Africa)

Normally, technology is very good to solve a single problem at a time. For example, we may come up with an artificial tree. But this will give us only one of the multiple benefits that an ecosystem can give us. And we will have to find technologies for every little bit of the things that one functional ecosystem gives us altogether. And the need of these technologies will have externalities.

(Dr Sandra Diaz, DIVERSITAS Scientific Committee and Professor at the National University of Cordoba and CONICET, Argentina)



BIODIVERSITY RESEARCH,
a key to our future



So a lot of the ecosystem services can be replaced by man-made services, man-made activities but these are much more expensive.

(Dr Rik Leemans, Chair of the Earth System Science Partnership Scientific Committee (EESP) and Head of the Environmental Systems Analysis group of Wageningen University, The Netherlands)

Keeping a forest healthy will keep water-sheds healthy and supply water to cities; when those forests are available. Beijing has done that, New-York has done that, so let's go for the nature-based solutions when it's possible. If of course it's not possible, technological solutions are also an option. But up until now, we haven't really put the nature-based solutions on the table.

(Ms. Julia marton-Lefèvre, Director General of the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN), Switzerland)

What we need to do now is to continue pursue the technological breakthroughs, but at the same time, we need to somehow, cap, at an absolute level, how far we can allow the increase in use of ecological space, and we've never done that. There is this schizophrenic perception about technology which is, I think something that we need to recognize, that it's good and bad. And somehow we need to make it good and good.

(Dr Johan Rockström, Executive Director of the Stockholm Resilience Centre and the Stockholm Environment Institute, Sweden)



BIODIVERSITY RESEARCH,
a key to our future



Means and needs

There is no question that financial support, both to the research done on biodiversity and ecosystem services and financial support for the IPBES (*Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services*) is gonna be absolutely critical. There are some very important scientific issues that need to be resolved. We need to understand, in the best way, what are the drivers of the loss of biodiversity and the change in the degradation of ecosystem services. To make sure that we link together, issues such as climate change-biodiversity; Biodiversity-food security; -water security; -energy security; -human security. All of these issues are totally inter-related.

What we have to show to decision makers both in government, in the private sector, the NGOs, and civil society at large, that these ecosystems, and their services, are the very foundation of sustainable development, the very foundation of human well-being.

***(Sir Robert Tony Watson, Professor at
University of East Anglia, United Kingdom)***

So for me, it's an obvious research area to continue to support, to fund, and also to reap the results very quickly.

***(Ms. Julia marton-Lefèvre, Director General of the
International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN), Switzerland)***

**The video « Biodiversity Research, a key to our future » is available online at:
<http://vimeo.com/40622244>**

Video produced in May 2012 by the [Belgian Biodiversity Platform](#) for the European Platform for Biodiversity Research Strategy ([EPBRS](#)).

For more information, please contact Estelle Balian, Science Officer for the Belgian Biodiversity Platform and Secretariat of the European Platform for Biodiversity Research Strategy : e.balian@biodiversity.be