

# Countdown 2010 Declaration



**BIODIVERSITY – THE WEB OF LIFE ON EARTH – IS ESSENTIAL TO THE QUALITY OF HUMAN WELL-BEING, AND IT IS A CRUCIAL ELEMENT IN SUSTAINING THE SOCIAL, ECONOMIC AND SPIRITUAL DIMENSION OF ALL EUROPEANS. YET, BIODIVERSITY CONTINUES TO DECLINE. POLITICAL COMMITMENTS HAVE BEEN MADE TO STOP THIS TREND BY 2010. FURTHER STEPS NEED TO BE TAKEN TO HONOUR THIS COMMITMENT AND TO TRANSLATE IT INTO ACTION.**

We the undersigned will take every practical opportunity to:

**Support** the commitments to halt or significantly reduce the current rate of biodiversity loss by 2010, made by:

- European Union Heads of State and Government - in the Presidency Conclusions adopted at the Göteborg European Council, Sweden in 2001;
- World Environment Ministers in the Hague Ministerial Declaration of the Conference of Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity in the Netherlands 2002;
- World Heads of State in the Plan of Implementation at the United Nations World Summit on Sustainable Development in Johannesburg, South Africa in 2002;
- European Environment Ministers and Heads of Delegation of the region of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe in the Declaration of the fifth Ministerial "Environment for Europe" Conference, in Kyiv, Ukraine 2003.

**Encourage** European decision makers at all levels, in both the public and the private sector, to contribute to these commitments and to:

- Increase public awareness and participation for biodiversity conservation, including the promotion of exemplary activities towards the 2010 biodiversity target;

- Better integrate biodiversity considerations into all relevant sectors of public policy and economy;
- Undertake serious efforts to adapt human activities to the needs of natural systems;
- Likewise address the loss of biodiversity Europeans are causing in other regions of the world;
- Support the development of suitable monitoring and indicator tools to assess the state of biodiversity in Europe.

**Commit** ourselves to encourage and assist decision makers and European societies in achieving the 2010 biodiversity target, notably through:

- Actively promoting Countdown 2010 to focus attention and mobilise resources for achieving the 2010 biodiversity target;
- Significantly reducing our own impact on biodiversity.

The **Ministry of Environment and Water** of Hungary will contribute to halt the loss of biodiversity by:

1. **Enhancing** the network of designated sites
2. **Complying** with EU legislation and international conventions
3. **Strengthening** financial and legislative capacities for nature conservation
4. **Raising** public awareness
5. **Managing** of sites and species



**The Ministry of Environment and Water of Hungary  
will contribute to halt the loss of biodiversity  
through taking the following actions:**



**1. Enhancing** the network of designated sites:

- Increasing the total area of designated sites (protected sites, sites of specific ecological networks, etc.);
- Within the protected areas, increasing the proportion of state-owned land managed by conservation bodies;
- Active protection of protected sites with high natural values;
- Increasing coherence of Natura 2000 and non-Natura 2000 protected sites;
- Increasing the size and coherence of natural and semi-natural habitats through elaboration and maintenance of ecological networks in Hungary (e.g. Pan-European Ecological Network, Hungarian Ecological Network, Natura 2000 Network).

**2. Complying** with EU legislation and international conventions signed by Hungary in the field of nature conservation and specifically the 2010 biodiversity target, in particular:

- Habitats Directive;
- Birds Directive;
- Convention on Wetlands of International Importance Especially as Waterfowl Habitat;
- Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals;
- Convention on the Conservation of European Wildlife and Natural Habitats;
- Convention on Biological Diversity;
- Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora;
- and other multilateral agreements.

**3. Strengthening** financial and legislative capacities for nature conservation:

- Supporting allocation of financial resources for measures taken to halt the loss of biodiversity, in particular through the 2<sup>nd</sup> National Development Plan, i.e. the national strategy for the upcoming EU budget period 2007-2013;
- Lobbying for the allocation of EU and other financial resources for nature-friendly farming in the habitats of the most important protected/strictly protected species and in the most important habitats by 2010;
- Promoting the integration of conservation and the 2010 Biodiversity target into the legislation and policy of other sectors at the local, regional, national and international level.

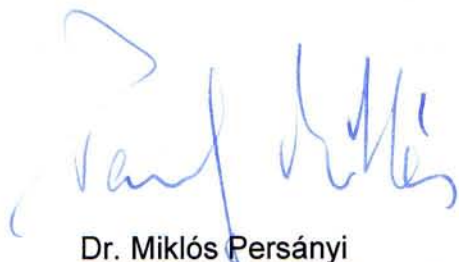
**4. Raising public awareness of the 2010 biodiversity target:**

- Raising public awareness and enhancing environmental consciousness through education of children, especially through on-site education;
- Development of the 'eco-school' network and launching the establishment of 'green kindergartens';
- Improving the communication with local governments in line with the concept of 'think globally, act locally'.

**5. Management of sites and species:**

- Implementation of the Action Plans of target species so as to be able to effectively protect them;
- Development of, and integration of the 2010 Biodiversity target within, management plans for target sites to promote the conservation of their special natural values;
- Establishment of a monitoring system for the analysis of the nature conservation status of target species;
- Development of a national strategy and management prescriptions towards reducing the impact of invasive alien species on natural biodiversity.

I, the undersigned, declare the accession  
of the Ministry of Environment and Water  
of the Republic of Hungary  
to the COUNTDOWN Initiative



Dr. Miklós Persányi  
Minister for Environment and Water  
of the Republic of Hungary

I, the undersigned acknowledge the accession  
of the Ministry of Environment and Water  
of the Republic of Hungary  
to the COUNTDOWN Initiative



Tamás Marghescu  
Regional Director for Europe  
of IUCN, The World Conservation Union

Done at Bősárkány, Hungary, on the 29<sup>th</sup> of September 2006, in two originals, in the English language.