



XI Conference of Parties
CONVENTION ON BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY
HYDERABAD INDIA 2012

Press Brief

Inland Waters Biodiversity

Why is this important?

Water supports all life on Earth. Fresh water is the most important natural resource on the planet and is essential for sustainable development, as well as supporting all terrestrial biodiversity. Ecosystems not only depend on water but also play an important role in regulating its supply (including in particular the extremes of drought and flood) and its quality. The tenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties (COP 10) recognized water is relevant to most areas of the work of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 and in particular referenced water in Aichi Biodiversity Target 14.

COP 10 also requested that further scientific work be undertaken on the role of biodiversity (ecosystems) in sustaining the water cycle. The progress in that work was considered at the fifteenth meeting of the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice (SBSTTA 15) and is reported further in document UNEP/CBD/COP/11/30 – with the detailed report available as information document 2 (UNEP/CBD/COP/INF/2). This confirms the importance of the water-related services supported by ecosystems and that ecosystems can be considered as “natural water infrastructure” to achieve water management goals: examples include using wetlands to regulate floods and restoring catchments to improve water quality (hence providing alternatives, or enhancements, to build infrastructure).



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What news to expect in Hyderabad?

COP 11 will consider ways and means to strengthen implementation of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 in areas that involve sustaining or restoring water related ecosystem services as a major contribution to sustainable development. Many stakeholders are already working on managing natural infrastructure as solutions for water management, although often using different terms. Even more stakeholders are interested in ecosystem based solutions for meeting water-related challenges. A key opportunity, therefore, is ways and means of building effective partnerships for implementation.

Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity

413, Saint Jacques Street, suite 800
Montreal, Quebec, H2Y 1N9
Canada

Tel.: +1 514 288 2220
Fax: +1 514 288 6588
secretariat@cbd.int

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