Title

What do International Year of Biodiversity and climate change have in common?. Jo Phillips from the RSPB (BirdLife in the UK) tell?s us? Biological diversity supports ecosystems essential for human life, including climate regulation, water, food security and protection from natural disasters. Climate change is an increasing cause of biodiversity loss that in turn adds to the impacts of climate change. Healthy ecosystems are particu arly important for people living in poverty ? they depend far more directly on natural resources for their livelihoods and survival. The starting point is that mitigation and adaptation must be based on sound science. An important new report, Global Biodiversity Outlook 3 (Convention on Biological Diversity, May 2010), supports this. GEO3 is also a wake up call. In many places across the world, natural systems supporting economies, lives and livelihoods are at risk of rapid degradation and collapse. While the poorest people suffer disproportionately from the deterioration of ecosystems, ultimately everyone stands to lose. Climate change and biodiversity are inextricably linked. Government policy and our personal choices determine how human drivers of both will shape our future. **Time is short.** The challenge to stay below 2o C of warming looms ever larger. The current Copenhagen pledges add up to a 3o to 4o C world by 2100 at best. At the same time, we have massively failed to meet the CBD?s target to significantly reduce the rate of biodiversity loss globally by 2010 (agreed by world leaders at the Johannesburg World Summit in 2002 and integrated into the Millennium Development Goals, MDGs). Catastrophic changes to our planet could happen well within the lifetime of our children. **One planet.** Unabated, these crises will change our planet?s unique human-life supporting conditions. Above 2o C of warming, ecosystem capacity to meet the needs of present and future generations will be severely compromised. In fact, even at a 1.5o C increase, lives in vulner-able places such as small island developing states and communities in the polar regions will be tremendously difficult, and for some, impossible. **Costs increase the more we delay**. TEEB (The Economics of Ecosystems and Biodiversity, 2009) is providing an economic evidence base for decision- makers, as Stern did for climate change. Addressing these challenges together will reduce costs and secure multiple benefits. But we must not steal from one pot to put money into another. New, not recycled, public money is essential. Money promised in the CBD process in the past should not be counted towards satisfying fast-start finance promises. **Adaptation can support or harm nature and people**. Supporting natural and social resilience is cost effective, locally appropriate and our insurance mechanism for the future. **Mitigation**. Nature can help. Ecosystems such as forests and peatlands absorb and store carbon, as do oceans and water bodies. If our mitigation choices harm natural systems, such as biofuels replacing natural forest, we risk releasing stored carbon into the atmosphere. Some 190 Parties engaged in the UNFCCC are also signatories to the Convention on Biological Diversity. Meeting the MDGs by 2015 is the international commitment to tackle poverty. This year through to Rio+20 in 2012 provides an opportunity not to be missed. Governments will meet to discuss biodiversity in New York this September and Nagoya in October, international de velopment at the MDG Summit in New York in September and climate change in Cancun at the end of 2010. Parties in the UNFCCC have a crucial role to play in encouraging cooperation and ensuring effective opportunities to make sure the links are made at national and international levels. Addressing these interconnected crises in a mutually reinforcing way is the only realistic and cost effective way forward for our modern world.