

Consensus reached at the eleventh hour of CBD COP11

Title

After two weeks of negotiations countries reached a consensus on resource mobilisation in the closing hours of the 11th conference of parties (CoP) to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD). At 2 AM this morning targets were agreed to achieve the implementation of the objectives of the Convention and its Strategic Plan, a comprehensive global framework for achieving the vision of 'Living in Harmony with Nature' by 2020, The parties have agreed to a 'Hyderabad Roadmap' with support to biodiversity conservation from developed to developing countries to be doubled to 10 billion US Dollars by 2015. This is to be reassessed after this year, based on more precise information on funding needs.

The agreement brought to an end tense and protracted negotiations on how financial resources will be mobilised and which have been the major focus of discussions among the parties in Hyderabad. Until the last moment developing countries objected to increased domestic funding obligations justifying that the Convention text is clear in the differentiated responsibilities of the developed countries to provide additional financial resources for the developing countries. BirdLife International welcomes this compromise that was achieved after very difficult discussions. "This will give the Aichi Biodiversity Targets the necessary push" says Carolina Hazin, BirdLife's Global Biodiversity Policy Coordinator. "We are happy that despite the fact that pre-conditions imposed at COP10 for setting new funding targets were not met, developed countries recognised their differentiated obligations in order for the Aichi Targets to be delivered. The overall constructive attitude of the African Group of countries has paid off".

Negotiations during COP11 on Ecologically or Biologically Significant marine Areas (EBSAs) have also been difficult, but eventually parties reached consensus on the recognition of EBSAs in the open oceans and deep seas; and the transmission of information on these sites to the United Nations General Assembly via the CBD EBSA repository. "While the agreed wording of the decision text is not as strong as some were pushing for, with many hoping for a resounding endorsement of the EBSAs described at regional workshops, it shows that CBD has fulfilled its scientific mandate for describing EBSAs and that the pressure is now on the UNGA to develop a legal mechanism for defining the management and or protection of these sites in the high seas" said Ben Lascelles, BirdLife's Marine IBA Officer. A third key issue for this meeting has been agreement on advice on reducing emissions from deforestation and degradation. "We welcome this decision - the CBD must continue to recognise and embrace its essential role in providing advice on REDD+ safeguards, and on monitoring and assessing the contributions of this mechanism to achieving the objectives of the CBD to ensure natural

systems benefit and biodiversity is conserved and not impacted negatively through REDD+ activities” said Melanie Heath, BirdLife’s Head of Policy. This spirit of consensus and compromise on tough decisions must continue as delegates return home - national implementation of actions agreed at COP 11 is crucial.