

Halting the loss of biodiversity by 2010

2006/2233(INI) - 20/11/2006

The Council held an exchange of views on a Commission Communication "Halting the loss of biodiversity by 2010 - and beyond". The Commission Communication is a response both to the commitment made at the 2001 Göteborg European Council to halt the decline of biodiversity in the EU by 2010, and to the undertaking made at the World Summit for Sustainable Development held in Johannesburg in 2002 to significantly reduce the rate of biodiversity loss at global level.

The Presidency considered it important to have an exchange of views not only at the Environment Council, which is due to adopt conclusions relating to the Communication in December, but also at the Agriculture and Fisheries Council, which is directly concerned by parts of the Communication.

The exchange of views was based on two Presidency notes and was structured on the basis of the following question drawn up by the Presidency: *Do you agree that the targets and actions laid down in the Communication are going in the right direction and can be implemented effectively in order to safeguard the protection of biodiversity and sustainability in the fisheries sector and in the agricultural sector?*

All delegations could support the targets and the key actions proposed in the Communication and welcomed the Commission's initiative.

Delegations also stated that the recently reformed Community policies on agriculture, rural development and fisheries can substantially contribute to halting the decline of biodiversity and to preserving ecosystems.

Several delegations particularly stressed the importance of conserving and using genetic resources as a crucial component of biodiversity, underlining the role of international instruments.