



## THE SECRETARY-GENERAL

## FOREWORD TO GLOBAL BIODIVERSITY OUTLOOK

In 2002, the world's leaders agreed to achieve a significant reduction in the rate of biodiversity loss by 2010. Having reviewed **all** available evidence, including national reports submitted by Parties, this third edition of the *Global Biodiversity Outlook* concludes that the target has not been met. Moreover, the *Outlook* warns, the principal pressures leading to biodiversity loss are not just constant but are, in some cases, intensifying.

The consequences of this collective failure, if it is not quickly corrected, will be severe for us all. Biodiversity underpins the functioning of the ecosystems on which we depend for food and fresh water, health and recreation, and protection from natural disasters. Its loss also affects us culturally and spiritually. This may be more difficult to quantify, but is nonetheless integral to our well-being.

Current trends are bringing us closer to a number of potential tipping points that would catastrophically reduce the capacity of ecosystems to provide these essential services. The poor, who tend to be most immediately dependent on them, would suffer first and most severely. At stake are the principal objectives outlined in the Millennium Development Goals: food security, poverty eradication and a healthier population.

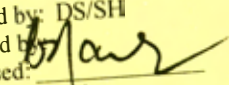
The conservation of biodiversity makes a critical contribution to moderating the scale of climate change and reducing its negative impacts by making ecosystems -- and therefore human societies -- more resilient. It is therefore essential that the challenges related to biodiversity and climate change are tackled in a coordinated manner and given equal priority.

In several important areas, national and international action to support biodiversity is moving in a positive direction. More land and sea areas are being protected, more countries are fighting the serious threat of invasive alien species, and more money is being set aside for implementing the Convention on Biological Diversity.

signed on 16/4  
SG UNEP foreword

Drafter: UNEP/DS

Proofread by: DS/SH

Approved by: Authorised:  
Date: 16/04/10

However, these efforts are too often undermined by conflicting policies. To tackle the root causes of biodiversity loss, we must give it higher priority in all areas of decision-making and in all economic sectors. As this third *Global Biodiversity Outlook* makes clear, conserving biodiversity cannot be an afterthought once other objectives are addressed – it is the foundation on which many of these objectives are built. We need a new vision for biological diversity for a healthy planet and a sustainable future for humankind.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Ki-moon Ban". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Ki" and last name "Ban" being more prominent, and "moon" written in a smaller, more connected script in between.

BAN Ki-moon