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Programme for Gincana magazine of the CBD**

2010 represents a real opportunity to boost the prospects for biodiversity and the health of natural systems.

Over the past two years fresh calculations and more precise evaluations of the value of nature to global and national economies have been coming to fore in part as a result of The Economics of Ecosystems and Biodiversity (TEEB).

Meanwhile, governments have taken negotiations on access and benefit sharing of genetic resources to new levels of determination raising optimism that this 'third' pillar of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) can be strengthened and lead to new revenue flows for conservation and sustainable use.

It is equally possible that nations may also make important strides on plugging the serious and significant knowledge gaps on ecosystem and biodiversity by supporting the establishment of an Intergovernmental Panel or Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services in order to inform policy-makers on real choices based on the very latest scientific developments.

The Copenhagen, UN climate meeting in December 2009 may set the stage for paying developing countries to maintain forests and their carbon stocks with multiple benefits for biodiversity as well as water supplies, soil stabilization and opportunities for green jobs in areas like natural resource management and eco-tourism.

A Reduced Emission from Deforestation and forest Degradation (REDD) agreement as part of a new overall commitment by countries on climate change will also make a significant contribution to the climate adaptation agenda while perhaps opening the door towards payments for other carbon-storing initiatives.

During 2010 some of the first results are likely to emerge from the UNEP-Global Environment Facility Carbon Benefits Project being undertaken with farmers and landowners in western Kenya as well as in Niger, Nigeria and China.

The project is to set standards covering the quantities of carbon 'sequestered' in different landscapes and under different management regimes.

It may be that farmers can be paid for the carbon locked away under sustainable agricultural systems such as organic and agroforestry schemes.

Payments for maintaining peatlands up to carbon-storing coastal 'infrastructure' like mangroves and wetlands are further tantalising prospects emerging.

TEEB

This visionary initiative, supported by the European Commission, Germany, Norway and the United Kingdom and whose secretariat is now hosted by UNEP, will produce its landmark, final report during the International Year of Biodiversity.

But TEEB, which dovetails with UNEP's Green Economy initiative, is already sharpening international attention on the economic losses resulting from the loss, degradation and destruction of the natural world and its goods and services.

Focusing attention too on the opportunities for action if investments are stepped up in ecosystem renovation and more creative management of the Earth's nature-based assets.

- The world's 100,000 National Parks and protected areas generate wealth via nature-based goods and services equal to around \$5 trillion but only employ 1.5 million people—indicating a potentially significant new area for employment generation.
- TEEB estimates that securing these \$5 trillion-worth services might require an additional investment of just f \$ 50 billion a year--a good cost benefit ratio of 100:1.
- Coral reefs, whose fishery, tourism and flood protection services are estimated at between \$100,000 and \$600,000 per square km, could be conserved for an investment of close to \$780 per square km or 0.2 per cent of the value of the ecosystem protected.
- Deforestation contributes close to 20 per cent of global greenhouse gas emissions-\$17 billion to over \$30 billion annually could halve this while securing livelihoods and boosting conservation-related employment in tropical countries.
- A global marine protected area network, involving the closure of 20 per cent of total fishing grounds could result in profit losses of an estimated \$270 million annually.
- But could sustain fisheries worth \$80-100 billion a year; assist in conserving an estimated 27 million jobs while generating one million new ones and protect food supplies for over one billion people, especially in developing countries whose main or sole source of animal protein comes from fish.

The ground work has been paid for a new response to the persistent and emerging challenges facing natural systems and their biodiversity.

2010 is the opportunity to open a new chapter where the myriad of intelligent policies and smart market mechanisms that have been tried and tested over the past decades are rapidly evolved to become part of mainstream economic policy.

On a planet of six billion, rising to over nine billion by 2050, more creative ways of managing ecosystems and biodiversity that reflect their central role in human well being and their inordinate contribution to live, livelihoods and economies will in large part determine whether an ever more populous humanity can survive and thrive in the 21st century.