

ECO

Volume 44, Issue 7
Tuesday, 16 Oct 2012
www.cbdalliance.org



Nominees for the prestigious Dodo Awards – Back Page

World Food Sovereignty Day

Agricultural Biodiversity feeds the World

Agricultural biodiversity provides food, improves health and well-being and regenerates the environment

On World Food Sovereignty Day – 16th October – we mark the challenges of a dysfunctional world food system that leaves a billion hungry and nearly double that number malnourished and obese.

Today is also the day when we celebrate the efforts of the small-scale food providers – farmers, gardeners, herders, fishers, forest dwellers, Indigenous Peoples and more, in both rural and urban areas – who currently provide food for more than 70 per cent of the world's peoples. They do so by using and developing agricultural biodiversity *in situ* in their resilient, biodiverse and ecological food production systems.

These are the people who, against the odds, safeguard agricultural biodiversity and whose rights to continue to do so, need recognition and enforcement. The CBD, as in the UN Committee on World Food Security, must integrate the views, demands and potential of the social movements of these small-scale food providers in international governance processes.

These movements are the champions of food sovereignty, a framework which, *inter alia*, embraces the realisation of the Right to Food and a model of food provision that works with, rather than against, nature. Without their continued efforts, the production of biodiverse foods, with all the benefits these bring to nutrition, to climate change resilience, to sustaining essential ecosystem functions above and below ground and in aquatic and marine waters, and for local livelihoods, is threatened.

We need food sovereignty now!

For more, see *CBD Alliance Briefing for COP 11* www.cbdalliance.org/cop11-briefing-notes/

Agricultural Biodiversity's relevance to COP11

Agricultural biodiversity addresses issues at the heart of the CBD. The conservation, sustainable use and development of agricultural biodiversity is essential for achieving the majority of the Aichi targets. Agricultural biodiversity is the subject of agenda item 13.5 and, in its broadest definition, it is also relevant in the negotiations in Marine and Coastal; Inland Waters; Forests; Drylands; ABS; New and Emerging issues; Retirement of Decisions; among others. Agricultural biodiversity issues are also at the centre of many Side and Parallel Events.

Themes for this issue:

- **Agricultural Biodiversity and Food Sovereignty**
- **A focus on India**
- **Dodo Awards**

ECO is currently published at COP11 in Hyderabad, India. Coordinated by the CBD Alliance, the opinions, commentaries and articles printed in **ECO** are the sole opinion of the individual authors or organisations, unless otherwise expressed.

Submissions are welcome from all civil society groups.
Email to lorch@ifrik.org or just.tasneem@gmail.com

Telegram

Date: 16 Oct 2011
Sending Station: Hyderabad, India

To: Prime Minister

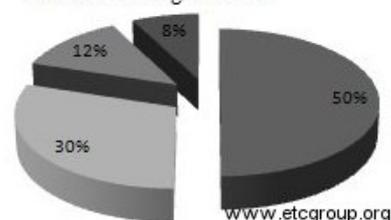
Urgent STOP Country in Crisis
STOP Displacement
STOP Over consumption
STOP ineffective legislation
STOP

Please read Pages 5-7
STOP **Regards**

The Nation

Peasants Feed the World

■ Peasant Agriculture	50%
■ Hunting/Gathering	12%
■ Urban	8%
■ Industrial Agriculture	30%



In situ Conservation of Agricultural Biodiversity

USC Canada and SEARICE

In situ conservation is the conservation of agricultural diversity on-site. It is living biodiversity, in farmers' fields, in ponds, waterways and coasts, and on pastures and lands. Through *in situ* conservation, farmers, fishers and pastoralists and indigenous peoples and local communities (IPLCs) are not only maintaining diversity but actually increasing it, while retaining control of seeds and agricultural production.

"In situ conservation directly addresses all three pillars of the CBD: conservation, sustainable use, and equity".

I no longer worry about the possibility of crop failure because I know the quality and the characteristics of the varieties I plant.

Farmers working with USC Canada's Seeds of Survival program in Honduras, Ethiopia and Nepal have developed a

wide range of beans, corn, wheat, sorghum, millet, and rice varieties, on-farm. These varieties are bred by farmer in their own research teams, using

participatory breeding and selection methodologies, and building on their own knowledge and criteria. These criteria include: the ability to withstand harsher climate conditions – either hotter or drier growing seasons -- higher nutrition content, cultural value, and of course higher yields.

If my community should ever experience crop failure, I will still feel secure because I have the capacity to choose, develop, and produce good quality seeds.

They are conserved in seed and gene banks that are managed by farmer communities, keeping seeds in farmers' hands.

SEARICE's experience shows that farmers actually rejected 95% of the varieties that were distributed to them. When given the chance and the skills to make their own choices based on their own preferences, farmers in the Philippines, Vietnam, Bhutan, Lao PDR, Thailand and Cambodia have shown remarkable capacity to enrich genetic resources; at the same time they have re-established their control over production processes.

The Interdependence of Food Sovereignty and ICCAs

Indigenous peoples and local communities play a crucial role in global food security and realising food sovereignty. For millennia, they have lived in, and carefully husbanded landscapes and seascapes, to which their livelihoods are intricately dependent. They have developed and have co-evolved with countless species and varieties that sustain their food systems and the environment in which they live. In many regions, these practices still survive and in some cases are being revived, with much of the motivation coming from the need for claiming, and obtaining sovereignty over their food systems. Territories and areas conserved by indigenous peoples and local communities (ICCAs) are repositories of beliefs and practices intimately linking people with their natural and husbanded surrounds. Recognised by the CBD in its Programme of Work on Protected Areas (PoWPA) as 'indigenous and community conserved areas' (ICCAs), they are crucial to food sovereignty for the following reasons:

- Conservation of agricultural/ horticultural/ livestock/ aquatic biodiversity;
- conservation of wild relatives of crops and livestock;
- linkages in the landscape between 'wild' and 'domesticated' biodiversity including pollination, genetic exchange etc.;
- access to 'wild' foods from forests, wetlands, marine areas, etc.;
- and access to natural medicines.

The ICCA Consortium hopes World Food Sovereignty Day will highlight the crucial role indigenous peoples and local communities play in both enhancing and conserving biodiversity, whilst ensuring global food security and sovereignty.

For more information on ICCAs, visit www.iccaconsortium.org

Peasants Feed the World and Cool the Planet

Agrofuels, GMOs and Synthetic Biology threaten Biodiversity and will Increase Hunger

La Via Campesina

On this World Food Sovereignty Day, the global peasants movement for food sovereignty - La Via Campesina - is concerned that the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) is heading in the wrong direction. It encourages the pricing and commodification of Nature, and technological fixes that worsen hunger and environmental degradation. A billion people are living with hunger, and the loss of agricultural biodiversity, and false solutions such as agrofuels and other techno-fixes will worsen the crisis.

Agrofuels divert crops from food to fuel, threaten biodiversity, and negatively impact small farmers and local communities. The United Nations Environment Program (UNEP) reports that the recent food crisis resulted in a “50–200% increase in selected commodity prices, drove 110 million people into poverty, and added 44 million more to the ranks of the undernourished.” UNEP identified a number of key causes: Speculation in food stocks, extreme weather, growth in agrofuel production, high oil prices and low cereal stocks. In August this year, the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) called on the US to suspend its biofuel production in order to avoid a food crisis and serious consequences for the global food supply. The literature that shows that agrofuels do not live up to the promise of mitigating climate change is vast. There is also evidence to show that producing agrofuels has led to land grabbing, deforestation, and large industrial monocultures

Despite this evidence, the CBD has just adopted the decision on Biofuels and Biodiversity, stating that “Acknowledging also the potential for biofuel technologies to make a positive contribution to mitigating climate change, another of the main drivers of biodiversity loss, and generating additional income, especially in rural areas.” The reality is of course quite different.

La Via Campesina calls on Parties to the CBD to stop the march towards techno-fixes. We reiterate our call to ban all genetically modified organisms (GMOs), maintain and strengthen the moratorium and move to a ban on geo-engineering and terminator technology. We also call for an immediate ban on synthetic biology technology. Here at COP11, we support some developing countries calling for an urgent moratorium on the environmental release and commercial use of synthetic biology.

Synthetic biology is the next wave of biotechnology that threatens food sovereignty, farmers’ rights, and agricultural biodiversity. No longer is industry limited to using only genes found in nature to genetically modify plants: With synthetic biology, new genes and traits could be developed on a computer to create novel organisms and novel plants that have never existed before. Such organisms could contaminate our crop plants and threaten the health of our ecosystems. Synthetic biology can also lead to a major biomass-grab to feed these synthetic organisms so that they may produce oils, industrial chemicals, and plastics. Already DuPont is producing Sorona bioplastic, a spandex-like fibre used for carpets, clothing and car parts.

La Via Campesina promotes food sovereignty to feed the world and address climate change. Sustainable peasant agriculture is at the heart of feeding the people with healthy, locally produced food. For food sovereignty to work we need genuine agrarian reform, which changes the system and farmer relations with resources. Agro-ecology, backed by UN Special report “Agro-ecology and the right to food” uses ecological principles in the production of food and is a truly sustainable way to feed the people and to cool the planet.

Now is the time for changing the system, changing the world. The time for ensuring global food sovereignty is now!

Small-scale Fisheries, Biodiversity and Food Sovereignty

ICSF

There will be no fish in the seas by 2040. While such alarmist predictions have been challenged on scientific and methodological grounds, there is general agreement that urgent action is needed to promote conservation and sustainable use of coastal, marine and inland fisheries resources and to restore ecosystems and depleted species. To achieve this requires recognition of the pivotal role of small-scale artisanal fishers in sustaining fisheries biodiversity and a defense of their rights.



Threats to fisheries resources are a threat to food sovereignty and to the livelihoods of millions of people who depend on fisheries for a livelihood. Fish is an important source of food. Important to note in this context is that as much as 50 per cent of all food fish originates from small-scale fisheries, and almost all fish from small-scale fisheries is used for food, catering primarily to domestic markets. Production from the sector is, in general, more directly available to diversified and remote population, at affordable prices.

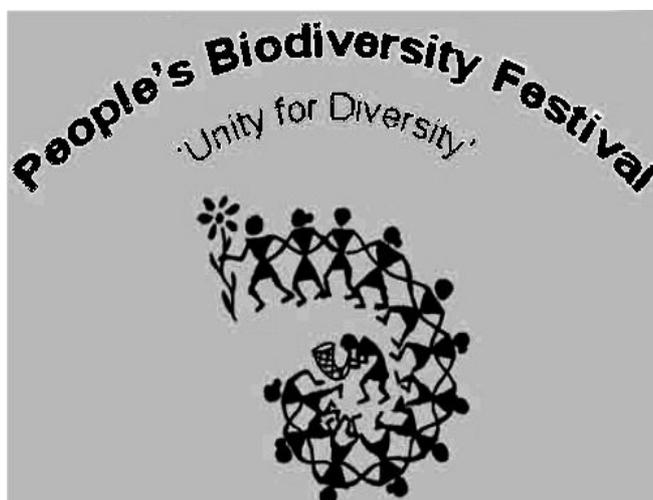
The People's Biodiversity Festival should have been far closer by, so that everyone at the COP could have experienced the richness of what was on offer, but unfortunately the cost of exhibiting in HITEX was too high. Visitors who made it to the festival had the chance to glimpse a selection of the rice, millet, corn, spice, herb and vegetable varieties India still has. This is a precious gift from the work of past breeders that we must maintain for future generations.

"We are here to raise the visibility of the humble microbe as the foundation of life and biodiversity..... Humus shares its linguistic root with two other words: Humility and Humanity - lets cultivate both." Vandana Shiva , Land Day 6

So what is the link between biodiversity, food sovereignty and small-scale fisheries? It is well known that small-scale fisheries are relatively more sustainable, given the diversity of the gear employed depending on the season and the species targeted, that minimal bycatch is generated, and that, as important, less energy is consumed per unit of fish output.

Small-scale fisheries provide the model on which to sustain fisheries and fishery dependent livelihoods into the future. The role of small-scale fisheries, from an environmental, social, economical and cultural perspective is increasingly being acknowledged. To enable small-scale fisheries to fulfil its true potential the FAO has embarked on the process of developing International Guidelines on Small-scale Fisheries. The process, as it has evolved so far, has been highly participatory.

At COP11 States need to reinforce the role of indigenous peoples and local communities (IPLCs), including fishing communities, particularly in the programme of work on marine and coastal biodiversity. It is highly unfortunate that even as States make commitment to these issues in other programmes of work, some States are reluctant to support the integration of traditional knowledge, the full and effective participation of IPLCs, and the use of social and cultural criteria in process of describing and identifying ecologically and biologically sensitive areas (EBSAs) in coastal and marine areas. Why these double standards?



India's Statements at COP11 are Doublespeak

Ashish Kothari, Kalpavriksh

India's growth fetish is leading to a massive attack on biodiversity and people's rights and livelihoods. Policies of rapid industrialization and urbanization have caused damage to millions of hectares of forests, wetlands, coasts, marine areas, and grasslands; and to the lives, cultures, and livelihoods of tens of millions of people depending on such ecosystems.

This attack has intensified in the last two decades of 'globalisation', which was initiated in 1991 by the current Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh when he was Finance Minister under the then PM Narasimha Rao.

Globalised development in India has meant:

- A systematic industrialization of the country's coasts, with existing or proposed power plants, ports, mines, sports facilities, dotting every few kilometres, resulting in displacement of traditional communities and severe environmental consequences;
- Increased rate of diversion of forestland for industrial and developmental purposes, such that 50% of such diversion since 1980 has taken place in the last one decade;
- Invasion of areas significant for agricultural biodiversity by invasive species and varieties, including GMOs;
- Creation of 800,000 tonnes of electronic waste and 2 billion tonnes of mining waste every year;
- A four-fold increase in mining activity, laying bare huge areas of forests, farmlands and beaches, while employment in mining has actually decreased by 30%.

All of the above has been facilitated by a systematic weakening of the environmental governance framework. For instance:

- Notifications under the Environment Protection Act, such as the Coastal Regulation Zone notification and the Environment Impact Assessment notification, have been repeatedly amended to allow more and bigger industrial projects in ecologically sensitive areas;
- The Forest Conservation Act has become a Forest Clearance Act, to divert lakhs of

hectares of forest for mining, industries and other such projects;

- Further, necessary laws and policies, such as those dealing with the rights of coastal communities, are being blocked or delayed.

In this context the recent proposal of the Finance Minister to mandate the National Investment Board to over-ride Union Ministries to clear development projects, is alarming and highly objectionable.

Even laws and guidelines that mandate environmental and livelihood safeguards are consistently violated. For instance, the July 2009 circular of the Ministry of Environment and Forests (MoEF) to all state governments, requiring that they finish the Forest Rights Act implementation process and seek gram sabha consent for all proposals on diversion of forest land for non-forest purposes, has almost never been implemented. Though the Ministry of Tribal Affairs has recently reiterated this requirement, there is little evidence that the MoEF is implementing it while giving forest clearance.

At the minimum, if India is serious about its commitments to the CBD and to other international agreements to its own Constitution and legal provisions for environmental protection and livelihood security, it needs to do the following:

- A moratorium on megaprojects and processes (including mining, megadams and power projects, GMOs, and others) that threaten or undermine such ecosystems and livelihoods based on them, until the second step below is undertaken.
- A comprehensive and participatory review of economic policies and planning processes, to put biodiversity conservation, and peoples' livelihoods based on biodiversity, as core values. This means a central focus on sustainable livelihoods based on responsible use of forests, marine and coastal areas, grasslands, farms, and other ecosystems.
- Genuine decentralization of political, financial, and economic governance to gram sabhas and urban ward or area sabhas, empowering communities and citizens to take decisions based on the best available knowledge.

Statement Against the recent Guidelines on Tiger Reserves

Tushar Dash, Vasundhara, and Swathi Seshadri, EQUATIONS

The recent guidelines on tourism that the National Tiger Conservation Authority (NTCA) has submitted to the Supreme Court clearly illustrate that the Government of India is not fulfilling its commitments under Programme of Work on Protected Areas (PoWPA) of the CBD. While the PoWPA calls on nations to ensure participation of local people in decisions related to identification establishment and management of Protected Areas (PAs) as well as equitable sharing of benefits and costs that arise from these PAs, the guidelines have circumvented these processes while declaring Tiger Reserves.

The issue began in October 2010 when a case was filed in Madhya Pradesh High Court asking for a ban on tourism in Tiger Reserves. The case eventually went to the Supreme Court (SC), which passed an interim order disallowing tourism in core areas of Tiger Reserves. The court order also questioned the manner in which the country's protected areas were identified, designated and governed. The Court directed all states to notify buffer areas of tiger reserves within a short span of time. This led to the hasty declaration of a few more buffer zones around many tiger reserves, without the consent of local governance institutions as mandated by law. This order generated vociferous debate among conservationists, tourism industry and forest rights activists. In their rush to notify buffer areas, state governments bypassed and violated processes laid down in the Wild Life (Protection) Act, 1972 (WLPA) and The Scheduled Tribes and Other Traditional Forest Dwellers (Recognition of Forest Rights Act), 2006 (FRA), necessary for such declaration.

In the course of various hearings, the Court directed the Ministry of Environment and Forests (MoEF) to constitute a committee with the mandate of finalising guidelines for the demarcation of core and buffer areas as well as for tourism in and around Protected Areas. Hence what began with a case about whether or not tourism should be allowed in protected areas led to issues which would have serious implications on the lives of thousands of local communities.

The Committee, quickly constituted by the MoEF, included representatives from NGOs, tourism industry, conservation groups, and government officers, attempting to bring in the concerns of all sectors.

The committee's discussions raised several issues:

- Local communities and civil society raised serious objections on the legality of how

core and buffer areas have been identified, notified and established in all tiger reserves in the absence of detailed site-specific scientific studies and local consultations as mandated by the WLPA.

- In the above context we suggested that the guidelines should include a clear statement that tourism is subject to compliance with all legal, procedural and rights related aspects of identification and designation of tiger reserves. This was not taken into consideration; the guidelines referred to existing core and buffer areas as if they are legal and final.
- The final guidelines also provide for identification and mechanisms to secure "corridor connectivity / important wildlife habitats." Any process related to such identification is outside the scope of the guidelines and are indeed not even provided for in the WLPA. Identification of corridors would impact many local communities and any such process must be arrived at in consultation with and consent of those communities (which is an obligation under the CBD)
- Very importantly, in the guidelines, the tourism industry has been unjustifiably given a special role in allocation of funds collected from tourism facilities. This is again contrary to the commitment under CBD which obligates the parties to equitably share the benefits from conservation with the local communities and include them in the decision making.

The above objections were raised by us and sent to the Minister, MoEF, but have received neither acknowledgement nor a response. We feel that it is vital that much wider consultation involving all concerned stakeholders, particularly the local communities and groups working closely with them, are carried out while drafting guidelines for identification, establishment and governance (including co-existence of people and wildlife). A separate process therefore needs to be initiated for this and given sufficient time to ensure that such consultations are indeed carried out. If the current tourism guidelines are issued just as they have been submitted to the court, they are likely to have serious impacts both on the wildlife as well as the local people.

Halt violation of human rights in forests

Kalpavriksh and Greenpeace India

A new report exposing a catalogue of environmental damage and human rights violations against tribal and other forest dwellers in the forests of Singrauli in Madhya Pradesh, that are under threat from the Indian government's massive coal expansion programme, was released at COP11. The report called for a moratorium on coal mining, highlighting the violations of constitutional rights of forest communities.

Authors of the report, 'Countering Coal', spoke to over 500 forest dwellers that are among the thousands who face forced eviction from their traditional lands to make way for the existing and proposed coal mines in the Singrauli region. The report that took over sixteen months to compile is the first to speak with such a large section of the communities affected by coal mining. The picture painted from the personal testimonies tells a harrowing story of the systematic failure of the Indian Government to protect the constitutional rights of these communities.

The scale of the destruction of the forests is unprecedented, with an estimated 1.1 million hectares under threat in the central Indian region from just 13 coal fields. If the Indian government implements its expansion programme then over 14,000 tribal people will lose their traditional homes and way of life in just one coal block of Mahan alone. There is legislation to protect these communities – the Forest Rights Act, 2006, is supposed to safeguard the rights of tribal communities, forests dwellers and the environment they live in. The report lays out the possibilities of the Act's provisions on Community Forest Rights providing legal backing to resisting displacement and dispossession. But the government is riding roughshod over the laws to protect these communities.

Ashish Kothari, founder-member of Kalpavriksh, a research and campaign organisation which have been working for over three decades on the issue of environmental and livelihood rights said: "In its blind pursuit of economic growth, the government is undermining the ecological and livelihood security of hundreds of millions of people; the Mahan coal mining process is part of this injustice. The Forest Rights Act could provide some safeguards against this, but has not been implemented."

Today at the launch of Countering Coal at the UN conference on biodiversity, Amnesty International joined a growing chorus of organisations calling for the government to respect the law and protect the human rights of the communities living in the forests. Commenting at the launch of the report Executive Director of Amnesty International India, G. Ananthapadmanabhan said:

"The Countering Coal report provides evidence to show that the Indian government and several state governments have violated the Forest Rights law and shown a lack of respect for the rights of local communities. We have heard directly from the community how coal mining projects can exclude them from participating in decisions that fundamentally affect their lives. The Indian government has a duty to respect, protect and fulfill human rights. It must obtain the free, prior and informed consent of Adivasi communities before taking any decision that can affect their lives and livelihoods. Businesses too have responsibilities to strive to avoid infringing people's rights, which apparently isn't the case here."

Greenpeace India has been at the forefront of challenging India's mad dash for coal power at the cost of its forest people and wildlife. Greenpeace India's Executive Director, Samit Aich said

"Today the Indian Government has two faces. The first face is a compassionate and caring one. It is a face that says it supports protecting the biodiversity of the planet. It is the face they are presenting to the international delegates at the COP in Hyderabad.

For the second face, you just have to travel a few hundred miles from Hyderabad to the forests of Singrauli, Madhya Pradesh the coal capital of India, to see the realities of their policies. It is the mass destruction of the forests, the forced removal of tribal people that is the true face of this government.

This report is clear and unequivocal in its findings – the Indian government is presiding over one of the largest acts of human rights abuses in our history. That is shameful stain on the integrity of the hosts of the 2012 UN conference on biodiversity."

The report is available at:

www.greenpeace.org/india/Global/india/report/Countering-coal.pdf



And the nominees for the prestigious Dodo Awards are....

Brazil: for trying to sabotage a draft ADVICE on safeguards for Biodiversity for the REDD mechanism; and for refusing to recognize the importance of full and effective participation of Indigenous Peoples and local communities in the EBSA process.

Canada: for breaching the moratorium on ocean fertilization and geoengineering adopted by CBD in 2008 and 2010, when they "ignored" a huge ocean fertilization, event recently carried out off their Pacific coast; for blocking on Finance; for their strong stance on "CBD not being a food venue" so that impacts of biofuel expansion on food should not be considered, and, furthermore, their "threat" that if others proposed amendments to the biofuels text, they would also propose amendments including deleting all recommendations regarding socio-economic issues; for refusing to recognize the importance of full and effective participation of Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities in the EBSA process; and for trying to stop the CBD taking up Synthetic Biology as a new and emerging issue.

China: for consistently trying to block the EBSA process; for denying some developing countries of the opportunity to highlight the importance of marine areas in their national waters; and above all, for blocking a process to which all CBD Parties have agreed upon 4 years ago.

Paraguay: for liberating GM cotton that violates the Cartagena Protocol; and in retrospect for sending a multi-headed delegation to the MOP to block any progress on for example the socio-economic aspects of GMOs.

UK: for blocking all attempts in the EU and the CBD to adopt a precautionary approach to synthetic biology and geoengineering; and for facilitating the monetisation and sale of biodiversity in order to enable the continuation of business as usual. UK is currently one of the main supporters and promoters of 'biodiversity offsets' (BBOP) one of the many 'innovative' ways by which the developed countries refuse to meet with their mandatory contributions to the CBD budget, denying the ecological debt, the basis of the CBD itself.

'Dodo Awards' to be presented to Governments at the Convention on Biological Diversity: 17th Oct 2012

Civil society organizations at the 11th Conference of the Parties (COP11) to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) hereby announce the nominations of the prestigious **Dodo Awards** as the Convention begins its second week of negotiations. The Awards, named after the Dodo Bird, the quintessential symbol of biodiversity loss, signify governments' failure to evolve.

The CBD Alliance, a global network of civil society organizations involved in the CBD will announce the '*Dodos of COP11*' tomorrow, mainly based due to their obstructive behaviour during this meeting...

Watch this space tomorrow

CBD Alliance would like to thank Swedbio for their continued and ongoing support. We would also like to thank Christensen Funds for supporting the participation of CBD Alliance candidates at the COP11.