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Submissions are welcome from all civil society groups.

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Tourism will become an issue at COP 12, but safeguards are needed

Helmut Röscheisen, German League for Nature and Environment

Working Group II will discuss the cooperation with international organizations, other conventions and initiatives as CRP.7. In section F of this document the collaboration on biodiversity and tourism development is mentioned in several paragraphs. It's time to clarify the scope of the so called *sustainable tourism* within CBD as the pressure from tourism to biodiversity is enormous. Although CBD guidelines on Tourism have been already been criticized in ECO 44(2) last week, there is a lot of effort behind them and they can be used for a further and comprehensive development.

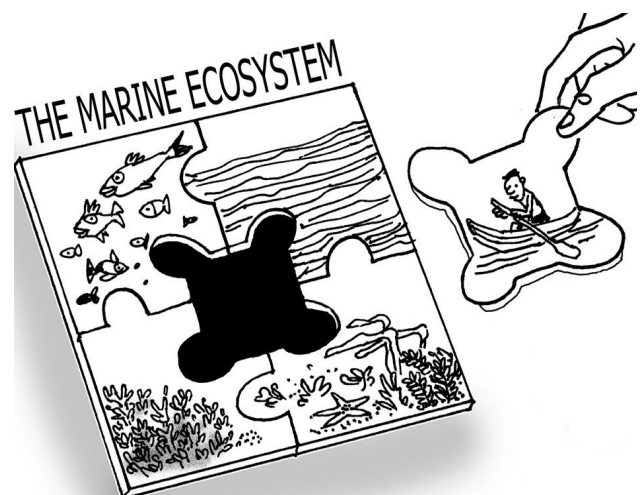
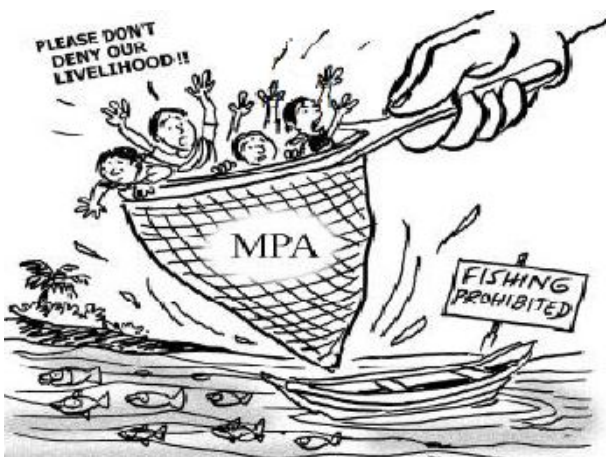
Paragraph 56 in section F reads as follows: "Decides to review the application of the Guidelines on Biodiversity and Tourism Development at its twelfth meeting, in order to improve, inter alia, the provision of updated and innovative tools and instruments on sustainable tourism management to Parties and interested stakeholders and enhance their contribution to the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020."

As Third World Network proposed earlier there should be an amendment at the end of this paragraph to establish a safeguard as follows: "regarding point 16 of the Berlin Declaration on Sustainable Tourism as a baseline." The Berlin Declaration on Sustainable Tourism (1997) was signed by UNEP, GEF, the CBD secretariat and several countries. Point 16 states: "Tourism should be restricted, and where necessary prevented, in ecologically and culturally sensitive areas." I do hope that a party will take the proposed amendment.

No fishing communities = No fish, no biodiversity!

Getting it wrong...

... or getting it right?



More Doublespeak

An analysis of the Indian Prime Minister's Address

Kalpavriksh

The Indian Prime Minister's address on Tuesday was a classic case of doublespeak. Listening to his assertions regarding India's commitment to conservation and livelihoods, one would think the country is in the right hands. Nothing can be farther from the truth. If the PM is serious about what he said, he needs to make fundamental changes to the government's economic policies and governance structures.

What the PM said: "We believe that the treasure trove of traditional knowledge should be used for the benefit of all humankind rather than for private profit. We will continue to work to strengthen our institutions to record this knowledge, to value its science and to provide benefits to its custodians."

What the government does: Displaces and dispossesses forest-dwelling adivasis, fishers on our coasts, pastoralists, and other holders of traditional knowledge, by taking away their lands and resources for corporate profit, thereby destroying the basis of traditional knowledge.

What the government also does: Drags its feet in amending the Biological Diversity Act to empower communities in protecting their natural resources and traditional practices, and fails to implement the provision of the Act that mandates protection of such knowledge. The Traditional Knowledge Digital Library that the PM mentioned with pride, is a poor substitute for living, evolving knowledge that only local communities possess.

What the PM said: "We have legislated a Forest Rights Act that lends legal sanctity to the rights of forest dwellers, who are often the best friends of the biodiversity that resides in these magnificent forests."

What the government does: Dithers in implementing the Forest Rights Act (FRA), with thousands of community rights claims pending across the country; worse, continues to violate the FRA by clearing projects for forest land diversion for mining, dams, etc, without first recognizing forest-dwellers rights and without seeking gram sabha consent.

What the government also does: Displaces forest-dwellers from tiger reserves in complete violation of the FRA.

What the PM said: "We will have to adopt similarly innovative approaches to deal with the issue of protecting fishermen's livelihoods."

What the government does: Approves hundreds of power projects, ports, chemical industries, tourism complexes, and other projects which are destroying coastal and marine biodiversity, and the livelihoods of fisher communities.

What the government also does: Shelves a proposal for fishing community rights legislation made in 2010 by the Minister for Environment and Forests.

What the PM said: "we need to build a movement to conserve traditional varieties of crops."

What the government does: Continue to push a model of agriculture based on large-scale monoculture, chemicals, and dependence of farmers on corporations, including through approving genetically modified seeds like Bt Cotton.

This and other cases of hypocrisy and doublespeak are characteristic of India's decision-makers, and will remain so until the blind pursuit of economic growth 'at all costs' is changed to ecologically sustainable and socially equitable models of human well-being. Thousands of communities across India are demonstrating that such models are practical and achievable. Yet even the Hyderabad Pledge that he has generously announced is aimed at strengthening "national and state-level mechanisms" ... not for promoting decentralised, community-based approaches.

Nevertheless, civil society and community organization groups will demand that the Prime Minister stands by his commitments in today's address, towards stronger rights for fisher communities, conservation of traditional seeds, promotion of new models of conservation of biodiversity, and other steps necessary to implement India's commitments under the CBD.

Busy Bee Award

The Global Youth Biodiversity Network (GYBN) is happy to present Busy Bee Awards to a Party and a Region that have made proactive contributions within the COP11 negotiations over the past two weeks. The winners have shown constructive behaviour in working groups and have strived for ambitious outcomes.

The **African Group** is the winner for their contribution in the negotiations on resource mobilisation. **Gabon** gets the award for the engagement of civil society groups "including youth".

We encourage all Parties and Regional Groups to follow the path demonstrated by the winners of the Busy Bee Awards.

Countries must retain the values of the citizens they represent and fight for the future of biodiversity.

Bravo to our winners!