



ENVIRONMENT HOUSE

NEWS

Number 4
January 2001

A periodic update on the Geneva Environment Network and the International Environment House, Geneva

Preparing for Rio+10

By Frits Schlingemann, Director, United Nations Environment Programme/Regional Office for Europe

The review conference in 2002, ten years after the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED) in Rio de Janeiro, offers Governments and others the opportunity to not only review the progress made in the implementation of Agenda 21, but also assess the adequacy of the institutions involved and remove major obstacles for sustainable development.

It is already agreed that Rio+10 must focus on ways and means to address the abject poverty in which the vast majority of the world's population lives. Its message must include that national environmental management practices and international co-operation in the field of the environment should be made conducive to and assist in meeting poverty alleviation needs. New legal instruments, economic incentives, and awareness raising tools should be developed and applied with a view to service the full range of interrelated social, economic and environmental goals designed to ban poverty out of our daily lives.

A major challenge in the environmental field is ensuring that the policies we agree on and the commitments we make, are followed through. Multilateral Environmental Agreements are in need of better enforcement and compliance regimes. Non-compliance should be made subject to procedures, which can establish liability for, and compensation of damage occurred. Dispute settlement should be made mandatory and should be institutionalised.

Several starts of creating this ambitious network as a counterpart of the arrangements under the World Trade regime have been made. A Protocol on Liability and Compensation to the Basel Convention on the Transboundary Movement of Hazardous Wastes has been adopted

and a similar Protocol to the ECE Industrial Accidents Convention has been proposed. Guidance for improving enforcement and compliance and better equipped regimes to deal with environmental crimes, are subject of discussion in an increasing number of fora, while a number of voluntary dispute settlement arrangements, including an Office for a global environmental ombudsman, are in the making or in place. It would be a major breakthrough if at Rio+10 an overall global overarching regime could be agreed upon.

In the institutional field the arrangements called upon or created by or following the UNCED will have to be scrutinized on their adequacy and effectiveness. Concerns have been expressed as to the proliferation and geographic spreading of global environmental conventions and institutions. The need and calls for finding ways and means to reduce and simplify the burden of governance, improve co-operation and co-ordination, and ultimately regroup and cluster the arrangements in something like a World Environment Authority, are growing by the day. Rio + 10 may wish to recognise these calls and express an opinion on principle.

Already in the preparation phase of Rio+10 there is a unanimous call for the strengthening of UNEP and making its financial base secure and predictable. The entirely voluntary system of funding the organization, its core staff and activities has become more and more cumbersome throughout the years. Work programmes and their budgets are welcomed and approved but every the gap between the

Contents

- 1 **Preparing for Rio+10**
- 2 **Environmental management: an investment in peace**
- 4 **IUCN World Conservation Congress 2000 meets in Amman**
- 6 **Conserving biodiversity through BIOTRADE**
- 7 **UNEP promotes European biodiversity**
- 8 **Environment-related meetings and events in the Geneva area**



approved budget and voluntary contributions provided is growing steadily. Governments agree on what is needed, applaud UNEP for its views and plans, but fail to give the organization the financial base to ensure adequate implementation. An agreed system of contributions which ensures full funding of UNEP's work programme once it is approved, is needed. Once adopted, it will allow the organization to properly discharge its mandate and work in preparing for Rio+10 and implementing the environment

related part of its follow-up.

How is and should Europe prepare for Rio+10. Europe has its Environment for Europe process to periodically review the state of the environment and discuss and agree on trends and priorities. The next Conference is scheduled for May 2003 in Kiev, Ukraine. Undoubtedly the preparatory work and the agenda for Kiev 2003 bear relevance to Rio+10. The agenda already contains an ambitious list of assessment studies, reviews and proposed legal instruments. However,

at the same time, there is the need for Europe to discuss and agree on global environmental imperatives. What is more, these imperatives need to be reviewed and matched by a region wide economic and social analysis. The ECE Department on Environment and Human Settlements and UNEP's Regional Office for Europe are jointly preparing for these reviews to take place in September 2001. NGO and private sector events and opinions will be integrated as additional food for the intergovernmental dialogue.

Environmental management – an investment in peace

by Mark Halle, International Institute for Sustainable Development

Geneva's International Environment House is home to a range of environmental organizations that are of various descriptions but share the common aim of promoting sustainable development.

Some tenants, such as WSP-International (formerly the War-Torn Societies Programme), the UNDP Disaster Preparedness Unit and the UNEP Balkans Task Force, are seemingly harder to place. Are these misfits in Geneva's Green Headquarter, relics from the days of the Geneva Executive Center? A current initiative by the International Institute for Sustainable Development (IISD) – whose European office is located in the House – suggests that the fit may actually be a good one.

There is an emerging consensus that security from disaster and conflict is fundamental to environmental protection. As the secretariat for an international task force that has been examining the links between environmental management, conflict and disaster, IISD has twice brought leading experts in this field to the Environment House to draw out the implications of this fact for the sustainable development movement.

IISD is currently expanding the work of its Task Force on Environment and Security and, in so doing, is discussing collaboration with fellow tenants. What is Environment and Security, and what new approaches

does it offer for facing our traditional challenges?

The notion that there is a link between environment and security is not a new one. After all, in a world of dwindling natural resources, of growing populations and expanding consumption, the conditions for increased competition and even conflict are ever present. Resource degradation is an important contributor to movements of refugees and displaced people, itself an ingredient of ever more conflicts.

But the real interest in Environment and Security came with the ending of the Cold War. Faced with the threatened outbreak of peace, many in the defence community sought to justify military spending by redefining the notion of security – away from the notion of secure frontiers and towards a new notion of the stability and resilience of societies and communities. Others saw the chance of a *peace dividend*, the opportunity to use military resources (budgetary, but also satellite imagery, intelligence resources, infrastructure, and equipment) for broader and more constructive social purposes. Soldiers could be redeployed to replant forests, terrace steep slopes, build flood control dikes or even assist the poor.

This redefinition of security spread, to the point where a new notion of human security came to the forefront. Human security involved freedom from want, violence and discrimina-

tion, and access to education, health care, economic opportunity. In short, human security merged with the notion of development.

IISD entered the field with a very focused set of interests. We began with the observation that development assistance funding has steadily sunk since 1992, whereas funding for humanitarian emergencies has steadily grown and expenditures on peace-keeping have sky-rocketed. If it is possible to demonstrate a solid link between environmental degradation on the one hand, and an increase in social tension and conflict on the other, the ground would be laid to argue for investing in environmental management as a means of preventing, or at least minimizing, disasters and avoiding the dramatic outlay of funding that peace-keeping requires.

IISD chose to confine itself to a specific scope. We have chosen not to focus on the concerns of the defence and intelligence communities, nor on the positive roles that can sometimes be played by the military. At the same time, we have resisted the temptation to define security as including anything that contributes to human well-being. Instead, we have chosen to focus, in the first instance, on the link between the management of living natural resources and life-support systems (soil, water, etc.) and conflict. We have looked both at the way in which envi-



NatureNotes

Winter companions

Not all of our garden birds go south in winter, a fact that becomes abundantly clear if you live near a city park or have a small garden with a feeding table or box supplied with plenty of seeds, nuts and tallow.

Finches as a group are, like the tits, among the most common garden birds. They have stout and sometimes enormous beaks for eating seeds.

An extremely widespread and common bird, the chaffinch *Fringilla coelebs* (top) abounds in woods, gardens, orchards and farmland. It has a grey head, chestnut back, pinkish belly and white wingbar and shoulder patch.

In favourable winters your garden may be visited by a flock of bramblings *Fringilla montifringilla*. The males are striking black, grey and white birds with orange breasts, females similar but duller. Their favourite food is beech nuts but they also like other nuts, grains, berries.



chaffinch



brambling

ronmental degradation contributes to conflict, and at how environmental management can dissipate social tension and turn competition into positive channels. We have deliberately sought to identify and understand those factors that determine why and how a situation with all the ingredients for conflict can in fact lead to cooperative solutions, and especially to identify the traditional mechanisms for managing resource-based conflicts.

Our work has been conducted under the supervision of a Task Force chaired by Ambassador Mohamed Sahnoun, Special Representative of the UN Secretary General in relation to conflicts in Africa. Other members have included academics and representatives of NGOs and the private sector. Eight case studies have been selected and developed, representing a range of geographical areas, issues, and outcomes. The eight were presented at the World Conservation Congress of the World Conservation Union (IUCN) in Amman, in October 2000, and will now be published as a book.

One case study traced the origins of the Rwanda genocide, and mapped the relationship between those parts of the country under the most severe environmental stress, and the places

where the worst violence broke out. The relationship was direct and compelling. Another case study examined the famous Estai case – the brief and surprising armed skirmish between Canada and Spain over the turbot fishery in the Atlantic. A third looked at the link between environmental management and the impact of Hurricane Mitch, which devastated Central America in 1998. Others examined the highly topical land situation in Zimbabwe, the forest fires of Indonesia, the volatile development situation in the North-West Frontier Province of Pakistan, uranium mining in Australia's Northern Territory, and the impact of war on biodiversity.

This first phase has pointed to two areas for further work, both of which IISD is now developing. The first is a closer look at environment and natural disasters, and particularly the extent to which sound management of resources can reduce the vulnerability of communities to extreme natural phenomena. This would link very closely with some of the work being carried out in the Geneva Environment House on disaster prevention and preparedness. The second, related to the first, would be to identify private sector interests in environmental management as a

way of reducing risk. This is of particular concern to the insurance and reinsurance communities, but is of general concern to all investors in development. Both of these projects will be conducted with the same Task Force, and will be based on the development of case studies.

Both the approach and the development of case studies has attracted the attention of the University for Peace. IISD has entered into discussion with Upeace with the idea of developing course materials on various aspects of environment and security, to be offered both on the Upeace campus in Costa Rica, and in partner institutions around the world.

We have always known that environment is an inextricable part of development. It is now becoming clear that it is an integral part of disaster mitigation and conflict prevention. The scope for cooperation between the respective communities is enormous and just beginning to be mapped. The International Environment House provides an ideal hub from which to start.

For more information, contact: Mark Halle (mark.halle@iprolink.ch) or Jason Switzer (jswitzer@ictsd.ch), IISD-Geneva



IUCN World Conservation Congress 2000 meets in Amman

By Maritta von Bieberstein Koch-Weser, Director General, World Conservation Union (IUCN)

The IUCN World Conservation Congress, held in Amman, Jordan, between 4 and 11 October 2000, reported that the loss of biological species has assumed dramatic speed and magnitude as more species move into the critically endangered category or go extinct. Overall at least 11,000 species are threatened with extinction according to IUCN's Species Survival Commission (see www.redlist.org). Scientists believe that hundreds of thousands more are at risk.

The world's largest environmental gathering in the year 2000 sought ways to fight the extinction crisis, now threatening future human welfare. The Congress concluded its eight-day session with the approval of an ambitious new IUCN Action Plan and Programme, to combat the

intertwined problems of species loss and ecosystem integrity.

Delegates from 143 countries in IUCN's unique partnership between government and civil society, together with representatives from its network of 10,000 scientific experts from 181 countries, agreed on an innovative

Causes for environmental degradation

The loss of species is a form of environmental degradation mankind can never mend again. Climate change threatens to drive this loss even faster. Participants emphasized that unless these two threats are addressed vigorously now, a future world population, which will reach eight billion in the next quarter century, will suffer misery, disease, conflict and poverty beyond anything we know today.

The extinction of species and the loss of habitats are inseparable.

According to IUCN's President Yolanda Kakabadse, "Species disappear as the ecosystems they live in are destroyed. Desertification is accelerating through over-consumption of water and land, forests are disappearing through logging and development activities – 200 million hectares, an area twice the size of South Africa, have been lost over the past 15 years – and seas are seriously over-fished and increasingly polluted."

Participants highlighted diverse driving forces behind the degradation of the environment – population growth, abject poverty as well as wealth, greed and the loss of indigenous knowledge systems. Together they contribute to an escalation of resource exploitation and spiralling environmental destruction.

"We are losing some of our only planet's resources forever, because we do not sufficiently assist the poor of this world. And yet, we have far greater riches and more global food supplies than any generation before us," said Mr. Maurice Strong, Secretary General of the 1992 Rio Earth Summit, in his opening speech.

"Poverty must not be overlooked in conservation: the poor will not conserve species at the expense of their lives," said the Hon. Dr. Kezimbira

"We have the knowledge, technology and human resources to avert the extinction crisis. What is missing is the political commitment to use them and to invest in them in the interest of future generations. No loss of species is acceptable to IUCN – no species should go extinct."

– Maritta von Bieberstein Koch-Weser

programme of action across countries and in the oceans, to save terrestrial and marine ecosystems and help stem the rising tide of extinction.

NatureNotes

Nuthatches *Sitta europaea* will visit feeding tables, especially for sunflower seeds. But they are usually seen hopping up and down tree trunks, wedging nuts in cracks in the bark where they hack them open with their strong bills: hence their name, 'nut-hack'.



great spotted woodpecker

nuthatch



If you put out a bowl of seed you might be lucky enough to attract a great spotted woodpecker *Dendrocopos major*, known from similar black and white species by the bright red patch under its tail (the male also has a red crown).



NatureNotes

Bullies and acrobats

Tits are small, agile birds of the family Paridae, most of which live in woodlands. They are easily attracted to our gardens, however, since they are quite fearless for their size.

The great tit *Parus major* (top) is famed among ornithologists for its enormous variety of calls and phrases. The largest of the tits, this common garden visitor is something of a bully. It is recognized by its black and white head, and its yellow belly with a black stripe.

The blue tit *Parus caeruleus* is known by its blue cap, wings and tail, yellow underparts and eye stripe. Mainly a woodland bird, it also frequents garden birdfeeders where it amuses onlookers with its lively acrobatics.

Another tit often seen in our region is the marsh tit *Parus palustris*, recognizable by its black crown. It is nearly indistinguishable from the less common willow tits *Parus montanus*.



great tit



blue tit



marsh tit

Miyingo, Minister of State for Environment of Uganda. "Africa must be assisted to fully identify and know its biodiversity and be able to earn benefits from it with dividends flowing right back to the poor. IUCN can lead that noble cause."

Other prominent figures who spoke at the Congress and associated events included Her Majesty Queen Noor of Jordan; Mohammed Halaikah, Deputy Prime Minister of Jordan, Klaus Toepfer, UNEP Executive Director; Maurice Strong, Chairman of the Earth Council; Klaus Schwab, President of the World Economic Forum; José Maria Figueras Olson, former President of Costa Rica; Elizabeth Odio, Vice-President of Costa Rica; Maureen Marlowe, Director of Reuters Foundation; Yasuo Goto, Chairman Emeritus of Keidanren (the Japanese Chamber of Commerce); and Ralph Petersen, CEO of CH2M-Hill. The Congress was also attended by 13 ministers from several IUCN member countries.

Programmes and resolutions adopted

Responding to the challenges ahead, governments and civil society organizations adopted a new Programme Framework together with

over 100 specific resolutions that will shape IUCN's environmental agenda for the years to come. The new Programme committed the Union to seven Key Result Areas spanning a wide range of actions from ecosystem management and restoration to information management and better governance. The resolutions address issues such as:

- *Linking climate change to biodiversity* to ensure that reforestation activities designed to prevent global warming also give due consideration to critical biodiversity and habitat issues;
- Initiating a Global Theme Programme on the Conservation and Management of Arid and Semi-Arid Lands, which will promote co-operation of IUCN's membership with the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification;
- Developing *comprehensive approaches to conservation of marine ecosystems*, including species-specific measures such as controlling over-fishing, and reducing the loss of seabirds and turtles to long-line fishing;
- Identifying *protection measures for specific ecosystems*, such as Mountains, Temperate and Boreal forests (especially in Russia), and for the Arctic and Antarctic, the cradle of rivers in Asia,

the Parana River, Mesoamerican Biological Corridor, the Mekong basin, the Baltic Sea, the Guyana Shield, and others;

- Identifying *protection measures for individual species*, such as tigers, black rhinos, marine turtles, Tibetan antelopes, Dugong, and several bird species, including the Okinawa Woodpecker, the Okinawa Rail – and of particular interest to the Middle East host region – the Houbara Bustard and the Saker Falcon;
- Establishing guidelines for the *prevention of biodiversity loss caused by invasive alien species*;
- *Addressing corruption*, especially in the forest sector, by promoting good governance, transparency, democratic processes, human rights and other fundamental components of good environmental stewardship;
- Understanding the relationship between *security and environmental degradation*, including conflict avoidance and improved international co-operation to prevent and mitigate the impact of natural disasters;
- Establishing a *task force on large dams, people and the environment*; and
- Improving distribution of real-time *environmental information* through the use of cutting edge technology.



Conserving biodiversity through BIOTRADE

By Sálvano Briceño, Rafael Sánchez and Rik Kutsch Lojenga, BIOTRADE Initiative, United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD)

Many developing countries are endowed with rich and diverse forest and marine biodiversity resources. These resources provide the basis for a wide range of products and services, such as nuts, fruits, perfumes, natural dyes, oils, medicinal plants, biochemical compounds, ecotourism, watershed protection and carbon sequestration. Many of these products are extracted by local populations to make a living, while others have served as an important source of innovation for the pharmaceutical, biotechnology and cosmetic industries.

The problem is that many countries rich in natural resources are losing their biodiversity at alarming rates. Well-known examples include damage to coral reefs due to dynamite fishing and destruction of tropical forests through slash-and-burn practices, excessive commercial logging and clearing of natural habitats for agriculture and urban expansion. The search for short-term economic gains, population growth, and local poverty are at the root of this biodiversity loss.

The challenge is to make the use of biological resources sustainable in order to support both development and nature conservation. This requires generating tangible economic benefits for people whose livelihoods depend on biodiversity. One of the ways to achieve this is to take advantage of the new investment and trade opportunities that are emerging for biodiversity-based products and services. Interest in these products is on the rise because of the emerging biotechnology industry, the search by industry for recyclable products, and shifts in consumer behaviour in developed and developing countries.

If developing countries are able to seize these opportunities, biodiversity could be turned into an engine for growth and sustainable development. Developing countries are therefore focusing on:

- developing legal and policy frameworks for the sustainable use of biodiversity;
- acquiring technical and entrepreneurial capabilities;

- obtaining market information and market access; and
- developing biodiversity conservation schemes.

In most instances, a lack of capacity in several or all of these areas will result in the provision of low value-added products and services that only marginally benefit the country, its biodiversity and local populations.

BIOTRADE Initiative

The BIOTRADE Initiative was launched in 1996 by the Geneva-based United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) with the objective of stimulating trade and investment in biological resources and thus promoting sustainable development. This is in line with the objectives of the 1992 Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), which are the conservation of biological diversity; sustainable use of its components; and fair and equitable sharing of the benefits arising from the utilization of genetic resources.

BIOTRADE enhances the capability of developing countries to produce value-added products and services from biodiversity for both domestic and international markets. It is an integrated programme consisting of three complementary components: country programmes, policy development and trade facilitation, and Internet services (www.biotrade.org).

The BIOTRADE country programmes are at the centre of BIOTRADE. They identify opportunities and constraints for the sustainable development of biodiversity resources in each country, focusing on bio-business development, bio-partnerships, and incentives for conservation, sustainable use and benefit-sharing. Country programmes are being developed in Colombia, Ecuador and Peru, managed by national focal points.

NatureNotes

Everyone knows the house sparrow *Passer domesticus*, flocks of which may crowd into your bushes or hedges. But you may not know that this is the most widespread introduced species of bird, having colonized more than two-thirds of the world's land surface. Note the patch of grey on their head.

A second species of sparrow common to our gardens (but rare in Britain) is the tree sparrow *Parus montanus*. The tree sparrow's head is brown instead of grey and it has a distinctive dark spot on its cheek.

house sparrow



tree sparrow





Partnerships

BIOTRADE collaborates with the private sector, government agencies, local and indigenous communities, and other relevant actors. To this end, BIOTRADE is developing concrete and innovative partnerships, such as:

Poverty and Environment in Amazonia (POEMA) - UNCTAD and the non-governmental organization POEMA (Belem, Brazil), are developing the Programme Bolsa Amazonia. The programme helps local communities seize bio-business opportunities for natural products of the Amazonian region by forging links with the private sector. Private organizations, such as Mercedes Benz, Henkel, the National Economic and Social Development Bank (BNDES) and the Amazon Bank (BASA), as well as public institutions, are involved in the project.

Bioamazonia (São Paulo, Brazil) is a semi-governmental organization that helps to implement the Brazilian Programme of Molecular Ecology (PROBEM). This government programme aims at developing bio-industries and promoting the sustainable use of biodiversity, while conserving biodiversity and improving the well-being of local populations. UNCTAD collaborates with Bioamazonia, A2R, a Brazilian Asset Management Company, and the Inter-American Development Bank (IADB) in establishing the Amazon Biodiversity Permanent Fund. This fund is intended to finance R&D in biotechnology and assure benefit-sharing within the context of PROBEM.

Humboldt Institute (Villa de Leyva, Colombia) - The first BIOTRADE country programme was started in Colombia in 1999 and coordinated by the Alexander von Humboldt Institute. The programme, called "Biocomercio Sostenible", is developing work along different lines: networking, information systems, business development, market information, investment, and financial mechanisms. A number of demonstration projects that unite community and private sector efforts are being developed in the areas of medicinal plants and ecotourism.

For more information, contact the BIOTRADE Initiative at +41-22-9175607 / 20 / 76, fax +4-122-9170044, email: biotrade@unctad.org, or see: www.biotrade.org

NatureNotes

With its red face and breast, the robin *Erithacus rubecula* makes up for its small size by being very aggressive with other birds. Although known for being quite tame in Britain, in our region this small thrush tends to be shy and solitary.



UNEP promotes European biodiversity

By Alla Metelitsa, Programme Officer, United Nations Environment Programme/Regional Office for Europe

Ever since the Convention on Biological Diversity was adopted eight years ago at the Rio Earth Summit, UNEP's Regional Office for Europe (UNEP/ROE) has been working hard to facilitate its implementation in Europe. In collaboration with European Governments and non-governmental organizations, UNEP/ROE has been initiating and catalysing programmes aimed at raising awareness of the importance of European biodiversity and promoting its conservation and sustainable use.

UNEP is committed to ensuring that the global biodiversity agenda is adequately reflected in regional and national policies and programmes. To this end, UNEP has joined forces with the Council of Europe to provide the Secretariat of the Pan-European Biological and Landscape Diversity Strategy (PEBLDS), which in recent years has become more and more of an implementing arm for the Biodiversity Convention in Europe.

A particular focus of UNEP's biodiversity work in Europe is providing assistance to the countries of Central and Eastern Europe and to the Newly Independent States in order to promote new policies and instruments and to strengthen links between East and West. This assistance is provided through a Biodiversity Service that UNEP coordinates on behalf of itself and its partners IUCN - the World Conservation Union, the European Centre for Nature Conservation and the Regional Environmental Centre for Central and Eastern Europe.

The Service provides demand-driven and tailor-made assistance to help beneficiary countries implement their National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans. As a first phase of this project, UNEP and its World Conservation Monitoring Centre (UNEP/WCMC) have recently assessed the status of the Convention's implementation in six Central and Eastern European countries, namely Albania, Czech Republic, Kyrgyzstan, Lithuania, Moldova and Romania. The results of this assessment and the methodology used provided an important input into the deliberations on national reporting at the Fifth Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity, which took place last May.

Finally, on request from European Governments, UNEP/ROE served as the Secretariat of the Intergovernmental Conference "Biodiversity in Europe" (Riga, Latvia, 20-23 March 2000). It was the first time that global, European and national biodiversity policies were discussed at the Pan-European level by Governments, international organizations and non-governmental organizations.

The Riga Conference became a milestone on the way towards the enhanced implementation of the Convention in Europe. Building on the momentum of Riga, UNEP and its partners are further developing and strengthening efforts to raise the political profile of biodiversity in Europe. This will be vital to preserving Europe's natural heritage for future generations.



Environment-related meetings and events in Geneva

Date	Event (Organizer/contact)
16-19 Jan	UN/ECE Working Party on Pollution and Energy, Inland Transport Committee (UN/ECE, Tel: +41 22 917 0505, Email: info.ece@unece.org)
13-14 Feb	WTO Committee on Trade and Environment (Ms. Sabrina Shaw, WTO, Tel: +41 22 917 4444, Email: Sabrina.shaw@wto.org)
14-18 Feb	Meeting of the Interim Chemical Review Committee of the Rotterdam Convention (UNEP Chemicals, Mr E. Larsson, Tel: +41 22 917 8177, Email: elarsson@unep.ch)
26-27 Feb	UN/ECE Joint Ad Hoc Expert Group on Transport and the Environment (UN/ECE, Tel: +41 22 91705 05, Email: info.ece@unece.org)
7-9 Mar	UN/ECE Committee on Environmental Policy (UN/ECE), Tel: +41 22 917 0505, Email: info.ece@unece.org)
April (dates to be determined)	Fifth Meeting of the Council for the Pan-European Biological and Landscape Diversity Strategy (UNEP, Ms. Alla Metelitsa, Tel. +41 22 917 83 10, Email: alla.metelitsa@unep.ch)
April (dates to be determined)	Basel Convention: 18 th Session of Technical Working Group and 3 rd Session of Legal Working Group (Anne-Marie Fenner, SBC, Tel: +41 22 917 8227, Email: anne-marie.fenner@unep.ch)
6 Apr	WTO Council on TRIPs (Mr. Peter Ungphakorn, WTO, Tel: +41 22 739 5412, Email: peter.ungphakorn@wto.org)
28-30 May	UN/ECE Steering Committee of the Energy Efficiency 21 Project (UN/ECE, Tel: +41- 22- 917-44 44, Fax: +41- 22- 917-05 05, Email: info.ece@unece.org)
29 May- 1 June	Working Party on Pollution and Energy, UN/ECE Inland Transport Committee (UN/ECE, Tel: +41 22 917 4444, Fax: +41 22 917 0505, Email: info.ece@unece.org)
4-8 June	CITES Standing Committee (CITES Secretariat, Tel: +41 22 917 8139, Email: cites@unep.ch)
6 June	UN/ECE Joint Meeting on Transport and the Environment (UN/ECE, Tel: +41 22 917 4444, Fax: +41 22 917 0505, Email: info.ece@unece.org)
26-29 June	Ramsar Convention, 10 th Meeting of Scientific and Technical Review, Gland, (Ramsar Convention secretariat, Tel. +41 22 999 0170, Fax +41 22 999 0169 Email: ramsar@ramsar.org)
27-28 June	WTO Committee on Trade and Environment (Ms. Sabrina Shaw, WTO, Tel: +41 22 739 5482, Email: Sabrina.shaw@wto.org)

Environment House News

**Number 4,
January 2001**

This newsletter includes information contributed by Geneva-area organizations. It provides general information only and does not represent the official views of these organizations nor of the United Nations. Readers are welcome to reprint articles giving appropriate credit.

Published in Geneva by the United Nations Environment Programme. For a free electronic or paper subscription, or for editorial queries, please contact:

**Geneva Environment Network
International Environment
House, Geneva
11-15 chemin des Anémones
1219 Châtelaine
Switzerland.**

**Tel. +41-22-917-8505
fax +41-22-797-3464
e-mail:
info@environmenthouse.ch**

**NatureNotes: Nikki Meith,
Wendy Strahm and
Denis Landenbergue**

**This bulletin is available in
English and French and is
distributed on the Internet at:**

www.EnvironmentHouse.ch