

Summary paper of Working Group “Biodiversity and Climate Change” led by Colombia

Knowledge about biodiversity and its different uses for human activity is quite important to understand the benefit that it gives to the growth of productivity across different economic sectors, to the improvement of people’s quality of life, to the reduction of risk factors associated with specific ecosystems, and to the improvement of processes aimed at the prevention and preparedness for climate change.

Biodiversity across all its scales affects ecosystems both locally and globally. However, although its crucial role to secure the sustainability of natural resources and the development of nations is well-known, it is not always considered in the international decision-making process on economic, social and political affairs.

Biodiversity and Climate Change are two issues that have many themes. Issues related to extinction of species, deforestation, overgrazing, overfishing, carbon dioxide emissions, soil erosion are central to the study of biodiversity and climate change. For this reason, it is important to tackle exclusively, specific issues that are interesting for Latin American countries as well as EU countries. Taking into account the conclusions of the workshop *“Mitigation and adaptation measures to reduce the impact of climate change and achieving the sustainable use of biodiversity”* held in Manizales where EU-LAC representatives participated, the Biodiversity and Climate Change Working Group have identified some topics of common interest. This group sent a survey to the different EU-LAC representatives with a list of twenty topics that were identified in the workshop. The Working Group selected the following five topics that were chosen by two or more country representatives:

- Water-related problems and the way they could alter biodiversity.
- Climate change and its relation with ecosystems in the regional integrated approach including scenarios, modeling tools and assessment of climate extremes.
- Bioprospecting, considering technology and knowledge transfer and benefit sharing.
- Focus on monitoring and impact of invasive alien species and proliferative species through bi-regional networks.
- Interdisciplinary research looking for multiple and interactive factors that lead to biodiversity loss.

Besides defining topics of interest, the workshop in Manizales was also useful to set specific objectives that Working Groups should achieve. Therefore, it was agreed that WGs should:

- Identify possible cooperation activities or pilot projects to be developed in certain predefined subareas between EU and Latin American partners.
- Present and discuss European and Latin American public policies concerning the thematic field.
- Provide inputs for the SOM working groups

- Identify possible funding schemes for these new activities.
- Identify bi-regional funding for mobility schemes and doctoral programs.

Other forms of cooperation were also explored such as exchange of good practices, innovative approaches and implementation mechanisms on the areas of interest defined by the WG. This might include scenario-building and inter-linkages, institutional aspects and governance, legal and planning tools and instruments.

Finally, the workshop left country representatives with some commitments. The WG on Biodiversity and Climate Change establishes the following as next steps, taking into account cooperation possibilities with the newly created ALCUE-NET network and the possible implementation of an ERA-NET LAC project, and FP7 ENSOCIO-LA project:

- EU-CELAC Observatory on Biodiversity and Climate Change in order to identify key actors from academia, research and the private sector as well as other initiatives, forums and networks; (ii) Current bi-regional and bilateral policies and programme. (based on the activities of the ALCUENET project)Bi-regional meetings and workshops in Latin America in order to identify prioritize areas and innovative public-private partnerships. Possible participation of Microsoft and the Costa Rican government to organize a joint workshop on biodiversity and climate change.
- Input policy note of the EU-CELAC state of the art joint projects and initiatives on climate change, resource efficiency and raw materials (Based on the activities of the FP7 ENSOCIO project where Colciencias is co-leading a WP)
- Formulation of a joint strategy focused on the identification and the development of a common platform for the comparative analysis of existing good practices and information sharing in the EU-LAC region.
- Assessment of national and regional assets and capacities as possible contributions to the constitution of robust bi-regional research.
- Presentation, design and strengthening of new and existing capacity building programs (doctoral and post-doctoral exchanges) as well as student and research mobility programs in conjunction with other WGs and taking into account the EU-CELAC Higher Education Summit initiative.
- Implementation of a national-contact-point network for biodiversity and climate change.