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Press Release



'Biodiversity in Good Company' – Businesses at the World Conference on Biological Diversity in India

The loss of species, ecosystems and biological diversity is dramatic. Steady progress in international environmental policy is vital to enable global businesses to make the greatest possible contribution towards protecting biological diversity and ecosystems. From 9 – 18 October 2012 the parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), an international agreement negotiated 20 years ago, are coming together in Hyderabad, India for their eleventh conference of the parties (CoP). The 'Biodiversity in Good Company' Initiative will showcase the business sector's dedication at this event through a variety of activities.

This consortium, which brings together businesses from across business sectors, appeals to the parties of the convention to decidedly implement the 2010 Strategic Plan on Biodiversity 2011 – 2020. Only with a concerted effort will it be possible to reach a trend reversal by 2020. For their part, the member companies of the 'Biodiversity in Good Company' Initiative have taken on the responsibility of preserving and sustainably using the natural basis of life by signing the Initiative's "Leadership Declaration". The business network will be presenting around 30 good practice examples at the conference in Hyderabad. These examples demonstrate that companies take action because it is the foundation of their business models that is affected.

Prof. Dr. Claus Hipp, CEO of HiPP, says: "As a baby food producer HiPP relies on ecologically sound organic farming, which uses natural methods to protect the environment. However, biodiversity must also not be underestimated from an economic perspective, for example, with respect to the procurement of raw materials. Healthy ecosystems are a direct driver of added value especially in the food production sector." **Thomas Bittinger, Managing Director of Mars Chocolate Deutschland**, agrees: "An intact biodiversity, for instance in the cultivation of cocoa, directly affects our core business. Only cocoa plants that grow in species-diverse surroundings are truly productive." The companies consider it important to highlight the connection between protecting nature, the environment and climate. On this issue, **Volkswagen AG CEO Prof. Dr. Martin Winterkorn** says: "The Volkswagen Group has markedly committed to ambitious environmental goals and is pursuing an expedited efficiency strategy that should make Volkswagen the most ecologically-minded automobile manufacturer in the world. As a founding member of the 'Biodiversity in Good Company' Initiative we are delighted to present our projects that protect the environment, climate and biological diversity at such a significant United Nations conference, especially as it takes place in India, where the company is establishing a long-term presence and has set up a new Volkswagen Group India headquarters."

The business network will be presenting its operation in a number of side events. In a joint event together with the German Federal Environment Ministry, it will be shown how the German business sector is participating in the implementation of the German National Strategy on Biological Diversity. The Federal Environment Ministry, now a partner of the Initiative, founded the platform in 2008 as an internationally recognized project. Since 2011, the Initiative member companies have taken over the responsibility to lead its operations. It is open to members from around the world.

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Thus, various Japanese companies have been active in the network and supported the Initiative since its beginning, among these are Fujitsu and Saraya, a hygiene product manufacturer. **Atsuhisa Takahashi, the Fujitsu Corporate Executive Advisor on Environmental Strategy**, confirms: “Fujitsu will carry out environmental activities continuously with an emphasis on contribution to biodiversity conservation by leveraging our core business—information and communication technology (ICT).” In Hyderabad, Saraya will be presenting its activities in the area of palm oil and preserving wild animal habitats: “We support the ‘Sabah Mega Ecological Corridor’ by Borneo Conservation Trust with our customers through our new, novel detergent ‘Happy Elephant’, says **Yusuke Saraya, President of Saraya Co., Ltd.** Japan has held the CBD presidency since 2010 and will now pass it on to India.

During the CoP 11, the second meeting of the “Global Partnership on Business and Biodiversity” will also take place. The ‘Biodiversity in Good Company’ is a partner of this worldwide network of national and regional business initiatives, whose establishment was agreed upon at the previous conference in Japan in 2010 with the purpose of motivating the business sector to engage with the issue of biodiversity. All involved partners will voice their support for this process in a joint statement in Hyderabad.

“Those who pay heed to their business’s ecological footprint will not only save money, but will also be attractive to those who have understood that the next megatrend is green and has already begun,” **Jacob Radloff, Publisher and Managing Partner of the German oekom – Gesellschaft für ökologische Kommunikation**, said prior to the conference.

The practical examples and event program can be found by visiting www.business-and-biodiversity.de

Members: Aleph – Beraca – BIONADE – Faber-Castell – ForestFinance – Fujitsu – Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) – HeidelbergCement – HiPP – KfW – Mars – Mori Building – oekom verlag – Otto Group – REWE Group – Ritter Sport – Saraya – Sumitomo Mitsui Trust Holdings – TUI – UPM – Volkswagen – Weleda – Werner & Mertz

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