

“Islands and Overseas Entities’ contribution to biodiversity conservation and the fight against climate change”

Tuesday 20 December 2011

15:30 – 18:00

Room JAN 6Q1

European Parliament, Brussels

Interpretation EN-FR

AGENDA

Chaired by:

MEP Maurice Ponga, Co-Chair of the “Islands and Overseas Entities” Group of the EP Intergroup “*Climate Change, Biodiversity and Sustainable Development*”





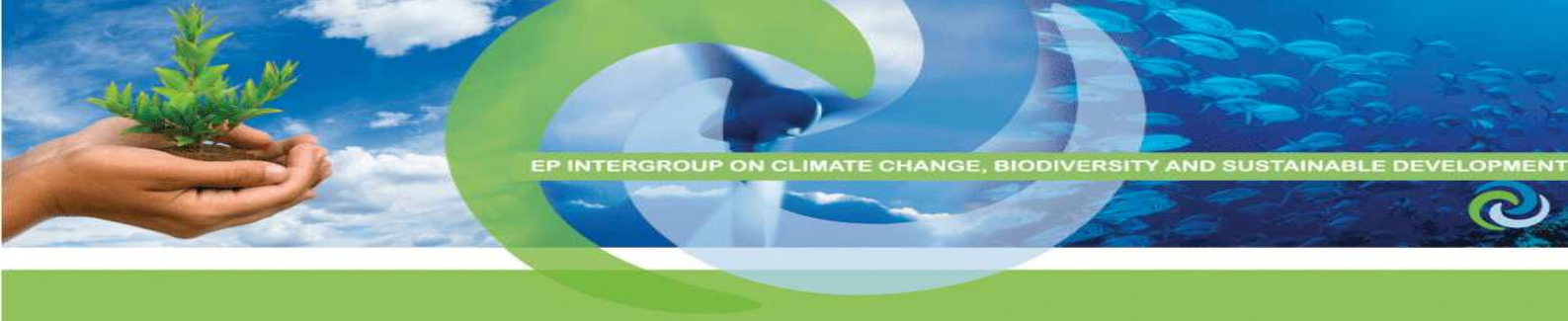
“Six European Union Member States, namely the United Kingdom, France, the Netherlands, Portugal, Spain and Denmark, have a total of 34 Overseas Entities hosting an important diversity of landscapes, ecosystems and species.”¹ The marine importance of these territories is significant, allowing France to have the second exclusive economic zone in the world and the UK the fourth. Thanks to their exceptional geographic situation and their ecosystems’ resources, they have a key role in climate change adaptation and mitigation. Despite their multiple assets in the field of biodiversity and climate change, islands and overseas entities have received limited attention from the EU and international policies.

The conference entitled “*Strategies to Counter Climate Change and Biodiversity Loss*,” which took place in La Reunion in 2008 under the French Presidency, created a political momentum at the EU and international stage for the recognition of islands and overseas entities’ assets and specificities. It is now time to act and give a real roadmap to these territories.

This conference on “**Islands and Overseas Entities’ contribution to biodiversity conservation and the fight against climate change**” aims at raising awareness on the importance of overseas entities and islands’ assets to take up these crucial challenges. Indeed, the event will lead to a brainstorming session on the possible mechanisms that could enable these assets to be further considered by European and International decision-makers. This would allow the EU to promote islands and overseas entities’ specificities in the framework of its International commitments.

The event will be followed by a series of technical activities at the European and regional level to analyse these mechanisms in depth and to set strategic priorities for the BEST preliminary action, recently approved by the European Parliament. This will lead to a ministerial meeting in the European Parliament at the end of 2012 that will have the aim of materialising EU commitments before the CBD and UNFCCC COP18.

¹ Jérôme Petit and Guillaume Prudent. “Climate Change and Biodiversity in the European Union Overseas Entities”, July 2008. <http://data.iucn.org/dbtw-wpd/edocs/2010-064.pdf>



Opening Session

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| 15:30 – 15:35 | Welcoming speech, MEP Maurice Ponga |
| 15:35 – 15:45 | Opening Statement, MEP Struan Stevenson, Chair of EP Intergroup
“Climate Change, Biodiversity and Sustainable Development” |
| 15:45 – 15:55 | Opening statement by Cyriaque Sendashonga, Global Director,
Policy, Programme and Capacity Development Group, IUCN |

Roundtable I: *Islands and Overseas Entities’ specificities and assets in the fight against climate change and biodiversity conservation*

Moderator: MEP Maurice Ponga

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| 15:55 – 16:05 | European Overseas Entities and Islands: A unique asset for the EU
<i>Ronan Uhel, European Environment Agency</i> |
| 16:05 – 16:15 | Capitalizing islands and overseas entities’ specificities and assets: An economic perspective
<i>Thomas Binet, Research Associate, Centre for the Economics and Management of Aquatic Resources (CEMARE) University of Portsmouth</i> |
| 16:15 – 16:25 | Synergies between the socio economic development of European Overseas Entities and the preservation of nature: the role of the cohesion policy
<i>Mathieu Fichter, Programme Assistant, Unit D2 "Coordination thématique, Innovation", DG REGIO, European Commission</i> |
| 16:25 – 16:55 | Debate |



Roundtable II: *Improving the integration of Islands and Overseas Entities' specificities and assets into European and International policies*

Moderator: Hugh Laxton, Head of the UK Nature and Landscape Office

16:55 – 17:05 **European Islands and Overseas Entities and the implementation of International Conventions: The example of the Convention on Biological Diversity**

Video message from Ahmed Djolaf, Executive Secretary, Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD)

Visio conference with Oliver Hillel, CBD

17:05 – 17:15 **European Islands and Overseas Entities in European Biodiversity policy**

Robert Flies, Advisor to the Director, Directorate « Nature, Biodiversity & Land Use », DG Environment, European Commission

17:15 – 17:25 **Net-Biome as an effective tool for enhancing overseas regions and territories assets integration into European and International policies**

Frédéric Cadet, Vice-President, Net-Biome

17:25 – 17:35 **European Islands and Overseas Entities: The perspective of Member States' in International fora**

Jacques Trouvilliez, French Ministry of Ecology, Sustainable Development, Transports and Housing

17:35 – 17:55 **Debate**

18:00 **Conclusions by MEP Maurice Ponga**

18:00 – 19:30 **Cocktail (offered by MEP Maurice Ponga)**