

## For Immediate Release

# Federal Government Silent on Biodiversity Treaty Negotiations

(May 10, 2010) Ottawa isn't talking as negotiations begin today in Nairobi among the parties to the global biodiversity treaty. In the wake of the failure of countries to stop the disintegration of ecosystems, substantive targets have been proposed for national governments to adopt. The federal government has kept its position from Canadians, hoping to avoid the torrent of public criticism it faced last year for its performance at the Copenhagen climate treaty negotiations.

Countries are being asked by 2020 to:

- eliminate subsidies which undermine ecosystems
- end destructive fishing practices
- reduce nutrient pollution from agriculture and industry below critical thresholds
- cut habitat destruction in half
- reduce natural resource exploitation to keep it within ecological limits

“The Prime Minister will not adopt targets that require industry to bring its activities within ecological limits because it would be seen as bad for business,” said David Coon, Executive Director for the Conservation Council. “Our negotiators will be defending the status quo.”

Negotiations around the implications of the proposed 2020 targets for national governments wrap up on May 28<sup>th</sup>. Countries are expected to stake out their ground publicly during a special session of the UN General Assembly on the ecological crisis for Heads of State on September 22<sup>nd</sup>. The 2020 targets are to be finalized at the 10<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Conference of the Parties (COP 10) to the Biodiversity Convention in Nagoya Japan, Oct. 18-29th.

“The United Nations Global Outlook on Biodiversity to be released today will report that ecosystems and species continue their downward spiral, that this poses serious risks for society, and urgent action is needed,” said the Conservation Council’s David Coon. “It’s past time that we stop cutting our biological life support system out from under us. We need to adopt the 2020 targets as national targets and declare a ceasefire with nature in this country,” said Coon.

An assessment of ecosystem health in Canada initiated by Environment Canada in 2006 will not be made public until after the 2020 targets have been finalized at COP 10 in Nagoya, but its results have been incorporated into the UN’s Global Outlook report.

## For more information, please contact:

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*Global Biodiversity Outlook is available at <http://www.cbd.int/gbo3/>*