



International Day for Biological Diversity: ISLAND BIODIVERSITY

Communications Brief

The United Nations proclaimed **22 May the International Day for Biological Diversity** (IDB) to increase understanding and awareness of biodiversity issues. The theme for 2014 is **Island Biodiversity**, as announced in the notification of 21 October 2013 (www.cbd.int/doc/notifications/2013/ntf-2013-094-idb-en.pdf). This 2014 theme coincides with the designation by the UN General Assembly proclaiming 2014 as the International Year of Small Island Developing States. The theme was chosen to correspond with the timing of COP decision XI/15 paragraph 1(a), in which the Conference of the Parties “urges Parties, and invites other Governments, financial institutions and other relevant organizations to strengthen the implementation of the Programme of Work on Island Biodiversity”.

Purpose of Communications Brief

The Global Island Partnership, as a mechanism to support the implementation of the CBD programme of work on island biodiversity, is supporting the Secretariat of the CBD in celebrating the IDB. This communications brief has been developed to some guidelines/ideas to celebrate initiatives that are working, “bright spots”, as part of the International Day for Biological Diversity: ISLAND Biodiversity on the 22 May 2014 as well as share the Partnerships goals for the day.

Get Your Event Recognized Globally

1. Plan your creative and fun event

Organise a Green Wave event (<http://greenwave.cbd.int/>)

2. Share your plans:

Register at <http://www.cbd.int/idb/2014/>

Or email: jessica.robbyns@glispa.org / @GLISPA_discuss

3. Invite the Media:

Share and celebrate bright spots in conservation and sustainable livelihoods

4. Share Your International Day of Island Biodiversity Celebrations!

@CBDNews

@GLISPA_discuss

#islands2014

<https://www.facebook.com/UNBiodiversity>

<https://www.facebook.com/GLISPA>

Register your Plans

<http://www.cbd.int/idb/2014/>

Goals

1. Create awareness of the value and uniqueness of island biodiversity in your community/country
2. Celebrate and encourage investment in bright spots in island conservation and sustainable livelihoods from your community/country
3. Engage your community to take action to support conservation and sustainable livelihoods

Message Guidelines:

1. Localize messages to be relevant to your country/community
2. Tell the story of bright spots that are making a difference in your country/community
3. Focus on “LOVE not Loss” - love of “island nature”. Read: [Branding Biodiversity Handbook - http://www.futerra.co.uk/downloads/Branding_Biodiversity.pdf](http://www.futerra.co.uk/downloads/Branding_Biodiversity.pdf)
4. Have a clear call to action! - Get people out into their local environment e.g. participate in a **Greenwave** event

Key Messages:

“I am not here to talk about saving islands; I am here to talk about saving the world.”

The Honourable Tony de Brum
Minister in Assistance to the President
Republic of the Marshall Islands, Rio+20

Why Islands, Why Now?

Never before have islands been so at risk. Their peoples, cultures, oceans and ecosystems are interlinked and threatened by natural disasters, invasive species, unsustainable development and other global shocks. These challenges are being compounded by the real and serious threat of climate change. While islands constitute less than 5% of the Earth’s landmass they provide habitat for 40% of all listed Critically Endangered and Endangered species¹. More than 80% of known species extinctions have occurred on islands². Urgent and immediate action is needed to halt and reverse trends to save our precious island ecosystems globally. Now is the time for action: for leadership, commitments and collaboration across all sectors to build a resilient and sustainable future for our planet.

Island Bright Spots: Invest in What Works

Islands are taking action to effectively conserve biodiversity and promote sustainable livelihoods. Despite significant vulnerabilities facing islands, leaders of island countries and countries with islands have made visionary commitments at local, national, regional and global levels. Notably, governments are working together in innovative partnerships with public and private partners to achieve the commitment targets. Inspired island solutions in action are “bright spots” that exemplify how together we can build on what is working to conserve and sustainably utilize our invaluable natural resources, and achieve the Aichi targets.

¹ Critically Endangered and Endangered species are listed by the International Union for Conservation of Nature. Threatened Island Biodiversity Database Partners (2012) The Threatened Island Biodiversity Database: developed by Island Conservation, University of California Santa Cruz Coastal Conservation Action Lab, BirdLife International, IUCN Invasive Species Specialist Group. Version 2012.1. Available at <http://tib.islandconservation.org/>.

² Ricketts, T. H., E. Dinerstein, T. Boucher, T.M. Brooks, S.H. Butchart, M. Hoffmann, ... & E. Wikramanayake. 2005. Pinpointing and preventing imminent extinctions. Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences of the United States of America. 102: 18497-18501.

The time for action is now!

- **Demonstrate your leadership:** Make, promote and implement visionary high-level island commitments
- **Invest in What Works:** Identify, scale and replicate island bright spots
- **Support the Global Island Partnership** (www.glispa.org): Contribute to building resilient and sustainable island communities through innovative partnerships

Priorities for Island Action

1. Management of Invasive Species

Invasive species pose one of the greatest threats to island biodiversity. Approximately 80% of all extinctions recorded since 1,500 have been on islands³, with invasive species being a primary cause of insular extinctions⁴. Invasive species are a key risk to today's threatened species with islands providing habitat for 40% of all IUCN listed Critically Endangered and Endangered species.⁵

Invasive species have had drastic impacts on our most isolated and unique ecosystems and continue to pose a serious risk to all islands by threatening the ecosystems and their services: livelihoods, food security, economies and health of inhabitants⁶.

2. Establish and manage marine and terrestrial protected area

Protected areas are not only critical to supporting healthy ecosystems and threatened species, but also provide many benefits to people and local economies, including provision of food and clean water, disaster risk reduction, and climate change mitigation.

Protected areas provide valuable safety nets for island countries under the stresses of climate change. Protected areas can support species adapting to climate change by providing refuges and migration corridors. They also protect people by reducing their vulnerability to sudden climatic events such as cyclones, storm surge, floods, and drought. Protected areas directly support the economy through providing valuable tourism resources and indirectly by reducing the costs of the negative impacts of climate change and the need for physical infrastructure.

3. Mainstream ecosystem-based adaptation to climate change

The special characteristics of islands (e.g., geographic isolation, frequency of natural disasters and extreme weather events, nature-based livelihoods, socio-economic conditions) make them highly vulnerable to a large range of potential impacts from climate variability and change.

Island biodiversity is particularly vulnerable to climate change impacts due to typically high levels of endemic species with regionally restricted distributions. Islands are often characterised by high levels of biodiversity that provide essential goods and services for local communities. In particular, climate change

³ Ricketts, T. H., E. Dinerstein, T. Boucher, T.M. Brooks, S.H. Butchart, M. Hoffmann, ... & E. Wikramanayake. 2005. Pinpointing and preventing imminent extinctions. *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences of the United States of America*. 102: 18497-18501.

⁴ Blackburn, T.M., P. Cassey, R.P. Duncan, K.L. Evans, and K.J. Gaston. 2004. Avian extinction and mammalian introductions on oceanic islands. *Science* 305:1955-1958. Clavero, M. and E. García-Berthou. 2005. Invasive species are a leading cause of animal extinctions. *TRENDS in Ecology and Evolution* 20:110.

⁵ Threatened Island Biodiversity Database Partners (2012) The Threatened Island Biodiversity Database: developed by Island Conservation, University of California Santa Cruz Coastal Conservation Action Lab, BirdLife International, IUCN Invasive Species Specialist Group. Version 2012.1. Available at <http://tib.islandconservation.org/>

⁶ Millennium Ecosystem Assessment, 2005. *Ecosystems and Human Well-being: Synthesis*. Island Press, Washington, DC.

heavily impacts coral reefs, fisheries and other marine-based resources. Projected sea level rise poses a high risk for low-lying islands and their coastal resources (e.g. corals, mangroves, and reef fish).

Resilience is the ability of an ecosystem to absorb disturbance without shifting to an alternative state and losing ecosystem function and services. Resilient and healthy ecosystems are a cost-effective way of managing some of the adverse impacts of climate change, such as increased storm surge, flood and erosion control.

OTHER RESOURCES:

- Branding Biodiversity Handbook - http://www.futerra.co.uk/downloads/Branding_Biodiversity.pdf
- Rare Pride Handbook - <http://www.rare.org/sites/default/files/Rare%20Pride%20Handbook%20English%20low%20res.pdf>

Mobilizing Leadership for islands towards CBD COP12

The International Day for Biological Diversity is coordinated by the Secretariat of the Convention on Biodiversity in recognition of the International Year of Small Island Developing States. The International Day of Biodiversity: Island Biodiversity provides an opportunity to inspire leadership and mobilizing commitment to action of the Parties to the CBD towards the Third International Meeting of Small Island Developing States in September in Samoa as well as the Twelfth Conference for the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity in Korea in October 2014.

The Global Island Partnership (GLISPA), co-chaired by the Presidents of Seychelles and Palau and the Prime Minister of Grenada, is a mechanism to advance the conservation of island biodiversity and sustainable livelihoods. GLISPA will be coordinating activities to inspire leadership, catalyze commitments and facilitate collaboration including the identification of bright spots, during UNSIDS and CBD COP12. The Global Island Partnership is open to any entity committed to taking significant action to ensure island conservation and sustainable livelihoods. If you would like to get involved in these activities, contact Jessica.robbs@glispa.org

GLISPA has been recognized as:

- a mechanism for advancing the conservation of island biodiversity [Decision IX/21](#), CBD COP9 (2008) and [Decision XI/15](#), CBD COP11 (2012) further invites Parties to engage with GLISPA as an effective partner to support conservation of island biodiversity
- a best practice partnership by the UN Commission on Sustainable Development (UNCSD, 2010)
- a success factor in preparations for the 2012 UN Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio+20)