

## A NEW VISION FOR BIODIVERSITY CONSERVATION

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The keynote address explains the historic role of IUCN as an international leader in conservation and describes the findings of the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species and other indices, which show that our wanton use and abuse of nature has damaged two thirds of ecosystems all over the world and caused the current rate of species extinction to be up to 1,000 times the natural rate of loss.

In 2002, at the World Summit on Sustainable Development, nations agreed on biodiversity targets for 2010. This is the International Year of Biodiversity, and these targets, will not be met. Preparations are underway to mark the International Year at a special session at the UN in September, and in October the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity will meet in Nagoya to set new targets. IUCN has consulted its Members and has proposed an ambitious mission for 2020 by which ‘all the necessary policies and actions to prevent further biodiversity loss’ will have been put in place. The vision for 2050 calls for a world in which ‘ biodiversity is conserved and restored to secure a healthy planet and to deliver essential benefits for sustainable development and the well being of all people and nature.’ Twenty specific, measurable, achievable, ambitious, relevant and timely targets are proposed to meet the 2020 mission. There are several factors that will be crucial in making the 2020 mission and ultimately the 2050 vision: adequate financing; a new link between science and policy; assigning an economic value to ecosystem services, and explaining biodiversity clearly to all citizens.