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DIRECTORATE-GENERAL  
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Directorate B - Protecting the Natural Environment

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**Subject: Portuguese-EU Initiative on Business and Biodiversity**

In the field of environmental agenda, Portugal has announced that one of the priorities during its Presidency of the European Union, in the second half of 2007, will be to strengthen the linkages between Business and Biodiversity protection. This commitment from the Portuguese Presidency, is fully coherent with the recent Communication from the European Commission entitled "Halting the Loss of Biodiversity by 2010 and Beyond", in which stronger partnerships with Business were identified as a key action for protecting biodiversity and also guaranteeing the long-term delivery of the ecosystem goods and services upon which Europe's sustainable development depends.

The first major milestone in the development of this new activity will be a high-level conference to be held during the Portuguese Presidency which will also be the platform for launching the EU Business and Biodiversity (B&B) initiative. This means we have more or less 12 months to develop the concept and actions, bring-in stakeholders and set-up and organise this major event during the Portuguese Presidency.

We are aware that there are already a number of organisations and individuals that are already working in this area. The future EU B&B initiative is not intended to duplicate these on-going actions, rather we would like to learn from previous experience and also to identify the most profitable process for our activity. Accordingly and in recognition of your considerable expertise in the area, we have the pleasure to invite you to take part in a "concept shaping" meeting that will take place in Brussels on 9 November 2006. The meeting will be held in the premises of the Portuguese Permanent Representation, Avenue de Cortenbergh 12, 1040 Brussels starting at 10:00.

Attached to this letter of invitation you will find a short paper setting out the background for this action plus some initial thoughts and questions concerning the EU B&B initiative. However, we would emphasize that the purpose of the meeting is to allow us to draw on your experience in shaping our future work on the development of stronger links between business and biodiversity protection.

Information concerning reimbursement of expenses will be sent in a separate mailing.

We very much look forward to meeting you on the next 9 November. For further information concerning the B&B initiative and the organisation of the meeting please contact Patrick Murphy, Head of Unit, B.2., telephone: +32 2 299 83 39, e-mail: [Patrick.Murphy@ec.europa.eu](mailto:Patrick.Murphy@ec.europa.eu) or Susanne Pedersen, Secretary, telephone +32 2 298 09 47, e-mail: [Susanne.Pedersen@ec.europa.eu](mailto:Susanne.Pedersen@ec.europa.eu)



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