

The role of the Private Sector in Nature Conservation and Ecosystem Service Management

The Business and Biodiversity Initiative

Both the economy and society benefit from biological diversity - in terms of providing food, preserving health, and catalysing innovation. In May 2008, Germany hosted the 9th Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity - COP 9. The conference sent strong signals concerning collaboration with the private sector. On this account the Business and Biodiversity Initiative 'Biodiversity in Good Company' was established as an international initiative within the scope of the German chairmanship of the CBD.

Members of the inter-sectoral 'Biodiversity in Good Company' Initiative are small and medium-sized businesses as well as major enterprises. To join, companies sign a membership application together with the Initiative's Leadership Declaration. In doing so, members commit to integrating biodiversity preservation measures into the business' corporate management system. Of the more than 40 member companies, the majority are located in Brazil, Germany and Japan.

The Initiative is engaged in advancing the topic of business and biodiversity through its many implementation tools. One of its most important products is the Corporate Biodiversity Management Handbook: A guide for practical implementation, developed together with the Centre for Sustainability Management at the Leuphana University in Lüneberg and in cooperation with the member companies.

The Commitment of the Volkswagen Group

Using the slogan "Volkswagen connects habitats", the company has begun to develop its own international biodiversity management system and integrated it into its pre-existing environmental management system.

Volkswagen is actively implementing its biodiversity management at home and abroad. It has not only clearly defined its responsibilities in the realm of biodiversity management, but biodiversity is regularly discussed at its regional non-European locations. Expert reports delineating threatened species in the surrounding areas as well as the emissions values for all of the German and many of the European offices have been compiled. Additionally, biodiversity is now included in the regular sustainability reports.

With the help of Volkswagen AG's B2B platform, a forum to actively communicate with its suppliers about corporate biodiversity management standards, the car manufacturer is working to constantly improve its practices. At the same time Volkswagen cooperates with many competent partners, especially with NABU (BirdLife International / Germany), in the field of biodiversity protection to expand its know-how and facilitate an exchange between the business world and other organizations.

Benefit

Among the many diverse nature and wildlife protection projects in the world of conservation, there are a few that are based directly on the business model of vehicle manufacturers. One of these projects has been developed in cooperation with NABU and resulted in putting Volkswagen in the forefront of innovation on the market. As part of the new and inventive mobility concept Volkswagen Leasing GmbH has developed the "Green Fleet Programme". This is an environmental programme designed to allow

Panellist contribution by Christiane von Finckenstein-Wang

corporate customers to combine cost-saving lease vehicles with climate protection and nature conservation.

Customers interested in leasing particularly economical vehicles, such as BlueMotion or EcoFuel, can rest assured their business is supporting NABU projects in moor rewetting and CO₂-reducing measures generated from biogas plants. Additionally, fleet operators can send fleet drivers to fuel-saving trainings at reduced costs. To inform the public and create more awareness for innovative fleet management, Volkswagen and NABU have instituted the 'Green Fleet Prize'. Nearly every second new car in Germany is a company car – for this reason VW Leasing's environmental programme has the potential to play a key role in climate and environment protection.

VOLKSWAGEN

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Biodiversity Conservation - the Role of Business

Christiane von Finckenstein

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Nature Conservancy Legislation in Germany

Compensation step by step:

- Analysis of damage and need for compensation
- Public approval procedure concerning damage and compensation
- Search for compensation area, evaluation and acquisition of the area
- Planning and implementation of the compensation measures
- Generation of a long term maintenance plan
- Monitoring



Why is conservation good for business? It...

- Contributes to sustainable growth
- Helps minimize risk
- Can improve access to investment capital
- Anticipates – and can influence – regulation
- Often results in better products and services
- Often results in cost savings
- Helps attract and retain employees
- Can positively differentiate business in competitive marketplaces



Reasons for the Involvement of Volkswagen in the protection of Biodiversity

- As a global company Volkswagen accepts corporate responsibility in three respects: economic, environmental and social (CSR).
- A healthy natural environment is a precondition for human wellbeing. Only people who live under adequate conditions will be able to buy cars on a long term basis.
- Roads have an impact on wildlife habitats. As a car manufacturer Volkswagen wants to contribute to innovative solutions that protect migrating animal species from the dangers of road traffic.

The Biodiversity Strategy of the Volkswagen Group: Getting Focused

Motto: „Volkswagen connects habitats“

Focus on two issues:

- Protection or restoration of **rivers** at our production sites
- Support for projects that protect **migrating animals**



photo: Claus Bauer

The Business and Biodiversity Initiative (B&B)

- **Launched** at CBD CoP 9 in Germany, in May 2008 by the German Federal Ministry for the Environment
- **Objective**
integration of the private sector - "...as the less involved stakeholder in achieving the objectives of the convention.." (CBD)
- **Target group**
large and small/medium enterprises from different branches; willingness to start an internal process



42 member companies



The Leadership Declaration

Signatory companies commit themselves to:

- Analyze corporate activities with regard to their **impacts** on biological diversity.
- Include the protection of biological diversity within their **environmental management system**, and develop biodiversity indicators.
- Appoint a **responsible individual** within the company to steer all activities in the biodiversity sector and report to the Management Board.
- Define realistic, measurable **objectives** that are monitored and adjusted every 2 to 3 years.
- **Publish** activities and achievements in the biodiversity sector in the company's annual, environmental, and/or corporate social responsibility report.
- Inform **suppliers** about the company's biodiversity objectives and integrate them accordingly.
- Explore the potential for **cooperation** with scientific institutions, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and/or governmental institutions with the aim of deepening dialogue and continuously improve the corporate management system vis-à-vis the biodiversity domain.

The Activities of Volkswagen for the Protection of Biodiversity

- Most locations of the Volkswagen Group have a **tradition** of projects for the protection of nature: protection of biotopes where endangered species of plants and animals live, tree planting activities, planting of hedges, restoration of river banks etc.
- Since circa 1995 a **regular exchange** of information between the individual sites and Head Office about activities for the protection of nature has been established.
- In February 2008 Volkswagen joined the „**Business and Biodiversity Initiative**“ of the Federal Ministry for the Environment. Quote from a letter of Prof. Winterkorn to Minister Gabriel:
„In the framework of its environmental management system, Volkswagen will integrate the protection of nature into the environmental action plans of the sites in the coming years. In addition, targets and activities concerning the protection of nature will be made part of the environmental action plans of the sites in the framework of the international Regional Conferences that are organised in regular intervals.”



Biodiversity Projects of Volkswagen



Volkswagen is running activities to protect biodiversity in many countries. These projects are mostly located in the **vicinity of our production sites**. This makes it possible to **involve our employees and the local population**, with a focus on local schools.

- Breeding of endangered animal species at the Parque Ecologico, **Sao Paulo / Brazil**
- Reforestation and water infiltration in the „Izta-Popo“ area near the VW plant in **Puebla / Mexico**
- Biodiversity Award “For the Love of the Planet“, **Puebla / Mexico**
- Panda Research in **Chengdu / China**
- Restoration of the river Aller in **Wolfsburg**
- Sponsoring of the **NABU** (BirdLife International) campaign „Welcome, Wolf!“
- Sponsoring of the **BUND** (Friends of the Earth) project „corridors for migrating wildcats“



Biodiversity: Connecting Protected Areas



Restoration of the river Aller



November 2006

Restoration of the river Aller



November 2006

Restoration of the river Aller



December 2006

Restoration of the river Aller



April 2007

Restoration of the river Aller



May 2007

Restoration of the river Aller



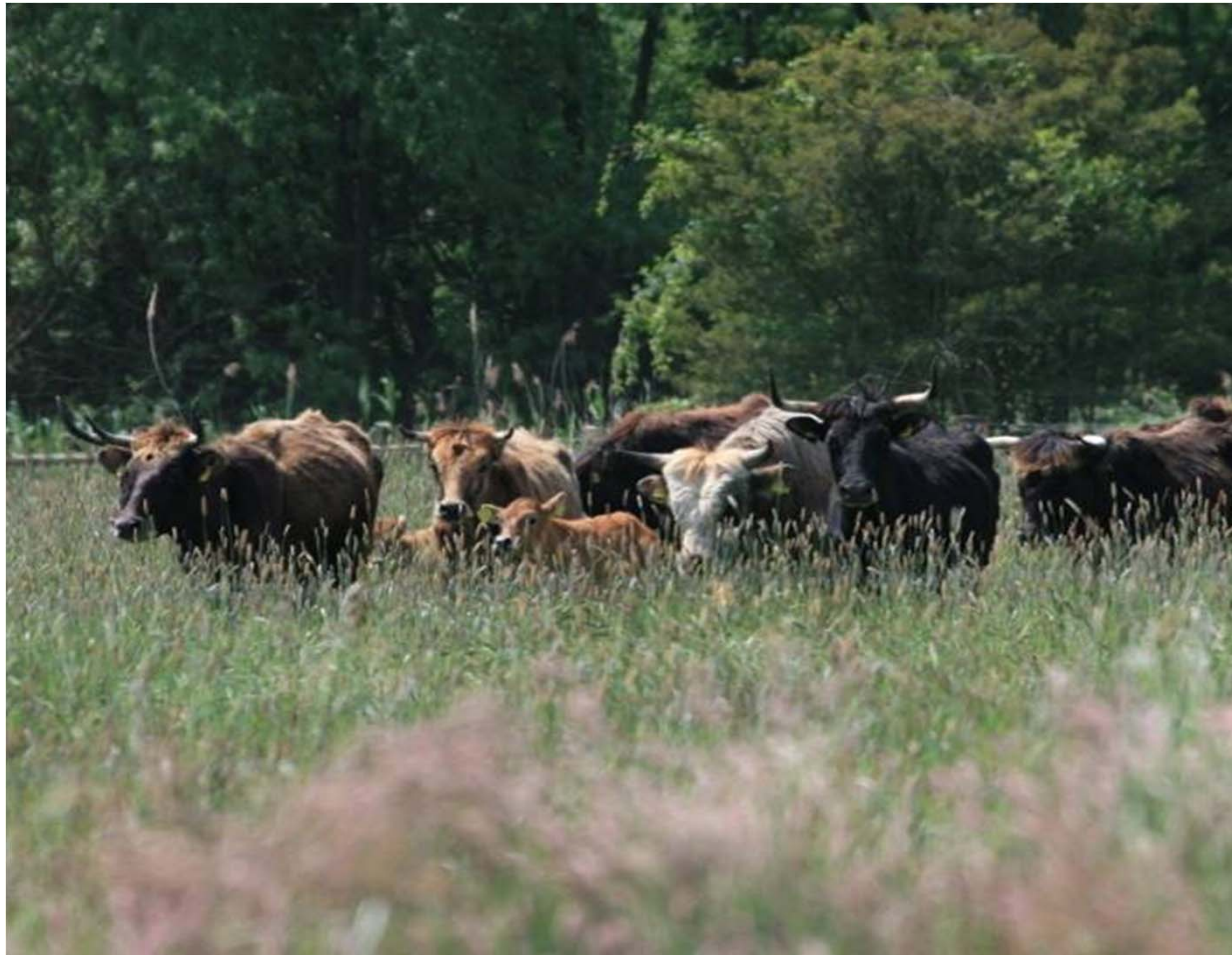
May 2008

Restoration of the river Aller



November 2006

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May 2008

Restoration of the river Aller



May 2010