

Conferences and Events

International Day for Biological Diversity – 2013. The Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity has been announced the theme of the International Day for Biological Diversity on 22 May 2013 will be as *Water and Biodiversity*. The theme was chosen to coincide with the United Nations designation of 2013 as the International Year of Water Cooperation. UNESCO has been chosen as the lead agency to promote the global celebrations and to help raise awareness on the critical issues facing water management. Providing and sustaining water for the needs of people around the world is already well recognized as a major challenge for sustainable development in most areas in both developed and developing countries. Water – the source of all Life on Earth – is a cross-cutting topic and requires partnerships for its management. Solutions to water management issues are included in the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 and its Aichi Targets. The Secretariat will develop, in early 2013, a variety of outreach materials to help celebrate the day including a web page with key messages and a booklet on the theme. For further information, please visit at: <http://www.cbd.int/idb/>.

Struggle against invasive species remains important goal for global Strategic Plan for Biodiversity. The Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity has expressed support for a recent call from conservation organizations for continued action against invasive species. On 22 July 2011, the magazine *Science* published a letter from senior leaders of the world most authoritative conservation organizations entitled “Invasives: A Major Conservation Threat”. The purpose of the letter was to respond to recent positions that have argued against the struggle against invasive species. In the letter, the leaders of IUCN, Birdlife, WWF, Conservation International, Wildlife Conservation Society, Fauna and Flora International, and Island Conservation indicated that recent discussions on alternative strategies to the management of invasive species should not undermine ongoing efforts to prevent and mitigate the impacts of invasive species. The authors of the letter stress that as invasive species are indeed a major cause of biodiversity loss continued aggressive

intervention is needed to capitalize on recent successes. Therefore, conservation leaders call the global community to work together to control the most harmful invasive species, and to meet target 9 of Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020, which calls for action to control invasive species. “Invasive species are a subtle threat to the natural balance of species and ecosystems, but can suddenly occur in explosive outbreaks. For this reason, the global Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 includes a specific target on this issue”. Preventing and mitigating the negative effects of invasions is indeed a huge challenge, and the cooperation of the NGOs is of crucial importance.” For additional information, please contact: David Ainsworth at david.ainsworth@cbd.int or Johan Hedlund at johan.hedlund@cbd.int.

International Conference on Challenges in Aquatic Sciences will be held at Keelung, Taiwan on 15-21 March 2013. During this conference, world famous aquatic biologists will deliver keynote lectures, and many other talks will be given, posters will be presented. The program will be highly focusing on the hot topics for aquatic scientists in the past decade and in the near future. With this conference, the journal *Hydrobiologia*, Springer and National Taiwan Ocean University want to open a gate to research on aquatic sciences in Asia. The conference thus also provides scholarships to Asian students, to encourage young scientists to join this important international scientific event. You will find all relevant information on the conference website at www.2013hydrobiologiaconference.org.

Fourteenth International Student Conference on Conservation Science will be held in Cambridge, UK on 19-21 March 2013. The conference series aims to bring together conservation scientists in the early stages of their research careers. SCCS also uses its location in Cambridge to build firm links between the new generation of conservation scientists and the many national and international conservation agencies based nearby. The conference has an internship scheme, which is available for conference delegates from developing and eastern European countries. This scheme enables

student delegates to spend one month after the conference with a UK-based NGO or university department carrying out a conservation-related project of mutual interest. Further information about this conference and details of how to apply can be found on website: www.sccs-cam.org.

An online database on the African arachnida now available. The African Arachnida Database (AFRAD) was developed by the Agricultural Research Council in Pretoria and the Koninklijk Museum voor Midden Afrikato.

It contains information on all the Arachnida species of the Afrotropical Region. Information in the AFRAD database is available online and information and images on taxa can be printed as factsheets. To access the database, visit the Agricultural Research Council's home page at <http://www.arc.agric.za> and click on the quick link AFRAD or access the database at this address: <http://www.arc.agric.za/home.asp?pid=3235>. Information on the spider families is presently available and information on the genera and species are added on a weekly base.

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