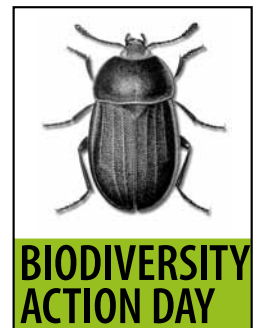




22 May 2010

National Biodiversity Action Days

A Conceptual Guideline and Checklists for Organisers



a joint project of



Federal Ministry for the
Environment, Nature Conservation
and Nuclear Safety



Federal Ministry
for Economic Cooperation
and Development

in cooperation with

GEO

Dear Partners and Friends of Biodiversity,

22 May 2010 is a great day to make the world know more about the value of nature!

Many organisations in many countries are going to organise Biodiversity Action Days, which will help people see and feel why preserving the diversity of life on earth is so crucial for human well-being.

If you hold this guide in your hand, you are part of a global community that will create a mosaic of experiences from around the world. And you are likely to be wondering what you actually need to do to make your Action Day a success.

This guide is designed to help you. It compiles an array of ideas and suggestions, as well as lots of practical hints on how to proceed.

Please remember that it has been written with a broad and very diverse audience in mind. Some organisations may want to go »big« and use the opportunity to reach a broad public in their countries; they will find many useful hints. Others may take more of a »small and beautiful« approach, and that's fine. They too will find guidance, and they may want to select only some of the ideas provided in this guide.

There are many ways to do a Biodiversity Action Day, and the choice is yours.

We invite you to use this guide as a source of inspiration – and to focus on those ideas that are useful for you.

**We wish you lots of fun and memorable experiences with
your Biodiversity Action Day!**

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Biodiversity Action Day 2003 in Harz National Park: Scientists meet media at former German-German border

Introduction

22nd May 2010: International Day and Year of Biodiversity

2010 is the United Nations' International Year of Biodiversity. On 22nd May every year, the world celebrates International Biodiversity Day. The coincidence of these two dates – 22nd May 2010 – is a great opportunity to draw public attention to the issues at stake.

The official theme of International Biodiversity Day in 2010 is »Biodiversity and Development«. The first and foremost purpose of all related Action Days, therefore, is to raise public and political awareness of the importance of intact ecosystems for human well-being.

The German Ministries for Environment, Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety (BMU) and for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ), together with GEO Magazine, are inviting organisations and countries from all over the world to join in a global project designed to promote awareness and understanding of biodiversity and ecosystems.

Biodiversity Action Days

As the name implies, a Biodiversity Action Day brings people to action. Different stakeholders come together at a previously defined site, to analyse the features of this specific ecosystem. Scientists accompany mixed groups of participants to help them assess the characteristics of species, links between them and the ecosystem as a whole. All results are then gathered and discussed with the help of the experts.

This brochure is designed to help you organise your national Action Day. Please note that it addresses Action Day organisers in some 50 countries. This means that it reflects a great array of possible circumstances: Different cultures and political systems, different ecosystems and people, and potentially very different designs of Action Days. If some of the hints and ideas don't suit your circumstances: just ignore them, knowing that they may be useful for others.

Also, please remember that planning for a Day like this is an iterative process. That is, the chapters don't necessarily reflect a linear planning sequence. To give an example: You may already have identified a suitable site, but once you determine the participants, it may turn out that the site is not so suitable after all. So you might need to go back and look for another location. We recommend that you start by scanning this whole document, so that you are familiar with the overall range of things to consider.

Should you ever feel the need for support, please don't hesitate to contact your helpdesk at bday@geo-media.de. We will do everything we can to assist you. Should we not be able to help you directly, we will try to identify others who can.

Also, we encourage you to check the global project website (www.biodiversity-day.info), as it provides interesting examples for inspiration: There are reports from eight previous Action Days in different countries, and most of them are available in several languages.

Key dates related to national Biodiversity Action Days 2010

1st May to 5th June:

Preferred period for national Action Days

22nd May:

International Biodiversity Day

5th June:

World Environment Day

Deadlines for reporting on Biodiversity Action Days 2010

(see Chapter 8 for details)

By 28th February

Indicate your selected site and an outline of your basic intentions for the Action Day.

By 31st March

Submit a project profile of your Action Day, including some basic data about the site and the participants, and possibly a few photos.

By 30th June

Send selected results of your Action Day, including a summary report and photos. Optionally, you may add media reports and articles, films and/or other coverage.

Please submit all documents to bday@geo-media.de.

Very important: Whenever you submit photos, videos or other audio-visual material, please ensure world-wide copy and/or usage rights!

Chapter 1: Overall Objectives and Scope

From Species to Ecosystems to Ecosystem Services

Everywhere, even in our immediate neighbourhoods, the animal and plant kingdoms are rich in diversity, highly interesting and worthy of protection. A Biodiversity Action Day is to make this wealth of nature visible and create appreciation for the importance of biodiversity for people's lives. Following the maxim »you can only protect what you know«, the participants are to see, touch and feel what biodiversity is all about, so that they recognize the need for its conservation.



In human focus: Nature

The official theme of International Biodiversity Day 2010 is »Biodiversity for Development«. The goal is to demonstrate how much we all depend on an intact nature for our well-being. Looking at biodiversity in this way goes beyond protecting individual plant or animal species: it means looking at the broader picture of ecosystems and asking what services they provide to humans.

A national Action Day is a great opportunity to discuss this with many different people and involve the media to reach an even broader audience. The participants will experience a direct encounter with nature. They will search for and analyse species. From this they can move on to learn how the different species relate to each other, and what benefits humans derive from this ecosystem.

The results of your Action Day will later become part of a global mosaic of experiences, which is going to be presented in different forms at international level and help promote global awareness of the issues at stake. Your main focus, however, should be on the impact you want to create »at home«.

You should therefore spend some initial time to reflect what you actually want to achieve: What do you want people to learn from the Action Day? What messages do you want to convey, and to whom? What kind of impact do you want to create with this Day in your country or region?

Your answers to these questions will guide all your subsequent decisions: the potential partners you will approach for cooperation, where you are going to hold the event, which experts and other participants you are going to invite, how you will promote the event, what type of activities you will organise, which media you are going to approach, how and to whom you are going to communicate the results of the Day, and last but not least, where and how you may be able to find additional financial resources for an interesting and memorable national Action Day.

These topics will be covered in the following chapters.

Checklist 1: Overall Objectives and Scope

Discuss and decide with a few key responsible individuals:

Content

- What do you want to achieve with this initiative? What are attractive and realistic impacts?
- What are the main learnings and messages you want to come out of the Action Day?
- Whom do you want to reach with these messages?
- How does the Day relate to other plans for the International Year of Biodiversity in your country?

Overall set-up

- Generally, which regions of your country might be considered for the Action Day?
- Are there any regions that should not be considered for any reason?
- What might be a suitable date between the 1st of May and the 5th of June?
- Are there any dates in that period that are strictly impossible for your Action Day?

Responsibilities and communication

- Who will take the lead in designing and organising the Day?
- Who must be involved in major decisions regarding the Action Day?
- How are you going to communicate internally during the preparation process?

Chapter 2 : Possible Partners

Joining Forces with Others

Setting up a national Action Day for Biodiversity involves many activities such as planning, organising, promoting, implementing and documenting the event. You will need contacts, for example to experts, politicians and the media, and you'll require resources, like information, money and time.

All of this becomes easier (and much more fun, too) if you have one or more competent partners at your side. Please think about cooperations very early in the process and approach potential partners well ahead of time.



Partners of Biodiversity Action Day in Vietnam 2007: Governmental institutions, NGOs and Universities

In most cases, the crucial factor will be finding an **organisation that has contacts to experts of zoology, botany and ecosystems**, and that will motivate these experts to participate in your Action Day.

Generally speaking, there are many different types of partners you may consider: You may think about national or international organisations like UNDP, IUCN, WWF, scientific institutes, museums or NGOs. You may cooperate with partners from the political and/or administrative level. Also, media houses or publishing companies can be interesting partners for a national Action Day. Or you could work with business organisations that are interested in biodiversity and related issues. All of this is possible, and one or a few partners will be of tremendous help for making your Action Day real.

A word of caution: It may be better not to liaise with too many partners, as this will increase your coordination requirements. Also, you may know the proverb: »Too many cooks spoil the broth«.

Having said this, here are some ideas for possible partners:

- Nature conservation organisations, animal protection associations, environmental organisations, local heritage societies, collectors
- Natural history museums, zoos and botanical gardens
- Youth sections of nature conservation organisations, scouts
- Administrative bodies for environmental protection or green space planning, ministries
- Project developers, private environmental offices, ecological institutes
- Biological or environment-related university faculties, providers of teacher training seminars, nature and environment education centres, nature conservation centres
- Scientific associations
- Schools of every type, universities (biology and/or environmental science faculties)
- Nature photographer associations
- Ecological farmers, farmers' associations

Again, it is important to note that cooperation always requires a certain degree of coordination. Therefore, it may be worthwhile for you to consider assigning this task to one specific person. This should be someone who is not only available during the planning and implementation phases, but also for the follow-up of the Action Day. Ideally, you may want to hire a coordination assistant for this project.

Checklist 2: Partners for your Action Day

Identifying potential partners

With your overall objectives in mind and the help of the suggestions in Chapter 2:

- Identify the type of organisation(s) you want to approach.
- Decide which organisation(s) you are actually going to approach for a partnership.
- Put together some basic information about the initiative (you may use the leaflets and video provided in English, Spanish and French at www.biodiversity-day.info).
- Contact potential partners, provide the information and ask for a call or a meeting.
- Discuss with each of them whether and in which way they are willing to cooperate with you in this project.

Starting the cooperation

Once you have gained a general commitment of one or more partners:

- Organise a joint kick-off meeting with representatives of this partner or partners.
- Discuss your overall objectives and intentions to ensure common understanding.
- Exchange some initial ideas on possible sites for the Day.
- Check which dates in the period from the 1st of May to the 5th of June are particularly suitable or unsuitable for any partner.
- Discuss the role of each partner in this project and what they can contribute (e.g., money, manpower, contacts, expertise, venues, facilities, ...?).
- Clarify communication lines and procedures for decision making.
- Designate one person to coordinate the group (this may be a group member or an assistant).
- Decide when and where you will meet next time, and who will prepare what by then.
- Document the results of your joint decisions.
- Where necessary, make formal agreements with each partner.

Don't forget during your talks: You have a serious goal – but do keep the »fun factor«. For yourself and your team – and to attract many experts as well as the public.

Chapter 3 : Location

Choosing a suitable ecosystem



From the low savanna to the mountain top: monitoring the Krugers2Canyon Biosphere at the South African Bioiversity Day 2008

A Biodiversity Action Day can take place wherever the value of nature becomes visible. Protected areas or national parks usually host huge biodiversity, so they are obvious candidates.

However, this is only one out of many different options. Nature is everywhere, and the Action Day is to help demonstrate that biodiversity and ecosystems provide important services even at our doorsteps. So you could consider a city park, a forest, a river bank, a pond or a beach, an industrial wasteland, a piece of rangeland, a gravel pit – or even a backyard. Alternatively, you may want to think of comparing two different areas; or five schoolyards; or two wooded areas; or three pockets of overgrown railway land. All these are just examples for illustration; there are no limits to your creativity.

What's important is that you keep the theme of International Biodiversity Day 2010 – »Biodiversity for Development« – in the back of your mind when deciding about the location. The site should allow the participants to make a direct, hands-on experience with nature, and it should be suitable to demonstrate the value of its biodiversity and ecosystem services for people (beneficiaries).

The following general criteria should be considered when selecting the area:

- The site should be »**biodiverse**« in some way, and you should have at least an initial idea about the kind of biodiversity that it holds.
- The site should have some kind of **symbolic value**, i.e., stand for something that people cherish.
- There should be something about the site that **attracts** people's curiosity and interest.
- The site should have a »**story to tell**«, and it should be possible to identify protagonists who can be interviewed about it. This aspect is particularly important for the press and the media.
- It should be possible to demonstrate and experience some **ecosystem services** that the site provides, and to discuss the (socio-economic) **value of these services** for human well-being.
- Finally, the site must be **accessible** for the participants, especially for the experts, the media and political representatives. This becomes all the more important if you plan to invite the broader public. Some aspects to consider here are: a central meeting point, catering, sanitary facilities, and whether access to the area requires any special permits.



For inspiration on different ecosystems that have been used as sites for national Action Days in past years, please check the examples provided at www.biodiversity-day.info.

Once you've identified one or more possible sites, you should check them for some very practical criteria before you make a final decision. Please refer to Checklist 3 for a first scan. For example, if you already know that it's very difficult to get access permits, or that large groups of visitors might harm either the ecosystem or disturb the people who live there, you may want to consider a different site.

From the low savanna to the mountain top: monitoring the Kruger2Canyons Biosphere at the South African Bioiversity Day 2008

If you feel sufficiently confident that the Action Day can take place in the particular area that you've got in mind, you should still pre-visit that site at least once. Speak with local authorities and representatives of the community to check whether all your assumptions are correct, and to ensure that they support your plans. Again, you may use Checklist 3 to guide your enquiries.

Checklist 3: Selecting the Site

Identifying possible sites for the Action Day

Again with your objectives in mind:

- Identify one or more potentially suitable sites for your Action Day.
- Check whether the site(s) fulfil(s) the basic criteria listed in Chapter 3: It should be »biodiverse«; have symbolic value; attract interest; have a story to tell; be suitable for discussing the value of ecosystem services; and be accessible.
- Make an initial scan of practical criteria (see next heading), e.g., by internet research or asking people who know the area.

Pre-visiting one or more sites

If you are sufficiently confident that a site fulfils the criteria, make a pre-visit to:

- Clarify weather conditions in the period around the Action Day.
- Identify facilities or other options to supply
 - Drinking water
 - Food
 - Sanitary services
 - Accommodation (if needed)
- Identify important local communities, NGOs or other key stakeholders to discuss:
 - Do they agree to host the Action Day in their area?
 - Are they interested to actively participate and contribute to the Day?
 - What traditional or scientific knowledge about biodiversity exists in the community?
 - Can the area and the people cope with a lot of visitors on one single day?
(Remember the slogan »Do no harm!«)
- Contact local authorities to clarify:
 - Do you need any official permits for the Action Day?
 - If so, which permits are required and how can you get them?
 - Check whether any dates in the period from the 1st of May to the 5th of June are particularly suitable or unsuitable for an Action Day in this region.
 - Agree how and by when the final decisions will be made, and how you will inform each other.

Making the final decision

Once you have checked all the conceptual and practical criteria:

- Involve your partners and any other responsible individuals in the final decision.
- If necessary, make formal agreements with the local authorities, communities and/or NGOs at the site.
- Should you decide against a site that you've already visited: Don't forget to inform the people you met there and apologise.

Chapter 4 : Participants

Bringing interesting and interested people together

Generally speaking, there are three types of participants that you should consider: Experts, promoters, and the broader public.

1. Experts

An essential group – without whom it is hardly possible to conduct the Action Day – are the experts. You will need to involve people who have solid knowledge about nature, and who are willing to share their expertise with others. They should be able to explain the characteristics and value of the biodiversity found at the site in a way that lay people can understand.

This is the type of experts you may want to look for:

- **Biologists**, for example, botanists, ornithologists (bird experts), herpetologists (amphibian/reptile experts), coleopterists (beetle collectors), taxonomists (experts for the classification of living things), etc.;
- **Geographers**, who can help analyse the habitat;
- **Environmental economists or sociologists**, who can provide insights about the value of the ecosystem for humans;
- **Teachers** of natural sciences, who often have good general knowledge and are used to explain complicated things in a simple way;
- **Representatives of NGOs**, for example, environmental or development-oriented organisations, indigenous peoples' associations, etc.;
- Where possible: Authors or editors of the global study on »The Economics of Ecosystems and Biodiversity (TEEB)«, who may act as **TEEB Ambassadors** and draw the link to international research.

Of course you don't have to involve all of these experts. While **biologists and taxonomists are indispensable**, the others are suggestions to show you the range of options. In fact, you better don't even attempt to cover every single aspect. No site can be fully researched on one day – and the symbolic value of the initiative is far more important.

Remember that experts, even scientists, are not only found at universities or research institutes. A retired scientist may be very happy to share his or her expertise. Also, there are many specialists who don't earn a living with their knowledge, but are passionate about nature and dedicate a lot of their private time to the environment (just think of bird watchers, mushroom hunters or anglers ...).

How many experts should you invite? Again, this depends on your objectives and the focus of the activities, as well as on the size of the area and the number of other participants who will need support from the experts. Astonishing results can be achieved with just 10 outstanding nature experts, while 50 will turn the Day into an exceptional event, and 80 or more will make it truly spectacular!

Should you have difficulties to identify enough or the right experts, please don't hesitate to contact the Action Day helpdesk at bday@geo-media.de, which has contacts to international networks of scientists (such as the Global Biodiversity Information Facility, GBIF, and the Global Taxonomy Initiative, GTI) and may be able to assist.



Taxonomists are core element of every Biodiversity Action Day

2. Promoters and Multipliers

You will also need promoters and multipliers, to help you attract interest in the Action Day and to promote its outcomes later on.

You may want to consider inviting

- **Journalists**, ideally from different types of media (press, radio, TV, online media). For extensive information about working with the media, please refer to chapter 7.
- **Political decision makers** from the local, regional or national level: for example, the mayor, the provincial governor, the national CBD Focal Point or the Minister of Environment. If you have good contacts, you may also consider inviting other sectoral Ministers – but don't be too disappointed if they cannot make it. The officials might open and close the Day, participate in the activities and help communicate the results into the political decision making process.
- **VIPs** (»Very Important Persons«), like representatives of religious communities, locally known celebrities (e.g., singers, actors or athletes), directors of important business organisations, or any other well-reputed people you can think of and who can help you promote the Day and frame the programme.

3. Communities and the broader public

The extent to which you want to involve the broader public, and which type of communities or organisations you are going to invite, is entirely your choice. It starts with deciding how many people you actually want to participate: The range at former Action Days has been from just 50 to over 1,000 people. Any number between these two figures is fine, as long as it suits your purposes and possibilities.

The next decision is whether you want to select and invite specific groups, or whether you want to publicly announce the Day and welcome anyone who is interested. At the other end of the spectrum, you may decide to limit participation exclusively to experts and a few journalists.

Here is a selection of groups you may want to consider

- The local and/or indigenous communities who live in the selected area, and who may benefit from its diversity
- Schools or classes of pupils
- University students
- Local clubs or associations
- »Everyone«, i.e., making your Action Day a public event

One thing to remember with any group – from experts to promoters and the broader public – is that you may need to stir their motivation to participate. Some people may be quite happy about your invitation; for example, taxonomists don't usually get much attention, so they may appreciate the opportunity to shed some public light on their expertise. Others, for example some politicians, may challenge your promotion skills a little more to make visible what's »in it« for them.

In any case, it's important to decide on participants at the earliest possible stage of your project, to produce information material that attracts their interest, and to make sure to invite them in time, so that they can save the date.

Checklist 4 : Participants

Determining the participants

With your objectives and the characteristics of the site in mind, discuss and decide:

- How «big» an event you want to make your Action Day, i.e., how many people you want to join.
- The type and number of experts you need for the Action Day:
 - Biologists and taxonomists
 - Other specialists (geographers, economists, sociologists, teachers, NGO experts, «TEEB ambassadors», ...)
- The promoters you want to invite:
 - Journalists
 - Politicians
 - Other VIPs
- Public groups that you would like to participate:
 - Which groups? How many people? Special invitations or public announcement?
 - Local or indigenous people that will be involved: Who, how many people?

Invitations and follow-up

- Screen your own contacts and those of others for experts, journalists and VIPs.
- Prepare information material about the day (you may also use the leaflet and video at www.biodiversity-day.info, which are provided in English, Spanish and French).
- Compile a list of invitees.
- Send out invitations with information material.
- Follow-up confirmations.

Briefing key participants

- Meet participants for specific briefings about the site and preparation of the Day
 - Experts
 - Journalists
 - VIPs
 - Representatives of the invited public groups
- Where necessary, make agreements with key participants

Chapter 5: Promotion

Beating the drum for your Action Day

Good promotion of the national Action Day will help draw attention to the issues at stake: Biodiversity and ecosystems, and the vital services they provide to humankind. It will also highlight the need for inspiring communication of these issues. In addition, the Action Day may help cast a positive light on key actors – the minister, rangers, farmers, fishermen, a local NGO, indigenous people or others who may not always receive the full appreciation they deserve.

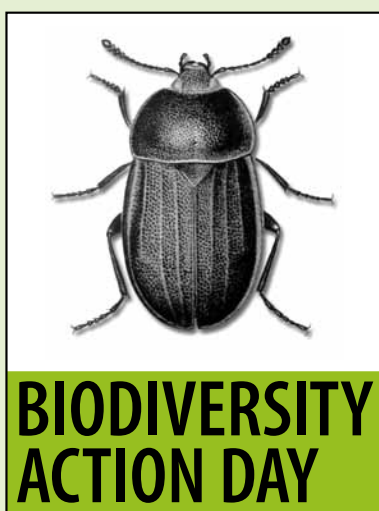
Also, your Action Day will be part of the global mosaic of biodiversity and ecosystems. Compilations of reports, photos and possibly film material of all Action Days will be presented to an international audience.

The means for good promotion are diverse: You may produce advertising material like posters or leaflets, you may take out public ads about the event, you may create a website or produce a video clip. If you involve schools, you could organise a student competition, for example, for nature photos or posters. Also, don't forget communication channels that already exist: Your own or like-minded organisations may issue a newsletter where you can place articles about the Day. Local radio stations may be interested to broadcast interviews about the event. Some NGOs issue journals and may be willing to inform their members. Also, you are welcome to use the promotional leaflets and video from www.biodiversity-day.info (available in English, Spanish and French).

During the Day itself, you may want to distribute giveaways to the participants, like pencils, caps, bags, cups, T-shirts or other things that carry the name, logo and/or slogan of your Action Day. Having said this, there are a few minimal design guidelines for the global Action Day Initiative – see Box. They can be applied with any common MS Word programme and should be used by all countries to support international branding.

Which means of promotion you choose depends again on your objectives and also on your resources. Speaking of resources: you may be able to identify sponsors to support your promotion, please refer to Chapter 9 for ideas.

Design guidelines for the global Biodiversity Action Day initiative



Fonts

Regular text: Verdana

Headings: Times bold

Special text (footnotes, captions): Times

Biodiversity Action Day logo

This is the logo for the global initiative, which we ask you to integrate in your publications.

Colour values

Green (screen): R 119, G 180, B 31.

Green (print): C 61, M 0, Y 100, K 0.

Red (screen): R 226, G 0, B 26.

Red (print): C 0, M 100, Y 100, K 0.

Logos of Sponsors and Partners

The logos of Sponsors and Partners of the global initiative are shown on the front and back covers of this guideline. If you receive sponsoring, we ask you to integrate the logo of the respective sponsor in your publications. You are free to «brand» your Day with the other logos, too, if you like – as well as using your own ones. All logos are provided on www.biodiversity-day.info under «Resources».

Checklist 5 : Promotion

Decide with your partners which of the following suggestions you are going to pick up:

Promotional material and communication channels

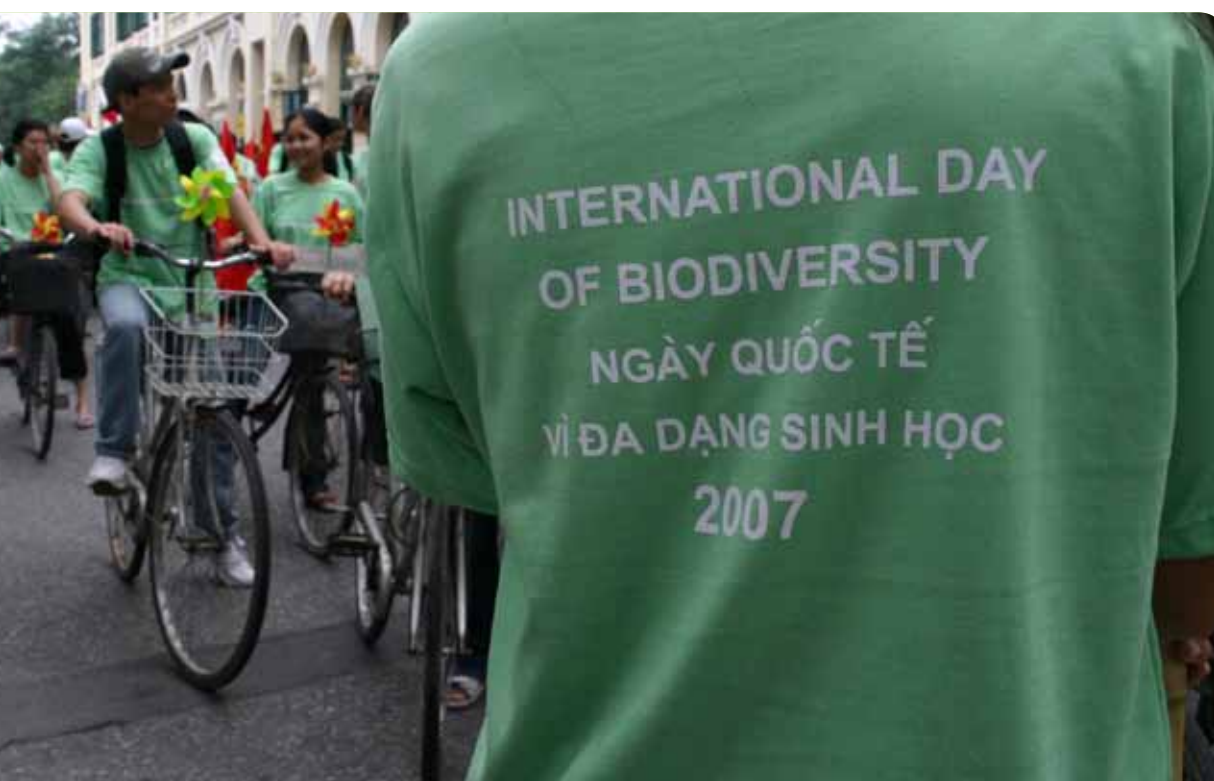
- Posters
- Leaflets
- Special websites, special interest web portals
- Special profiles and posts in social networks, like facebook
- Twitter messages
- Video clips
- Newsletter
- Public journals, NGO journals
- Local radio or television
- Student competition
- Public ads

Elements of a «corporate identity»

- Special business cards for Action Day organisers
- Special stationery (e.g., paper and pens with Action Day logo and/or slogan)
- Giveaways for the participants, e.g., pencils, caps, bags, cups, T-shirts, etc.

Resources

- Check internet resources like www.biodiversity-day.info or www.cbd.int/2010 to support your promotion.
- Approach potential sponsors to help promote the national Action Day.



Chapter 6 : Activities on and around the Action Day

Conceptual decisions and practical preparations

This chapter is about »the big day« itself and provides hints to help ensure that your Biodiversity Action Day runs smoothly. Obviously, the actual script for the Day will differ considerably from country to country and from ecosystem to ecosystem.

In any event, the first thing you will want to specify is: What are your **intentions**? What do you want to see at the end, to be able to say that the Day was well worth the effort?

Next, you need to make a final decision about the **date** of the Action Day (preferably between 1st May and 5th June) and define the **time frame**: half a day, a full day, or a day and a night? Will it start in the morning or in the evening? At what time does it end?

All this will influence your further decisions regarding activities: What exactly do you want to happen during the Day? What is possible at this specific site, and with the people you are going to invite? What do you want the participants to do and **experience**?

Apart from all these conceptual decisions, there are various logistical and organisational preparations. Checklist 6 provides details on this.



Species identification during and after the biomonitoring:
Action Day at Bavaria Forest 2008

1. Basic elements of a Biodiversity Action Day

There is one **core activity** that should be part of every Action Day in every country: The participants should engage in some sort of hands-on »**biomonitoring**«. That is, they should have the opportunity to walk into the chosen ecosystem to search and identify different species (and where possible, collect samples). For this activity, they will need species lists for the site or at least be equipped with reference books. If there are lay people amongst the participants, groups should be accompanied and supported by experts. And, at the end of this exercise, all participants should be given the opportunity to get back together again, show their results and discuss what they found.

The **task** that was originally created for the biomonitoring – and that is still used – by GEO Magazine is to »Find as many species as you can in 24 hours!«. This is a very straightforward activity that everyone can understand. It also allows identification of species that only come out at night, which makes the exercise all the more interesting. However, it implies that some or all participants will have to stay overnight – and that may not be possible everywhere.

Depending on your objectives, you may define variations of the task: It can be less than 24 hours. Also, you may decide to focus the monitoring on particular kinds of species (for example, »all insects«, »all reptiles« or »all fungi«), or on particular habitats of the ecosystem (e.g., »at the waterfront« or »in the forest«). Or choose any other variation that suits your objectives and is doable at your site. What's important: **The task must be simple enough for everyone to understand what they're supposed to do!** We recommend that you define the task together with some of your experts, to ensure a focus that your participants can work with

Speaking of the **participants**: There are different ways to involve them, and that's your choice. Do you want everyone to engage actively and throughout the day in searching for and identifying the species? Or are there groups of participants that you want to act as observers only? How exactly are you going to involve the media people? Do you want each journalist to accompany one participant group throughout the day, or do you want them to roam around and glance at all groups?

Finally, you need to decide how to end the Day. In any case, there should be some kind of **get-together** for the participants to exchange and discuss their experiences. From a scientific perspective, the results will be preliminary at this point. So you should aim for an informal reflection to highlight key insights that can be taken out of the biomonitoring.

The following questions may help you structure and enrich this discussion:

- What have we found and observed?
- How intact does this ecosystem seem to us?
- Have we seen degradation – and if so, of what kind?
- Why is this ecosystem important for humans? What services does it generate and who benefits from them?
- How could this ecosystem be better protected?

Biodiversity Action Day at a glance: Basic elements

1. Arrivals and registration
2. Welcome and opening
3. General introduction with explanation of objectives and task(s) for the Day
4. Division of participants into groups, assigning one or more experts to each group
5. Briefing of each group on their specific assignment, according to the particular knowledge of (their) expert(s), and equipping them with the necessary materials.
6. Briefing of media representatives (how to accompany the groups; who are protagonists that can be interviewed; etc.)
7. Biomonitoring: Searching for and identifying the species (this will take several hours)
8. Get-together for groups to share their experiences and discuss implications.
9. Closure and good-byes

2. Optional activities on or around the Action Day

Once you've defined the core programme, you may want to think of supporting activities to enhance the impact of the Day. The following are optional suggestions that you may or may not want to consider. Of course you are free to generate your own ideas, too!

In any case, we hope that you'll be inspired by the following list of possible modules:

- Having a politician or other VIP participate, or at last formally open or close the day.
- Asking one of the experts to hold a short, inspiring introductory speech.
- Offering some sort of cultural pre- or interlude: a short play, some music or dancing.
- Creating a photo or other exhibition to be shown at the site.
- Organising a panel discussion about the results of the Day.
- Concluding the Day in a relaxed atmosphere, with a barbecue or around a fireplace.
- Presenting some of the Day's preliminary results at a Gala Dinner.
- Holding a press conference before, at the end or in follow-up of the Day.
- Issuing a newsletter or online blog in the run-up to the Action Day.
- Using photos taken during the Day for a poster exhibition elsewhere, e.g., the capital.
- Producing video clips of the Action Day and putting them on the internet.
- Embedding the Action Day into a larger event, like a festival or a thematic week.
- Organising a symposium, perhaps in the capital, to analyse and discuss the outcomes of the Day with a larger audience.

For more inspiration and ideas, you may browse www.biodiversity-day.info, which provides extensive documentation of past Action Day set-ups in various countries.



Species identification during and after the biomonitoring: Action Day in Mali 2005

Checklist 6: Conceptualising and preparing the Action Day

General set-up

- Decide on the final date and determine the time frame: beginning and end.
- Decide how the Day will be formally opened and closed.
- Decide about any special activities you want to offer.
- Decide about and contact any VIPs that you would like to involve.
- Determine how and where the participants are going to get together to present their results and discuss implications.
- Decide whether and how you are going to evaluate the Day and its impact.

Biomonitoring (this should be discussed with the experts)

- Specify the focus of the biomonitoring (all species or particular groups of species?).
- Clarify how to work with those participant groups who are not experts.
- Formulate the task(s) for these participant groups, and how they can benefit from the specific knowledge of the experts.
- Determine the tools and materials needed for the biomonitoring, e.g.
 - Reference books
 - Prepared species lists for the site (if possible; bday@geo-media.de may be able to help)
 - Magnifying glasses, binoculars and/or microscopes
 - Depending on the biomonitoring focus: nets, brailers, knives, glue, ...
 - Paper and pens
 - Laptops

Programme

- Prepare a script for the Action Day (to be used by the organisers), including timing of activities, necessary materials, responsibilities.
- Secure provision of biomonitoring materials as discussed with the experts.
- Prepare for the presentation and discussion of the biomonitoring experiences:
- Reserve the venue, ensuring that there are sufficient chairs, tables, etc.
- Arrange for flipcharts and pens and/or procure laptop, data projector, screen.
- If needed: check availability of a speaker's desk, a stage, etc.
- Prepare any (optional) official and/or cultural elements of your programme, e.g.
 - Write opening speech.
 - Organise music or dance presentation, photo exhibition or similar as needed.
 - Book barbecue, dinner or other element you may want to offer.

Participants' orientation and well-being

- Organise transport to the site and/or provide directions on how to get there.
- Prepare programme printouts and name tags for the participants.
- Ensure availability of
 - Sufficient drinking water (!), possibly other drinks and/or food
 - Sanitation
 - First aid
- If necessary and possible: Prepare overview maps of the site for participants.
- Organise and brief scouts (e.g. from a nearby school) to help orientate participant groups.
- If accommodation is required: Make reservations.

Chapter 7: Press and Media

Casting public light on the Action Day and Biodiversity

This Action Day is about communicating biodiversity, and the media play a crucial role as intermediates between experts and the general public. The media should therefore be involved in the entire process: From the early planning phase to the event itself and beyond. Generally, your media work will be guided by two major objectives:

- Ensure broad media coverage of the Action Day itself.
- Sensitize the media for environmental issues in general and biodiversity in particular.

Ultimately, you will want to encourage the media to continue to report on these issues far beyond the Action Day, and to keep the general public interested in the topic. Your media work therefore involves three phases: Before, during and after the Action Day.

1. Before the Action Day

Who deals with the Media?

It is crucial to designate at least one individual from your team who is responsible for the media work. Ideally, it should be someone with journalistic and/or public-relations experience. Also, be sure to involve your Action Day partners and make the media work a joint effort: It's important that you speak with one voice, come out with common press releases (e.g., with all partner logos) and jointly organise major events, like press conferences or briefings. If you hold a press conference, your partners should be with you on the panel, for instance, to explain their motivation to be part of this project.

What do we have to offer?

Any successful media work requires key messages, relevant information and possible »stories«. To prepare this, put yourself in the shoes of a journalist: What could be interesting and attractive for the media and their audience? What kind of stories do they need? Which protagonists, e.g., experts, are active communicators that could be interviewed by the press – before and/or during the event?

Whom to contact?

Do consider different types of media: Newspapers, radio, TV, news agencies and online media ... at the local, regional, national or international level. Remember that different media have different target groups, who might be interested in different aspects of the subject. You should therefore prepare different distribution lists, according to the type(s) of media you want to address and their specific orientation. Find out which editorial sections might be interested in the topic, and try to identify the journalists who deal with environmental issues. It's best to contact them **personally** well in advance.

When to start contacting the media?

Should you consider holding a press conference before the event, a good time for this is about one month in advance – but be sure to have all the relevant information prepared. Alternatively, you can send out a press release to announce the event.



Radio interview at Biodiversity Action Day in Honduras, 2005



TV covering aquatic analysis at Austria Biodiversity Action Day

Logistics

You want the media to report positively on your event and its topics. Therefore, it's important to make the journalists' life as easy as possible – before and especially during the Day. This involves providing handouts (e.g., a press kit) and preparing possible stories. You may even consider organising a press conference. In any case, think of how you want the media to work at the site. Take care of logistics: Provide the journalists with transport, food and beverages during the Day, and check whether they need accommodation. Should you expect international media representatives and they require special visa or accreditation, it's good to let them know early.

Story

It's important to think of what could make interesting stories for the media. Ideally, start early to develop stories together with the journalists, so that they can go right into effective work on the Action Day. Note that different media have different requirements: Not all of them may want to go for the same story, see the same spot or interview the same people.

Remember that journalists need interesting people to talk to. So you should suggest local protagonists: beneficiaries, experts, perhaps a politician or another prominent person who can contribute to the story. A typical protagonist benefits from the ecosystem service, and/or his livelihood is affected by the state of the ecosystem, whether it's intact or deteriorating. For example, the loss of biodiversity might affect people and contribute to poverty. If fish species in a lake are being lost, a fisherman may be a good protagonist for an interview. Alternatively, if a local group takes care of conserving a forest, you may suggest them for the story. There are many other options. The local people will be able to direct you to these personalities.

You should also help the interview partners (protagonists) to prepare for their role on the Day. Remember that photographers and TV camera teams need good pictures – think of possible spots or scenarios you can suggest to them. Radio journalists need sound clips for their work – check what would be possible interviews, acoustic scenarios etc.

Timing

With regards to the media it is crucial to choose an appropriate date for your event. The 22nd of May 2010, International Biodiversity Day, is a Saturday. **Ideally, your event takes place a few days earlier, so that the media can publish their stories on the 22nd of May.** This is particularly interesting for newspapers, as they often provide space for such stories in their weekend issue. If the event is on the Saturday itself, the first possible day for a printed story to come out is Monday. This is usually not a very good day for coverage, due to lots of other weekend events and limited space in the paper.

If you can't do the Action Day before the 22nd of May, you may consider focussing on the 5th of June. Being the International Day for Environment, this is another suitable day for stories on a Biodiversity Action Day. Generally, we recommend that you find out when the Media prefer to come out with their stories and consider this in your planning.

2. During the Action Day

Once everything is set, you might want to offer another press briefing, just before you take the journalists out to the field. At the site, assign someone to accompany the media people throughout the Day and support them while they take interviews and pictures. If there are international journalists around, they might need interpreters. Make sure to take notes which media are present and that you get their contact details. Ask where and when exactly the reports will be published and how you can get samples.

3. After the Action Day

You should analyse how your Action Day messages have been received and which reports were published. Also, it's important to keep in contact with the journalists, both with those that covered the Day and with those that did not. You may offer them future stories, topics, aspects or interview partners related to biodiversity.

Tools for media work

There are several different tools for media work: E.g., press release, press conference, interviews and background talks. Here are some basics principles for each of these:

Press Release

- Answer the 6 Questions: What, who, where, when, how and why?
- Use a clear structure.
- Make short sentences and use clear, understandable, reader-friendly language.
- Use examples to transport your key message

Press Conference

- Prepare a panel. Not exceeding 3-4 speakers!
- Brief the speakers.
- Make sure that a moderator guides the press conference.
- Leave enough time for questions.

Interviews

- Prepare your key message carefully.
- Keep in mind that everything you say in an interview can be published.
- Use clear, audience-friendly language.
- Keep in mind that your voice (radio) and your visual appearance (TV) are crucial.

Background Talks

- Are different from interviews in that they primarily serve to inform the journalists.
- Nevertheless, a journalist might want to use some quotations: Clarify with the journalist which ones are appropriate to be published and which ones are not.

Checklist 7: Press and Media

Before the Action Day

- Designate a person from amongst your team who is responsible for media work.
- Identify and formulate your key message.
- Think of possible stories, protagonists, picture opportunities and scenarios that can be suggested to print journalists, radio and TV teams during the Action Day event.
- Collect media addresses and contacts (local, regional, national and international).
- Make sure to distinguish between print, radio, TV, news agencies and online media.
- Find out about the relevant editorial sections and journalists dealing with environmental subjects, and note down their addresses/phone numbers.
- Contact them personally in advance and inform them about the Action Day.
- Write distribution lists for different types of media.
- Check whether some media could be official partners or sponsors for your Action Day.
- Publish a press release and additional information to announce the Action Day.
- Prepare a press kit (final press release, background information like fact sheets on biodiversity, the ecosystem that will be visited, the partners, the participants, the protagonists and their stories, perhaps photos and/or DVDs).
- Possibly organise a preparatory press briefing or conference.
- Send additional invitations to the media for the actual Action Day.
- Prepare sheets for replies, so that you know who will participate.
- Prepare transport, food and drinks, accommodation for the media.
- Where applicable, inform international media about visa or accreditation needs.
- Inform the media about weather conditions on the spot.
- Brief possible protagonists, beneficiaries, experts, participants on their role as interview partners.
- Possibly organise a second press briefing or conference just before the event.

During the Action Day

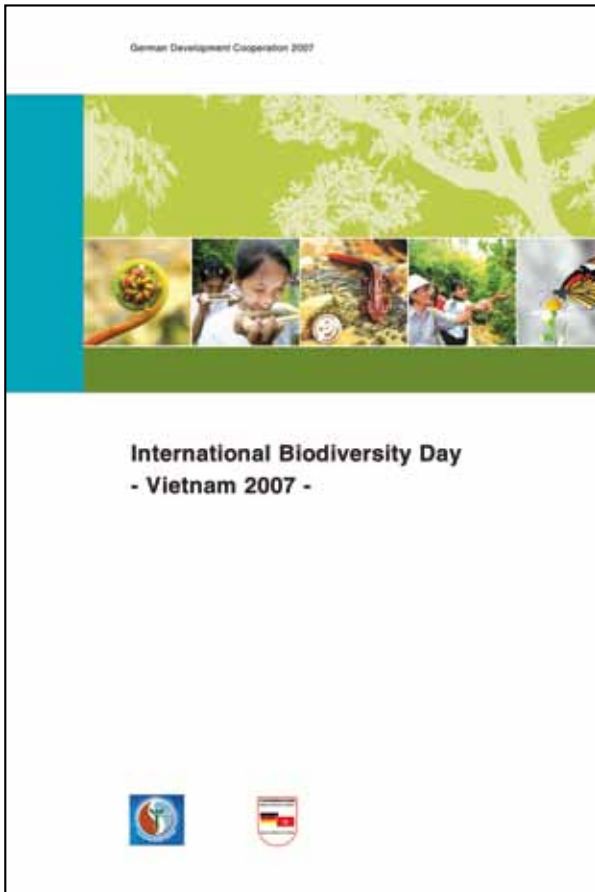
- Have all the logistics and information material prepared.
- Have someone to accompany the media at the site.
- If you expect international media, provide translators / interpreters.
- Make a list of all the media and journalists that are present at the Action Day.

After the Action Day

- Make a list of reports that were published.
- Ask newspapers for copies of their articles.
- Ask radio and TV stations for recordings of their broadcasts.
- Analyse them: How did the media report about the Day? How was your message received?
- Compile a documentation of press reports, radio and TV spots/interviews.
- Make a list of possible recipients of that documentation and send it to them.
- Update your media addresses with the new contacts you made during the Action Day.
- Continue to inform journalists about biodiversity issues.
- Offer follow-up stories to those journalists and media who were present.
- Offer wrap-ups and information material/pictures to those who were not present.

Chapter 8: Other Reporting and Communication

Telling the world about your Action Day



Official Report of Biodiversity Day 2007 in Vietnam

Communication is indispensable for the success of every campaign and project. Besides involving the press and the media, you should take your own steps to communicate the activities and results of the Day and support it with successful PR at the local or national level.

Also, since your Action Day is part of a global initiative, there are certain minimal reporting requirements to support communication efforts for biodiversity at international level. Please don't forget to report back on your activities and major events to the global Action Day coordination office at GeoMedia in Bonn, Germany (bday@geo-media.de).

International level

Of course you can use your own national communication and PR (see further below) as a basis for your reports to the international level. Here is some orientation for you about the kind of planned reports and presentations at the international level:

Reports from all participating countries will be collected for a final print documentation, to provide different stakeholders (politicians, decision-makers, sponsors and the broader public) with an overview of the world-wide activities around Global Action Day 2010. Summaries of all Action Days will also be published on www.biodiversity-day.info.

In addition, a special brochure and possibly a film or power point presentation featuring highlights from different countries is envisaged for presentation at the United Nations General Assembly (UN GA) in September in New York, and at the 10th Conference of the Parties (COP 10) in October 2010 in Nagoya, Japan.

Of course, any additional opportunities will be sought to use the global mosaic of Actions Days to draw international attention to biodiversity and the importance of ecosystems. The box on the next page outlines the minimal reporting requirements that you are asked to provide for the international presentations.

National level

Which tools to choose?

You are free to decide which forms and tools of communication you want to use in your country, and which ones are most appropriate with regards to your specific activities and situation. A basic communication tool would be a leaflet/flyer providing key information around your Action Day, the selected ecosystem and the planned activities. You may also think of some broader information, like a several-page brochure that allows you to add pictures and background material on biodiversity and ecosystems. Or you may want to consider addressing a publication to a certain target group, for example, a leaflet or newsletter for schools.

How to design the publications?

Make sure that you use a clear, snappy and reader-friendly language and format to attract as much attention as

possible. Take into account the specific interest and questions that your target group might have about biodiversity in general and the Action Day in particular. Please make use of the design guidelines provided in Chapter 5, to support overall branding of the initiative. Within these minimal guidelines, you are of course free to add anything that suits your purposes and target groups.

Reporting requirements for the international level

Before your national Action Day (deadline: 31st March 2010)

- A profile of your project with main facts and figures for the website (about 1,500 to 2,500 characters, which amounts to 1 page max)
 - Country, region, site and date of your Action Day
 - Special characteristics of the ecosystem and why you chose it
 - Focus of the planned bio monitoring (what will be the task for the Day?)
 - Type and planned number of participants
- Optional: A selection of 3-5 attractive photos of the site and/or its people, a short video clip, interview or story.

After your national Action Day (deadline: 30th of June 2010)

- A summary report that describes the main activities during the Action Day (3,000-4,000 characters = about 2 pages max. Please make sure that your summary report is written in a clear, attractive and entertaining way.)
 - Country, region, site and date of your Action Day
 - Special characteristics of the ecosystem and why you chose it
 - Focus of the activities and main findings
 - Type and actual number of participants
 - A selection of 10 to 20 attractive photos from your Action Day
- Optional: Copies of or links to media reports about your Action Day.
- Optional: An additional interview with or of portray of an interesting protagonist or an anecdote around your Action Day (1,500-2,500 characters = about 1 page max)
- Optional: Attractive Audio- and Video-clips, produced throughout the “Making-of” the Action Day, as well as during (or maybe after) the event.

Please submit all your documents in **English**. If that is not possible, **French, Spanish or German** are fine, too – and a »courtesy translation« into English is always welcome.

Very important: Whenever you submit photos, videos or other audio-visual material, please ensure world-wide copy and/or usage rights!

Other options

Besides print publications, you may think of audio-visual material, like a CD or DVD about the Action Day. A special website is another, very attractive tool – especially, if you offer interactive elements, like a chat or forum where users can contribute to the subject. Do make sure that any chat or forum is supervised by someone from your team – you don't want to see racist or otherwise inappropriate contributions on your website!

When to communicate

A **flyer** is most suitable to announce the event, as it provides only basic information. A **newsletter** may be used before the event to draw people's attention to biodiversity and your activities; a follow-up issue could present the results. For a **brochure**, you will need material from the Day (pictures, stories, interviews), so this could be a perfect tool in the follow-up of the event. DVDs and other **audio-visual material** are also best published after the Day, because this is where you will get the necessary pictures, audio-visual clips or interviews. You could also think of a »Making-of« DVD, with portraits, interviews, or clips showing how your team prepares for the event. Special **websites**, in turn, should be created well before the event and be updated throughout the project.

For any kind of publication, do make sure that you collect relevant material, interesting stories, clips and pictures throughout the process. And remember: it's better to focus on a few communication tools and maintain them well, rather than having a whole series of them that you cannot look after. If your budget allows, you may want to consider professional support to help create and maintain your communications.

Checklist 8: Other Reporting and Communication

International level

Before the Action Day

- Collect basic facts and figures for your project profile.
- Optional: Select photos, short clips or stories that you might want to add.
- Submit your material by 31st March at the latest to bday@geo-media.de.

After the Action Day

- Prepare your summary report of the Action Day.
- Select the photos to accompany your report.
- Optional: Collect copies or links to media reports.
- Optional: Collect possible additional stories, interviews, portrays of protagonists or pictures that you may want to add to your report.
- Optional: Select audio - and video-clips that you may want to see published.
- Deliver your material by the 30th of June to bday@geo-media.de.
- Make sure you get copies of the final publications so that you can link them, for example to your own Action Day website.

National level

- Identify the type of publications that you plan to produce.
- Identify someone within you team who is responsible for the PR material.
- Check whether you might need (and can afford) professional support of a journalist, PR-expert, photographer, camera team and/or graphic design expert.
- Collect basic information for your material.
- Think of possible stories that you might want to publish, and of possible interview partners or protagonists that suit your documentation.
- Contact these protagonists and interview them.
- Take a few pictures – or if you like, audio- and video-clips – throughout the process, which you can use for all your material later on.
- Check what your partners can contribute to your publications.
- Compile a list of recipients for your publications (like environmental organisations, schools, local authorities and decision makers, broader public, companies, media, ...)
- Determine the format, size and design of your publications.
- Select the pictures to be used.
- Consider additional illustrations, like graphs or maps.
- Set a deadline when each publication needs to be ready.
- Set up an editorial team – or at least, identify an editor within your team.
- Draft the documents by using the collected information and other materials.
Make sure to write in a clear, snappy, reader-friendly and entertaining way.
- Determine the distribution channels for your publications (hand-out, e-mail, other?).
- For print publications: Select an affordable printing company.
- Set the final date of release for each publication.



Journalists ready for taking off for an aerial view in Hondurian governmental helicopter

Chapter 9: Financial Aspects

Budgeting and possible sources of support

Considering the great diversity of countries that participate in this global project, and the broad range of possible programme designs, this chapter can only provide very general hints regarding budgeting and possible sources of support. Please ignore hints that don't apply to your situation; they may be useful for others.

Generally, the budget for your Action Day will depend largely on the location, the number of participants and any special activities you may decide to offer. Speaking in extremes: It's obviously less costly to take 50 participants to an easily accessible site and conclude the day around a fireplace, than it is to get 1,000 people to a remote area and invite them to a gala dinner at night. Both extremes are possible – as is anything in between. Your budget will, at least in parts, determine what is doable in your situation.

Important: Please remember that you are **not** in a competition for the biggest or most expensive event! This project is about quality, not quantity: A small, decent programme with a few competent experts and some motivated participants can be more exciting and create more impact than a glamorous happening with lots of people who are not really interested in the topic.

From experience, the main budget items for the Action Day are:

- Transport to and from the site
- Food and beverage for the participants
- Accommodation (where applicable)
- Special evening activities (like a dinner or barbecue)
- Film production (where applicable)

If your budget is limited (and whose budget is not?), you may want to look for sponsors who are willing to provide support. In some countries, there are special public funds that you can apply for. In other places, private organisations are more likely to contribute.

We recommend that you consider various options: Some sponsors may be so excited about this initiative that they offer a lump-sum grant to your Action Day budget. Others may be willing to finance specific elements, like transport, the production of giveaways or a particular activity that you would like to organise.

Another option is trying to get price reductions from service providers. For example, if your Action Day involves accommodation for participants, the hotel(s) may be willing to give you a bulk discount. Or you may be able to find a caterer who provides food and/or soft drinks at a reduced rate. A print shop may be willing to give you a special rate for your flyers or brochures. Or, if you are organising the Day at a remote site, certain tour operators may be ready to grant special prices for transport.

Also, don't only think »big« and not exclusively »cash«: In-kind contributions, even small ones, may also reduce the strain on your budget. For example, a local school may offer its hall without charge, for the get-together at the end of the Day. A bus company might provide free rides for your participants if you in turn offer to put their logo on your information material. A public or private organisation may give its corporate stationery, so you don't need to buy paper and pens. Overall, identifying sponsors and contributors is often a matter of creativity: If you scan what you need for your planned activities, and brainstorm with a few colleagues, you are likely to come up with surprisingly many ideas.

In any case, it is usually very helpful to put yourself in the shoes of potential sponsors before approaching them: What may be interesting for this particular person or organisation? What benefits might they draw from contributing to your project? The more interesting your request is **for them**, the more likely you are to get their support.

Since the circumstances regarding finance and sponsors are so different from country to country, from region to region and from Action Day to Action Day, this chapter comes without a checklist. It's obvious that you (a) need to budget all your activities and (b) will want to identify sponsors of different kinds. We advise that you involve a qualified finance person (and perhaps an experienced fundraiser) in planning your Action Day.

Lodges and local caterers offered special discounts for a Gala dinner after the South African Action Day



For inspiration: Sponsoring examples from previous Action Days

Corporates

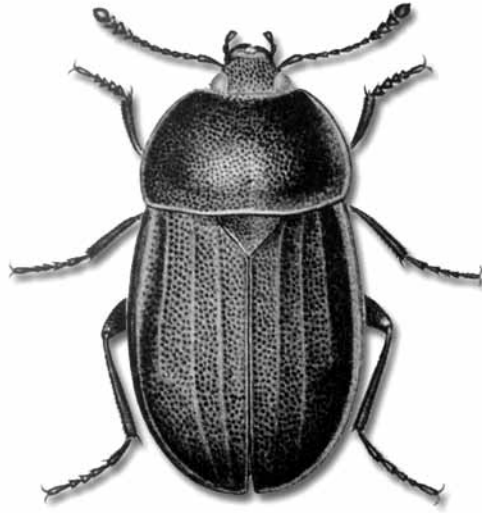
- The Colombian airline »Avianca« reported on the 2001 national Action Day in their inflight magazine.
- The German bio-softdrink company »Bionade« sponsored the drinks for the 2008 Action Day in South Africa.
- The Swiss herb drops company »Ricola« contributed a grant to an Action Day that focused on herbs.

Public organisations

- At Biodiversity Action Days in Honduras and South Africa, the Military provided free helicopter flights over the sites, for journalists to take aerial photographs.
- ÖBB, the Austrian railways company, helped with transport to and from the Action Day site.
- The »Alfred Wegener Institute for Polar and Marine Research (AWI)« provided a ship and three boats in 2006, to accompany an Action Day at the German North Sea coast from the waters.

Private organisations

- The »Deutsche Wildtier Stiftung« (Wild Animals Foundation) offered their Park in East Germany in 2009 and sponsored accommodation, food and drinks.
- The German NGO »BUND« paid for a coordinator for half a year, to prepare an Action Day on seven locations in the "Green Belt" (former German-German border).



**BIODIVERSITY
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Convention on
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