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World governments fail to deliver on 2010 biodiversity target

World leaders have failed to deliver commitments made in 2002 to reduce the global rate of biodiversity loss by 2010, and have instead overseen alarming biodiversity declines. These findings are the result of a new paper published in the leading journal *PLoS ONE* and represent the first assessment of how the targets made through the 2002 Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) have not been met.

Compiling over 30 indicators – measures of different aspects of biodiversity, including changes in species' populations and risk of extinction, habitat extent and community composition – the study found no evidence for a significant reduction in the rate of decline of biodiversity, and that the pressures facing biodiversity continue to affect ecosystems", said Dr Stuart Butchart, of the United Nations Environment Programme World Conservation Monitoring Centre and BirdLife International, and the paper's lead author.

"Our data show that 2010 will not be the year that biodiversity loss was halted, but it needs to be the year in which we start taking the issue seriously and substantially increase our efforts to take care of what is left of our planet."

The indicators included in the study were developed and synthesised through the 2010 Biodiversity Indicators Partnership – a collaboration of over 40 international organisations and agencies developing global biodiversity indicators and the leading source of information on trends in global biodiversity.

"Since 1970, we have reduced animal populations by 30%, the area of mangroves and sea grasses by 20% and the coverage of living corals by 40%", said the United Nations Environment Programme's Chief Scientist Prof Joseph Alcamo. "These losses are clearly unsustainable, since biodiversity makes a key contribution to human well-being and sustainable development, as recognised by the UN Millennium Development Goals."

The UNEP World Conservation Monitoring Centre is the biodiversity assessment and biodiversity policy support arm of the United Nations Environment Programme, the world's foremost intergovernmental environmental organisation. The Centre has been in operation for over 25 years, providing objective, scientifically rigorous products and services to help decision makers recognise the value of biodiversity and apply this knowledge to all that they do. The Centre's core business is locating data about biodiversity and its conservation, interpreting and analysing that data to provide assessments and policy analysis, and making the results available to both national and international decision makers and businesses.

BirdLife International is a global partnership of conservation organisations working in more than 100 countries and territories that, together, are the leading authority on the status of birds, their habitats and the issues and problems affecting them.

The United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), established in 1972, is the voice for the environment within the United Nations system. UNEP acts as a catalyst, advocate, educator and facilitator to promote the wise use and sustainable

