

Introduction

The Bioeventos 2010 are a set of initiatives to be held in Portugal to commemorate 2010 as the International Year of Biodiversity, which aim to illustrate the role and importance of biodiversity for a sustainable future and the role of human societies in their preservation.

The activities proposed here will reach a broad spectrum of the Portuguese society, from the more specialized and informed audience on the subject to the public in general. The proposed initiatives are aimed at a wide audience and use different forms of communication.

This program is a joint initiative of the Portuguese National Museum of Natural History and the Centre for Environmental Biology, the main entities of the University of Lisbon devoted to biodiversity research and environmental education.

The Bioeventos 2010 program

Train of Biodiversity - 13 March

This train journey explores the wealth of natural and cultural heritage of Portugal through various areas of scientific knowledge, such as biology, geography, history or sociology. Using an environmentally friendly transport, researchers from the University of Lisbon will be the guides of this initiative. The guests will be passengers representing all sections of the public, including Members of Parliament, managers of private companies, celebrities (athletes, actors, musicians, artists) and people from various professions.

Conferences- Part I

The first series of conferences aims to discuss major issues, problems and solutions related to the current loss of biodiversity, in order to captivate the interest of various sectors of civil society. The conferences will be held by internationally recognized experts and include the topics:

12 April - BIODIVERSITY AND RECONCILIATION ECOLOGY - **Mike Rosenzweig** (Univ. Arizona, USA)

10 May - HUMAN BIODIVERSITY - **Jonathan Marks** (Univ. North Carolina, USA)

17 May - BIODIVERSITY AND CONSERVATION PRACTICES - **Ana Sofia Rodrigues** (CEFE-CNRS, France)

7 June - BIODIVERSITY, EVOLUTION AND GMOS - **Pierre-Henry Gouyon** (MNHN, France)

Trail of Biodiversity

A visit to the field station of the University of Lisbon (Grândola, SW Portugal) begins with a morning walk in different landscapes of this region. This visit will mainly focus on various aspects of flora and fauna and the traditional management of the cork oak woodland. Visitors will be invited to try some of the methods used by field biologists. Over 2010, three visits in different times of the year will illustrate the changing environment in the spring, summer and autumn.

Exhibition: Insects in Order- 27 May

Insects, its diversity of species, forms and habits of life, represent a major part of animal diversity. With often negative connotation in the minds of Western culture, insects are essential elements in the sustainability of the planet by the diversity of functions they perform in the ecosystems. The exhibition "Insects in Order" will help to dispel the negative image of insects and will promote a better knowledge of the Portuguese insects. Visitors that enter the exhibition will receive a small box with a specimen of an insect. To identify it, to know its characteristics and specific name, visitors will traverse a dichotomous key constructed in the exhibition space. This key looks like a maze, with a series of marked trails on the ground that make the connection between benches until the correct identification.

B-Day: Day of Biodiversity- 22 May

B-Day is, of course, the International Biodiversity Day, commemorated on the 22nd of May. The challenge for Bioeventos 2010 is the active participation in the work of the inventory of the Portuguese natural heritage. Therefore, it is asked to all citizens to go out to the field during this day, seeking an appropriate location to observe and record flora and fauna species. This activity can be individually or in organized groups (schools, companies, universities, local authorities, etc.). All the participants in the B-Day will receive in advance a document (brochure or pdf) with images of common Portuguese species of various groups of animals and plants.

Stations of Biodiversity

The stations of Biodiversity are public paths, with a maximum length of 3 km, marked on the ground with information panels about the biological diversity to be observed by visitors. Each station is located in a place of high species richness and landscape, representative of habitats characteristic of the area. During the year 2010, it will be inaugurated 20 Stations of Biodiversity in various regions of mainland Portugal. In addition to the educational and tourist activities to be carried out at these stations, the network of observation and inventory of natural heritage will be made public through a website called "BioDiversity4All". This new portal on biodiversity is an online Portuguese database, based on the active participation of civil society and the scientific community.

Exhibition: Lynxes, Wolves and Golden Eagles- 28 October

This exhibition presents a historical overview of the relationship between the Portuguese and Biodiversity, in order to illustrate the history of conservation of natural areas and endangered species like the wolf, the Iberian lynx and the golden eagle. In addition, it is also highlighted the role of the natural history museum and other national institutions in the study and conservation of biodiversity.

Conferences- Part II

The second series of conferences continues to focus on the importance of biodiversity in human societies, namely:

29 September - BIODIVERSITY AND HABITAT FRAGMENTATION - **Ilka Hanski** (Univ. Helsinki, Finland)

6 October - BIODIVERSITY AND EDUCATION- **Pier Luigi Nimis** (Univ. Trieste, Italy)

20 October - BIODIVERSITY AND HUMAN HEALTH - **Aaron Bernstein** (HMS-Harvard, USA)

3 November - BIODIVERSITY AND CONSERVATION GENETICS **Craig Moritz** (Univ. Berkeley, USA)

Program EvoS

The theory of Darwin's natural selection explains the evolution of all biological diversity on Earth. However, this theory is scarcely known by the ordinary citizen. The program EvoS, which was initially launched in the U.S. by David Sloan Wilson, provides seminars and other training and information about the evolution to a wide audience. The Center for Environmental Biology at University of Lisbon is the organizer of the program EvoS in Portugal and will launch this program in the academic year of 2010-11.

Biodiversity in concert

The Biodiversity in concert, to be held in the anniversary of the Botanical Garden of the National Museum of Natural History, ends the program of the celebrations of International Year of Biodiversity, Bioeventos 2010. The initiative includes rock music, a balance of the year and announces the initiatives that will continue in 2011.

If you wish further information about the Bioeventos 2010, please contact us at:

E-mail: bioeventos2010@museus.ul.pt

Telephone: +351 21 392 1841