

Commissioner Janez Potočnik  
DG Environment, European Commission  
Rue de la Loi 200, 1049 Bruxelles, Belgique

29 November 2013

Dear Commissioner Potočnik,

In the light of the Environment Commission's leading work with the No Net Loss Initiative, I'm writing with an invitation and request to you. We would be delighted if you would be a keynote speaker at the opening of an important two-day international conference on 'No Net Loss' that the Business and Biodiversity Offsets Programme will be hosting with Defra and the Zoological Society in London on 3 and 4 June 2014. In addition, and building on previous collaboration with your colleagues in DG Environment, we would be honoured if the DG Environment would consider being a partner institution for this conference.

We explored a number of regions and countries in which to host this event for 250-300 people. As the European Union is developing its No Net Loss Initiative for 2015, given the encouragement and participation of the UK Secretary of State and the Director General of IUCN, and as London can be a centre of gravity for the many companies and governments from Asia, Africa and Latin America also currently preparing no net loss policy, we settled on the UK. I attach some initial information on the conference. In May this year, we co-hosted a smaller meeting on No Net Loss in Brussels with your Nature & Biodiversity Division - a stepping stone to the planned conference.

The BBOP Secretariat and our 80 or so government, company, financial institution and civil society members regard our systematic and rigorous work on the science, policy and practice of 'No Net Loss' and a 'Net Positive Impact' as an important contribution to Target 2, Action 7 of the EU Biodiversity Strategy to 2020 and the roadmap to a resource efficient Europe. Indeed, in April 2012, the European Parliament urged the Commission to use the standards applied by the Business and Biodiversity Offsets Programme as well as Member State experience in developing an effective regulatory framework based on the 'No Net Loss' initiative. This conference is a great opportunity to bring these players together to discuss policy proposals and corporate best practice.

We would like to collaborate in organizing this event with DG Environment, the Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity, the Bretton Woods institutions and other significant organizations shaping international best practice on no net loss. We hope you feel the conference will be a good opportunity to draw attention to progress towards the EU No Net Loss Initiative. I appreciate that you are extremely busy and cannot predict the most urgent calls on your time on 3-4 June 2014, but if you were kindly able to agree in principle to join us and speak at the conference, this would be a marvellous encouragement for us. We are now preparing the agenda in consultation with key organizations and would like to discuss the Commission's potential role as partner with your team.

I would be very grateful if you would consider this invitation and let me know whether, subject to availability, you would kindly join us and set the tone for the conference.

With best wishes,

[Redacted signature]

[Redacted name], Director, Business and Biodiversity Offsets Programme (BBOP), Forest Trends  
cc Karl Falkenberg, François Wackenhut, [Redacted name]



BBOP Director in the UK:

Brook House | Crookham Village | Hampshire GU515SS | [Redacted]  
<http://bbop.forest-trends.org/>

Forest Trends Headquarters:

1203 19th St, NW | 4th floor | Washington, DC 20036 | [Redacted]  
<http://www.forest-trends.org/>

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# TO NO NET LOSS OF BIODIVERSITY AND BEYOND

3-4 June, 2014 - Zoological Society of London, Regent's Park

This gathering will be the first global conference on approaches to avoid, minimise, restore, and offset biodiversity loss. It will bring together experts and professionals from business, governments, financial institutions, NGOs, civil society and research, and intergovernmental institutions with an interest in demonstrating no net loss and preferably a net gain of biodiversity.

## OBJECTIVES

- Catalyse agreement on practical ways for business leaders, policy-makers and other decision-makers to make this generation the first to leave the world's biodiversity and ecosystem services in a better condition than that in which they inherited it
- Exchange ideas and experience from many countries and industry sectors on best practice
- Provide advice on the design and implementation of mitigation measures, offsets and conservation banks to those who need it
- Provide training on technical and policy issues involved

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## CONTEXT

Since 2012, there has been a growing commitment by governments, intergovernmental bodies, banks, export credit agencies, individual companies and non-governmental organisations to 'No Net Loss' and a 'Net Positive Impact' on biodiversity.

For instance, the EU is developing a No Net Loss Initiative for 2015. Many governments either recently announced or are developing policies to regulate biodiversity offsets - following in the footsteps of others which have already done so. Since 1 January 2012, the International Finance Corporation (IFC) and the Equator Principles Association require clients with impacts on natural and critical habitat to demonstrate no net loss and a net gain of biodiversity, respectively. The World Bank is updating its own safeguard policies related to no net loss and IUCN – The World Conservation Union is developing a policy on biodiversity offsets by November 2014. In addition, over 40 companies have made voluntary commitments and aspirations to achieve no net loss.

In January 2012, the Business and Biodiversity Offsets Programme (BBOP), now comprising over 70 members, released the Standard on Biodiversity Offsets to underpin these developments.

The year 2014 will mark the 10th anniversary of the founding of BBOP. During the development of so many initiatives related to no net loss and a net positive impact, BBOP and co-hosts Defra and ZSL, will provide a forum where members of the international community working on these issues can share experience and formulate ideas.

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## FORMAT

The two-day conference will comprise

- Plenary and parallel sessions with high-level keynote speeches and panels
- Robust debates among speakers and working break-out sessions for practitioners.
- Presentations of offset projects, government offset systems and intergovernmental policy processes.
- Optional two-day training session for a small number of early registrants.

## The sessions will cover the following issues:

- Best practice examples of mitigation measures including biodiversity offsets
  - Voluntary versus regulated offsets
  - The place of offsets in the mitigation hierarchy
  - Linkages between biodiversity, carbon and watershed markets
  - Metrics, 'like for like or better' ecological equivalence rules and geographical service areas
  - The basis for costing and budgeting offset activities
  - Recent developments in practice and policy in the EU, Latin America, Australasia and other regions
  - Offsets and landscape planning
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For additional information to attend, speak, partner or sponsor this event,  
please contact [pmaguire@forest-trends.org](mailto:pmaguire@forest-trends.org)

