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Podcast: Equal Parts Hope and Despair Greet New Financing Mechanisms on International Day of Biodiversity (Loss)

Author: Becca Madsen

Author Title: Biodiversity Program Manager

After two weeks of talks designed to reach consensus on scientific criteria for combating climate change, UN negotiators took a break on Saturday to commemorate the International Day of Biodiversity – which many are calling the Day of Biodiversity Loss. *Ecosystem Marketplace* takes stock of the proceedings so far and previews the week ahead.

▶ [Click to hear Frank Vorhies discuss the Green Development Mechanism](#)

22 May 2010 | In the podcast above, Frank Vorhies, Director at [Earthmind](#) and insider on issues related to the [Green Development Mechanism](#), speaks with *Ecosystem Marketplace* about financing biodiversity conservation – and in particular one idea to develop a certification for the restoration of biodiverse landscapes.

This 'Green Development Mechanism' (or GDM) certification would in essence create units of managed landscapes for sale in a voluntary market, which Vorhies thinks **could move billions of new dollars into biodiversity conservation** through private transactions in voluntary trades. The landscape certification scheme is an idea in development but as Vorhies explains, could create something akin to a real estate market for biodiversity. Instead of selling square footage of office spaces in New York City, however, you'd be selling hectares of landscape management in a biodiversity hotspot like the Amazon rainforest.

What is the demand driver of voluntary purchases of certified landscape management? Vorhies explains that companies who recognize the global impact on biodiversity from various activities in their supply chain could 'offset' their impact by purchasing GDM-certified landscape management. This diverges from traditional 'biodiversity offsets' which (after avoidance, minimization, and restoration measures) offset the footprint of impacts on a particular ecosystem type so, for example, a mining company impacting Australian native vegetation would offset with the same type of native vegetation. A supply-chain offset would imply far-flung and difficult-to-measure global impacts, which Vorhies thinks could be supplied by GDM-certified landscapes worldwide.

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About this Series

UN negotiators are meeting this month in Nairobi, Kenya, as part of an ongoing process designed to build a technical framework within which the next global agreement on halting the loss of biodiversity can be forged. We've been following those aspects of the talks relevant to bringing biological values into our economy, and this series is the result.

Part One: [EM Cheat Sheet: The Convention on Biological Diversity](#). We offer a primer on the Convention on Biological Diversity.

Part Two: [Biodiversity Boosters Hope to Leverage REDD Momentum at Nairobi Meeting](#). We tell you how CBD participants hope to increase funding for biodiversity preservation.

Part Three: [A Conversation with Ahmed Djoghla](#). In a wide-ranging interview, the UN's biodiversity boss discusses the lessons learned from