



Position Statement

AkzoNobel
Tomorrow's Answers Today

Biodiversity and Ecosystems

As a company which is fully committed to sustainable development, AkzoNobel promotes the conservation and sustainable use of the world's resources.

Biodiversity and healthy ecosystems are fundamental to the welfare of the planet and, ultimately, of mankind. Biodiversity is defined in the Convention of Biological Diversity as the "variability among living organisms and the ecological complexes of which they are part". We all depend on biodiversity and ecosystems: the air we breathe, the water we use, the land on which we grow our products, the raw materials we use for our medicines. However, pressure on the planet's biodiversity and ecosystems from human activity has reached dangerous levels - we are losing animal species at an unprecedented rate, our tropical rainforests are disappearing rapidly, and many of our water resources are being steadily polluted.

As a key element of their commitment to Sustainability, companies have a role to play in protecting and supporting biodiversity and ecosystems. AkzoNobel contributes in its own way by addressing threats such as:

Loss of habitat

This might conceivably involve measures aimed at reducing environmental degradation such as widespread deforestation and depletion of resources. Our Pulp and Paper business, for instance, although not directly involved in forestry, supplies chemicals for the production of Pulp and Paper. We have issued a Position Paper on the Pulp and Paper Industry AkzoNobel's Position on Sustainable Fiber Supply for Pulp and Paper Production) in which our position regarding these issues is clarified. We ensure that environmental and social impact assessments are a key component of our investment decisions. The former must include the impact of changing land use, such as the use of scrub land for plantations and the effect of introducing new species of trees, such as eucalyptus or acacia.

Water pollution

This, together with soil contamination, causes short and long-term biodiversity loss. Environmental management systems are in place at all of AkzoNobel businesses. At all sites, emissions to air, water and soil are monitored; strict reduction targets have been agreed, and performance is both internally audited and externally verified. In our Marine and Protective Coatings business we continue to work on the development of new Antifouling Coatings. The focus of this work is on the development of coatings that will conserve natural resources by reducing fuel consumption in the marine industry, whilst at the same time having very limited, or no effect on marine life.

Climate change

If climate change - now generally considered to be directly linked to the emission of green house gases - continues at the level predicted by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, this will have marked effects on biodiversity and ecosystems. AkzoNobel shares this concern, which is reflected by our Position Statement on Climate Change and Man-made Carbon Emissions and has adopted a Carbon Policy which includes challenging targets on the use of low carbon and renewable energy sources and on energy efficiency in our value chains.

We have worked with the World Resources Institute to develop an Ecosystems Services Review and further development of the international Greenhouse Gas Protocol.