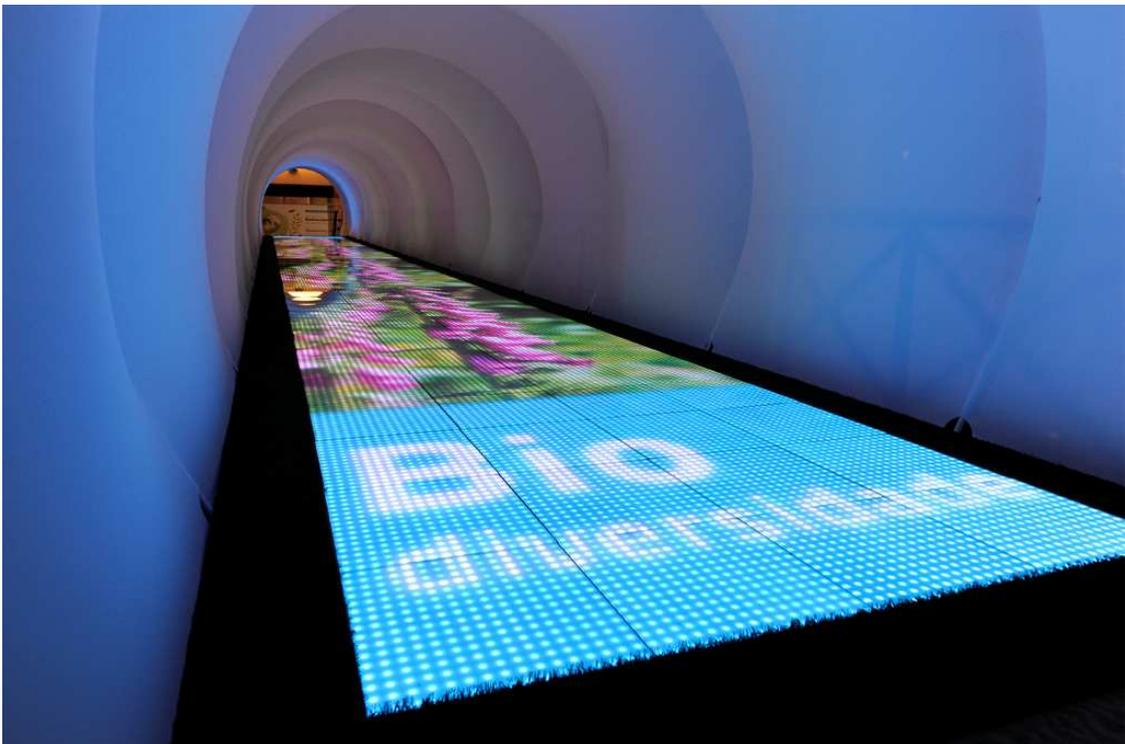


Portucel Soporcel Group marks the International Year of Biodiversity with a conference in Lisbon

In the International Year of Biodiversity, the Portucel Soporcel group organised a Seminar, on the topic "Biodiversity, an asset for the future", bringing together some of the top Portuguese and international specialists in the field of Biodiversity Conservation.



This event, which took place last 5th November at the Ritz Hotel in Lisbon, was aimed at debating wildlife conservation and management with a view to deriving economic, social and environmental benefits, an issue of the greatest significance to society as a whole. The main goal of this initiative was to raise awareness of the value and significance of Biodiversity Preservation for the country and for forest-based industries in particular.

Biodiversidade um valor com futuro

Biodiversity an asset for the future

The opening session was attended by the Minister of Agriculture, Rural Development and Fisheries, Prof. António Serrano, who congratulated the Group on this relevant initiative.



The President of the Executive Commission, Dr. José Honório, welcomed all participants and read a message from the Chairman of the Board of Directors, Mr. Queiroz Pereira, who was unable to attend the event. The following are some of the most relevant parts of the speech addressed to the audience:

"... This Seminar forms part of Portucel's commitment to introduce, in our activities in general and in an industry like ours in particular, respect for the rights of future generations and to increasingly value nature. And these rights and valuing of nature must come from knowledge. And this is why we are here. To share experiences and learn from one another."

Biodiversidade um valor com futuro

Biodiversity an asset for the future

The speakers at the seminar included Pavan Sukhdev (leader of The Economics of Ecosystems and Biodiversity initiative, co-sponsored by the United Nations and the European Union), Shulamit Alony (International Union for Conservation of Nature), Nathalie Balan (Sair da Casca) and Henrique Pereira dos Santos (consultant). They emphasised the importance of environmental preservation and conservation of biodiversity as integrating factors for a responsible and sustainable society. The debate involved topics as diverse as the economic value of ecosystems, environmental benefits and environmental education.



Biodiversidade um valor com futuro

Biodiversity an asset for the future

There was also room for two round tables. One of them with representatives from companies working in the area of Biodiversity conservation: Paula Guimarães (Portucel Soporcel group) and Alexandra Silva (Secil), Luís Neves Silva (WWF Mediterrâneo), Susana Fonseca (Quercus) and Alfredo Cunhal (Herdade do Freixo do Meio), and the other with representatives from the Business and Biodiversity (B&B) initiative in Portugal: Tito Rosa (Institute of Nature and Biodiversity Conservation), António Mexia (EDP), Vasco de Mello (Brisa) and José Honório (Portucel Soporcel group).





These debates, encouraged by expert journalists (Ricardo Garcia from Público magazine and Manuel Menezes from RTP, respectively), portrayed a real picture of the work done in the area of biodiversity conservation by companies, public organisations and environmental NGOs in Portugal.

The closing session was led by the State Secretary for Environment, Prof. Humberto Rosa, who emphasised the fact that Portugal is participating proactively in the important work carried out at international level in the area of Biodiversity Conservation. He congratulated the decisive role of companies such as Portucel Soporcel group.