

Biodiversity and the Post-2015 Development Agenda



and Biodiversity (TEEB) study to be around € 50 billion per year under a business as usual scenario.

The benefits provided by biodiversity and ecosystem services are important to all people. Some benefits of biodiversity are especially important to indigenous peoples, and poor and vulnerable groups. Conversely, the impacts stemming from the lost and degradation of biodiversity are particularly severe and more immediate on the poor and vulnerable, women, children and indigenous peoples.

These groups, including the rural poor, are in most cases most directly dependent on biodiversity and ecosystems for their livelihoods. For them, the goods and services provided by ecosystems underpinned by biodiversity often constitute a safety net. More than 70% of the world's poor live in rural areas and depend directly on biodiversity and ecosystem services for their subsistence.

Many economic sectors depend on biodiversity and ecosystem services, including water supply, agriculture, fisheries, forestry, health, nutrition, energy, trade, industry, transport and tourism.

Biodiversity is a vital asset in



Convention on
Biological Diversity

Introduction

Biodiversity and ecosystems featured prominently in the discussions of the Open Working Group on Sustainable Development Goals (OWG). The linkages between biodiversity and sustainable development have been recognized in many different international forums, most recently at the twelfth Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity, held in October, 2014 in Pyeongchang, Republic of Korea. This short paper provides some background for the discussions at the first session of the post-2015 development agenda process, on “stocktaking”.

Biodiversity is essential to sustainable development

There is now a recognition that biodiversity and ecosystem services are central to sustainable development and poverty eradication.

Biodiversity and ecosystem services contribute directly to human well-being in many ways and are also the foundation of the Earth's

life support on which the welfare of current and future generation depends:

- Biodiversity provides basic goods such as food, fiber, fuel, medicine;
- It underpins ecosystem functions and the provision of benefits to people (services) such as water purification and supply, pollination, regulation of pests and diseases, soil nutrient cycling and fertility;
- It also provides ecosystem resilience, plays a critical role as part of disaster risk reduction and contributes to the ability to respond to unpredictable global changes and natural disasters;
- Biodiversity and ecosystem functioning provide goods and services essential for human health, including nutrients, clean air and water, and regulation of pests and vector-based diseases.
- The global welfare loss of ecosystem services from land-based ecosystems alone is estimated by the Economics of Ecosystems

global and local economies and it directly supports major economic activities and jobs in such diverse sectors as agriculture, fisheries, forestry, pharmaceuticals, pulp and paper, cosmetics, horticulture, construction and biotechnology.

Food production depends on biodiversity and the services provided by ecosystems. The thousands of different crop varieties and animal breeds are founded in the rich genetic pool of species, which also need to be actively conserved to combat their ongoing erosion.

Importance of biodiversity has been recognized at the highest levels

Countries have recognized, at the highest political level, the critical role of ecosystems and biodiversity for sustainable development.

The Outcome Document of the **UNCSD “Rio+20”** (“The future we want”, June 2012) confirmed the importance of implementing the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 and achieving the Aichi Biodiversity Targets, and it recognized that there are different approaches, visions, models and tools available to each country, in accordance with its national circumstances and priorities, to achieve sustainable development.

The **United Nations General Assembly** encouraged Parties to consider the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 and its Aichi Biodiversity Targets in the elaboration of the post-2015 development agenda.

Most recently, the **twelfth Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity (COP-12)**, held in October, 2014 in Pyeongchang, Republic of Korea reiterated the need for the post-2015 development agenda and SDGs to support the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity (decision XII/4). Parties encouraged governments to fully engage in discussions on the post-2015 development agenda and sustainable development goals, with the goal of integrating and mainstreaming the objectives of the Convention and the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020, not only into relevant goals, targets and indicators, but also in the *means of implementation* of a transformative sustainable development agenda.

In a landmark decision of COP-12, the Parties to the Convention reaffirmed their commitment to an overall substantial increase in total biodiversity-related funding for the implementation of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020, and adopted ambitious targets for resource mobilization, including the doubling of total biodiversity-related international financial resource flows to developing countries by 2015, and the mobilization of domestic financial resources from all sources to reduce the gap between identified needs and available resources at domestic level. The COP also decided to extend its existing strategy for resource mobilization until 2020, identified concrete and effective actions, contained in an annex to the decision, as a flexible framework to complement the strategy, and adopted a reporting framework for effectively monitoring the progress in implementing

the financial targets. These decisions and the associated financial work stream create important linkages with the United Nations Financing for Development work and its mission to promote policy coherence within the United Nations to issues related to financing for development, including in the context of the post-2015 development agenda.

The **Gangwon Ministerial Declaration** which resulted from the COP-12 High-Level Segment welcomed the importance given to biodiversity in the outcome document of the Open Working Group on Sustainable Development Goals (OWG) and called for the further integration and mainstreaming of biodiversity in the post-2015 development agenda. It reiterated that: “*mainstreaming biodiversity into wider sectoral policies, through the integration of conservation and the sustainable use of biodiversity into various sectors, is critical to the advancement of sustainable development and poverty eradication*”. The declaration also emphasized the relevance and key contribution of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 and its Aichi Biodiversity Targets and Vision for 2050 to the post-2015 development agenda at all levels, and invited the General Assembly to integrate them effectively in the post-2015 development agenda.

In order to review overall progress in implementing the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 and its Aichi Biodiversity Targets, the Convention has identified a set of biodiversity indicators to assess the status and trends of biodiversity, drivers of biodiversity loss, benefits to society, and

policy response, and has also put in place a process for the further development of this indicator set. Therefore, it will be important to consider the development of indicators that build on the work achieved under the Aichi Biodiversity Targets, such as by making use of the indicators identified by the Convention, those brought together by the Biodiversity Indicators Partnership (BIP) and those used in the fourth edition of Global Biodiversity Outlook (GBO4).

Biodiversity and the SDGs

On 19 July 2014, the Open Working Group on Sustainable Development Goals (OWG) agreed to forward a proposal containing 17 SDGs to the General Assembly. Biodiversity and ecosystems featured prominently in the document which includes two goals directly related to biodiversity:

- **Goal 14** (Oceans and coasts): “conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for SD”.
- **Goal 15** (Terrestrial biodiversity): “protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainable manage forests, combat desertification, and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss”.

Other goals are of direct interest to biodiversity and include some biodiversity-related targets, such as:

- **Goal 2**: “End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition, and promote sustainable agriculture” and associated target 2.4: “Ensure sustainable food

production systems and implement resilient agricultural practices that increase productivity and production, that help maintain ecosystems”; and target 2.5: “Maintain genetic diversity of cultivated plants and farmed and domesticated animals and their related wild species”.

- **Goal 6**: “Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all” with particular attention to targets 6.5: “Implement water resources management”; and 6.6: “Protect and restore water-related ecosystems”.
- **Goal 11**: “Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable” and targets 11.4: “Protect and safeguard the world’s cultural and natural heritage”; and 11.7: “Provide universal access to safe, inclusive and accessible, green and public spaces”.
- **Goal 12**: “Sustainable consumption and production” is also very relevant to the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity, particularly target 12.2: “By 2030 achieve sustainable management and efficient use of natural resources”; target 12.4: “Sound management of chemicals and waste”; and target 12.8: “Information and awareness for sustainable development and lifestyles in harmony with nature”.
- **Goal 17**: “Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the global partnership for sustainable development” and numerous targets such as 17.9: “Capacity building to implement SDGs”; 17.15: “Implement policies for poverty eradication and sustainable development”;

17.16: “Partnership”; and 17.19: “Measurement of progress that complement GDP”.

In addition, the Chapeau of the document underscores that conservation, sustainable use and equitable sharing of benefits are central to sustainable development. Paragraph 3 states that “Poverty eradication, changing unsustainable and promoting sustainable patterns of consumption and production and protecting and managing the natural resource base of economic and social development are the overarching objectives of and essential requirements for sustainable development”.

Opportunities for strengthening the linkages with biodiversity

There are a number of areas in the SDGs where biodiversity plays a key role, but where linkages to biodiversity are not clearly identified. These include **Goal 1**: “End poverty”, **Goal 3**: “Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all”, **Goal 8**: “Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth” and **Goal 9**: “Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and foster innovation”. For example, the linkage between biodiversity and human health was a topic of major discussion at COP-12, yet there is very little consideration of biodiversity in Goal 3.

The Way Forward – Translating Global Aspirations to the National Level

One of the major topics of discussion in the post-2015 develop-



STRATEGIC PLAN FOR BIODIVERSITY 2011-2020

THE VISION

By 2050, biodiversity is valued, conserved, restored and wisely used, maintaining ecosystem services, sustaining a healthy planet and delivering benefits essential for all people.

STRATEGIC GOALS

Goal A: Address the underlying causes of biodiversity loss by mainstreaming biodiversity across government and society

Goal B: Reduce the direct pressures on biodiversity and promote sustainable use

Goal C: To improve the status of biodiversity by safeguarding ecosystems, species and genetic diversity

Goal D: Enhance the benefits to all from biodiversity and ecosystem services

Goal E: Enhance implementation through participatory planning, knowledge management and capacity building

more information:

www.cbd.int/sp
secretariat@cbd.int

ment agenda will concern how to shape actions at the national level in a manner that can contribute to achievement of the universal SDGs. The UN-wide Strategic Plan for Biodiversity is a model that may prove of some use. The 194 Parties to the CBD have each committed to developing, implementing and reporting on a national biodiversity strategy and action plan. Each plan is tailored to the country-specific circumstances.

Many countries have also developed an important national-level mechanism to oversee development and/or implementation of their plans. These have taken the form of inter-agency or inter-ministerial committees or councils. Given the multi-disciplinary nature of the SDGs and the post-2015 development agenda, and the need to involve multiple parts of government at the table, this may be a useful tool that countries may wish to consider

adopting as part of the post-2015 development agenda.

National reporting by Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity is an important source of information in assessing progress in the implementation of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 and the implementation of the Convention more generally. Each Party to the CBD is requested to report routinely as part of their obligations as Parties. In addition, an online reporting tool is now available to facilitate reporting and make it more effective.

Conclusion

As we embark on the final steps in shaping the post-2015 development agenda, we have an opportunity to ensure that our work is truly transformative. Biodiversity and ecosystem services will play a key role in achieving this vision – the future we want.

