



Biodiversity-specific Guidance for Preparing a Common Country Analysis (CCA) in Support of UNDAFs

Secretariat of the UN Convention on Biological Diversity, April 2019

Biodiversity – the variety of life on Earth, including species and ecosystems – is essential for sustainable development and human well-being. It underpins food, fibre, and water supply, mitigates and provides resilience to climate change, supports human health, and provides jobs in agriculture, fisheries, forestry and many other sectors. Given its foundational role in sustainable development, biodiversity is included as one of the cross-cutting elements for defining country context in a Common Country Analysis (CCA) undertaken in support of a United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF).¹

This present document provides biodiversity-specific guidance for UN Country Teams who are undertaking a CCA, to help ensure effective and efficient analysis of biodiversity’s foundational role in supporting a Member State’s achievement of the 17 sustainable development goals (SDGs).

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The Convention on Biological Diversity

The Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) was opened for signature at the United-Nations Conference on Environment and Development, held in Rio de Janeiro in 1992, and entered into force in 1993. It has three main objectives: the conservation of biological diversity; the sustainable use of the components of biological diversity; and the fair and equitable sharing of the benefits arising out of the utilization of genetic resources.

The Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 and its twenty Aichi Biodiversity Targets, adopted by the Conference of the Parties to the CBD in 2010 at its tenth meeting, has been recognized by the UN General Assembly as the global policy framework for biodiversity. Accordingly, many elements of the 2030 Agenda and its SDGs have been drawn from the Strategic Plan and the Aichi Biodiversity Targets.

¹ Source: UNDG CCA UNDAF Companion Guidance, Table 1, page 5. Available at: <https://undg.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/06/UNDG-UNDAF-Companion-Pieces-2-Common-Country-Analysis.pdf>



Common Country Analysis (CCA)

The United Nations Sustainable Development Group (UNSDG) and its Development Operations and Coordination Office (DOCO) describe CCA as an essential element of every UNDAF process and an “opportunity for UN agencies to come together with key national and international stakeholders to discuss national development challenges and common approaches in the beginning of the UNDAF cycle.” It is the UN system’s independent and mandate-based articulation of the country context, opportunities and challenges, encompassing sustainable development, human rights, gender equality, peace and security, and humanitarian perspectives.” As such, the CCA seeks to translate the SDG framework into an analysis of the national context through a consideration of civil, cultural, socioeconomic, environmental and political concerns.

Biodiversity’s Cross-cutting Role in Supporting the SDGs

Biodiversity and healthy ecosystems provide a foundation for achieving the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its 17 global sustainable development goals (SDGs). Of the seventeen SDGs, fourteen include targets that directly reflect biodiversity’s important role.² For example, there are critical biodiversity dependencies for SDG 2 on zero hunger, including Target 2.4 relating to maintaining ecosystems and improvement of land and soil quality, and Target 2.5 on maintaining the genetic diversity of seeds, cultivated plants and farmed and domesticated animals and their wild species. For SDG 8 on decent work and economic growth, the role of biodiversity and healthy ecosystems is reflected in Target 8.4 on decoupling economic growth from environmental degradation and Target 8.9 relating to sustainable tourism.

Biodiversity also plays an important role in the 2030 Agenda’s imperative to ‘leave no one behind’. For example, ecosystem services are estimated to make up between 50% and 90% of the livelihoods of poor rural and forest-dwelling households.³ Additionally, the UN Human Rights Council at its 34th Session noted that “the loss of biodiversity-dependent ecosystem services has a disproportionate effect on people who are vulnerable for other reasons, including gender, age, disability, poverty or minority status” and that “the loss of biodiversity-dependent ecosystem services is likely to accentuate inequality and marginalization of the most vulnerable sectors of society, by decreasing their access to basic materials for a healthy life and by reducing their freedom of choice and action.”⁴

Biodiversity supports the 2030 Agenda’s aspiration for achieving resilient societies and does so in various ways. Urban and rural ecosystem services provide fresh water, and contribute to climate-change mitigation and adaptation, pollution reduction and resilience to natural disasters. The biological diversity within an ecosystem at genetic and species levels, together with the interconnected mosaic of different

² Including SDG targets 1.4, 2.3, 2.4, 2.5, 2.A, 3.3, 3.9, 4.7, 5.A, 6.3, 6.4, 6.5, 6.6, 7.A, 8.4, 8.9, 9.4, 11.4, 11.6, 11.7, 11.A, 11.B, 12.2, 12.4, 12.8, 12.C, 13 (all), 14 (all), 15 (all),

³ Source: Biodiversity and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, 2016. Available at: <https://www.cbd.int/development/doc/biodiversity-2030-agenda-technical-note-en.pdf>

⁴ Source: UN Human Rights Council, 34th Session. Available at: http://www.ohchr.org/EN/HRBodies/HRC/RegularSessions/Session31/Documents/A_HRC_31_52_E.docx



ecosystems across the landscape, plays a crucial role in maintaining ecosystem functions and the variety and quality of ecosystem services provided, by making ecosystem more resilient against external stressors and shocks.

The Secretariat of the Convention on Biological diversity (CBD), together with the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, the World Bank, the United Nations Environment Programme, and the United Nations Development Programme, jointly published a Technical Note to illustrate the cross-cutting role of biodiversity in achieving the 2030 Agenda and SDGs.⁵ The key linkages are summarized below.

SDG 1: No Poverty. Biodiversity provides resources and income, particularly for the rural poor, the majority of whom directly depend on biodiversity and ecosystems for their subsistence. Ecosystem services and other non-marketed goods make up between 50% and 90% of the total source of livelihoods among poor rural and forest-dwelling households – the so-called ‘GDP of the poor’.

SDG 2: Zero Hunger. 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. Biodiversity is also the basis for soil fertility, pollination and all aspects important for producing the world’s food.

SDG 3: Good Health and Wellbeing. 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. Biodiversity is essential for the regulation of the immune response and is the basis of traditional medicine—a large number of top-ranking global prescription drugs contain components derived from plant extracts.

SDG 4: Quality Education. Traditional knowledge associated with biodiversity is also important and has value not only to those who depend on it in their daily lives, but to modern industry and agriculture as well.

SDG 5: Gender Equality. Biodiversity is the cornerstone of the work, belief systems and basic survival of many women. Accounting for women’s knowledge and role in biodiversity conservation and its sustainable use can ensure their full participation and thus substantially contribute to sustainable development.

SDG 6: Clean Water and Sanitation. Clean and secure supplies of water also depend on biodiversity. Ecosystems function as natural water infrastructure, costing less than technological solutions. Forests protect water supplies, wetlands regulate floods, and healthy soils increase water and nutrient availability for crops and help reduce off-farm impacts.

SDG 7: Affordable and Clean Energy. Bio-energy produced from renewable biomass such as forestry byproducts and agricultural residues, and other forms of renewable energy generated based on ecosystems such as hydropower systems, can provide major opportunities for supplying cleaner and affordable energy.

SDG 8: Decent Work and Good Jobs. Biodiversity directly supports major economic activity and jobs in such diverse sectors as agriculture, fisheries, pharmaceuticals, pulp and paper, cosmetics, horticulture, construction and biotechnology. Biodiversity is the basis for sustainable livelihoods. Benefits of biodiversity are especially important to poor and vulnerable groups. To many, the goods and services derived from biodiversity directly constitute social safety nets and can mean the difference between misery and well-being.

⁵ Source: Biodiversity and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, 2016. Available at: <https://www.cbd.int/development/doc/biodiversity-2030-agenda-technical-note-en.pdf>



SDG 9: Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure. Biodiversity and healthy ecosystems can provide reliable and cost-effective natural infrastructure. For example, coral reefs and mangrove forests protect coasts against flooding that are expected to increase with climate change. Natural infrastructure such as vegetation in cities can reduce the run-off of pollution into water bodies. Such green infrastructure can offer multiple benefits and are often more effective than built infrastructure in terms of cost, longevity and effectiveness.

SDG 10: Reduced Inequalities. Recognizing rights to sustainable management of natural resources, enhancing values of biodiversity and related knowledge, and building an environment for equitable benefit-sharing has the potential to improve socioeconomic and political inequality among social groups.

SDG 11: Sustainable Cities and Communities. Even the built environments of our cities are linked to and affected by biodiversity. Ecosystem-based solutions to water provisioning and to urban water run-off, climate control and other challenges can both protect biodiversity and be cost-effective.

SDG 12: Responsible Consumption and Production. Utilizing cleaner and more resource-efficient approaches that minimize wastes and pollutants can bring about economic opportunities and better quality of life for consumers and producers alike, and at the same time benefit biodiversity.

SDG 13: Climate Action. Biodiversity plays a major role in mitigating climate change by contributing to long-term sequestration of carbon in a number of biomes. Biodiversity also underpins ecosystem resilience and plays a critical role as part of disaster risk reduction and peace-building strategies.

SDG 14: Life Below Water. Biodiversity underpins all fishing and aquaculture activities, as well as other species harvested for foods and medicines. Conservation and sustainable use of marine and coastal biodiversity is essential to ensure that the world's oceans, seas and marine resources remain vital for current and future generations.

SDG 15: Life on Land. The conservation, restoration and sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems is essential for sustainable development and for achieving other SDGs. Targets under this goal include a call to integrate ecosystem and biodiversity values into national and local development planning, poverty reduction strategies and accounts (Target 15.9). Other targets highlight the importance of particular ecosystems, including freshwater, forests, deserts and degraded lands, and mountain ecosystems.

SDG 16: Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions. Conflicts over natural resources, environmental degradation and contamination can be one of the factors leading to social insecurity and violence. Vulnerable people are often disproportionately affected. Strengthening the rights of communities over natural resources management, combating illegal exploitation and corruption, and ensuring transparent decision-making on social and environmental issues constitute an important process toward building an inclusive and peaceful society based on justice.

SDG 17: Partnerships for the Goals. The Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 provide opportunities for strengthening global partnership on science, technology and innovation, dissemination of environmentally sound technologies, and for building national capacity for monitoring the progress of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. For more information, see www.cbd.int/sp.



Biodiversity Guidance for Completing a Common Country Analysis (CCA)

The UNSDG's UNDAF Companion Guidance on CCA outlines the important aspects necessary for defining the national context. These aspects are listed below from the perspective of analysing biodiversity and its role in supporting the achievement of the SDGs.

Data and Evidence Base

UNSDG's CCA Guidance: The UNSDG's CCA Guidance states the following: "...the initial point of departure for conducting the CCA consists of gathering available data to establish the evidence base for determining the status of progress against the SDGs, including quantitative and qualitative baselines, normative commitments and long-term trends. The CCA should seek to establish an overview of key trends based on available data of relevance to the SDGs. These trends should be both historical and forward-looking in order to ensure that UNCT priorities are determined by a clear understanding of the "big picture" dynamics that will have an influence on the sustainable development trajectory of the country."

Biodiversity-specific Guidance and Information:

The National Reports Database of the UN Convention on Biological Diversity provides access to the National Reports submitted by the 197 Parties to the CBD. These National Reports provide the latest information on biodiversity trends at the country level.

<https://www.cbd.int/reports/search/>.

Additional sources of information on trends include:

- The Voluntary National Reviews (VNRs) for countries who have already presented to the High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development, available at: <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/vnrs/>
- The regional assessments of the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES): <https://www.ipbes.net/deliverables/2b-regional-assessments>
- The forthcoming fifth edition of the Global biodiversity Outlook. More information is available here: <https://www.cbd.int/doc/decisions/cop-13/cop-13-dec-29-en.pdf>

Risk Profile

UNSDG's CCA Guidance: The UNSDG's Guidance notes that "the CCA should seek to identify the key risks that could impact the development trajectory of the country." Additionally, it is emphasized that "the CCA should highlight the ways in which a thorough analysis of risks and their underlying drivers affect the overall developmental landscape in the country and provide linkages to disaster risk reduction and climate change adaptation as well as humanitarian response, peacebuilding and the Human Rights Up Front



agenda. The CCA should indicate the need for both mitigation and contingency measures related to the most fundamental and significant risks.”

Biodiversity-specific Guidance and Information: For access to the latest country-level and regional information on the direct and indirect threats to biodiversity, including impacts of changes in biodiversity on ecosystem services and socio-economic and cultural wellbeing, refer to the following:

- Biodiversity National Reports database: <https://www.cbd.int/reports/search/>
- Regional Assessments of the IPBES: <https://www.ipbes.net/deliverables/2b-regional-assessments>
- Voluntary National Reviews (VNRs): <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/vnrs/>
- The 5th Global Biodiversity Outlook: <https://www.cbd.int/doc/decisions/cop-13/cop-13-dec-29-en.pdf>

National Policy and Institutional Frameworks

UNSDG’s CCA Guidance: “The CCA should provide a strategic overview of the most critical government policies as well as the most significant gaps in the policy architecture....The CCA should analyse and provide an overview of compliance with global norms and standards, their integration into national policy/legal frameworks and institutional arrangements, and adherence to any corresponding national commitments emerging from intergovernmental mechanisms and processes.”

Biodiversity-specific Guidance and Information: Article 6 of the *Convention on General Measures for Conservation and Sustainable Use* states that each Contracting Party shall, in accordance with its particular conditions and capabilities: Develop national strategies, plans or programmes for the conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity or adapt for this purpose existing strategies, plans or programmes. These strategies are referred to as National Biodiversity Strategies or Action Plans, or NBSAPs.

The National Reports Database of the Convention on Biological Diversity (see above) provides access to the latest information on NBSAPs and their implementation, prepared by Member States. The Database on Voluntary National Reviews may also provide information on biodiversity strategies and policies, and how they are embedded into the overall national policy framework.

Gender Assessment

UNSDG’s CCA Guidance: “Gender assessment provides information that recognizes that gender, and its relationship with race, ethnicity, culture, class, age, sexuality, disability and/or other status, is important for understanding the different dynamics of power relationships between men and women, their access to and control over resources, and their patterns of involvement, behaviour and activities in economic, social, political and legal structures. Gender assessment also highlights the main constraints women and men face relative to each other and involves examining the potential impact of certain development interventions on existing gender roles and strategic gender interests.”



Biodiversity-specific Guidance and Information: Biodiversity is the cornerstone of the work, belief systems and basic survival of many women. Accounting for women’s knowledge and role in biodiversity conservation and its sustainable use can ensure their full participation and thus substantially contribute to sustainable development. Progress toward the CBD’s Aichi Target 14 on ecosystems, as outlined below, is particularly relevant to gender equality.

Aichi Target 14: By 2020, ecosystems that provide essential services, including services related to water, and contribute to health, livelihoods and wellbeing, are restored and safeguarded, taking into account the needs of women, indigenous and local communities, and the poor and vulnerable.

See the ‘Data and Evidence-base’ and ‘Risk Profile’ sections above for links to the latest information on biodiversity-related trends. Additional information related to gender and biodiversity can be found on the Secretariat’s website at: www.cbd.int/gender/.

Financing Landscape

UNSDG’s CCA Guidance: “A key objective of the new generation of UNDAFs is to support the alignment of finance with implementation of the SDGs. Financial analysis should be undertaken at the CCA stage of the UNDAF and include a review of financing flows in a country, sectoral flows in chosen outcomes, and the sources and levels of resources that the UN can access.”

Biodiversity-specific Guidance and Information:

The CBD has adopted a strategy for resource mobilization and, further to this strategy, targets for resource mobilization under Aichi Biodiversity Target 20 of the Strategic Plan for biodiversity 2011-2020. CBD COP-13 also adopted a Financial Reporting Framework for monitoring progress by the Parties to the Convention in achieving these targets for resource mobilization. A database of financial reports received by Parties is available here: <https://chm.cbd.int/search/reporting-map?filter=resourceMobilisation>

The Biodiversity Finance Initiative (BIOFIN) of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) supports countries with a methodology that provides innovative steps to measure current biodiversity expenditures, assess financial needs, identify the most suitable finance solutions and provides guidance on how to implement these solutions to achieve their national biodiversity target.

The BIOFIN methodology takes shape through three assessments that culminate in a Biodiversity Finance Plan. The steps include:

- *The Biodiversity Finance Policy and Institutional Review (PIR)* looks into the policy and institutional context for biodiversity finance in the country and establishes which are the key stakeholders to involve.
- *The Biodiversity Expenditure Review (BER)* is an analysis of public and private expenditures in the country that benefit biodiversity. The assessment establishes past, present and projected expenditures on biodiversity.



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- *The Financial Needs Assessment (FNA)* estimates the finance required to deliver national biodiversity targets and plans, usually described in the NBSAPs.
- *The Biodiversity Finance Plan (BFP)* identify and prioritises a mix of suitable biodiversity finance solutions to reduce the biodiversity finance gap.

A database of countries participating in BIOFIN can be accessed at:

<https://www.biodiversityfinance.net/biofin-around-world>

For More Information

For more information on biodiversity's cross-cutting role in supporting the 2030 Agenda and SDGs visit:

<https://www.cbd.int/development/>



United Nations Decade on Biodiversity