



Convention on Biological Diversity

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REGIONAL WORKSHOP FOR NORTH AFRICA
AND THE MIDDLE EAST ON UPDATING
NATIONAL BIODIVERSITY STRATEGIES AND
ACTION PLANS
Beirut, 2-7 May 2011

REPORT OF THE WORKSHOP

I. INTRODUCTION

1. In decision X/2, the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) adopted the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020. In the same decision, the Conference of the Parties urged Parties and other Governments to develop national and regional targets, using the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 as a flexible framework, and to review, update and revise, as appropriate, their national biodiversity strategies and action plans (NBSAPs) in line with the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 and the guidance adopted in decision IX/9. The Conference of the Parties also urged Parties and other Governments to support the updating of national biodiversity strategies and action plans as effective instruments to promote the implementation of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 and to use the revised and updated NBSAPs as effective instruments for the integration of biodiversity targets into national development and poverty reduction policies and strategies, national accounting, economic sectors and spatial planning processes.

2. In the same decision, the Conference of the Parties also emphasized the need for capacity-building activities and the effective sharing of knowledge to support all countries, especially developing countries, in particular the least developed countries, small island developing States, and the most environmentally vulnerable countries, as well as countries with economies in transition, and indigenous and local communities, in the implementation of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020.

3. In response, the Executive Secretary is organizing a series of regional or subregional workshops on updating NBSAPs in 2011 and 2012. The workshop for North Africa and the Middle East was held in Beirut, Lebanon from 2 to 7 May 2011 and was organized in collaboration with the Ministry of Environment of Lebanon and with financial support from the Government of Japan and the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA).

4. The specific objectives of the workshop were to:

(a) Facilitate national implementation of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020, including by assisting Parties to develop national biodiversity targets in the framework of the Aichi Biodiversity Targets;

(b) Assist Parties in reviewing, updating, revising and implementing their national biodiversity strategies and action plans, with consideration given to how the plans can serve as effective tools for mainstreaming biodiversity into broader national policies;

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(c) Raise awareness to stimulate early actions to implement other Aichi-Nagoya outcomes, in particular, the Nagoya Protocol on Genetic Resources and the Fair and Equitable Sharing of Benefits Arising from their Utilization and the Nagoya – Kuala Lumpur Supplementary Protocol on Liability and Redress to the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety;

(d) Support countries in making use of the findings of the third edition of the Global Biodiversity Outlook (GBO-3) and the Economics of Ecosystems and Biodiversity (TEEB) study, and consider how the findings could be integrated into updated and revised NBSAPs;

(e) Facilitate active learning opportunities and peer-to-peer exchanges for national focal points and persons in charge of implementing and revising NBSAPs;

(f) Make use of the findings of the study on the Economics of Ecosystems and Biodiversity (TEEB);

(g) Integrate the values of biodiversity into relevant national and local policies, programmes and planning processes.

5. The workshop format featured a mix of presentations with question and answer sessions, discussions in small working groups, interactive sessions to introduce relevant tools, and a field trip.

6. The workshop was attended by government-nominated officials responsible for the development and/or implementation of NBSAPs, as well as officials from development planning and finance ministries. Algeria, Comoros, Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Mauritania, Morocco, Oman, Saudi Arabia, Somalia, Sudan, Tunisia, United Arab Emirates and Yemen were represented, as well as the Palestinian Authority. Additionally, a representative from indigenous and local communities (ILCs) attended. Resource persons from the region contributed their expertise in mainstreaming biodiversity, local implementation, spatial planning, stakeholders' engagement, communication, education and public awareness (CEPA), work with other conventions, resource mobilization and economic valuation. The list of participants for the workshop can be accessed at <http://www.cbd.int/nbsap/workshops2/mena.shtml>. The workshop was conducted in English, and interpretation in Arabic was provided. All presentations made at the workshop can also be downloaded at the same link.

7. This report provides an overview of the workshop agenda sessions, discussions, the conclusions of the meeting, and the next steps going forward. Annexes to this report present more detailed information from the workshop.

II. SUMMARY OF PROCEEDINGS

ITEM 1. OPENING OF THE WORKSHOP

8. The workshop opened on Monday, 2 May 2011. The Ambassador of Japan to Lebanon, speaking on behalf of the President of the tenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties (COP 10) highlighted the strategic importance of the Aichi Biodiversity Targets, the Nagoya Protocol on Access to Genetic Resources and the Fair and Equitable Sharing of Benefits Arising from their Utilization, and the Nagoya – Kuala Lumpur Supplementary Protocol on Liability and Redress. Mr. Kawakami reiterated the commitment of the Japanese Government to assist Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity in adapting or revising their own national strategies and implementing them in the most effective manner.

9. Speaking on behalf of the Executive Secretary, Mr. David Duthie, Senior Programme Officer at the Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity (SCBD), thanked the Government of Japan for establishing the Japan Biodiversity Fund to assist countries in translating the Aichi Biodiversity Targets into national biodiversity strategies and action plans (NBSAPs) before the eleventh meeting of the Conference of the Parties, to be held in India in 2012. He noted that funds for national biodiversity planning have been made available through the fifth replenishment of the Global Environment Facility (GEF-5) and he emphasized the importance of ratifying the Nagoya Protocol, which to date has been

signed by 11 countries, as well as the Nagoya-Kuala Lumpur Supplementary Protocol, signed by four Parties by the date of the workshop.

10. Ms. Carol Cherfan welcomed the guests on behalf of Ms. Rima Khalaf, Executive Secretary of the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA). Ms. Cherfan showed how protection of biodiversity is dependent on the adoption of sound socio-economic and environmental policies. To this effect, ESCWA continues to support the efforts of the international community to protect biodiversity through multilateral environmental agreements (MEAs). She finished by expressing the hope that this meeting will result in new approaches for fostering collective commitments in the Arab region.

11. After the opening statements, Ms. Diane Klaimi (United Nations Environment Programme - Regional Office for West Asia, UNEP-ROWA) and Ms. Nermin Wafa (League of Arab States) also expressed their pleasure to be attending the workshop, and thanked the organizers and supporters of this key workshop.

12. Ms. Nermin Wafa facilitated self-introduction among the participants and was followed by Mr. David Duthie who presented the specific objectives of the workshop and the expected outcomes.

ITEM 2. REVIEW OF THE FINDINGS OF THE THIRD EDITION OF THE GLOBAL BIODIVERSITY OUTLOOK (GBO-3) AND OVERVIEW OF THE AICHI-NAGOYA OUTCOMES

13. Mr. David Duthie first presented on the Aichi-Nagoya outcomes. He introduced the 47 decisions of the tenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties, including on the Nagoya Protocol, the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 and Aichi Biodiversity Targets, the Strategy for Resource Mobilization, and the United Nations Decade on Biodiversity; and also decisions of the fifth meeting of the Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety (COP-MOP 5), including adoption of the Nagoya-Kuala Lumpur Supplementary Protocol on Liability and Redress and the Strategic Plan for the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety for the period 2011-2020. Mr. Duthie also presented findings from GBO-3 and focused on the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020, as well as the Aichi Biodiversity Targets and national implementation. He reviewed the different mechanisms available to support implementation and the next steps to follow.

14. Mr. Duthie made a presentation on the Nagoya Protocol on Access to Genetic Resources and the Fair and Equitable Sharing of Benefits Arising from their Utilization, linking it to the third objective of the Convention. He mentioned the history of the negotiations, its objective and the advantages for users and providers of genetic resources as well as for indigenous and local communities. He also referred to the GEF funds available to support the early ratification and implementation of the Nagoya Protocol, through briefing sessions for decision-makers and capacity-building workshops for national focal points and indigenous and local communities. He concluded the presentation by explaining the necessary steps for signature and ratification.

15. Mr. Duthie made another presentation on the Nagoya – Kuala Lumpur Supplementary Protocol, which originated in response to Article 27 (Liability and Redress) of the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety. He spoke about the negotiation process leading up to the adoption of the Supplementary Protocol and some of its main articles: use of terms, response measures and the implementation and relation to civil liability. He finished the presentation by mentioning the steps to follow for signature, ratification and entry into force, noting that only Parties to the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety may become Parties to the Supplementary Protocol.

ITEM 3. REVIEW AND UPDATING OF NATIONAL BIODIVERSITY STRATEGIES AND ACTION PLANS: LESSONS LEARNED AND NEXT STEPS

16. This item was introduced using an exercise in which participants were asked to write down a self-assessment of their NBSAP including their achievements and challenges of implementation. Participants reported the following conclusions (see also annexes I and III):

NBSAP's achievements:	Challenges in implementing NBSAP:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stakeholders identified. • Biodiversity assessment and national surveys already done. • NBSAP implemented and in some cases already updated. • Fourth national report finalized. • Establishing the context and creating high-level reference for national and sub-national targets. • Protected areas have increased. • NBSAP helped in mainstreaming biodiversity into other sectors and emphasize biodiversity for development. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of financial resources. • Communicating the NBSAP (CEPA). • Lack of legislation and institutional fragmentation. • Failure to address objectives of the Convention on Biological Diversity. • Lack of capacity. • Lack of international support. • Needs for setting indicators. • Poor translation of traditional knowledge in some cases; very good for others.

17. A presentation of a study published by the United Nations University Institute of Advanced Studies (UNU-IAS), assessing NBSAPs, was made by Mr. David Duthie. He talked about the objectives of the study, methods and obstacles in NBSAP implementation. Some of the main conclusions were:

(a) Women and indigenous communities are largely missing from participation in NBSAP formulation;

(b) The coverage of the objectives of the Convention on Biological Diversity is uneven;

(c) Newer NBSAPs are approved at a Parliamentary level;

(d) Communication, education and public awareness (CEPA) are often only mentioned in NBSAPs as an add-on chapter and not integrated;

(e) Not all NBSAPs place biodiversity in a broader development policy context; some NBSAPs may have strong emphasis on development, but most national Millennium Development Goals (MDG) plans have little or no focus on biodiversity;

(f) Most NBSAPs highlight the need to value and create economic incentives for biodiversity, but few move beyond general statements;

(g) Mainstreaming with climate change and other biodiversity-related conventions is rather weak, although there are some positive signs emerging with recent national adaptation plans of action (NAPAs);

(h) Only very few countries in very new NBSAPs include time-bound and measurable targets;

(i) Generally there are very few NBSAPs with mechanisms for monitoring and review at the country level; and

(j) Although some countries have reported full implementation of first-generation NBSAPs, gaps and constraints to implementation are reported in nearly all other countries.

18. Egypt's experience with NBSAP implementation was presented by Mr. Mustafa Fouda who spoke about their NBSAP development process. He stated that the most important elements of their success were (i) the communication between all resource persons within the country ("think-tank"), (ii) the integration of the strategy within the overall national development policy, and (iii) being aware of information on emerging issues.

19. The second country to present was Iraq, one of the latest countries to enter the NBSAPs development process. Mr. Ali Al-Lami described Iraq's NBSAP development process, which started in

2009. Iraq, in collaboration with UNEP-ROWA, has overcome many obstacles to reach a high level of national commitment in the preparation process.

20. Mr. David Duthie introduced the NBSAP training package to support national biodiversity planning. These modules serve to help develop/update NBSAPs, targeting biodiversity planners. The modules also cover the majority of topics to be discussed in the workshop and can be accessed at: <http://www.cbd.int/nbsap/training/>.

ITEM 4. SETTING NATIONAL AND REGIONAL TARGETS IN THE FRAMEWORK OF THE AICHI BIODIVERSITY TARGETS

21. This agenda item was spread over four days, and also drew upon presentations and discussions under agenda items 5 and 6. Mr. Duthie made a presentation on setting national biodiversity targets, stressing that targets must be appropriate to each country and relate to the biodiversity and socio-economic aspects of the country. He mentioned that targets should be integrated into revised and updated NBSAPs, adopted as policy instruments at the highest level, and need to move from words to action and to obtain measurable results. Mr. Duthie covered the five Strategic Goals and the different targets under each goal and he also provided some examples of current national targets.

22. As an example in target-setting, the workshop addressed Aichi Biodiversity Target 11 (protected areas), and participants were asked to outline the following: (a) current extent of protected areas, (b) areas of importance for biodiversity and ecosystem services not currently protected, (c) effectiveness of existing protected areas, (d) opportunities and constraints to expand them, (e) involvement of stakeholders, and (f) additional resources required to reach the national targets.

23. In another presentation, Mr. Duthie introduced one of the major purposes of this workshop and showed that adapting the global framework to the national level means developing targets that contribute to each of the goals of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020. Each of these five goals is relevant to all Parties, and national biodiversity planning committees should consider developing national targets for each goal. In this presentation, Mr. Duthie described the characteristics of national biodiversity goals and targets as follows:

- (a) Cover the main biodiversity issues in the country;
- (b) Address the three objectives of the Convention (conservation, sustainable use, and benefit-sharing) and the five Goals of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020;
- (c) Be specific and measurable (more specific than the global targets);
- (d) Be realistic (credibility for biodiversity planning);
- (e) Be ambitious – go beyond business as usual (BAU) and not be limited to existing resources;
- (f) Be intricately tied to the NBSAP;
- (g) Relate to the Aichi Biodiversity Targets;
- (h) Be developed using a participatory, multi-stakeholder process;
- (i) Be limited in number to 5 to 10 targets, and be time-bound.

24. At the end of the presentation, participants further developed the above characteristics through an exercise on Aichi Target 11. They analyzed the diagnosis, demands, collaboration and resources that could be applied to this target. The result of this exercise is provided in annex IV.

ITEM 5. INVASIVE ALIEN SPECIES (IAS), INTERNATIONAL REGULATORY FRAMEWORK

Goal B, Target 9

25. Mr. Mohamed Fishar, from the National Institute of Oceanography and Fisheries in Egypt, started this session with a presentation entitled “Towards achieving Aichi Target 9 for invasive alien species at national and regional levels in the Arab region”. The discussion during this session focused on how the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 should incorporate invasive alien species and highlighted the need for cooperation between the countries of Arab region. Participants stressed the importance of the role of the League of Arab States (LAS) which could lead this cooperation.

26. Technical issues were also discussed, mainly prevention, early detection and land management. Participants agreed that the IAS issue should be integrated into global economical policies through environmental national and regional strategies. Mr. Fishar highlighted the following items:

- (a) Overview on invasive alien species issues (identification, threats and pathways);
- (b) Case studies on invasive species in the Arab region;
- (c) Importance of preparation of national strategies and action plans for Arab countries on invasive alien species;
- (d) Fostering regional cooperation between countries of the Arab region.

27. Mr. Fishar introduced a questionnaire to participants in order to collect basic information on the status of assessment made in the area of invasive alien species in marine and terrestrial ecosystems. A compilation of this work is provided in annex II.

ITEM 6. INTEGRATING BIODIVERSITY INTO RELEVANT NATIONAL AND LOCAL PLANNING PROCESSES

Valuation – Goal A, Target 2

28. Ms. Diane Klaimi, MEA focal point for biodiversity and ecosystems at UNEP-ROWA, delivered an introductory presentation about the findings of the global report on the Economics of Ecosystems and Biodiversity (TEEB), a study hosted by UNEP and arising in response to a proposal from the G8+5 Ministerial Summit in 2007. She provided an overview of the TEEB approaches used for valuation of biodiversity and ecosystem services, making them more visible to policymakers, and capturing values and modalities of integration into markets and legislation. Mainstreaming biodiversity into economic planning is one of the major gaps identified in the UNU assessment of NBSAPs. Ms. Klaimi described the concept of TEEB as one of the instrumental tools available for mainstreaming biodiversity into national economic planning and sectors, and the importance of sharing best practice methodologies, experiences and guidelines for policymakers and businesses. TEEB demonstrated that biodiversity underpins all ecosystem services and the economic value generated by these services. The TEEB study analyzed global benefits of biodiversity, assessed the cost of loss in nature, and the cost of conservation versus failure to take protective measures. Degraded ecosystem services impact disproportionately on the GDP of the poor who rely more on natural resources, and failure to address this risks not achieving MDG goal 1 and 7. The TEEB report also proved that the cost of restoring degraded biodiversity and ecosystem services far exceeds the cost of maintaining and conserving them. Recommendations to policymakers included immediate reforms in environmentally harmful subsidies, and for the business sector to practice transparency in divulging environmental impacts in financial reports and through corporate responsibility reports, and to effectively manage and reduce those impacts. Ms. Klaimi emphasized that electronic Arabic translations of some of TEEB reports were available at <http://www.teebweb.org/InformationMaterial/TEEBReports/tabid/1278/Default.aspx>.

29. The economic topic generated a good deal of discussion during the panel session and questions about TEEB and potential for applying TEEB methodologies in the region. Interactions among participants showed that some scattered economic valuation studies in the region existed and needed to be compiled as a baseline. Nevertheless, the region still lacks knowledge and awareness and efforts in this area. The TEEB tools provide insight but their application could still present a challenge in the region, particularly bringing economic and trade experts, stakeholders and policymakers together to make biodiversity more visible in the market and for certification schemes.

30. In a separate presentation, Mr. Jonathan Brazdo (CITES) highlighted the synergies between international trade-related mechanisms and Customs services in relation to endangered species, such as regarding agarwood products supplied from Indonesia. A representative from Lebanon highlighted that local trade and certification mechanisms are ineffective and do not provide enough financial incentive. Legislation needs to be enforced to market locally abundant and diverse medicinal extracts.

31. Ms. Wafa (LAS) emphasized that a lot of action is required from regional organizations and raising awareness at the highest levels, such as the Council of Arab Ministers Responsible for the Environment (CAMRE).

32. Mr. David Duthie (Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity) further provided insight on other mechanisms to capture the economics of biodiversity through innovative financial mechanisms. He produced an illustration of how different landscapes are viewed by different cultures and thus how capturing values could be affected by attitudes and approaches to valuation in various communities. He also clarified the impacts of perverse versus harmful incentives in relation to Goal A, Targets 2 and 3 and decision X/44.

Incentive measures – Goal A, Target 3

33. Mr. Duthie made a presentation on positive incentives for the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity, focusing on Aichi Target 3. Economic growth, biodiversity and development alignment was the main focus of this presentation. Mr. Duthie showed how payments for ecosystem services (PES) could, through direct and indirect approaches, provide incentive measures for the conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity. Participants agreed that these incentives would be a cornerstone of poverty alleviation programmes. In interactive discussion, participants identified programmes that they thought would generate positive incentives for biodiversity and the environment.

34. A number of comments were made during the workshop to introduce various approaches to the integration of biodiversity into national and local planning processes. Participants stressed the importance of mobilizing decision-makers, the role of League of Arab States as well as the need for effective CEPA programmes.

Field trip

35. Participants visited the Tannourine Cedars Forest Nature Reserve, where they met Mr. Nehmeh Harb, the President of the Reserve Committee, and the Technical Advisor, Mr. Nabil Nemer. Participants had the opportunity to discuss the objectives, achievements and challenges encountered during the establishment of the reserve. Particular importance was given to (i) control of the cedar web-spinning sawfly, *Cephalcia tannourinensis* Chevin, a destructive endemic insect first detected in 1997 and (ii) Greek juniper, *Juniperus excelsa*, becoming a rare species to be protected, and (iii) mainstreaming ecosystem service values offered by the reserve.

36. On Thursday morning, participants were asked to identify the provisioning, regulating, cultural and supporting ecosystem services of the reserve during the exercise on ecosystem service values.

ITEM 7. STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT AND STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION

Goal E

37. This agenda item started with a presentation on communication, education and public awareness (CEPA) and how to develop and implement effective CEPA programmes as an integral part of the NBSAP. This presentation was delivered by Ms. Tala Al Khatib, an outreach officer of the Commission on Education and Communication (CEC) of the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN).

38. Ms. Al Khatib defined the stakeholders' engagement and types of stakeholders. She listed tips for engagement as following:

- (a) Engage opinion leaders (e.g. mayor);
- (b) Use informal communication (e.g. informal face-to-face meetings);
- (c) Encourage the participation of all sectors of the society;
- (d) "Listen" rather than "educate";
- (e) Consider the needs and interests of other stakeholder, "negotiate" and develop common objectives (win-win situation to avoid conflicts);
- (f) Communicate formally with decision-makers and politicians (e.g. send official letters, workshops, etc.);
- (g) Build solid partnerships and networks;
- (h) Define clear goals before communicating with stakeholders;
- (i) Apply evaluation and monitoring at every stage of the process of developing a communication strategy;
- (j) Define technical terms and use simple wording;
- (k) Integrate the main messages into informal school education curricula;
- (l) Provide access to information and material.

39. A video was shown on the achievements of the Society for the Protection of Nature in Lebanon (SPNL) with particular focus on the old/new concept of community-based conservation. (A link to this movie is at:

40. An exercise was proposed next to identify different stakeholders involved in the process of updating and applying the NBSAPs. Participants were divided into three groups and as result of the exercise identified the following three categories of stakeholders: primary, secondary and tertiary stakeholders.

41. Another exercise was proposed to set a strategy involving the stakeholders. Participants agreed that this strategy should respect the following chronology:

- (a) Assessment;
- (b) Defining the general problem;
- (c) Setting the objectives;
- (d) Stakeholders' analysis;
- (e) Setting priorities;
- (f) Identifying the resources;

- (g) Action plan and implementation;
- (h) Evaluation and monitoring.

42. Ms. Khatib showed a short video film entitled “Love, not loss” (<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BvIdwOEzreM>). The video stressed the importance of media in communication with communities as well as the importance of communicating in a positive manner.

ITEM 8. RESOURCE MOBILIZATION FOR NBSAP IMPLEMENTATION

Goal E, Target 20

43. Mr. Ghassan Jaradi from the Lebanese University started this session with a presentation on assessments and opportunities related to resource mobilization and NBSAP implementation. He described how the tenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties decided that national implementation of the strategy for resource mobilization should include, as appropriate, the design and dissemination of a country-specific resource mobilization strategy. Participants interacted with Mr. Jaradi in a discussion based on three major elements: (i) assessment (e.g. NBSAPs implementation), (ii) opportunity (e.g. Nature SWAPS for certain debts) and (iii) innovative financial mechanisms (e.g. Payments for Ecosystem Services).

44. Ms. Nermin Wafa (LAS) made a presentation on innovative financial mechanisms in the Arab region. She listed opportunities that enhance fund mobilization such as Green Stimulus programmes, the Green Development Mechanism (GDM), the GEF funds, REDD+, and the Clean Development Mechanism (CDM). Ms. Wafa linked the Aichi Biodiversity Targets to these opportunities and showed how these targets could be oriented to access these resources.

45. At the end of this session, Mr. David Duthie (Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity) made a presentation on GEF funding for biodiversity enabling activities. He explained how funding has been provided according to eligibility criteria for the biodiversity focal area under the GEF and through “blocks of funds”. Mr. Duthie integrated the application of GEF funds for the next steps to be done in the updating process of the NBSAPs and the implementation of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020. Participants are now aware about the guidance for the development of a proposal for GEF-5 focal area set-aside (FAS) funds for the preparation, revision or updating of NBSAPs.

ITEM 9. SOUTH-SOUTH COOPERATION – STRENGTHENING SCIENTIFIC AND TECHNICAL COOPERATION IN THE REGION

Goal E

46. During the session on South-South cooperation, Mr. David Duthie (Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity) gave an overview about the importance of regional cooperation to exchange scientific research and data specific to the region. This initiative is especially important to developing countries in the North Africa and Middle East region given the urgent need for individual and institutional capacity-building to address the management of biodiversity threats. However, the participants noted that scientific knowledge present in research centres is not being communicated to managers and policymakers due to weak communication. Utilizing the clearing-house mechanism (CHM) as a platform for scientific information exchange was highlighted in this context to promote regional and international scientific cooperation. Under S-S cooperation, Morocco is supporting countries in West Asia to build their CHM in collaboration with Belgium. A questionnaire on collaboration and exchanges was distributed to participants (see annex V).

47. Ms. Diane Klaimi (UNEP-ROWA) introduced the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES) and its role in linking sound science to policymakers and managers. This initiative, also referred as “IPCC for biodiversity”, is equivalent to the IPCC under Climate Change which assisted in catalyzing worldwide understanding and governmental action on global

warming. IPBES is a supporting mechanism for biodiversity and ecosystems services monitoring and assessment, policy and decision-making, as well as capacity-building. The scope of IPBES covers biodiversity and ecosystem services meaning that the added value of IPBES is its relevance to the agriculture, water, health, finance sectors as well as to the biodiversity community.

48. Mr. Jonathan Brazdo (CITES) drew attention to CITES Notification to the Parties 2011/021, issued on 24 February 2011 to inform CITES Parties in particular about the text of decisions X/2 and X/5 of the tenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity, urging Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity to take into account the synergies among biodiversity-related conventions when updating their NBSAPs, and to involve the national focal points of those conventions. He said that this was a recognition that, while the other conventions all have their own specific mandates, their work is directly relevant to achieving biodiversity objectives, and that national actions under these MEAs need to be incorporated into the NBSAPs. Regarding CITES specifically, he noted that it is about biodiversity conservation and sustainable use. He noted that in Appendix II of CITES there are some 33,000 species of animals and plants. Trade in them is regulated to ensure that it is legal, sustainable and traceable. The conservation benefits of CITES, and its benefits for people, flow from this regulated trade. He referred to the trade in falcons (for falconry) and agarwood as examples of CITES trade of particular relevance to North Africa and the Middle East. He emphasized the importance of taking national sustainable use into account in the preparation of NBSAPs, noting the possible impacts of national measures to control trade for trading-partner countries. It is important to involve national CITES Authorities, as they understand the regulations and actions relating to this convention. Finally the representative of CITES announced the publication on the CITES website, that day, of a draft guide for CITES Parties on contributing to the development, review, updating and revision of national biodiversity strategies and action plans, also available at this link: <http://www.cbd.int/nbsap/guidance-tools/guidelines.shtml>.

49. Ms. Klaimi (UNEP-ROWA) also delivered a presentation highlighting the coherent and synergistic implementation of biodiversity-related MEAs in support of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 and enhancing synergies amongst them using the NBSAPs review process. One of the obstacles in implementing NBSAPs identified by the UNU-IAS assessment report was the lack of inclusion of measures to implement other biodiversity-related MEAs. Consequently, in paragraph 3(f) of decision X/2 the Conference of the Parties urged Parties and other Governments to “Support the updating of national biodiversity strategies and action plans as effective instruments to promote the implementation of the Strategic Plan and mainstreaming of biodiversity at the national level, taking into account synergies among the biodiversity-related conventions in a manner consistent with their respective mandates”. NBSAPs can be considered as an umbrella framework for supporting implementation of all MEAs by identifying commonalities and synergistic programmes/actions. Thus the NBSAPs review offers a unique opportunity for countries in the Arab region to begin thinking of developing joint programmes to deal with biodiversity issues across all policy sectors. And similarly, collaboration amongst MEAs provides the grounds for a more effective implementation of the Convention on Biological Diversity at the national level and more action-based results through promoting the generation and use of scientific information for monitoring indicators. Other MEAs and related treaties, including the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES), the Convention on Migratory Species (CMS), the Ramsar Convention, the World Heritage Convention (WHC) and the International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture (ITPGRFA) are governance instruments which facilitate more horizontal cooperation, dialogue and ground work and better understanding and awareness.

50. An exercise was proposed to identify possible linkages with specific programmes/cross-cutting issues, e.g. Ramsar’s, inland waters coastal biodiversity, or CITES, trade implications with endangered species. The exercise included cross-examining the new Aichi Biodiversity Targets against the MEAs’ objectives, thus suggesting potential collaboration for achieving better results through enhanced coordination of specific actions. For example Targets 11 and 14 are strongly relevant to the Ramsar Convention, Target 12 relevant to CITES and Target 11 and 12 to CMS. Countries were advised to

conduct a similar exercise at the national level during the NBSAP review process to place biodiversity conservation in a broader context. CMS and CITES are drafting guidance on NBSAPs for effective integration of their programmes in NBSAPs measures. The eleventh meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Ramsar Convention will incorporate outcomes of the tenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity in its deliberations.

ITEM 10. SYNTHESIS AND CONCLUSIONS OF THE WORKSHOP

Conclusions

51. As a result of the workshop, participants agreed that the following components of the NBSAP revision process were more clearly understood:

- (a) The overall NBSAP planning process and target-setting;
- (b) Aichi Biodiversity Targets are considered a good framework to guide the policies on biodiversity of the Arab States;
- (c) The different approaches to setting national targets based on the global Aichi Biodiversity Targets;
- (d) How to identify and engage with a full range of stakeholders and the importance of integrating communication, education and public awareness (CEPA) into NBSAPs;
- (e) The mechanism of financing by GEF and STAR, and the process for accessing GEF financial assistance for biodiversity-enabling activities;
- (f) The range of ways through which biodiversity can be mainstreamed into the broader production landscape and economic sectors;
- (g) The use of economic valuation techniques to make the benefits arising from the sustainable use of biodiversity and associated ecosystem services more transparent to both policymakers and the general public;
- (h) Methodology for determining stakeholders, and for engaging stakeholders in biodiversity planning (CEPA and CHM);
- (i) Analyzed synergies between focal points of CITES and the Ramsar Convention, on the one hand, and focal points of other multilateral environmental agreements (MEAs), on the other;
- (j) Regional approaches may be better suited and more cost-effective for some components of biodiversity planning related to the economics of payments for ecosystem services (PES), taxonomy, IAS, etc.;
- (k) There is a need for strengthened regional cooperation on indicators and NBSAP updating processes between UNEP-ROWA and North African countries; and
- (l) New mechanism of research and IPBES to support mechanisms of the Convention on Biological Diversity.

52. Participants stressed that the process of NBSAP revision should ensure that:

- (a) All aspects of biodiversity be considered at the national level;
- (b) Synergies amongst all stakeholders;
- (c) Take into consideration indigenous knowledge in the new NBSAPs;
- (d) NBSAPs must target all players at national level especially policymakers, students, women, children, etc.;
- (e) Trends (up or down) and dynamics must be considered;

- (f) IAS issue to be addressed in next generation of NBSAPs;
- (g) More work is needed to link “SMART” (specific, measurable, ambitious, realistic and time-bound) indicators to national targets for monitoring and reporting.

Recommendations

53. Specific recommendations made by the workshop participants included:

- (a) It is important for the workshop participants and organizers to maintain contact and explore other mechanisms for regional cooperation on issues related to the Convention on Biological Diversity;
- (b) There should be another regional workshop specifically focused on indicators and monitoring;
- (c) There is a need to follow up with other MEAs ratified by the countries and to explore synergies between them;
- (d) There is a need for focal points to convince decision-makers of importance of biodiversity loss on the economy;
- (e) There should be a special invasive alien species (IAS) programme for the Arab region;
- (f) Workshop documents should be translated to Arabic for wider distribution;
- (g) Involvement of all regional organizations in preparation of NBSAPs (League of Arab States, LAS), United Nations Environment Programme - Regional Office for West Asia, UNEP-ROWA) and the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA), etc.)
- (h) Urgent application for GEF technical assistance;
- (i) Media deserve a regional workshop on NBSAPs with focus on main tipping points and actions needed for next two years;
- (j) Marine protected areas should be a greater focus in this region than before; they have not previously been adequately addressed;
- (k) Increase the level of document distribution related to NBSAP revision, to all stakeholders;
- (l) Creation of an observatory to detect the degradation of biodiversity and enforce collaboration scientific and technical at national and regional level to conserve;
- (m) Establish funds to implement biodiversity projects, to finance projects that valuation of natural resources;
- (n) Mechanisms and methodologies to follow up on strategy to monitor its paths and progress towards the targets;
- (o) Concentrate more on practical issues and focus on mainstreaming techniques;
- (p) Create a special fund for Parties to intervene immediately in fragile regions and situations;
- (q) For each Party, creation of a legislative framework and a directorate related to biodiversity taking into consideration customary rights of indigenous people;
- (r) 18. Women, indigenous and local communities and NGOs must participate at all levels of NBSAP preparation.

ITEM 11. CLOSURE OF THE WORKSHOP

54. Closing remarks were delivered on 7 May 2011 by M. David Duthie, who officially closed the workshop at 3 p.m.

*Annex I***PLANS FOR THE REVISION OF NBSAPS***Status of NBSAP*

Algeria: NBSAP prepared in 2000. followed by several law and policies adoption such as (i) National and action plan for environment and sustainable development in 2002, (ii) National schedule of territorial management in 2007 and (iii) and new law for protected area in 2011.

Comoros: NBSAP implemented in 2010 and environmental policy already existing.

Egypt: NBSAP implemented in 1998. Egypt has now two laws on protected area and environmental protection and has also policies on ecotourism and nature conservation.

Jordan: NBSAP implemented on 2003. Few laws and policies already exist such as law on protected area.

Morocco: NBSAP implemented in 2002 and reviewed in 2004. There are two strategies related to biodiversity and marine fishing. There is also new law for protected areas.

Oman: NBSAP implemented in 2001 in parallel to the law on nature reserve and wild life conservation.

Palestinian Authority: NBSAP implemented in 1999 in parallel to environmental laws which includes complete set of articles on nature conservation.

Saudi Arabia: In 2005, national strategy for biodiversity has been integrated into the (i) ninth national development plan, (ii) national forest strategy, (iii) national plan for science and technology, (iv) coastal zone management plan, (v) biodiversity in education, (vi) action plan for the protection of environment in the Riyadh region, and (vii) the national system plan for protected area.

Somalia: Never developed policies, frameworks or laws.

Sudan: NBSAP implemented in 2000. Sudan adopted several laws related to biodiversity protection (e.g. laws on wildlife, forest, biosafety, animal resources and ABS).

Tunisia: NBSAP implemented in 1998 and reviewed in 2003. Adoption of the law respecting the establishment of marine and coastal protected areas and Tunisia is currently working on its requirements. Red List has been prepared according to IUCN requirements.

United Arab Emirates: There is no current NBSAP but there are several strategies at local level of each emirate that are revised regularly every 2 to 4 years.

Yemen: NBSAP prepared in May 2004.

Current Plans

Algeria: Revision of NBSAP by end of 2012 in light of Aichi Targets.

Comoros: Implementation of NBSAP according to Aichi Targets.

Egypt: (i) Apply GEF funding (ii) Stakeholders engagement (iii) Concentrate on lesson learned and emerging issues.

Jordan: Elaborate the outcomes of this workshop to review the NBSAP.

Morocco: Setting priorities according to Aichi targets and objectives of the Convention on Biological Diversity.

Oman: NBSAP revision and update included as a priority project in the ministry 2011 plan.

Palestinian Authority: (i) Identifying stakeholders, (ii) updating data and identifying targets according to Aichi targets and (iii) formulate national strategy.

Saudi Arabia: Development of NBSAP in line with the tenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity.

Somalia: Identifying stakeholders, consultation and awareness.

Sudan: Expansion of the biodiversity committee and revising the existing studies on status of biodiversity.

Tunisia: Review its strategy according to Aichi Nagoya targets and in respect to the outcomes of this workshop.

United Arab Emirates: The ministry of environment will lead the process of updating the NBSAP.

Yemen: Yemen's NBSAP update is to meet new emerging issues as stated by the Aichi-Nagoya targets and it meet the 2011-2020 international targets.

National Targets

Algeria: Targets will be set to meet national priorities through steering committees.

Comoros: National workshops will be engaged to set national targets.

Egypt: Hopes to reach 10 national targets including targets for coral reefs and mangroves.

Jordan: High consideration will be given international biodiversity policies with particular importance to on protected areas and coral reefs.

Morocco: Setting national targets through stakeholders' engagement and further environmental assessment.

Oman: Will adopt the national targets according to the country priorities and in line with Aichi targets.

Palestinian Authority: National workshops, consultations with specified experts to revise the national targets.

Saudi Arabia: The central components of the strategy document are 17 strategic goals. Each goal provides a broad national objective for specific ecosystems and programmes of work of the Convention on Biological Diversity.

Somalia: Conducting studies on biodiversity losses causes and ecosystem services.

Sudan: Explore existing targets in line with Aichi Targets and consider the relevant ones.

Tunisia: Through national mobilization targets will be set according to national priorities.

United Arab Emirates: Importance will be given to targets related to stakeholders' engagement and scientific collaboration.

Yemen: Yemen will try setting the national targets within flexible framework, taking into account national needs and priorities, while also bearing in mind national contributions to the achievement of the global targets.

Opportunities

Algeria: Targets will be set to meet national priorities through steering committees.

Comoros: National workshops will be engaged to set national targets.

Egypt:

Jordan: High consideration will be given international biodiversity policies with particular importance to on protected areas and coral reefs.

Morocco: Setting national targets through stakeholders' engagement and further environmental assessment.

Oman: Will adopt the national targets according to the country priorities and in line with Aichi targets.

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Sudan: Explore existing targets in line with Aichi Targets and consider the relevant ones.

Tunisia: Through national mobilization targets will be set according to national priorities.

United Arab Emirates: Importance will be given to targets related to stakeholders' engagement and scientific collaboration.

Yemen: National Action Plan to Combat Desertification (NAPCD), water policy and National Wastewater Strategy.

Annex II

TOWARDS ACHIEVING AICHI TARGET 9, ON INVASIVE ALIEN SPECIES (IAS), AT NATIONAL AND REGIONAL LEVELS IN THE ARAB REGION

The following conclusions/recommendations emerged from participant discussions in a session on invasive alien species and regional cooperation between the countries of the Arab region.

The most high-risk invasive species in Arab countries:
Red palm weevil, Prosopis trees, water hyacinth, rats, red swamp crayfish, Lessepsian migration of fish, carp, Acacia trees, goldfish, whiteflies and aphids on tomatoes, Conocarpus trees, Indian mynah bird.
The most important pathways of invasive species in Arab countries:
Air, water, transportation, international trading, tourism, introduction for aquaculture, climate change, ship ballast water and hull/surface fouling, containers, seaweed, aquatic propagules, garbage landfill, ballast water, and importation and transportation of plants, pets, seeds and animals for research, trading and entertainment.
Threats:
Destruction of crops, cost of management, harm to the environment, displacement or out-competition of native animals and plants, competition for resources, extinction of native species, economic impacts (losses in tourism, reduced production), pathogens to humans, threats to international trade.

A - Priorities for achievement of Aichi Target 9 at national level

1. Prevention of new invasions and early detection and rapid response to new invaders

- i. Detection mechanisms for borders.
- ii. Create lists of high-risk invasive species.
- iii. Develop a system for early detection of suspect species.
- iv. Create a mechanism for reporting new or spreading species.

2. Control and management of established and spreading invaders

- i. Encourage development of monitoring programs.
- ii. Prepare guidelines to deliver to agencies, partners and volunteers.

3. Creating effective legal structures

- i. Form a national steering committee.
- ii. Appoint national focal point.
- iii. Establish links with international and regional bodies.
- iv. Changes in the legal structure made as efficiently as possible; it may be desirable to consider an “omnibus” package of legislation.

4. Promotion of awareness

- i. Publicize danger posed by invasive species.

- ii. Publicity by drama, video, films using print and electronic media, and radio and television programmes.
- iii. Distribute posters and guidelines.
- iv. Community participation (use of volunteers - landowners, interested people).
- v. Relation between economy and invasive alien species.
- vi. Preparing curricula for primary and secondary school students.
- vii. Regional communication, education and public awareness (CEPA) programme.

5. Improvement of the knowledge base

- i. Identify national institutions to promote invasive species management.
- ii. Strengthen research on invasive species inventories/baselines.
- iii. Collect indigenous knowledge on invasive species (lists etc.).
- iv. Establish impact and risk assessment studies (socio-economic, biological) to follow the impact of these species.

6. Building/strengthening of national capacity

- i. Train people from environmental agencies.
- ii. Hold workshops to identify the threats of damage from invasive alien species.
- iii. Research and technical cooperation.
- iv. Increase cooperation between agencies and NGOs.
- v. Set up centres of excellence on invasive species (in existing research centres).

7. Mobilization of increased financial resources

- i. Funds to be committed to invasive species management by national/regional/international organizations.
- ii. Enhance private sector funding.

B - Priorities for achievement of Aichi Target 9 at regional level

1. Information

- i. Emphasize regional prevention and early detection mechanisms, to be led by the Council of Arab Ministers Responsible for the Environment (CAMRE) and the League of Arab States (LAS).
- ii. Share information regionally through the establishment of mutually accessible databases and websites.
- iii. Develop a regional clearing-house mechanism (CHM) for information on invasive species, perhaps through a web-based information system (may use the clearing-house mechanism of the Convention on Biological Diversity).
- iv. Exchange lists of invasive alien species.
- v. Appoint technical team to draft regional communication and dissemination strategy for validation.

2. Awareness

- i. Promote awareness by educational programmes in identification.
- ii. Hold exhibitions to develop awareness of the dangers to biodiversity of accidental introduction of invasive species.
- iii. Publicity through drama, videos and films, print and electronic media.

3. Building regional capacity

- i. Establish a regional coordination framework to define next steps (to be led by the League of Arab States and the Convention on Biological Diversity).
- ii. Harmonize regional training in invasive species via the Arab Union for Protected Areas.
- iii. Use/exchange invasive species experts in the Arab region.
- iv. Hold regional workshops to follow progress regarding the Aichi Biodiversity Target related to invasive species.
- v. Exchange experiences.
- vi. Prepare a proposal for regional project on invasive alien species in Arab countries.
- vii. Establish regional scientific research projects.
- viii. Assess institutions' training needs regarding invasive species.

4. Legislation

- i. Implementation of a roadmap/framework for a regional strategy for the way forward (agreed CAMRE, LAS).
- ii. Prepare regional initiative led by the Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity and CAMRE, LAS.
- iii. Establish strong legislative framework.

5. Funding

- i. Make representations to government leaders to improve long-term funding to address the pressing issues of invasive species of concern to conservation in the region.
- ii. Demonstrate the economic cost/ benefit studies for invasive species in Arab countries.

*Annex III***POTENTIAL PRIORITIES OF THE NBSAPs PROCESS**

Cluster	Algeria	Comoros	Egypt	Jordan	Morocco	Palestinian Authority	Saudi Arabia	Somalia	Sudan	Tunisia	Yemen	UAE	Component
I. Preparation													1. Rapid stocktaking and review of relevant plans, policies and reports
													2. Identifying stakeholders; consultations; and awareness
													3. Supplementary studies (e.g. the causes and consequences of biodiversity loss highlighting the value of biodiversity and ecosystem services and their contribution to Human well-being)
II. Setting national priorities and targets													4. Setting national targets, principles, & main priorities of the strategy through national consultations
III. Developing the strategy and action plan													5. Developing the strategy and actions to implement the agreed targets through national consultations
													6. Addressing the application and implementation of the NBSAP at sub-national levels through consultations with sub-national and local authorities
													7. Sectoral integration including mainstreaming into development, poverty reduction and climate change plans through sectoral consultations
IV. Development of implementation plans													9. Developing a plan for capacity development for NBSAP implementation
													10. Conducting a technology needs assessment and developing a plan for increasing technical capacity
													11. Developing a communication and outreach strategy for the NBSAP
													12. Developing a plan for resource mobilization for NBSAP implementation
V. Institutional monitoring, reporting and exchange													13. Establishing/ strengthening of national coordination structures
													14. CHM development
													15. Development of indicators and monitoring approach
													16. Fifth national reports
VI. Adoption by the government													17. Adoption

Annex IV

CURRENT AND FUTURE EXTENT OF PROTECTED AREAS (PAS); RESULT OF EXERCISE ON APPLICATION OF TARGET 11

Country/ Entity	Diagnosis			Consultation & collaboration		Demands		Resources
	Area	Proposed PA	Management	Stakeholders	Contribution	Opportunities	Constraints	
Algeria	Overall PA: 23%; Marine 1%	Marine PA	Management plans already implemented	Farmers, ranchers, local authorities, NGOs, landowners	Decision-making, consultation	Extract area from human activities	Implementation	Financial and technical resources are required mainly for capacity-building
Comoros	34% of Moheli is a marine PA	PAs in Karthala and Ntringui	Local community and government are involved	Local community & sub-national authorities		New PA	Harmful human activities	Local community is available for cooperation but financial resources are needed
Egypt	Overall PA: 15% (150,000 km ²) Marine: 7%	Nasr Lake, Middle Sinai, deep sea water	60% of PAs are effectively managed	Seanaï Bedauin, Nuba Community		Mainstreaming biodiversity	Political, financial, technical	Multilateral and bilateral cooperation
Iraq	Overall PA: 0.2%	Marshlands, and wetlands in North Iraq	In progress			New programs on PA	Technical	Resources for technical support
Kuwait	Overall PA: 5% Marine: 1%	Coastal mud flats, coral reefs	20% of goals are achieved	Government & NGOs		PA extension, and new laws		Financial, technical and human resources are required
Lebanon	Overall PA: 2.7%	Estuaries and wet lands	Natural reserves effectively managed but Nature sites are less managed	Private land owners, fishermen, farmers etc.		Socioeconomic benefits, protection of National Sites	Private ownership of lands	Financial, human and technical resources are required mainly in raising awareness expertise
Morocco	770,000 ha of PA	2.5 million ha will be protected by new laws	Management plans exist	Local community	Consultations and raising awareness & PA management	New laws and new PA assessment		
Oman	Overall PA: 3% including 15 PAs	Massirah Island & Jabal Al Akhdar	Very good reputability management system	Oman Environment Society (OES)	Raising public contribution, research and studies	New reclaimed PAs		Capacity-building, human and technical resources are needed
Palestinian Authority	50 PAs including one marine and one wetland			Government, NGOs, universities & private sectors	Partnerships, networking, raising awareness	New PAs, PAs assessment	Israeli occupation prevents from managing PAs	Funding for NBSAP and fifth national report, GEF funding assistance
Sudan	Overall PA: 12% Marine: 10%		Excellent improvement	Local community and farmers	Global stakeholders' involvement	Indigenous communities involvement	Infrastructure for implementation	Financial resources are required; establishment of laws
Tunisia	Overall PA: 7%	Study in progress	43 PAs have management plans	Local community	Consultation, raising awareness & program implementation	Implementing a PA network		Financial and technical resources are required
United Arab Emirates	Overall PA: 12% Marine PA: 5%	Mountain of Hafeet	Management plans are well set up and implemented	Local community, fishermen	Establishing and managing the PAs	Private islands which hold birds populations	Urbanization	Human and technical resources are required
League of Arab States opinion		New marine protected reserves for cetaceans			Assistance of national focal points (NFPs)	New ecosystem approach to be applied in planning for marine and coastal area		On regional level US\$ 100 million are needed to restore PAs and applying the concept of polluter pays

SCIENTIFIC TECHNICAL AND TECHNOLOGICAL COOPERATION (REGIONAL OR SOUTH-SOUTH COOPERATION)

1. What biodiversity-related knowledge-sharing mechanisms exist within your country? Are they effective? Who are the providers and users?

- *CHM Egypt* is an effective mechanism in relation to biodiversity. It is provided by the Egyptian Environmental Affairs Agency and the users include people from Arab countries.
- *CHM Tunisia* and *CHM Morocco* are also effective tools. Universities, Ministries of Environment and Agriculture are the providers; students and scientists are the users.
- The *Coastal Atlas* and *AGEDI* (Abu-Dhabi Global Environmental Data Initiative) in United Arab Emirates cover all biodiversity-related information and databases. The Environment Agency in Abu Dhabi is the provider and the municipalities and scientists are the users.
- The exchanges in Kuwait and Iraq are made through a national committee for biodiversity. This committee refers to the Ministry of Environment.
- The main providers of databases in Saudi Arabia are: the Saudi Wildlife Commission (*SWC*), King Abdulaziz City for Science and Technology (*KACST*), and the Presidency of Meteorology and Environment (*PME*).
- In Algeria, Comoros, Jordan, Lebanon, Mauritania, Oman and Yemen, exchanges are made through Ministries, workshops, universities, libraries and media campaigns.

2. What information, knowledge and technologies are most needed for your country's NBSAP revision and implementation, which you could not access at national level (gap analysis)? Are you aware of any sources for those information, knowledge and technologies in your region? Are they available and accessible?

- Ecosystem benefits and services.
- Invasive alien species (IAS) impacts at national and regional levels.
- Capacity-building, particularly on NBSAP implementation and taxonomy.
- Valuation of biodiversity features.
- Status of threatened species.
- Marine and coastal biodiversity.
- Biodiversity indicators.
- Research work on propagation, harvesting, marketing of medicinal plants
- Better understanding and documentation of traditional knowledge
- Biotechnology and genetic engineering.
- Remote sensing and GIS.
- Emerging issues.

3. Is there any facilitated or organized biodiversity information and knowledge exchange/technology transfer mechanism operational in your country? Give an example

- The Arab Team on UEAS under the auspices of the League of Arab States.
- The Arab Center for the Studies of Arid and Dry Lands (ACSAD).
- The Arab Organization for Agricultural Development (AOAD).
- The North African partnership for taxonomy (NAFRINET), based in Tunisia.

4. Are you aware of, and able to reach, any regional centre of excellence for technical and scientific support and assistance on your biodiversity practices?

Most of the answers were “No”; some countries identified the following scientific organizations: Nature Conservation Center for Sustainable Futures (IBSAR), International Center for Agricultural Research in the Dry Areas (ICARDA), Arab Center for the Studies of Arid Zones and Dry Lands (ACSAD), (Lebanese Agricultural Research Institute (LARI), Marine center, Kuwait.

5. Are you aware of any regional biodiversity-related capacity-building/training programmes for professionals (for instance school/university curriculum)?

With the exception of Algeria, Morocco, Sudan, United Arab and Yemen, all Parties are aware of regional trainings and programmes such as:

- Nature Conservation Training Centre in Egypt.
- RAC/SPA.
- Saudi Wildlife Training Centre.
- Alexandria University.

6. What are the most important biodiversity-related fields of expertise in which your country excels, which you could and would like to offer to other partners in your region? Do you have good dissemination channels?

Algeria	Comoros	Egypt	Iraq	Jordan	Kuwait	Lebanon	Mauritania
-Saharan ecosystem -Ornithology -Herbology -Wetlands -Forestry -Genetic resources -PAs management	-Indian Ocean Commission	-Economics of biodiversity -PAs planning & management -CEPA -Bird migration -Management of marine natural resources -GIS, remote sensing -Database management -Legislation -ABS	-Marshlands -Forestry	-Protected areas -ABS -Legislation -Sustainable development	-Phytoplankton	-Land species - Habitats -Biodiversity management -Natural disasters (forest fires) -Combat desertification	-Combating desertification
Morocco	Oman	Palestinian Authority	Saudi Arabia	Somalia	Sudan	Tunisia	United Arab Emirates
-CHM -Protected areas -Database management -NGO engagement	-Mangroves plantation -Sea turtles conservation -Botanical garden -Wild plant conservation	-Policy-making -Combating desertification -Awareness -Biodiversity conservation	-Protected areas -Breeding wildlife species	-Fishery -Wildlife -Forestry	-Genetic resources -Forestry -Animal resources	-Genetic resources -Forestry -Entomology	-Marine-related fields -Terrestrial-related fields -Environmental database technologies - Migratory bird species