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**Convention on
Biological Diversity**

REGIONAL CAPACITY-DEVELOPMENT WORKSHOP FOR
  CENTRAL ASIA ON NATIONAL BIODIVERSITY STRATEGIES
  AND ACTION PLANS AND THE MAINSTREAMING OF
  BIODIVERSITY
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Item 3 of the provisional agenda∗

STATUS OF NATIONAL BIODIVERSITY STRATEGIES AND ACTION PLANS

Note by the Executive Secretary

I.   INTRODUCTION

1.   Article 6 of the Convention on Biological Diversity 1/ requires each Party to develop or adapt national strategies, plans or programmes for the conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity and to integrate, as far as possible and as appropriate, the conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity into relevant sectoral or cross-sectoral plans, programmes and policies.

2.   In its decisions VI/26, on the Strategic Plan for the Convention, and VI/27 A, on implementation of the Convention, and, most recently, in decision IX/8, the Conference of the Parties of the Convention stressed that the development and implementation of national biodiversity strategies and action plans constitute the cornerstone of national implementation of the Convention. This is reflected in goal 3 of the Strategic Plan, namely, that "national biodiversity strategies and action plans and the integration of biodiversity concerns into relevant sectors serve as an effective framework for the implementation of the objectives of the Convention".

3.   The Working Group on Review of Implementation of the Convention, at its first meeting, in September 2005, examined progress in the implementation of the Strategic Plan and concluded that there was little progress towards goal 2 and that that remained a major constraint on implementation. The Working Group also noted that progress towards goal 3 was also poor. In view of this slow progress, the Conference of the Parties decided to conduct an in-depth review of the implementation of goals 2 and 3

∗   UNEP/CBD/NBSAP/CBW-CA/1/1.

1/ Article 6 of the Convention states that:

   "(a)   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 which shall reflect, *inter alia*, the measures
   set out in this Convention relevant to the Contracting Party concerned.

   "(b)   Each Contracting Party shall, in accordance with its particular conditions and capabilities,
   integrate, as far as possible and as appropriate, the conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity
   into relevant sectoral or cross-sectoral plans, programmes and policies."

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of the Strategic Plan. Section II of the present note provides a summary of the results of that review, as considered by the Working Group on Review of Implementation of the Convention, at its second meeting, in July 2007, and presented to the ninth meeting of the Conference of the Parties in May 2008 (UNEP/CBD/COP/9/14/Rev.1 and UNEP/CBD/COP/9/4).

4.   This series of regional workshops on capacity development for national biodiversity strategies and action plans is intended to contribute to the review process.   Section III of the note provides information on the status and implementation of national biodiversity strategies and action plans in Central Asia, as a basis for further work during the workshop (see section IV below).

5.   Since considering the issue of national biodiversity strategies and action plans at its second meeting, the Conference of the Parties has issued guidance on the preparation and implementation of such strategies and plans and endorsed third-party guidelines developed to assist countries to fulfil their obligations under Article 6 of the Convention. The second meeting of the Working Group on Review of Implementation of the Convention, held in July 2007, prepared consolidated and updated guidance (see UNEP/CBD/NBSAP/CBW-CA/1/3). The ninth meeting of the Conference of the Parties, held in Bonn in May 2008, adopted this guidance in paragraph 8 of decision IX/8.

II.   IN-DEPTH REVIEW OF THE STATUS AND IMPLEMENTATION OF NATIONAL BIODIVERSITY STRATEGIES AND ACTION PLANS: A GLOBAL OVERVIEW

6.   As noted above, at its eighth meeting, the Conference of the Parties decided to consider, at its ninth meeting, the in-depth review of goals 2 and 3 of the Strategic Plan (decision VIII/8). It requested the Working Group on Review of Implementation to prepare for the in-depth review by focusing in particular on the following elements:

(a)   The status of national biodiversity strategies and action plans and their updating;

(b)   The extent to which biodiversity concerns have been effectively mainstreamed in accordance with Article 6(b) of the Convention;

(c)   The implementation of national biodiversity strategies and action plans (NBSAPs); and

(d)   The provision of financial resources, capacity development, access to and transfer of technology and technology cooperation.

7.   The relevant goals and objectives of the Strategic Plan are:

Goal 2: Parties have improved financial, human, scientific, technical, and technological capacity to implement the Convention.

Objective 2.1: All Parties have adequate capacity for implementation of priority actions in national biodiversity strategies and action plans

Objective 2.2: Developing country Parties, in particular the least developed and the small island developing States amongst them, and other Parties with economies in transition, have sufficient resources available to implement the three objectives of the Convention

Objective 2.5: Technical and scientific cooperation is making a significant contribution to building capacity

*Goal 3: **National biodiversity strategies and action plans and the integration of biodiversity concerns into relevant sectors serve as an effective framework for the implementation of the objectives of the Convention.***

Objective 3.1: Every Party has effective national strategies, plans and programmes in place to provide a national framework for implementing the three objectives of the Convention

Objective 3.3: Biodiversity concerns are being integrated into relevant national sectoral and cross-sectoral plans, programmes and policies

Objective 3.4: The priorities in national biodiversity strategies and action plans are being actively implemented, as a means to achieve national implementation of the Convention, and as a significant contribution towards the global biodiversity agenda.

8.   In line with decision VIII/8, the Executive Secretary synthesized and analysed information in national biodiversity strategies and action plans, the 127 third national reports submitted by Parties by April 2007, 2/ and other information submitted by Parties in response to the invitation in decision VIII/8 to provide updates on the status of national biodiversity strategies and action plans, obstacles to implementation, national reviews of implementation and the availability of resources. The Secretariat also consulted relevant academic studies and reports prepared by the Global Environment Facility (GEF) and its implementing agencies. The latter includes evaluations of GEF support for enabling activities, national capacity self-assessment reports and analyses of environment-related issues included in poverty reduction strategies and strategies for the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals.

9.   The following provides a summary of the main conclusions of the review, focusing on implementation of national biodiversity strategies and action plans and the availability of financial resources. 3/. It reproduces the conclusions of the second meeting of the Working Group on Review of Implementation of the Convention, held in July 2007, and presented to the ninth meeting of the Conference of the Parties in May 2008. Data in subparagraphs (a) and (b) have been updated to the end of 2008:

        (a)   From information provided to the Secretariat from Parties, 166 Parties (87 per cent of the total) have finalized their national biodiversity strategy and action plan or equivalent instruments. Twelve Parties have informed the Secretariat that they are preparing their national biodiversity strategy and action plan. Thirteen Parties have not prepared a national biodiversity strategy and action plan or initiated the process to do so, or have not provided recent information to the Secretariat on the status of their national biodiversity strategy and action plan;

        (b)   Twenty one Parties have revised national biodiversity strategies and action plans, and fifteen more have revisions in progress. Revisions are designed to identify and meet new challenges and

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2/   Third national reports had been received by 147 Parties as end of 2008.

3/   The full results of the Secretariat's analysis is provided in the following documents:

- Implementation of the Convention and its Strategic Plan (UNEP/CBD/COP/9/14/Rev.1)
- Report of the Ad Hoc Open-ended Working Group on Review of Implementation of the Convention on the work of its second meeting (UNEP/CBD/COP/9/4)
- Status of implementation of goals 2 and 3 of the strategic plan focusing on implementation of national biodiversity strategies and action plans and availability of financial resources: an overview (UNEP/CBD/WG-RI/2/2)
- Synthesis and analysis of obstacles to implementation of NBSAPs, lessons learned from the review, effectiveness of policy instruments and strategic priorities for action (UNEP/CBD/WG-RI/2/2/Add.1)
- Updated synthesis of information contained in third national reports (UNEP/CBD/WG-RI/2/INF/1)
- NBSAPs: a meta-analysis of earlier reviews (UNEP/CBD/WG-RI/2/INF/9)
- Review of national biodiversity strategies and action plans, biodiversity mainstreaming and implementation of the Convention: a bibliography (UNEP/CBD/WG-RI/2/INF/10).

to respond to recent guidance from the Conference of the Parties. Some Parties are developing biodiversity strategies and/or action plans at the subnational level;

(c)   Stakeholder consultations have been a major part of the preparation of national biodiversity strategies and action plans. However, the range of stakeholders involved is often not adequate to ensure effective ownership of national biodiversity strategies and action plans or to ensure mainstreaming of biodiversity beyond the environment community;

(d)   While most national biodiversity strategies and action plans include goals and targets, few are quantitative and few respond directly to the 2010 biodiversity target or other targets established under the Convention. In part, this results from the fact that most national biodiversity strategies and action plans pre-date the establishment of the targets by the Convention on Biological Diversity;

(e)   Similarly, reference to the ecosystem approach is absent from most national biodiversity strategies and action plans, and most do not include reference to all of the relevant programmes of work and thematic issues under the Convention;

(f)   Most national biodiversity strategies and action plans include action plans. However, frequently, these action plans tend to be focused on projects rather than on the fundamental issues that need to be addressed to achieve the objectives of the Convention. Few specify domestic funding sources;

(g)   Effective communication programmes are lacking from many national biodiversity strategies and action plans;

(h)   Most countries report efforts to mainstream biodiversity into sectoral and cross-sectoral policies, plans and programmes. This is probably more effective with some sectors (e.g., forestry, tourism) than others. Mainstreaming of biodiversity into national development and poverty-reduction strategies and broader planning processes appears to be generally weak;

(i)   Most countries have identified priorities for implementation of their national biodiversity strategies and action plans, but few of them have indicated in their national reports whether and to what extent they have been implemented. Some countries may have comprehensive reports on implementation but these are not systematically available to the Secretariat;

(j)   Parties report that the most widespread constraints to implementation of the Convention are "lack of financial, human and technical resources" and "lack of economic incentive measures". Articles 7, 12, 8(h) and 8(a)-(e) are reported to be the provisions most constrained by lack of resources;

(k)   While nearly all countries indicate that they provide some financial support or incentives to national activities that are intended to achieve the objectives of the Convention, budget cuts are a serious problem in some countries. There are many examples of private contributions and resources generated from revenue measures, but the resources are generally small at national or international levels;

(l)   Several countries have begun to introduce innovative financial mechanisms such as payments for ecosystem services, but, generally speaking, they have not yet borne fruit in generating sustainable financing. About one third of the reporting countries have adopted tax exemption status for biodiversity-related donations;

(m)   Most countries do not have a process to monitor financial support in their countries, and only one-fifth of reporting countries have conducted a review of how their national budgets (including official development assistance) support of national biodiversity activities;

(n)   According to data from the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), about US$ 9 billion dollars of biodiversity-related donor assistance have been provided for the period 1998–2005. No clear long-term trends in bilateral assistance can be discerned;

(o)   While some positive outcomes are reported for specific activities, in general, technology transfer and cooperation under the Convention appears to have been very limited;

(p)   Important progress has been made with respect to the exchange of information and scientific and technical cooperation in general. However, the overall role of the clearing-house mechanism in supporting such cooperation needs to be further elaborated. About one-half of the Parties have developed a national clearing-house mechanism.

10.   In their third national report, Parties were asked to indicate the relative importance of various obstacles 4/ to implementation of the provisions of the Convention and the thematic programmes of work, by ranking them as "high-level", "medium-level", or "low-level" challenges. Taking all reporting Parties together, the following ten challenges were ranked as "high" or "medium-level" by more than 70 per cent of Parties for the implementation of Article 6:

- Lack of financial, human, technical resources (84%);
- Lack of economic incentive measures (82%);
- Loss of biodiversity and the corresponding goods and services it provides not properly understood and documented (76%);
- Lack of public education and awareness at all levels (75%)
- Lack of effective partnerships (74%);
- Lack of horizontal cooperation among stakeholders (73%);
- Unsustainable production and consumption patterns (72%);
- Lack of mainstreaming and integration of biodiversity issues into other sectors (71%);
- Inadequate capacity to act, caused by institutional weakness (70%);
- Lack of knowledge and practice of ecosystem-based approaches to management (70%).

III.   THE STATUS AND IMPLEMENTATION OF NATIONAL BIODIVERSITY STRATEGIES AND ACTION PLANS IN CENTRAL ASIA

11.   Of the ten Parties invited to participate in this regional workshop, nine (90%) have completed a national biodiversity strategy and action plan, while only one country is to develop its NBSAP document (see table 1) – a completion rate higher than the global average. In addition, under the Caspian Sea Environment Convention, signatories of this Convention have also developed a biodiversity strategy and action plan. Annex I provides a digest of the national biodiversity strategies and action plans as featured in the country profiles on the Convention's website. While some countries have prepared posters on aspects of their national biodiversity strategies and action plans, no Party from the Central Asian region has prepared a poster. These posters are available at: http://www.cbd.int/meetings/wgri-02/poster-session.shtml

12.   From the Central Asian region, Kyrgyzstan and Turkey are the only Parties to date that have revised their national biodiversity strategies and action plans. However, the Secretariat is aware that Turkmenistan has begun work in this regard.

4/   See UNEP/CBD/WGRI/2/2/Add.1 These obstacles correspond generally, but not exactly, to the list appended to the Strategic Plan (decision VI/26).

13. As part of the global analysis, summarized in section II above, Parties were invited to submit information on the status of national biodiversity strategies and action plans, their implementation and updating, and the extent to which biodiversity concerns have been effectively mainstreamed in accordance with Article 6(b) of the Convention on Biological Diversity. From the Central Asian region, information for this compilation, prepared by the Secretariat for the second meeting of the Working Group on Review of Implementation of the Convention (UNEP/CBD/WGRI/2/INF/7), was provided by Turkey only.

14. To complement and extend the global analysis, the Secretariat has requested each participant in the workshop, nominated by national focal points for the Convention, to provide further information on their country's national biodiversity strategy and action plan (see UNEP/CBD/NBSAP/CBW-CA/1/Add.1, paras. 7-8).

IV.   ACTIVITIES TO BE UNDERTAKEN DURING THE WORKSHOP

15. As noted in the annotated agenda (UNEP/CBD/NBSAP/CBW-CA/1/Add.1), participants will be invited to discuss national experiences and lessons learned in the development and implementation of national biodiversity strategies and action plans, focusing on:

(a)   Status of national biodiversity strategies and action plans or similar strategies and programmes;

(b)   Major features of national biodiversity strategies and action plans;

(c)   Priority actions identified for implementing national biodiversity strategies and action plans;

(d)   Mechanisms identified for implementing national biodiversity strategies and action plans;

(e)   Obstacles encountered in the implementation of national biodiversity strategies and action plans; and

(f)   Reviews undertaken of the implementation of national biodiversity strategies and action plans and assessment of the effectiveness of the strategy.

Table 1: Status of national biodiversity strategies and action plans and national reports in Central Asia

Country	NBSAP (year of adoption) *year of completion indicated where year of adoption is unknown or unclear	National reports			
		1st	2nd	3rd	4th * due 30 March 2009
Afghanistan	No *SCBD was informed in February 2006 that a project proposal had been submitted to the GEF	No	No	Yes	No
Azerbaijan	Yes (2006)	Yes	No	No	No
Islamic Republic of Iran	Yes (2006)* Year of adoption unclear	Yes	Yes	Yes	

Country	NBSAP (year of adoption) *year of completion indicated where year of adoption is unknown or unclear	National reports			
Kazakhstan	Yes (1999)* Third national report received in January 2006 states that NBSAP had still not been adopted	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
Kyrgyzstan	Yes (1998, 2002)* NBSAP completed in 1998 was not adopted by government however third and fourth national reports confirm that NBSAP for period 2002-2006 was adopted by government in 2002. SCBD has not yet received hard and electronic copies of the revised NBSAP.	No	No	Yes	Yes
Pakistan	Yes (1999)	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
Tajikistan	Yes (2003)	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
Turkey	Yes (1999, 2001, 2007).* Party is requested to clarify whether 2001 version constitutes an NBSAP revision or is the final product of a draft completed in 1999. If the former applies, a *second* revision was completed at the end of 2007 (SCBD was informed in July 2008 that a revision had been approved by the Minister of Environment and would be published in Turkish and English). To date, SCBD has not received hard and electronic copies of the 1999 original (draft?) version or the 2007 revision.	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
Turkmenistan	Yes (2002). Informed at WGRI-2 in July 2007 that NBSAP was being revised in line with 2010 targets, and scheduled for completion, in Russian, by end of 2007.	Yes	No	Yes	No
Uzbekistan	Yes (1998)	Yes	No	Yes	No

Annex I

MAJOR FEATURES OF NATIONAL BIODIVERSITY STRATEGIES AND ACTION PLANS OF CENTRAL ASIA

This annex provides brief outlines of the major features of national biodiversity strategies and action plans as provided on the Convention's website at http://www.cbd.int/countries/. Those entries with a tick mark (√) have been finalized and approved by Parties on the basis of a draft prepared by the Secretariat. For the remaining countries, the profiles have been prepared by the Secretariat on the basis of information provided in the national biodiversity strategy and action plan and national reports, but have not been reviewed by the Party concerned.

Afghanistan

Not available.

Azerbaijan

The NBSAP provides strategic direction and measurable targets for the conservation of the country's biodiversity over the next five years. It also contains an outline of the priority activities that should be undertaken in order to achieve these targets. The final NBSAP document will comprise three main sections:

(a)   A country study that summarizes the current status of Azerbaijan's biodiversity, including uses and threats, and outlines the current state of conservation activities;

(b)   A national strategy, which is a strategic framework that serves as a guide to the most pressing conservation activities. It consists of an overall aim and a series of measurable objectives. The strategy outlines principles that will guide the implementation of the national biodiversity strategy and action plan, and constraints and opportunities that should be considered during its design and implementation; and

(c)   A national action plan, which outlines a series of prioritized activities that must be undertaken in order to achieve the objectives set in the strategy.

Islamic Republic of Iran

Iran's national biodiversity strategy and action plan is based on many workshops and studies that try to link research, uses and policies together. Five reports addressed different aspects of biodiversity and served as the bases for analysis. The topics were: (

(a)   Intersection of social, political and economical issues in biodiversity assessment;

(b)   Land use in agriculture, forestry and fisheries;

(c)   Biodiversity status at ecosystem, species and genetic levels;

(d)   Links between cultural (traditional knowledge and religious beliefs) and biodiversity; and

(e)   The study of sensitive ecosystems.

This allowed the development of four strategies:

(a)   The promotion of the public awareness and participation;

(b)   The formation of biodiversity information systems;

(c)   The sustainable use of biodiversity resources; and

(d)   The integrated conservation of biodiversity.

The Ministry of Environment has conducted many studies in line with traditional knowledge and the rights of local communities in relation to genetic diversity. This policy helps to achieve better management practices and sustainable management of biodiversity, and serves as a sectoral objective.

Kazakhstan

Recognizing Kazakhstan's special place in the global context to conserve biodiversity, the republic developed a national biodiversity strategy and action plan in 1998, and decided to incorporate its targets in the national development strategy for the Republic of Kazakhstan up to the year 2030. The main objective of the national strategy is to conserve biological diversity and to achieve economic gains through the balanced use of its components. This of course includes biodiversity restoration. Although many species, especially those on the endangered list, are well represented and protected in some areas, like the vertebrates in the mountainous ecosystems, many species, whether on the Red List or not, fall outside the national reserves network. And since degradation, mostly due to human activity, occurred in over 60% on the republic's territory, many actions are to be implemented to address this situation. The most important step will be to more than double the surface of existing reserves, by adding 13 new ones.

The main objectives of the national strategy are to assess the status and trends of biodiversity, to promote the In-Situ conservation of biodiversity, to account for and assess socio-economical benefits of biodiversity, to allow additional resources to the genetic fund that helps achieve national biological security, the development of a national legal framework, the reduction of dangers affecting biodiversity, ecological restoration on infringed ecosystems, and the promotion, through awareness campaigns, of the sustainable use of biodiversity by local populations.

Kyrgyzstan

The overall objective of Kyrgyzstan's national biodiversity strategy and action plan is the protection and sustainable use of biological diversity for socio-economic development. It provides a framework for biodiversity conversation, outlines mechanisms to deal with current issues regarding the protection and use of natural resources, and serves as an integrated action plan, giving precise details, time-scales, budgets and targets. This is a five-year plan, and sets 11 targets that aim to be achieved. The main objectives are: to restore and conserve the most important species, ecosystems and landscapes; to increase the size of forested areas by 0.3%; to increase protected areas to 4.8%; to reduce pollution; to improve ecological legislation (by 2003); to improve public awareness on environmental issues; to enhance public institutions and NGOs through capacity building; to attract internal and external investors; and to assist in the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity while implementing a poverty reduction programme.

Pakistan

The major aims of the national biodiversity strategy and action plan are:

(a)   To create a policy framework that fosters the sustainable use of biological resources;

(b)   To strengthen and promote national biodiversity conservation programmes and develop international and regional cooperation;

(c)   To create conditions and incentives for biodiversity conservation at the local community level;

(d)   To strengthen and apply more broadly the tools and technologies for conserving biodiversity; and

(e)   To strengthen human knowledge, will and capacity to conserve biodiversity.

The specific objectives and actions to be implemented are organized in the document according to the principal articles of the Convention.

Tajikistan

The national strategy and action plan envisages:

(a)   Determining strategic trends of biodiversity conservation and sustainable management;

(b)   Determining the country needs in biological-diversity use;

(c)   Developing mechanisms and principles of sustainable use and conservation; analysing the present state of biological diversity;

(d)   Determining the place and role of biological diversity in the global ecosystem;

(e)   Determining the role of the public in developing careful attitudes towards biological diversity; and

(f)   Determining new funding priorities.

The components of the biodiversity conservation strategy include:

(a)   Complex economic and social evaluation of national biological resources;

(b)   Regeneration and conservation of the genetic pool of plants and animals;

(c)   *In situ* and *ex situ* biodiversity conservation;

(d)   Providing biological safety for the country;

(e)   Sustainable use of biological resources to reduce poverty and to improve quality of human life.

The action plan is to be implemented in a short-term (5 years), medium-term (10 years), and long-term (over 10 years) period. The main objectives of the action-plan implementation are: developing all-national measures on the main issues of biological diversity and realizing relevant measures in particular regions of the Republic.

Turkey

Turkey's national biodiversity strategy and action plan is based on the five following assumptions:

(a)   Biodiversity is the biological foundation for sustainable development;

(b)   Biodiversity is in jeopardy;

(c)   Conserving biodiversity is a shared responsibility;

(d)   Biodiversity links to future prosperity; and

(e)   Turkey contributes to global biodiversity conservation.

Turkey's national biodiversity strategy and action plan comprises six goals, which relate to:

(a)   Conservation and sustainable use;

(b)   Ecological management;

(c)   Education and awareness;

(d)   Incentives and legislation;

(e)   International cooperation; and

(f)   Implementation.

In addition, Turkey has prepared a priority action plan, and the national biodiversity strategy and action plan specifies that progress reports will be elaborated every two years.

Turkmenistan

The biodiversity strategy of Turkmenistan lays out 12 objectives, including:

(a)   The integration of biodiversity conservation activities into all levels of government programmes by 2005;

(b)   The review and development of nature protection laws by the end of 2006;

(c)   The reduction of the relative level of environmental pollution by 20% by the end of 2007;

(d)   The halting of the process of degradation of natural landscapes in 30% of the territory by the end of 2010; and

(f)   To preserve the existing state of the forests and restore 5% of their area by the end of 2010.

The other objectives concern public awareness, the extent of protected areas, agricultural biodiversity, economic incentives and finances.

The action plan is designed to be implemented over a nine-year period from 2002-2010. It includes practical actions that should be undertaken within the framework of each strategic component in order to attain the overall aim and objectives. Examples of specific actions are to prepare an inventory of breeding sites of rare animal species as the basis for the creation of minor protected areas and to establish a cultivated collection of locally selected and rare varieties and forms of apples, pears and grapes.

Uzbekistan

Uzbekistan's national biodiversity strategy and action plan contains strategy statements covering three aspects: the protected areas system; public awareness, participation and education; and sustainable use. For each of these aspects, the action plan identified goals, steps and outputs. For example, on the protected areas, the action plan covers development of institutional and legal frameworks, expansion of the protected areas system, management of protected areas, national biodiversity information system, captive breeding and *ex situ* conservation. In addition, Uzbekistan's national biodiversity strategy and action plan outlines specific schedules and outputs for implementing identified priority activities.