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REGIONAL CAPACITY-DEVELOPMENT WORKSHOP
FOR SOUTH, SOUTH-EAST AND EAST ASIA ON
THE FOURTH NATIONAL REPORT
Tsukuba, Japan, 2-4 December 2008

REPORT OF THE REGIONAL CAPACITY-DEVELOPMENT WORKSHOP FOR SOUTH, SOUTH-EAST AND EAST ASIA ON THE FOURTH NATIONAL REPORT

1. The Regional Capacity-Development Workshop for South, South-East and East Asia on the Fourth National Report was held from 2 to 4 December 2008 in Tsukuba, Japan. It was organized with the generous support of the Japanese Ministry of the Environment and Japan Wildlife Research Centre.
2. This workshop was organized in response to a request contained in paragraph 18 (e) of decision VIII/14 of the eighth meeting of the Conference of the Parties of the Convention on Biological Diversity held from 20 to 31 March, 2006, in Curitiba, Brazil.
3. This workshop is the first of a series of regional workshops that are organized to facilitate the preparation of the fourth national report and to strengthen the capacities of countries of monitoring, reviewing and reporting on the implementation of the Convention, including progress towards the 2010 target and the goals and objectives of the Strategic Plan of the Convention.
4. The workshop was attended by government nominees from Bangladesh, Bhutan, Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, China, India, Indonesia, Japan, Mongolia, Myanmar, Nepal, Pakistan, Philippines, Sri Lanka, Thailand and Viet Nam. The Joint Nature Conservation Committee (JNCC) of the United Kingdom, the World Conservation Monitoring Centre of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP-WCMC), the Institute of Advanced Studies of the United Nations University (IAS-UNU), the Ministry of the Environment of Brazil, BirdLife Asia Division and the Centre for Biodiversity of the Association of South-East Asian Nations (ASEAN) sent resource persons to this workshop. A number of Japanese research institutes and non-governmental organizations (WWF Japan, IUCN Japan) also participated in the workshop.
5. Participants proceeded in accordance with the following agenda:
 1. Opening of the meeting and organizational matters.
 2. Overview of the objectives and programme for the workshop.
 3. The process of preparing the fourth national reports.
 4. Linking monitoring with reporting on the implementation of the Convention.

5. Assessing the status and trends of, and threats to, biodiversity (chapter I of the national report and use of indicators).
 6. Use of indicators for assessment and reporting.
 7. Implementation of national biodiversity strategies and action plans and the mainstreaming of biodiversity (chapters II and III of the national report and updating of national biodiversity strategies and action plans).
 8. Assessing progress towards the 2010 biodiversity target (chapter IV of the national report).
 9. Appendix III of the report: Global Strategy for Plant Conservation and the programme of work on protected areas).
 10. Communication and public awareness: International Year of Biodiversity and updating of the Strategic Plan of the Convention.
 11. Follow-up to the workshop.
 12. Conclusions and recommendations from the workshop.
 13. Closure of the workshop.
6. A detailed programme of the workshop is contained in annex I of this report. The present report provides a summary of the proceedings of the workshop, and the main conclusions and recommendations from the workshop are contained in annex IV below. Presentations made at the workshop can be found on the Convention's website at <https://www.cbd.int/doc/?meeting=4NRCBW-ASI-01>.

I. OPENING OF THE WORKSHOP

7. Mr. Daizaburo Kuroda, Director General of the Nature Conservation Bureau of the Japanese Ministry of the Environment, welcomed the participants to Japan and stressed in his opening remarks the importance of the fourth national report, in particular its contribution to the third edition of the Global Biodiversity Outlook and the tenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties, to be held in Nagoya, Japan, in 2010. He hoped that the Workshop would provide an opportunity for countries in the region to exchange experiences in preparing the report, thus facilitating the finalization and timely submission of the fourth national reports. He also highlighted the initiatives taken by Japan to address biodiversity issues at various levels, including the Biodiversity Declaration adopted by G-8 Environment Ministers and the G-8 Summit hosted by Japan in 2008. He underlined the challenges for assessing the status and trends of biodiversity as Japan is undertaking a comprehensive assessment of its biodiversity, hoping that the workshop would provide useful inputs to that effort.

8. Mr. Ravi Sharma, Principal Officer, Implementation and Technical Support/Outreach and Major Groups (ITS/OMG), from the Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity, delivered an opening statement on behalf of the Executive Secretary, Mr. Ahmed Djoghla. He underlined Japan's leadership roles in addressing biodiversity issues at various levels, including hosting the upcoming tenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity, putting biodiversity on the agenda of the 2008 G-8 Summit and updating its national biodiversity strategy (third time since 1995). He stressed that the fourth national report, with focus on assessing progress towards the 2010 target and the Strategic Plan, would be crucial to the success of the tenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties and a number of important events leading to 2010, including development of GBO 3. He also

highlighted the importance of the fourth national report to development of a new Strategic Plan of the Convention and a possible post-2010 biodiversity target. While quoting key findings from the recent WWF Report on Living Planet Index, he underlined the importance of natural capital accounting through NBSAP and national reports to the ongoing work on economics of ecosystems and biodiversity, a major issue likely to be addressed at the tenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties. He said that this Workshop had two main objectives. One was to facilitate timely preparation and finalization of the fourth national report through exchanging experiences in preparing the fourth national report. The other was to strengthen capacities of countries in monitoring, reviewing and reporting on implementation of the Convention by introducing relevant tools and exchanging experiences in this regard. He noted the participation of some key partners and their role in providing support to countries in the region for undertaking relevant assessments and preparing the fourth national report.

II. OVERVIEW OF THE OBJECTIVES AND PROGRAMME FOR THE WORKSHOP

9. After a self-introduction, each participant was asked to write down their expectations from this Workshop, which will be used to evaluate it. The expectations included:

(a) To learn more about relevant issues concerning the preparation of the fourth national report, particularly use of indicators and selection of cases or case-studies;

(b) To know more about methods, indicators and data collection for assessing progress towards the 2010 target, including implementation of national biodiversity strategies and actions and the mainstreaming of biological diversity;

(c) To share experiences in the planning and preparation of the fourth national report, including how to involve various stakeholders in the process;

(d) To understand how the report should be organized, including the style and content of the report;

(e) To know how to make the report as useful as possible within the timeframe given, with the references available;

(f) To understand the guidelines more comprehensively for better use for preparing the report;

(g) To discuss ways to improve draft chapters or reports if any;

(h) To increase capacities for preparing national reports.

10. The representative of the Convention Secretariat then introduced the objectives and programme for the workshop. He began by highlighting the importance of preparing national reports to the proper functioning of the Convention, in particular that the fourth national report provided a key source of information for reviewing progress towards the 2010 target and identifying what needed to be done further, including setting a new, post-2010 target. He also outlined the main objectives, the day-by-day programme and expected outcomes of the workshop.

11. After drawing attention to the items on the agenda for the workshop, the representative of the Secretariat emphasized that the workshop would employ mixed modalities, including country presentations, plenary and group discussions, exchange of approaches and tools for monitoring, reviewing and reporting on the implementation of the Convention, in particular mechanisms and

processes for assessing implementation of national biodiversity strategies and action plans and mainstreaming and progress towards the 2010 target.

III. PROCESS AND STATUS OF PREPARING THE FOURTH NATIONAL REPORT

12. Under this item, the representative of the Secretariat introduced the guidelines for the fourth national report and relevant tools developed to assist countries in preparing the report. He informed participants that a portal dedicated to the fourth national report had been developed on the Convention website where countries could access all the relevant resources and tools to assist with the preparation of the fourth national report, including links with resources provided by key partners. He also encouraged countries to join a discussion forum recently opened, which provides a platform for countries to exchange experiences in preparing the fourth national report, in particular tools and approaches for reviewing national biodiversity strategies and action plans and mainstreaming implementation as well as progress towards the 2010 target. He also hoped that countries could submit in advance case-studies undertaken in the 2010 target assessment.

13. Dr. Filiberto Pollisco Jr. from the ASEAN Centre for Biodiversity introduced its programme to provide support to national consultations of the ASEAN member States for preparing the fourth national report.

14. Dr. Sujata Arora (from India), Mr. Rizwan Irshad (from Pakistan), Ms. Meriden Maranan (from the Philippines) and Ms. Hoang Thi Thanh Nhan (from Viet Nam) introduced their processes of preparing the fourth national report. All emphasized the importance of involving various stakeholders in the process to ensure that the report reflects comprehensively national situation. Some of them have organized local and national consultations or workshops to get inputs to the report. Vietnam put its draft report on the website of the Ministry of the Environment for public comments. Some of them have planned to launch the fourth national report on International Biodiversity Day 2009 to raise public awareness of and mobilize support for the implementation of the Convention. They also highlighted the importance of designating or establishing bodies for preparing the report such as a coordination committee or working group or drafting team.

15. Other participants were asked to mark the status of preparation by selecting the milestones listed in annex IV of the annotated agenda for the workshop (UNEP/CBD/4NRCBW-ASI/1/1/Add.1). The status of preparation of the fourth national report of the participating countries is provided in a table in annex II of this report. These countries also identified main obstacles encountered in the process of preparation. A list of obstacles and proposed solutions is provided in annex III of this report.

IV. LINKING MONITORING WITH REPORTING ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE CONVENTION

16. Mr. Noriaki Sakaguchi from Biodiversity Centre of the Japanese Ministry of the Environment introduced Japan's biodiversity monitoring programmes and systems as well as key initiatives in this regard, including technologies and tools used for monitoring and analysis. He also presented main threats to biodiversity in Japan, which were analyzed based on monitoring results.

17. Ms. Jessamy Battersby from the United Kingdom Joint Nature Conservation Committee introduced the United Kingdom strategy planning, monitoring and reporting. She emphasized the partnership approach for the United Kingdom strategy planning, monitoring and reporting, with all the countries having developed their own biodiversity strategies and the United Kingdom Biodiversity

Reporting System (BARS) established to report on the implementation of the UK Strategy as well as country strategies.

V. ASSESSING THE STATUS AND TRENDS OF AND MAJOR THREATS TO BIODIVERSITY

18. Ms. Cristi Nozawa from BirdLife Asia presented the support Birdlife and its partners at national and regional level that could be provided to countries in the region for preparing their fourth national reports. She also introduced some work undertaken by BirdLife and its national and regional partners in the protection and monitoring of birds, highlighting the importance of birds as an indicator of changes in the status and trends of biodiversity.

19. Prof. Khin Maung Zaw (from Myanmar), Mr. Rizwan Irshad (from Pakistan), Mr. Sudhir Kumar Koirala (from Nepal) and Mr. R.S. Ratnayake (from Sri Lanka) presented their draft chapter I. Most countries highlighted challenges in preparing this chapter due to limited technical capacities for assessment and lack of time-series data for analysing trends or changes in trends. Meanwhile, Mr. Ratnayake expressed concerns over managing or authenticating the load of information available.

VI. USE OF INDICATORS FOR ASSESSMENT AND REPORTING

20. Mr. Martin Jenkins from UNEP-WCMC introduced the concept, nature and categories of indicators developed for measuring progress in implementation, emphasizing that there is a need to test and use some indicators for measuring progress towards the 2010 target. He also underlined the complexities involved and the need for improvement of any indicator developed at various level. Despite this, he encouraged countries to test and use indicators for assessment and reporting.

21. Ms. Somaly Chan from Cambodia presented its national experiences in developing and using indicators. She emphasized that indicators must be specific, measurable, reliable and time-bound. She also introduced a set of national indicators developed to measure progress towards goals and targets in the 2010 target framework under the Convention on Biological Diversity.

22. Ms. Clarissa Arida from the ASEAN Centre for Biodiversity presented the outcomes of the two subregional workshops on indicators co-organized by the Centre and UNEP-WCMC. Ms. Connie Garcia from the Centre also presented information management tools in support of preparing the fourth national report.

VII. IMPLEMENTATION OF NATIONAL BIODIVERSITY STRATEGIES AND ACTION PLANS AND MAINSTREAMING (CHAPTERS II AND III OF THE REPORT)

23. The Secretariat gave an overview of the results of a series of regional and subregional workshops on national biodiversity strategies and action plans organized so far, highlighting key findings from these workshops and the linkages of further reviewing the implementation of national biodiversity strategies and action plans and the preparation of the fourth national reports. He also presented the latest guidance from the ninth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity for development, implementation, monitoring and review of national biodiversity strategies and action plans.

24. Dr. M. Badarch (from Mongolia), Ms. Meriden Maranan (from Philippines) and Ms. Hoang Thi Thanh Nhan (from Viet Nam) presented their draft chapter II. Dr. Bardarch said that Mongolia had assessed what is achieved against various goals and objectives included in its national biodiversity

strategy and action plan as well as identified key challenges encountered and recommendations to address them. Ms. Maranan said that a process was ongoing to review the implementation of the Philippines national biodiversity strategy and action plan, and results of this review would be included in chapter II. Ms. Hoang Thi Thanh Nhan presented the major results achieved to implement the Viet Nam 1995 national biodiversity and action plan and introduced the major content in its revised biodiversity action plan in 2007.

25. Ms. Vidya Sari Nalang (from Indonesia) and Dr. Sirikul Bunpapong (from Thailand) presented their draft chapter III.

26. Ms. Vidya Sari Nalang emphasized the use of important tools such as strategic environmental assessment, environmental impact assessment and the ecosystem approach for mainstreaming. She said that Indonesia had also developed a coordination matrix for mainstreaming and that Indonesia's approach for preparing chapter III was to involve various stakeholders including various sectoral departments and local governments by requesting them to fill in relevant questionnaires and then to pool them together and link sectoral and local assessments with reviews of biodiversity action plan.

27. Dr. Sirikul Bunpapong said that Thailand had drafted chapter III along the sectors, cross-sectoral strategies and the related conventions where biodiversity had been mainstreamed. In one particular case, biodiversity had been integrated into the military activities and biodiversity conservation supported by the army.

28. Following these presentations, participants were divided into four groups, with two groups discussing chapter II and the other two discussing chapter III. The discussion went along the suggested points listed below, using the guidelines for the fourth national report and the reference manual:

(a) Processes or mechanisms, including stakeholder engagement for reviewing implementation of national biodiversity strategies and action plans (chapter II) and mainstreaming (chapter III);

(b) Processes or mechanisms for analysing implementation and effectiveness of national biodiversity strategies and action plans /mainstreaming;

(c) Tools that can be used strategically: strategic environmental assessment, valuation of biodiversity, ecosystem approach, requirement to integrate biodiversity;

(d) Improvements needed.

29. The results of the group discussions are summarized below.

Group I

30. For chapter II, the group suggested that consultations be undertaken with various stakeholders through workshops/meetings and using information-technology tools such as emails, fax, etc. For those countries without a national biodiversity strategy and action plan, they can review implementation of other strategies and plans related to biodiversity conservation. For chapter III, the group suggested that countries should look at legislations in other sectors that have elements of biodiversity conservation, e.g. commercial tourism versus eco-tourism.

31. With regard to the processes or mechanisms for analyzing implementation and effectiveness of national biodiversity strategies and action plans/mainstreaming, the group felt that the clearing-house mechanism under the Convention should be used as a tool for assessing progress and the review should

look at the planning processes. The group also considers it useful to identify relevant indicators and needs for capacity-building.

32. The group suggested that the following tools can be used strategically:
- (a) Strategic environmental assessment/environmental impact assessment;
 - (b) Ecosystem approach;
 - (c) Biodiversity monitoring system;
 - (d) Management effectiveness assessment tools;
 - (e) Indicators as tools.
33. The group identified the following areas for improvement:
- (a) Plans should be more specific;
 - (b) Capacity-building should be enhanced;
 - (c) The clearing-house mechanism should be operationalized or enhanced.

Group II

34. Generally the group felt that the fourth national report would be much more analytical than three previous reports, even though the format is narrative.

35. The group also agreed that the fourth national report in general and chapter II in particular should not be long or bulky. At the beginning of the chapter, countries should briefly describe what their national biodiversity and action plan actually is, what is the process adopted/ and how it was prepared, is it the first or revised version, and then succinctly the contents. If it is the revised version, then what are the major differences from the previous version, in process of preparation, focus, contents, level of mainstreaming, and so forth. For example, climate change may not have figured in the first version, also mainstreaming would have improved in the revised version.

36. The countries could give a strategic assessment of the usefulness of preparing national biodiversity strategies and action plans and national reports, along with how it has helped the countries towards mainstreaming. For example, biodiversity being a multidisciplinary subject, many other ministries would have programmes dealing with biodiversity. Even within the Ministry of Environment, a number of divisions have ongoing programmes relating to biodiversity. Through the process of the national report and the preparation of national biodiversity strategies and action plans, this has helped put together the various measures relating to biodiversity being taken in Environment and other ministries. Even the process of approval of national biodiversity strategies and action plans in many countries involves inter-ministerial consultations, which itself is a measure of integration of biodiversity concerns into other sectors.

Group III

37. One participant opened the discussion by expressing his concerns on the use of strategic biodiversity assessment (SBA) or strategic environment assessment (SEA) as tool for reviewing national biodiversity strategies and action plans and the integration of biodiversity concern into national as well as sectoral planning due to limited capacities in this regard. The group shared the following observations:

(a) Hardly any country in the group has successfully carried out SEA or SBA for their NBSAP reviewing or mainstreaming processes, in contrast to their national environmental impact assessments (EIA) and strategic environmental assessment processes;

(b) Strategic biodiversity assessment/strategic environment assessments should be carried out when integrating biodiversity concerns into Poverty Reduction Strategic Papers and relevant economic sectors when maintaining the balance between biodiversity conservation and sustainable development;

(c) The Ministry responsible for planning and implementation should take a leading role in integrating SEA outcomes;

(d) The role of economists is important for undertaking SEAs/SBAs, and they should get involved in relevant processes;

(e) Main obstacles and the reasons for failures of effectively incorporating SEA/SBA are the lack of capacities in the relevant institutions and human resources;

(f) The group suggested that the Convention Secretariat enhance capacities on SEA/SBA integration for Parties to the Convention.

38. The group also discussed the integration of climate change concerns into biodiversity review and planning processes consistent with guidelines provided for chapters II and III. All group members agreed that they have no difficulties in integrating relevant concerns of the Ramsar Convention, the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES), the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD), the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals (CMS), except for the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). Since UNFCCC/Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) recommendations on biodiversity are more specific and technical, more guidance and strengthening capacities for effective integration are needed.

39. The group found out most of the country parties had not included the mainstreaming /integration of biodiversity concerns in their chapter II except a few countries. The group suggested that if a country party had effectively included biodiversity mainstreaming or integration concerns in chapter II, then there was no need to repeat it in chapter III. Finally, one participant expressed some concerns over streamlining biodiversity data and information for the effective sectoral and cross-sectoral integration of biodiversity consideration into national planning process.

Group IV

40. Best use should be made of the existing mechanisms and bodies for coordinating the implementation of the Convention to engage relevant stakeholders for preparing chapter III. If necessary bodies such as coordination team or working groups could be established to obtain inputs from various stakeholders and reach consensus on the report. However, the group felt that reaching out to local communities is a challenge considering their levels of awareness and understanding of biodiversity issues. It was suggested that inputs could be collected from local communities through relevant projects at local level and a network of local non-governmental organizations. The bottom-up consultation approach was also recommended to address this challenge.

41. For tools for mainstreaming, in addition to strategic environmental assessment, and the ecosystem system approach, the group recommended that mainstreaming could be achieved through implementing the Millennium Development Goals, follow-ups to the Millennium Ecosystem Assessments, national eco-zoning programmes, joint programmes for implementing the related conventions in particular biodiversity and climate change as well as national efforts to harmonize reporting to various, relevant conventions. It was also suggested that mainstreaming or synergies in

implementing relevant conventions could be promoted by putting all the relevant conventions under the responsibilities of one department such as the case in Cambodia. Regional cooperation to address related issues was considered as an option for involving various stakeholders.

VIII. ASSESSING PROGRESS TOWARDS THE 2010 BIODIVERSITY TARGET (CHAPTER IV OF THE REPORT)

42. Mr. Tony Gross from United Nations Institute of Advanced Studies and the Ministry of the Environment of Brazil introduced Brazil's experiences in developing its national biodiversity policy and relevant legal and institutional systems. He highlighted a set of national targets adopted by Brazil in response to the 2010 biodiversity target as well as some initial results of the monitoring of implementation of these national targets. He said that Brazil would present these results in analytical narratives in its fourth national report. He also briefly introduced a guide to carry out the assessment of progress towards the 2010 target.

43. Ms. Jessamy Battersby from the United Kingdom JNCC presented the sample chapter IV of the United Kingdom, as well as indicators and approaches (including traffic-light assessments) developed to assess progress towards the 2010 target and the goals and objectives of the Strategic Plan under the Convention. In doing so, she also presented initial findings from these assessments. She also shared the process employed by the United Kingdom for preparing the fourth national report, stressing the importance of consultations needed in the process.

44. Dr. Xu Haigen (from China) and Ms. Sakaya Kita (from Japan) presented their draft chapter IV. Dr. Xu Haigen presented China's preliminary assessments of progress towards the 2010 target, using both global and national indicators developed and highlighted changes observed over time while assessing progress. Ms. Sakaya Kita outlined Japan's plan for assessment of the 2010 target and progress in development and implementation of its national biodiversity strategy and action plan. India introduced its first step for assessing national progress towards the 2010 target by linking national activities and outcomes with the corresponding goals and targets in the 2010 target framework under the Convention on Biological Diversity.

45. Following the presentations, participants were divided into four groups discussing pending issues related to preparation of this chapter and other chapters. The results of group discussions are summarized below:

Group I

46. For chapter I, the group did not note major problems with the drafting of the chapter but recommended that climate change should be reflected and be related to biodiversity concerns. For chapter II, the group recommended that all chapters should be linked to each other so as to avoid repetitions, it is best to do cross-referencing instead. Chapter II should be concise and analytical. For chapter III, there is a need to describe what relevant sectors are doing. For chapter IV, the group recommended that the framework on the 2010 goals and targets should be used. For the executive summary, it should be well written as this is the portion most readers refer to only.

Group II

47. Possible overlaps between chapters II and III were discussed, along with suggestions on how to address this concern. On strategic environmental assessment, it was felt that most of the countries in the region have not advanced to that level from environmental impact assessment. Hence, lack of practical cases of and guidelines for strategic environmental assessment could be considered as an obstacle.

48. The size of the fourth national report was discussed. The guidance from the Conference of the Parties is to limit it to up to 100 pages, including appendices. The process and sequence of preparing four main chapters was also discussed, including the pros and cons of parallel versus sequential preparations, and it was agreed that these chapters are not necessarily prepared sequentially, and they could be prepared in parallel. It should be noted that assessment of the 2010 target and conclusions in chapter IV should be drawn from the analysis and findings from the first three chapters.

49. On the Global Strategy for Plant Conservation (GSPC), there was discussion on globally important species, vis-à-vis nationally important or endemic species. The group felt that the report should focus on nationally important species. The group noted the difficulty of target-by-target analysis due to lack of relevant information and data for assessing some targets in the Global Strategy for Plant Conservation.

50. Issue relating to working in the local national language that is not a United Nations language was discussed. Consideration was given to the advantages and disadvantages of the two options of either working in the local language and having the report translated into English, as opposed to working in English and thereby excluding stakeholders, particularly local communities.

51. The slow process of approvals in the United Nations Development Programme for accessing the Global Environment Facility funds was an important concern for many countries.

Group III

52. Guidelines should be consulted carefully to see what items to report on and how to report. Format of the fourth national report is good enough to give ownership to the national actors and institutions as it gives a prompt evaluation of their performance. This seems to be in contrast with the format of the third national report. Cross-references need to be made to relevant parts in chapters I and II while preparing chapter III.

Group IV

53. For content of chapter IV, the group agreed that if national targets match 2010 targets, it should be indicated in chapter IV. If national targets do not match 2010 targets, it has to be taken into account when national biodiversity strategies and action plans are revised or updated.

54. For developing indicators, Indonesia shared its experiences in this regard. Indonesia followed the steps by carefully reviewing global targets and indicators and proposed national indicators from a set of ASEAN developed indicators, then used these new indicators while revising its national biodiversity strategy and action plan.

55. The participant from Viet Nam suggested that existing indicators need to be reviewed and based on that, new indicators be developed for monitoring in the coming time.

56. For chapter III, the group suggested that sectoral indicators could be used. For chapter II, the group felt it should provide information on what has been done to achieve objectives, with successful case-studies included in boxes. For chapter I, some suggested that the threats should be put in general and specific to each biome.

57. For further steps to finalize the report, if a draft report is ready, the group suggested that the draft should be sent for comments by various stakeholders, including the Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity. The draft report could also be put on the internet for public consultation. On how to choose indicators, a band-aid solution is recommended.

IX. APPENDIX III GLOBAL STRATEGY FOR PLANT CONSERVATION AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PROGRAMME OF WORK ON PROTECTED AREAS

58. Dr. Sirikul Bunpapong (from Thailand) presented its draft appendix III on implementation of the Global Strategy for Plant Conservation, together with some findings from assessments of some targets contained in the Global Strategy, underlining the need for more data or information to assess some targets.

59. Dr. Sujata Arora (from India) and Dr. Xu Haigen (from China) presented their appendix III on the implementation of the programme of work on protected areas. Dr. Xu Haigen shared actions or measures taken to achieve some targets contained in the programme of work on protected areas. Dr. Sujata Arora also highlighted actions taken to implement the programme of work, including increasing categories and networks of protected areas as well as establishing legal, policy, institutional and management systems for protected areas.

60. The representative of the Secretariat also highlighted key points to which countries should pay attention while preparing an executive summary of the whole report, considering that it may be the only part many people read, in particular decision makers. One participant suggested that the executive summary should contain a conclusion concerning whether the 2010 target has been achieved.

X. COMMUNICATION AND PUBLIC AWARENESS: INTERNATIONAL YEAR OF BIODIVERSITY, POST-2010 TARGET AND THE THIRD EDITION OF THE GLOBAL BIODIVERSITY OUTLOOK

61. The representative of the Secretariat introduced the draft strategy for the International Year of Biodiversity, plans for development of the third edition of the Global Biodiversity Outlook, and the updating the Strategic Plan of the Convention for the period after 2010.

XI. FOLLOW-UP TO THE WORKSHOP

62. All the countries shared their follow-ups to this workshop, including steps for finalizing the fourth national report. Ms. Somaly Chan (from Cambodia), Mr. Nazrul Islam Khan (from Bangladesh), Mr. Kumbu Dukpa (from Bhutan) and Ms. Noralinda Binti Haji Ibrahim (from Brunei Darussalam) indicated that they would initiate a process to prepare the fourth national report soon after the Workshop. Other participating countries (that have started a process and prepared a few chapters) indicated that they would share the outcomes of this workshop with relevant bodies or teams working on the fourth national report and try to finalize the report in time for submission.

XII. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE WORKSHOP

63. Participants discussed and agreed on the conclusions and recommendations of the workshop, as contained in annex IV to the present report:

XIII. CLOSURE OF THE WORKSHOP

64. The workshop was closed around 1 p.m. on 4 December 2008, with closing remarks by Ms. Naoko Nakajima from the Japanese Ministry of the Environment, and Mr. Ravi Sharma from the Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity.

65. Before closing, participants were asked to evaluate the workshop against the expectations they indicated at the beginning of the workshop. Mr. Rizwan Irshad (from Pakistan), speaking on behalf of all the participants, indicated that the workshop would be helpful to the work on the fourth national report and facilitate the preparation and finalization of the fourth national reports by countries in the region. He also thanked the Secretariat and Japan for organizing the workshop.

Annex I
PROGRAMME OF THE WORKSHOP
TUESDAY, DECEMBER 2, 2008

9 a.m. – 10 a.m.	1. Opening of the workshop Opening statements (Ministry of the Environment, Japan, SCBD) Self-introduction of participants Expectations from the Workshop
10 a.m. – 10.30 a.m.	2. Overview of the objectives and programme for the workshop Introduction (SCBD) Plenary discussion
10.30 a.m. – 11 a.m.	<i>Group Photo and Coffee break</i>
11 a.m. - 12.30 p.m.	3. Process and status of preparing the fourth national report The guidelines and the tools for the preparation of the fourth national report (SCBD) Presentation by the ASEAN Centre for Biodiversity on its support to national consultations of the ASEAN member States Status and process of preparing the fourth national report (introductions by India, Pakistan, Philippines and Viet Nam) Other participating countries indicate their status of preparation and obstacles encountered in the process
12.30 p.m. – 2 p.m.	<i>Lunch break</i>
2 p.m. – 4 p.m.	4. Linking monitoring with reporting on implementation of the Convention National systems and approaches of monitoring implementation of the Convention (presentations by the UK JNCC and Biodiversity Centre of the Japanese Ministry of the Environment) 5. Assessing the status and trends of, and major threats to biodiversity (chapter I of the report) Presentation by Birdlife Asia Division (on tools developed to assist countries in the region in preparing the fourth national report) Presentations of draft chapters (chapter I by Myanmar, Pakistan, Nepal and Sri Lanka) Plenary discussions
4. p.m. – 4.30 p.m.	<i>Tea break</i>
4.30 p.m. - 6 p.m.	6. Use of indicators Country perspectives (presentation by Cambodia) Presentation on use of indicators for assessment of implementation, including the 2010 biodiversity target (UNEP-WCMC) Information or data management for reporting and presentation of the outcomes of the ASEAN/UNEP-WCMC workshops on biodiversity indicators (August and November 2008) (ASEAN Centre for Biodiversity)
7- 9 p.m.	<i>Reception hosted by the Ministry of the Environment, Japan</i>

WEDNESDAY, 3 DECEMBER 2008

9 a.m. - 9.30 a.m.	2.	Overview of the objectives and programme for the workshop (<i>continued</i>) Brief recap of day one and overview of plans for day two and presentations of group discussions
9.30 a.m. – 10.30 a.m.	7.	Implementation of national biodiversity strategies and action plans and mainstreaming (chapters II and III of the report) Overview of regional/subregional workshops on capacity-building for national biodiversity strategies and action plans and mainstreaming (SCBD) Introduction of COP-9 guidance for development, implementation and updating of national biodiversity strategies and action plans (SCBD) Presentations of draft chapters (chapter II by Mongolia, Philippines and Viet Nam) Plenary discussions
10.30 a.m. – 11 a.m.		<i>Coffee break</i>
11 a.m. – 12.30 p.m.	7.	Implementation of national biodiversity strategies and action plans and mainstreaming (<i>continued</i>) Presentation of draft chapters (chapter III by Thailand and Indonesia) Plenary discussion Tools and approaches for reviewing implementation of national biodiversity strategies and action plans and mainstreaming (work in small groups)
12.30 a.m. – 2 p.m.		<i>Lunch break</i>
2 p.m. – 3.30 p.m.	8.	Assessing progress towards the 2010 biodiversity target (chapter IV of the report) Presentation on the United Kingdom assessment (UK JNCC) Guide to carry out assessment of progress towards the 2010 Biodiversity Target and the example of the Brazil assessment (Tony Gross) Presentations of draft chapters (chapter IV by China, India and Japan) Plenary discussions
3.30 p.m. – 4 p.m.		<i>Tea break</i>
4 p.m. – 6 p.m.	8. 9.	Assessing progress towards the 2010 biodiversity target (<i>continued</i>) Issues related to assessing the 2010 target and preparing other chapters of the report (work in small groups) Plenary discussion Implementation of the Global Plant Conservation Strategy (Presentation by Thailand on draft Appendix III on GSPC)

THURSDAY, 4 DECEMBER 2008

9 a.m. - 9.30 a.m.	2.	Overview of the objectives and programme for the workshop (<i>continued</i>) Brief recap of day two and overview of plans for day three and presentations of group discussions
9.30 a.m. – 11 a.m.	9.	Implementation of the programme of work of protected areas (appendix III) Presentations of draft appendix III (by China and India) Writing of an executive summary Plenary discussions
<i>11 a.m. – 11 :30 a.m.</i>		<i>Coffee break</i>
11:30 a.m. – 1 p.m.	10.	Communication and public awareness: International Year of Biodiversity, updating the Strategic Plan and GBO 3 Plans or thoughts for celebrating the International Year of Biodiversity, developing GBO 3 and a process of updating the Strategic Plan of the Convention
	11.	Next steps: ensuring that information is available for assessing progress towards the 2010 target, including timely finalization and submission of the fourth national report and the launching of the report during the International Year of Biodiversity <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Introductions by Cambodia, Bangladesh, Bhutan and Brunei about their plans for preparing their 4NRs; ▪ Follow-ups by countries that have prepared one or two chapters; ▪ Follow-ups by countries that have prepared several chapters or almost the whole report.
	12.	Conclusions and recommendations from the workshop and closure of the workshop
<i>1 p.m. – 2:15 p.m.</i>		<i>Lunch break</i>
2.15 p.m. – 7 p.m.		Visit to Tokyo

Annex II

STATUS OF PREPARATION OF THE FOURTH NATIONAL REPORT BY PARTICIPATING COUNTRIES (AS OF DECEMBER 1, 2008)

Countries mark the status of preparation of the fourth national report according to the corresponding number of the milestones listed below:

1. GEF funding (requests approved (1.1), requests submitted (1.2) and requests to be submitted (1.3))
2. Organization assigned overall responsibility for report coordination and preparation has been identified.
3. Cross-sectoral steering committee has been established to:
 - Identify a representative group of biodiversity stakeholder organizations, including biodiversity-related conventions, who will participate in report preparation;
 - Establish a draft methodology for report preparation (e.g., face-to-face meetings, email exchanges, telephone conferences) and a draft timetable;
 - To coordinate the translation, if necessary, of reporting guidelines and other documents.
4. First general meeting of all above participants or national workshop has been convened to establish methodology, timetable, thematic working groups, etc.
5. Draft reports of thematic working groups have been submitted to the steering committee.
6. Steering committee has compiled a draft fourth national report and circulated it to all participants for comments.
7. Second general meeting or national workshop has been held to agree on conclusions (chapter IV) of information provided by thematic working groups.
8. If outstanding items exist, a third general meeting may be convened to agree on conclusions (if impossible, report should reflect where no consensus was reached).
9. Report has been adopted by all participants and approved by the competent authority if necessary.
10. Report has been submitted to Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity.
11. Party has publicized to the general public the positive outcomes for biodiversity identified in the report, and the obstacles and challenges that remain.

<i>Countries</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>4</i>	<i>5</i>	<i>6</i>	<i>7</i>	<i>8</i>	<i>9</i>	<i>10</i>	<i>11</i>
Bangladesh	1.1	√	√	√							
Bhutan	√	√									
Brunei Darussalam	1.3										
Cambodia	1.3										
China	√	√	√	√	√	√	√				
India	√	√	√	√							

<i>Countries</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>4</i>	<i>5</i>	<i>6</i>	<i>7</i>	<i>8</i>	<i>9</i>	<i>10</i>	<i>11</i>
Indonesia	√	√	√	√			√				
Japan		√	√								
Mongolia	1.2	√	√	√							
Myanmar	1.2	√	√	√	√	√	√				
Nepal	√	√	√	√							
Pakistan		√	√	√							
Philippines	√	√	√	√							
Sri Lanka	√	√	√	√	√						
Thailand		√		√							
Vietnam	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√			

Annex III

OBSTACLES ENCOUNTERED IN THE PREPARATION OF THE FOURTH NATIONAL REPORT

- Lack or scattering of data in different agencies and institutions, leading to difficulty in data collection, collation and updating;
- Difficulty among different sectors and stakeholders in reaching common understanding on relevant issues and terms used;
- A wide range of issues covered in the fourth national report;
- Selection of priorities for review and reporting;
- Selection and use of indicators for reporting;
- Difficulty in accessing funds and delays in provision of funds;
- Time constraints;
- Shortage of human and technical resources and frequent change of officials in charge of the Convention on Biological Diversity;
- Too many processes for and weak political commitment to reporting;
- Weak sectoral and cross-sectoral coordination.

PROPOSED WAYS TO OVERCOME OBSTACLES

- Strengthening monitoring;
- Development and use of a manual for reporting by all participants;
- Use of internet for communication with various stakeholders;
- Creating and promoting “sense of ownership” of national reports at all levels;
- Promoting awareness among all relevant stakeholders including local communities;
- Involving various stakeholders, particularly those institutions and organizations with good databases or information system of biodiversity;
- Development and use of national indicators for review and reporting; including through pilot testing of relevant indicators;
- Establishing bodies or teams for reporting by pooling together relevant expertise;
- Allocation of government funds for preparing reports while waiting funds from the Global Environment Facility or requesting implementing agencies to accelerate approval process;
- Using the clearing-house mechanism of the Convention as a tool for collecting and updating relevant data or information.

Annex IV

**CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE REGIONAL CAPACITY-
DEVELOPMENT WORKSHOP FOR SOUTH, SOUTH-EAST AND EAST ASIA ON THE
FOURTH NATIONAL REPORT**

Process of preparation of the fourth national report

1. It is important to involve relevant stakeholders in the process, including civil society and local communities. The process of preparing the report should be considered as a process of mobilizing public support for and public participation in the implementation of the Convention. Various means could be employed to engage various stakeholders, including using internet to solicit public comments on the draft report and holding consultations or workshops at various levels. It is also important to create a sense of ownership of this important report by relevant stakeholders by involving them in the whole process.
2. Preparing the report initially in the national or local languages rather than the official United Nations languages may be easy to get involved relevant stakeholders at various levels, however, there is a concern over the cost and quality of translation.
3. It is recommended that bodies such as coordination committees or working groups be established to coordinate the preparation of the report and address the challenges encountered in preparing the report.
4. It is also recommended that plan or schedule of activities or a checklist of milestones be developed to ensure that the report could be finalized, approved and submitted in time.

The content of the report

Chapter I

5. Chapter I should contain a succinct synthesis or analysis of the status and trends of and major threats to biodiversity, using as much information or data as possible and appropriate indicators if available. It could be based on biodiversity country studies, assessments or surveys already made at various levels and data obtained through modern technologies such as GIS, remote sensing and satellite mapping. Parties are encouraged to use data over time series to analyze trends or changes in trends of biodiversity. Use of graphics, tables and figures is encouraged to illustrate these changes.
6. Lack of adequate data or scattered data from different sources is considered as a major challenge. Identifying or using appropriate indicators is also a challenge. In addition, authentication of information from various sources or managing a big load of information is difficult.
7. In terms of threats to biodiversity, it is recommended that climate-change impacts should be reflected, however there is a concern over assessing them due to the unavailability of relevant data and information.

Chapter II

8. This chapter should not be a repetition of the strategy and action plan. It should be concise and analytical. It is stressed that more focus should be put on outcomes or impacts of implementation of national biodiversity strategies and action plans, particularly achieving the targets set and priority actions identified therein. Meanwhile countries should assess the effectiveness of the strategy by identifying gaps in implementation, including challenges encountered, and future actions that need to be taken to address threats identified in chapter I. If countries have revised or updated their strategies and action plans, the major differences between the current strategy and the earlier one(s) should be highlighted. The chapter

could report on the activities and outcomes of implementing the earlier strategies if the implementation of the new or revised strategy has just started.

9. Countries should report on their implementation activities and outcomes achieved no matter whether they have adopted a strategy and/or action plan.

Chapter III

10. In terms of the process, all the relevant stakeholders, in particular those sectors closely related to biodiversity and cross-sectoral departments as well as local communities, should be engaged and involved. Preparing this chapter should be used as an opportunity of mainstreaming.

11. In terms of mechanisms or tools, strategic environmental assessments, application of the ecosystem approach, implementation of the Millennium Development Goals, development of relevant incentives, and joint or synergized implementation of the biodiversity-related conventions should be employed. Integration of biodiversity into broader strategies and programmes such as poverty reduction strategy and sustainable development strategy should be also included in this chapter. Concerns were also raised over the limited capacities to carry out strategic environmental assessments due to limited technical and human resources.

12. The chapter should go beyond a list of sectoral and cross-sectoral strategies, policies and programmes where biodiversity has been included. It should elaborate on mechanisms put in place for mainstreaming, relevant actions taken and outcomes achieved.

13. It is suggested that, considering their close interrelationship, the preparation of this chapter and chapter II should be linked. Overlaps between them should be avoided by cross-referencing. It is also suggested that outcomes could be illustrated by linking them with changes in the status and trends of biodiversity presented in chapter I.

14. Shortage of indicators to measure progress in implementing national biodiversity strategies and action plans and mainstreaming is considered as a major challenge. Engaging relevant stakeholders in particular local communities is difficult considering that time is short for undertaking such consultations for preparing this report and that various stakeholders may have different levels of understanding of biodiversity and relevant issues.

Chapter IV

15. It is suggested that all the key information or findings should be drawn from the first three chapters to analyze how much actions taken at national level in particular those for implementing national biodiversity strategies and action plans and mainstreaming has contributed to achievement of the 2010 biodiversity target and goals and objectives of the Strategic Plan. This chapter should focus on targets adopted or established, actions taken to achieve these targets and indicators used to measure progress, both global and nationally developed ones. This chapter should also analyze challenges encountered and identify gaps.

16. In terms of steps for preparing this chapter, it is recommended that the first step could be linking all the relevant activities undertaken and outcomes achieved with the corresponding goals and targets in the framework of the Convention on Biological Diversity, and then analyzing to what extent these activities and outcomes have contributed to achieving the 2010 Target. Presentation of analyses through tables and graphics is recommended.

17. Use of indicators, both global and nationally developed ones, for assessing progress is encouraged. Uncertainties or imperfections concerning indicators should not discourage countries from using them.

Appendix III (the Global Strategy for Plant Conservation and the programme of work on protected areas)

18. The appendix should focus on information or analysis not covered in the main body of report. The targets adopted or established and the actions taken to achieve these targets should be highlighted, including key challenges encountered.

19. Target-by-target analysis for Global Strategy for Plant Conservation and the programme of work on protected areas may prove challenging due to lack of relevant information or data and huge amount of work required. Report should focus on national priorities, including national targets adopted, priority actions implemented and outcomes or impacts achieved, including national mechanisms or networks established.

Executive summary

20. The executive summary should be concise, well-written and capture key findings from the report. It should be appealing to interested audience, in particular decision makers and the general public, considering this may be the only part of the report they read.

Overall recommendations for the whole report

21. The Workshop noted strategic importance of the report and that preparing the report is not an end in itself. The process and the report should help promote implementation at national level as well as provide critical information for assessing progress to 2010 and a basis for updating the Strategic Plan of the Convention and a post-2010 biodiversity target.

22. Chapters should have a solid evidence base, using indicators (where available), focusing on concrete actions and outcomes, and highlighting case-studies or successful stories etc. However, they must be analytical, going beyond lists of actions.

23. Before and while preparing the report, countries should read the guidelines for the fourth national report carefully. They are useful (including guidance on what to report on, and what *not* to report on). But use them flexibly, according to countries' needs.

24. Countries are encouraged to use advance sample chapters prepared by some countries in a way appropriate to national circumstances.

25. Countries are encouraged to share advance drafts with stakeholders, peers (e.g. participants in this Workshop) and the Secretariat, for comments.

26. Use of graphs, charts, photos etc is recommended to maximize appeal of the report.

Funding

27. It is recommended that funding should be provided by UNDP expeditiously to allow countries to start the process of preparation as early as possible and submit the report by the deadline.

Strategic communication and follow-up to the workshop

28. It is recommended that countries launch their fourth national report on important occasions such as International Biodiversity Day or publish their assessments of progress towards the 2010 target. This helps mobilize public support for and participation in efforts to address biodiversity issues. Overall, it is recommended that national reporting is not just writing a report, instead should be a process of enhancing national implementation by identifying gaps and further actions, and more importantly, involving various stakeholders in the implementation of the Convention. It is also stressed that more actions should focus on achieving the 2010 target while reviewing progress towards it. The International Year of Biodiversity

in 2010, should be an important opportunity for making a case of biodiversity for all relevant stakeholders in particular decision makers and the public, and getting their support and participation in addressing biodiversity concerns.

29. As a follow-up to this workshop, most of the participating countries indicate that they would move fast in getting the whole report ready for submission by the deadline set by the eighth meeting of the Conference of the Parties (30 March 2009). For a few countries that have not started or just initiated a process, they indicated that they would initiate a process soon and try to finalize and submit the report as soon as they can.
