

**Possible Interventions by Thai Delegation to
The Seventeenth meeting of the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical
and Technological Advice (SBSTTA)**

14 - 18 October 2013 - Montreal, Canada

Agenda item 3: Facilitating the implementation of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 and the Aichi Biodiversity Targets through Scientific and Technical Means

Agenda item 3 (a): The identification of scientific and technical needs for the attainment of the targets under Strategic Goal A of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020

Target 1: By 2020, at the latest, people are aware of the values of biodiversity and the steps they can take to conserve and use it sustainably

Thailand wishes to point out that progress and impacts of efforts to raise awareness on biodiversity values have remained lagging behind those of actions to increase recognition of biodiversity in general. In addition, public appreciation of biodiversity continues to be largely confined to conservation aspect of its components while limited understanding on sustainable use dimensions of biodiversity values is likely to be one of the main obstacles to translating the awareness into actions for addressing drivers of biodiversity loss. This is evidence in many public dialogues on climate change where conservation was often the only focus in discussions on biodiversity for climate change mitigation and sustainable use of biodiversity was still under-recognized as a contributor for climate change adaptation. Therefore, we believe that further identification and/or development and adoption of tools and methodologies to conceptualize values of biodiversity could be useful in advancing the awareness beyond conservation (eco-centric) aspect of biodiversity and in enabling better understanding of the values derived from its sustainable use.

Target 2: By 2020, at the latest, biodiversity values have been integrated into national and local development and poverty reduction strategies and planning processes and are being incorporated into national accounting, as appropriate, and reporting systems

While the lack of technical capacity presents a significant challenge in enabling necessary valuation required for integration of biodiversity values into development strategies and planning processes, we believe that uptake of such valuation in formulation and implementation of the strategies is equally or perhaps more critical in achieving this target. The valuation can offer evidence-based motivation to enable development policies to better reflect biodiversity values in any informed decision-making process related to development

policy formulation. However, political directives would likely to dictate whether and how extent biodiversity values are integrated into the development policies irrespective of evidences provided by the valuation as well as determine level of cooperation required for policy making and planning processes. Therefore, it might be necessary to develop and employ tools and methodologies to assist uptake of biodiversity valuation for formulation of development policies in order to complement those for the valuation in achieving Target 2. It should also be noted that tools and methodologies may be associated with those required for meeting Target 1.

Target 3: By 2020, at the latest, incentives, including subsidies, harmful to biodiversity are eliminated, phased out or reformed in order to minimize or avoid negative impacts, and positive incentives for the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity are developed and applied, consistent and in harmony with the Convention and other relevant international obligations, taking into account national socioeconomic conditions

Thailand is of an opinion that subsidies can become harmful to biodiversity by their short-term focus. For example, fishery subsidies which are conducive to short-term expansion of harvest usually lead to depletion of fish stock in long or even intermediate terms. Highlighting the failure of short-term approach of subsidies would therefore provide the best opportunity to overcome resistance to subsidy reform since such approach is not only harmful to biodiversity but also compromise objectives of the subsidies in ensuring well-being of their target groups (i.e. fishing industries and communities). This method also bypasses the problem of competing interests in subsidy reform by focusing on validity of the approach employed by subsidies harmful to biodiversity and should perhaps be adopted as a priority action for Target 3 at regional, national and sub-national levels.

Target 4: By 2020, at the latest, Governments, business and stakeholders at all levels have taken steps to achieve or have implemented plans for sustainable production and consumption and have kept the impacts of use of natural resources well within safe ecological limits

The fact that sustainably produced products continues to be more expensive as producers passed on an additional cost of sustainable production to consumers signified how undervalued agricultural commodities are. It is well-known but not widely recognized that the commodities' prices have not adequately reflected the cost of their production, resulting in unsustainable use of resources, inefficient utilization of input and economic deprivation in production sectors. As production shifts toward becoming more sustainable, the cost associated with sustainability as well as other aspects of production came to the surfaced and was reflected in higher price in different market niche to that of traditional commodities and products. In this regards, Thailand believe that sustainably produced products do present a barrier to their wider adoption in present market place but are not an obstacle to sustainable

consumption as they reflected the actual cost of their production. The real obstacle to enabling sustainable consumption continues to be excessive purchase of undervalued products from unsustainable production process and any wider adoption of sustainably produced products would unlikely to significantly contribute to meeting Target 4 without addressing this consumption pattern.

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