



Biodiversity Conservation, Ecosystem Services and Poverty Reduction

Shaping a New Agenda

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*Workshop held at the
International Academy for Nature Conservation, Isle of Vilm, Germany*

Objectives and Recommendations



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1 Aim and Scope of the Workshop

The global economic crisis shocked the world in late 2008 and early 2009. Many governments have responded with enormous, unprecedented economic stimulus and support programs to avoid increasing unemployment and poverty. It is well known today that poverty impacts on the environment and increasing ecosystem degradation aggravates poverty. The loss of biodiversity is a central element in this vicious circle.

On the basis of recent discussions and experiences on linking biodiversity and ecosystem services with development and poverty reduction, the workshop primarily aimed to develop inputs for the new Strategic Plan of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD). The plan, which will be negotiated at the 10th Conference of the Parties (COP) in October 2010 in Nagoya, Japan, has the potential to influence environmental policies of 191 member states for the period 2011 to 2022. Among other issues, the plan will address the importance of biodiversity for poverty reduction and the achievements of the Millennium Development Goals.

Moreover, in 2010 the world will celebrate the UN International Year of Biodiversity and the theme of next year's International Day on Biodiversity is "biodiversity for development and poverty alleviation". In the run-up to these events, the workshop provided a forum to discuss key issues and to develop inputs for a new agenda related to biodiversity conservation and poverty reduction. Case studies and specific thematic presentations provided appropriate stimulus for a number of small group and plenary discussions. More specifically, the workshop focused on three principle elements for the integration of biodiversity and associated ecosystem services into sustainable development and poverty reduction strategies and, vice versa, poverty reduction considerations into biodiversity policy and action plans. These elements are: (1) a conceptual framework, (2) targets and indicators and (3) policy instruments.

Below the workshop recommendations are presented. The summary of the workshop process and outputs, including summaries of power point presentations and discussions, agenda and list of participants will be available soon on the website of the German Federal Agency for Nature Conservation, International Academy, Workshop documents, 2009 (http://www.bfn.de/0610_vortraege.html).

2 Sustainable Development and Poverty Reduction in the CBD-Strategic Plan

By 2002 the Parties to the Convention had developed the current Strategic Plan with the aim to guide its further implementation at the national, regional and global levels. In section B the plan states that "*Parties commit themselves to a more effective and coherent implementation of the three objectives of the Convention, to achieve by 2010 a significant reduction of the current rate of biodiversity loss at the global, regional and national level as a contribution to poverty alleviation and to the benefit of all life on earth*".

The Strategic Plan will be updated at COP-10. As mandated by the deliberations at COP-9 through its decision IX-9 (f): "*The Plan should highlight the importance of biodiversity for poverty eradication and the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals, taking into account that conservation and the sustainable use of biodiversity should contribute to poverty eradication at the local level and not harm the livelihoods of the poor.*" In 2007 at its second meeting the CBD Working Group on the Review of Implementation concluded that mainstreaming biodiversity conservation in national development and poverty reduction strategies appear to be generally weak. The new CBD Secretariat unit on Biodiversity for Development aims to address these deficiencies.

In a more recent document “Revision and updating of the Strategic Plan: Synthesis/analysis of Views” produced by the CBD Secretariat (5 June 2009) under the section on *Scope of the new Plan and general points* the above cited decision - IX-9 (f) - was mentioned in paragraph 32 and in paragraph 27 it is noted that: “*the Plan should more clearly highlight the links between biodiversity and human well-being (including poverty eradication) and economics*”.

The workshop aimed to provide inputs for a new Strategic Plan that offers guidance to better linking biodiversity and human well-being.

3 Recommendations from the Workshop

General recommendations were:

- The two-way linkages between development/poverty reduction and biodiversity conservation need to be explicitly recognized.
- The need to link to and coordinate with other processes such as the MDGs and UNFCCC should be made explicit.
- There is a need for measurable/quantitative targets and indicators.
- Guidance and support is necessary to facilitate the mainstreaming process of biodiversity conservation into development and poverty reduction and vice-versa.

Specific Recommendations focused on three aspects concerning the linkages between biodiversity conservation and poverty reduction in the context of the Convention on Biological Diversity:

- (1) Revision of goals and objectives of the Strategic Plan (as stated in the first Strategic Plan)¹;
- (2) Amendments to the framework of goals and targets for assessing progress towards the 2010 Biodiversity Target²;
- (3) Specification of necessary supporting mechanisms.

1) Revision of goals and objectives of the Strategic Plan

Goal 1: *The Convention is fulfilling its leadership role in international biodiversity issues*

Recommendation

Objective 1.5 should be revised to include the national level. It should be reworded thus: “**Biodiversity concerns are being integrated into relevant sectoral or cross-sectoral plans, programmes, and policies at the national, regional and sub-regional levels.**”

¹ The first Strategic Plan consists of 4 goals and a total of 19 objectives.

² The overall framework contains 11 goals and 21 targets.

Explanation

The national level is important in the context of policies, programmes and projects, and has implications at international level (e.g. in relation to migratory species, trans-boundary protected areas).

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

Recommendation

An additional objective is recommended: **“New and innovative financial mechanisms explored, tested and implemented to support biodiversity conservation and human well-being, including mechanisms that address market failures to adequately internalize ecosystem services, at national and international level.”**

Explanation

The new focus on ecosystem services, reflected for example in the TEEB study, has raised awareness of the value of ecosystem goods and services. Despite the value of ecosystem goods and services at levels from local to national to global, market failures are a major cause of biodiversity loss and ecosystem degradation.

GOAL 3: *NBSAPs and the integration of biodiversity concerns into relevant sectors serve as an effective framework for the implementation of the objectives of the Convention.*

Recommendation

The issue of **governance** is not adequately addressed in the goal and objectives and needs further consideration. Broad stakeholder engagement and **ownership of NBSAP implementation** is necessary.

Explanation

The concept of Governance is wider than just stakeholder engagement and essential to effective ownership and implementation of the Convention via NBSAP or other mechanisms. Governance is about power, relationships, responsibility and accountability. It is about processes for decision-making, who decides, who has influence and how decision-makers are accountable. The establishment of effective and culturally appropriate governance mechanisms is critical for the implementation of the Convention at the national and other levels.

GOAL 4 : *There is a better understanding of the importance of biodiversity and of the Convention, and this has led to broader engagement across society in implementation.*

Recommendation

It is suggested to split this goal.

New Goal 4: **“There is a better understanding of the importance of biodiversity for sustainable development and poverty reduction.”** Objective 4.1 and 4.2 are to be maintained under Goal 4.

New Goal 5: **“There is broader engagement across society in implementation of the Convention”.** Objective 4.3 and 4.4 are to be changed into 5.1 and 5.2 and it is recommended that objective 5.1 (formerly 4.3) should be revised to read: **“Indigenous and local communities are effectively involved in planning, decision mak-**

ing and implementation and in the processes of the Convention, at national, regional and international levels.”

Possibly a new objective related to **good governance** might also be added (as Objective 5.3). Thereby recognition of indigenous and local communities' governance systems, including customary laws, would be included.

Explanation

Goal 4 combines two broad and critical messages related to 1) understanding and 2) engagement. Those areas deserve one goal each. Moreover, and in order to reflect better the goal of the convention “as a contribution to poverty alleviation and to the benefit of all life on earth”, understanding of the convention needs to be placed within a sustainable development context.

Involvement of indigenous and local communities should be at all stages of delivering on the commitments and decisions of the Convention (including planning and decision-making – not just implementation) and this needs to be made more explicit.

2) Amendments to the framework of goals and targets for assessing progress towards the 2010 Biodiversity Target - Towards a post 2010 Biodiversity Target

Goal 5 to 7 on *Threats to biodiversity*

Recommendation

A **new Goal** (and related Targets) should be added which concerns the **reduction of threats from indirect drivers including markets and market failures, perverse subsidies, international trade (and trade agreements), trends in global consumer demand, tenure etc.**

Explanation

Goals 5 to 7 address threats to biodiversity. However they do not refer to indirect drivers of biodiversity loss.

Goal 8: *Maintain capacity of ecosystems to deliver goods and services and support livelihoods*

Recommendation

Goal 8 should be revised to include the restoration of ecosystems (as well as maintaining capacity). Suggested wording **“Maintain and restore capacity of ecosystems to deliver goods and services and support livelihoods”**.

Explanation

Many ecosystems have been so degraded that their potential to provide goods and services to those people dependent on them has been severely compromised, therefore driving people further into poverty.

Goal 8: *Maintain capacity of ecosystems to deliver goods and services and support livelihoods*

Recommendation

Introduce the following additional targets 8.3 and 8.4 under Goal 8:

Target 8.3 “Ensure adequate and equitable access to those ecosystem services vital for human well-being, in line with the Convention on Biological Diversity and its relevant provisions”.

Target 8.4 “Ensure equitable and fair sharing of benefits arising out of the conservation of biodiversity”.

Re-word target 8.2:

Instead of: “Biological resources that support sustainable livelihoods, local food security, and health care, especially of poor people, maintained” **Target 8.2** should be revised to read: **“Biological resources that support sustainable livelihoods, local food security, health care, adaptation to climate change and resilience to natural disasters, especially for poor people, maintained.”**

Explanation

Equitable access to the benefits from conservation is presently restricted to the sharing of benefits from genetic resources. There is a need therefore to introduce these additional targets (8.3 and 8.4) in order to address equitable access to goods and services from biodiversity and ecosystems more generally. These considerations are especially important given the increased attention being given to Payment for Ecosystem Services (PES) and the transfer of payments envisaged under schemes for Reducing Emissions from Degradation and Deforestation (REDD).

Vulnerability and resilience are key concepts defining the relationship between people (especially poor people) biodiversity and natural ecosystems. Target 8.2 needs to be re-worded to reflect this.

Goal 11: *Parties have improved financial, human, scientific, technical and technological capacity to implement the Convention*

Recommendation

Target 11.1 should be reworded thus: **“New and additional financial resources are transferred to developing-country Parties to allow for the effective implementation of their commitment under the Convention, in accordance with Article 20 and the Paris Declaration.**

Explanation

*Goal 11 and its targets should include the need for coordination between funding for biodiversity conservation and funding for development, and refer to the need to prioritize biodiversity conservation in the development cooperation agenda. The **Paris Declaration** is a major instrument regarding transfers of aid to developing countries. Financial resource transfers under the CBD should comply with the Paris Declaration.*

The Framework: *Structure of Goals, Targets and Indicators*

Recommendations

The goals, targets and indicators should be reorganized (and any gaps filled) to provide an interconnected and coherent framework built around Pressures (threats), State, Responses and Benefits.

The organization of the indicator framework should also map onto the Convention’s three Goals: biodiversity conservation, sustainable use and equitable sharing of benefits.

Explanation

The function of indicators is to guide decision making about improving the state of biodiversity and the benefits derived from it (as well as the threats it faces and the effectiveness of responses to those threats). The organization of the current set of goals, targets and indicators does not allow such links to be made and understood.

3) Specification of necessary supporting mechanisms

To improve implementation of the Strategic Plan the following action should be taken³:

- Improved communication between key sectors and decision-makers
- Enhance capacity at ministerial level to make the arguments and present the evidence to support biodiversity conservation (especially to finance ministries)
- Provide adequate resources for capacity building that reach all stakeholders
- Overcome the “mis-understanding” that conservation is a luxury and not a foundation/basis for life, livelihoods and development
- Off-set the lack of understanding of the role of biodiversity in ecosystem services provision
- Enhance the links between the CBD and UNFCCC and elaborate the issues and linkages between these MEAs
- Strengthen effective targeting of the poor and better understanding of their needs and linkages between their livelihoods and biodiversity
- Identify and address the role of global drivers (trade, subsidies, consumer trends etc)
- Improve the understanding and need for appropriate good governance mechanisms for decisions and delivery at supra-regional, national/sub-national level (including local communities (LCs) and local governments (LGs)).
- Establish a comprehensive assessment framework (particularly in relation to social assessment) to monitor the implementation of the convention that can be easily used by countries, which in turn have the capacity and resources to do so.

Recommendations

Taking into account the broader discussion above, the following key **supporting mechanisms** for specifically mainstreaming biodiversity conservation and poverty reduction and vice versa were identified, recognizing that they are inter-related and linkages between them need to be considered.

Science/Evidence

National level data and evidence on the importance of biodiversity for local and national development, livelihoods and human well-being are made available. This should include insights from local knowledge and experiences and be linked to national development priorities.

³ Workshop participants noted the move to establish an efficient science-policy interface on biodiversity, ecosystem services and human well-being in order to fulfill the need identified for a stronger international science-policy platform to enable emerging scientific knowledge to be translated into specific policy action at the appropriate levels. The workshop supported this process for the creation of an Intergovernmental Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES) [<http://ipbes.net/en/index.asp>]

Identification of Stakeholders

Guidelines for the identification of key actors and stakeholders and their engagement are developed and implemented with the goal of linking biodiversity conservation and development & poverty reduction.

Communication

National strategies are developed for engagement and communicating the evidence and arguments for integrating environment and development to various actors (addressing priorities of different target groups, using appropriate language, making linkages, and with special attention to actors that are not usually greatly interested in biodiversity or who have failed to appreciate its relevance). Loss of institutional memory by changes in governments and staff needs to be taken account of.

Coordination

All stakeholders should be involved in a meaningful way as early as possible in the process of biodiversity conservation, sustainable use and equitable access, so that projects are true joint, collaborative endeavours and not 'unilateral' projects associated exclusively with the CBD or sectoral agencies (e.g. Ministries of Environment).

Governance

Promote and provide guidance on multi-stakeholder fora, institutional frameworks⁴ and governance mechanisms for biodiversity mainstreaming that support the linkage/integration of biodiversity with poverty reduction and development within plans and strategies.

Social assessment and indicators

A comprehensive social assessment framework (that includes specific indicators) cross-cutting the differing programmes of works of the convention is developed. This should provide an integrated monitoring mechanism on the contribution of biodiversity conservation towards sustainable development, well-being and poverty reduction that includes the services provided by biodiversity (regulating, supporting, cultural, security) and the effectiveness of stakeholder engagement and governance systems (empowerment).

New and innovative financial instruments

Identify and develop market and non-market based financial mechanisms and tools (that also provide: guidance in use, toolkits, and a communication strategy) to build capacity for mainstreaming biodiversity into development/poverty reduction strategies and vice versa.

Mainstreaming

Key national policies (including Poverty Reduction Strategy Plans, sector policies, National Development Plans) should clearly recognize the links between environment/biodiversity and development/poverty reduction and identify concrete actions, institutional frameworks, legal reform and financial instruments to deliver outcomes.

Poverty reduction should be mainstreamed into current Programs of Work (PoW) of the CBD and possibly a mainstreaming PoW needs to be developed.

⁴ Specifically, the relationship between different ministries is to be considered in institutional frameworks.

To further support implementation of the Strategic Plan it is recommended that the following Guidelines are developed:

- (1) Guidelines on NBSAP formulation:
 - to be formulated by all stakeholders
 - to include sector-oriented tools for mainstreaming biodiversity conservation and its links to poverty reduction (including green economics)
 - process-oriented tools to achieve mainstreaming (including green economics);
- (2) Guidelines for good governance to implement the NBSAPS within a multi-sectorial stakeholder base;
- (3) Guidelines for social assessment of the implementation of the Convention at several levels;
- (4) Guidelines for equitable benefit distribution in relation to biodiversity and ecosystem services;
- (5) Guidelines for ensuring access by all sectors of society to vital ecosystem services;
- (6) Guidelines to mainstream development and poverty reduction into the 7 Programs of Work;
- (7) Guidelines on pro-poor Payments for Ecosystem Service, as a mechanism for poverty reduction;
- (8) Guidelines on economic methods which more effectively account for the immediate and long-term values of natural resources (and costs of their degradation and loss)
- (9) Guidelines and tools for operationalising the Ecosystem Approach

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