



## **Integration for Biodiversity in Ghana**

### **Contents**

1. Introduction .....	2
2. Information concerning the extent to which biodiversity is included in environmental impact assessments and strategic environmental assessments undertaken at various levels.....	2
3. A description of the extent to which biodiversity has been integrated into sectoral and cross-sectoral strategies and plans, providing concrete examples.....	3
Forestry .....	3
Fisheries .....	3
Livestock.....	4
Crops .....	4
Obstacles to these policies .....	4
4. A description of the process(es) by which biodiversity has been integrated into these sectoral and cross-sectoral strategies and plans.....	4
5. A description of whether and how the ecosystem approach has been adopted and employed in mainstreaming biodiversity into sectoral and cross-sectoral strategies, plans and programmes .....	6
6. Information concerning the extent to which biodiversity is included in environmental impact assessments and strategic environmental assessments undertaken at various levels.....	7
7. An analysis of the outcomes achieved through implementation of these measures, in particular in terms of observed changes in the status and trends of important biodiversity components, and the extent to which these measures contribute to the implementation of NBSAPs.....	7
8. A description of whether and how the ecosystem approach has been adopted and employed in mainstreaming biodiversity into sectoral and cross-sectoral strategies, plans and programmes.....	8
9. Obstacles to integrate biodiversity concerns into policies, plans and programmes .....	8

## **1. Introduction**

Ghana reported<sup>1</sup> on information concerning the extent to which biodiversity is included in environmental impact assessments and strategic environmental assessments undertaken at various levels; description of the extent to which biodiversity has been integrated into sectoral and cross-sectoral strategies and plans, such as forestry, fisheries, livestock, crops; the ecosystem approach; environmental impact assessments and strategic environmental assessments undertaken at various levels; obstacles to integrate biodiversity concerns into policies, plans and programmes.

## **2. Information concerning the extent to which biodiversity is included in environmental impact assessments and strategic environmental assessments undertaken at various levels**

There are two recognized sectors that operate in the Ghanaian economy. These are the private and public sectors. The private sector may be organised into the formal and informal. It is easy to deal with the former because of their organizational structure. Difficulties in biodiversity management usually stems from the informal private sector. However when this group is adequately sensitized the success rate in management is very high. It is usually at this level that NGOs and other civil society tend to increase their presence in the sphere of biodiversity management. The public sector is mainly formal, developing and promoting policies, plans and programmes which eventually, among others, promote management of biodiversity and genetic resources through Forestry, Fisheries, Crops and Livestock including poultry sub-sectors.

Within Ghana, there is a national programme called 'Coordinated Programme for Economic and Social Development of Ghana (2003-2012) which spells out strategies and enablers for accelerated growth for Ghana from 2003-2012. The document identifies science and technology research and development as among the enablers for accelerated growth and productivity of all sectors of the economy. Strategies for achieving the objectives within which issues of biodiversity conservation are covered are:

- a) the promotion of science and technology activities that would facilitate conservation and sustainable utilisation and management of natural resources in support of national development through the promotion of research and measures to protect and conserve biological diversity;
- b) the promotion and the enhancement and maintenance of the quality of the environment and the integration of environmental concerns into all development policies by developing the capacity to monitor, predict and mitigate the adverse problems such as alien species colonisation.

It is against this background that activities to implement many of the international obligations stemming from such conventions as the UN Convention on Biological Diversity, the UN Framework on Convention on Climate Change, the UN Convention to Combat Desertification and the other biodiversity related and environmental agreements, take their root.

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<sup>1</sup> Ghana (2009). Fourth National Report, Ministry of Local Government, Rural Development and Environment, 77 pp.

It should not have been a problem if this is taken seriously at the planning stages within the responsible ministries, departments and agencies as they conceive of activities for these projects and programmes.

### **3. A description of the extent to which biodiversity has been integrated into sectoral and cross-sectoral strategies and plans, providing concrete examples**

#### **Forestry**

Forestry sub-sector covers conservation, utilization, and resource mobilization.

##### **(a) Policies for forestry**

(i) The 1994 Forest and Wildlife Policies were established to take care of Wildlife Conservation and Resource Mobilizations.

(ii) Wildfire Policy

(iii) National Bio-safety in biotechnology Guidelines.

##### **(b) Plans and Programmes for Forestry**

(i) Northern Savanna Biodiversity which involved Ministry of Food and Agriculture, Forest Services Division and Environmental Protection Agency.

(ii) High Forest Biodiversity Conservation Project (HFBCP) which was established in 1998. Wildfire Management Project which was established in 2003 Natural Resources and Environmental Programme which is established to run for 5 yrs.

(iii) Forest Protection Strategy, is the master plan from which all forest related policies, plans and programmes are derived.

The Forestry Commission is the foremost institution of state with a specific mandate to manage and develop the forest heritage of Ghana for the optimal sustainable flow of benefits to all segments of the Ghanaian society. In other words, the FC is the legal entity in Ghana responsible for the protection and management of the wild lands of Ghana and by implication and in consultation with other key stakeholders including traditional rulers and the public, hold the key to the effective implementation of the three objectives of the UN Convention on Biological Diversity which include the conservation, the sustainable use of biological diversity and the fair and equitable share of benefits arising from the use or utilization of genetic resources.

The current number of forest reserves (291) and wildlife protected areas (15) occupy more than 38,000 sq km (i.e. about 16% of the total land area of Ghana) and these constitute the permanent forest estate of Ghana which is under the control and watchful eyes of the Forestry Commission.

#### **Fisheries**

##### **(a) Policies Available**

There is a provision in the Fisheries ACT, 2002 which refers to the Management of Aquatic Ecosystem. The ACT makes provision for the type of fishing gear to use. (ii) There is a policy for Aqua-Culture which protects biodiversity and does not allow the importation of exotic species of fishes. There is enactment of bye laws which regulate small Scale fishing.

### **(b) Plans and Programmes – Impacts on the Environment**

Aqua-culture is being practiced on the Volta Lake. A permit has been granted by EPA to practise aqua-culture and monitor the quality of the water from time to time but they have flouted this condition. During the assessment EPA did not take into consideration the carrying capacity of the lake. It is therefore being envisaged that the carrying capacity of the lake would be exceeded. Again, high tonnes of fishing feeds are being deposited into the lake to feed the fish. This is likely to enhance eutrophication leading to the depletion of available oxygen in the lake.

### **Livestock**

Information on livestock policy is scanty and a recommendation has been made for the Ministry of Food and Agriculture to make these available in the revision of the strategy and action plan

### **Crops**

The following information on Policies on crops are available:

- (a) MoFA is very much interested in utilizing aspects of Genetic Modifications into the country's agriculture and has supported the development of guidelines for biosafety in biotechnology. However, these guidelines have not yet been approved by the Ghanaian parliament. It is expected that the current sitting parliament will look at the guidelines and make the necessary approval so that the recommendations can be utilized at the national level.
- (ii) Another Policy is the Food and Agriculture Sustainability Development project (FASDEP) I and II. These are meant to support the Ghanaian Growth and Poverty Reduction Strategy (GPRS) for food security and poverty reduction through improved livelihood situations.

### **Obstacles to these policies**

- (i) Lack of Monitoring and compliance.
- (ii) Scanty information available
- (iii) The use of agrochemicals in farming
- (iv) Eating habits of the people.

## **4. A description of the process(es) by which biodiversity has been integrated into these sectoral and cross-sectoral strategies and plans.**

This should include a description of measures taken by relevant government departments, levels of government (from national to local) and other stakeholders for achieving the objectives of the Convention, including:

i) Mechanisms or arrangements put in place to ensure that implementation of these strategies and plans will avoid or minimize adverse impacts on biodiversity or contribute to the objectives of the Convention; and

ii) The use of any positive incentives and removal of perverse incentives

The Activities of the Forest Services Division of the FC illustrate the process.

The forest protection strategy developed in the early 1990s from the time of the revised Forest and Wildlife Policy of 1994 and the emergence of the UN Convention on

Biological Diversity, prescribes fine-grain to large-grain measures for the protection of forest flora and these are incorporated into management planning for all forest reserves.

All forest reserves are managed by the FSD.

The following actions have been ongoing:

- a) Capacity building
- b) Re-demarcation and pillaring of Globally Significant Biodiversity Areas (GSBAs) and Provenance Protection Areas (PPAs)
- c) Legal descriptions and protection of GSBAs
- d) Community Participation in Forest management in which over 150 community Biodiversity Advisory Groups have been established
- e) Alternative livelihoods in which an amount of US\$ 2.5 millions have been invested in a micro-finance scheme called Alternative Livelihood Investment Fund, for ecologically friendly livelihood programmes for forest-fringe communities. About 1200 persons have benefited from the scheme to date.
- f) Extensive faunal and floral surveys have been carried out in the GSBAs to beef up field data on species composition.
- g) A Wildfire management project has dispensed/invested a lot of resources to build the capacity of the Division for effective fire management, including fire prevention, early fire detection and fire fighting at the forest-community level. A large fleet of fire fighting equipment was out-doored last Thursday 30 October 2008

In-situ targeted action at Endangered/threatened species eg. Primates, *Talbotiella gentii*.

Under the High Forest and Northern Savanna Biodiversity Conservation Projects, a study was commissioned on primates towards the development of a survival plan. This was completed in 2006 and currently being implemented. A conservation plan has also been developed and implemented for the endemic plant species, *Talbotiella gentii*.

- h) Awareness creation. Numerous awareness creation programmes using various formats such as drama, open discussion, forums and community durbars have been organized in the communities. Posters and information leaflets on biodiversity have also been employed.

The near absence of standardized procedures and guidelines to govern the exploitation of non timber forest products (ntfps) is a worrying area for the FSD as the availability of these resources in areas outside the forest reserves is increasingly becoming part of the history of Ghana. This is in direct reference to the Forest and Wildlife policy which guarantees...’ the right of people to have access to natural resources for maintaining a basic standard of living and their concomitant responsibility to ensure the sustainable use of such resources’

## **5. A description of whether and how the ecosystem approach has been adopted and employed in mainstreaming biodiversity into sectoral and cross-sectoral strategies, plans and programmes**

The activities of the Wildlife Division of FC illustrate this.

The division has been pre-occupied with the promotion of the Protected Area The division has been pre-occupied with the promotion of the Protected Area Development Project (PADP). The first phase of the project PADP-I made significant contributions towards enhanced conservation of biodiversity. Under this phase, management plans for Ankasa and Bia PAs were prepared and limited infrastructure for conservation activities and tourism were developed. The community based programme called Community Resource Management Areas (CREMA) was piloted to improve the natural resource management capacity of fringe communities in off-reserve wildlife conservation.

The second phase of the project PADP-II has been planned and it will build on the results and work done under PADP-I. An elaborate listing of indicators and their sources of verification have been given in a comprehensive logical framework. The second phase is designed to, inter alia:

- a) implement management plans for Ankasa and Bia PAs
- b) improve services of WD and District Assemblies and build capacities
- c) develop appropriate ecotourism attractions and facilities
- d) establish sustainable livelihoods for populations adjacent to reserve through alternative natural resource use systems and income generating activities
- e) establish participatory institutional structures peripheral to each area within the programme
- f) improve conservation and management of natural resources within GSBAs , through the development of joint management procedures between WD and FSD for the GSBAs adjoining Bia PA and Krokosua Hill Forest Reserve. This particular activity will ensure coherence in future planning for the GSBAs.
- g) control illegal activities within Pas
- h) support conservation education programme

Another programme that has engaged the WD has been the Kyabobo Area Natural resources Development Plan (KANRDP). This was started in 2002 and designed to complete in five years but was extended and ended on 30 June 2008. The ultimate goal of KANRDP was to effectively conserve and manage Kyabobo National Park as part of a national/sub-regional system of Pas, conserve Ghana’s biodiversity, reduce poverty and contribute to the well-being of women and men in local communities and other stakeholders.

The main outputs of the programme are:

- a) adequate, well-trained WD staff effectively deployed
- b) management plan formulated and implemented
- c) adequate infrastructure in place and well maintained
- d) tourist attractions in the Kyabobo Area identified, the appropriate supporting facilities in place and marketing and publicity provided for
- e) cordial relationship with Togolese counterparts for trans-boundary management established
- f) participation of rural communities adjacent to the park in natural resources and environmental management enhanced
- g) relationships with clear agreements between the relevant stakeholders defined and respected and a Kyabobo Area Management Advisory Board established
- h) viable additional economic activities for communities facilitated

#### **6. Information concerning the extent to which biodiversity is included in environmental impact assessments and strategic environmental assessments undertaken at various levels.**

No development project can take place in Ghana without an environmental impact assessment (EIA). Consequently some aspects of information on Biodiversity are included in the environment impact assessments. However the information to be captured are not adequate. The EIA application forms that are used, do not elaborate extensively on the kind of information on biodiversity that will indicate status and trends.

It is recommended that the basic EIA form should capture extensive information on biodiversity including derivation of ecosystem services as well as ecosystem goods. A strategic environmental assessment (SEA) was used to capture environmental issues in the national Growth and Poverty Reduction Strategy (GPRS) document. A copy of this was sent to the CBD secretariat as case study for the CHM.

Ghana has recently hit oil deposit on its western coastal shoreline and in doing the EIA for the drilling of this oil (discovered at Cape Three Points) an extensive SEA should be carried out to ensure that the biodiversity in the area are protected

#### **7. An analysis of the outcomes achieved through implementation of these measures, in particular in terms of observed changes in the status and trends of important biodiversity components, and the extent to which these measures contribute to the implementation of NBSAPs**

As far as the protected areas are concerned, very little changes have taken place in the status and trends of important biodiversity components. Where significant changes have taken place are in some forest reserves and most of the off-reserve areas. As indicated in the priority activities suggested for the biodiversity strategy, several efforts are ongoing to ensure the three objectives of the Convention.

**8. A description of whether and how the ecosystem approach has been adopted and employed in mainstreaming biodiversity into sectoral and cross-sectoral strategies, plans and programmes.**

Ecosystem approach has been used in many forest and agricultural biodiversity programmes, without necessarily referring to it as such. The examples are more obvious in the management schedules adopted for the protected areas.

**9. Obstacles to integrate biodiversity concerns into policies, plans and programmes**

The following were identified.

- (i) Decision making processes are not decentralized.
- (ii) Lack of extension officers and logistics at the local level.
- (iii) Biodiversity conservation is not seen to support economies of scale therefore investors tend to prefer mono-culture practices