

Mainstreaming Biological Diversity

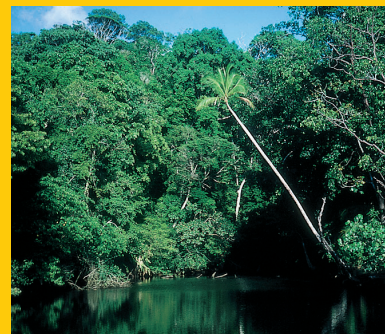
The role of communication,
education and public awareness



Exploration of
current practices
and motives for
change among
stakeholders



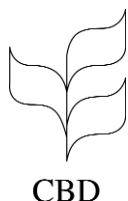
Information
Motivation



Feedback
Social responsibility



Behaviour change
Marketing



“Biodiversity carries a great deal of information in terms of present and past human or natural stresses.

Yet, when reduced diversity is observed, it is too late to reverse such negative trends. Everyone should be aware of this and should be enabled to act, both individually and collectively, in a way so as to minimize those stresses and even enhance diversity.”

UNESCO
Division of Ecological
Sciences and Man and
Biosphere Programme

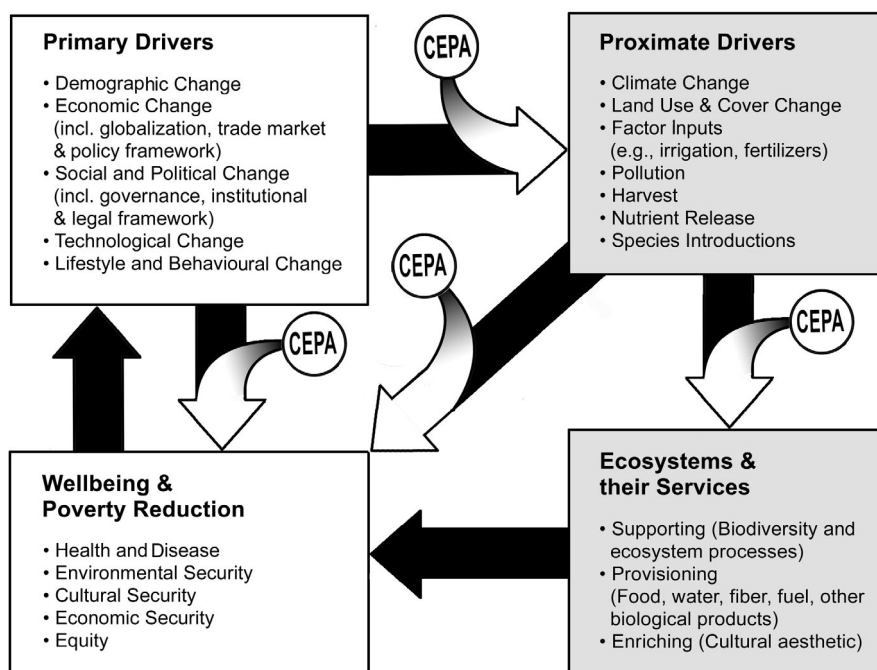
Mainstreaming

Biological diversity affected by all sectors

Humans are a major force in nature. By transforming vast parts of the earth’s surface, causing massive extinction of species, and depleting natural resources, humans threaten their own wellbeing and the diversity of all life. It is by the combined impact of human actions seeking maximum utility in agriculture, tourism, transport, water resources and forestry that this destruction occurs. The challenge is to make biological diversity concerns a part of how people manage the planet in all sectors.

Article 13 – Communication, Education and Public Awareness CEPA

The Convention on Biological Diversity recognises in Article 13 the need to create awareness and educate the public. However it is not sufficient to simply tell people what is happening so that they can correct what they do. The changes required of people will not come about by rational individual choice alone. Biodiversity planners need to think differently about using communication, education and public awareness rather than just making scientific information available to the public.



To deal with the complex interplay of underlying causes (primary drivers) and direct causes (proximate drivers) that affect biodiversity conservation, many sectors need to be involved. CEPA (Communication, Education and Public Awareness) has a role in identifying these drivers as well as in the social processes of learning that need to be in place to deal with them.

Social change

The goals of the Convention on Biological Diversity – biodiversity conservation, sustainable use and equitable sharing – call for social change. Communication, education and public awareness are long-term investments towards this social change. At the same time, biodiversity issues need to be dealt with by individuals and groups with differing opinions. CEPA is the tool to generate interaction and ensure participation of major stakeholders from different sectors.



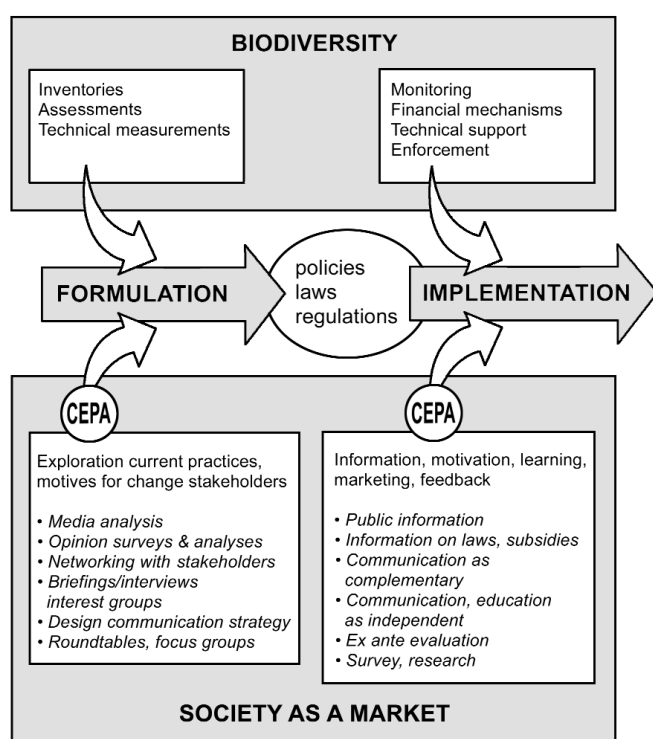
Tool for change: CEPA

Why CEPA?

Without communication, education and public awareness (CEPA), biodiversity experts, policy makers and managers risk continuing conflicts over biodiversity management, ongoing degradation and loss of ecosystems, their functions and services. CEPA provides the link from science and ecology to people's social and economic reality. It supplies the oil for the implementation of the Convention on Biological Diversity.

What is CEPA?

CEPA stands for Communication, Education and Public Awareness. CEPA deals with the processes that motivate and mobilize individual and collective action. CEPA comprises a range of social instruments including information exchange, dialogue, education, and marketing. The instruments work best when part of an instrument mix that is used to develop, implement and manage the national biodiversity strategy and action plans.



The added value of communication, education and public awareness (CEPA) in biodiversity policy and project planning and implementation

Roles of CEPA

CEPA has different roles in different parts of a project, strategy or policy. During formulation, CEPA plays a role in listening to how people feel about the issue, putting the issue on the agenda by raising awareness and identifying the issues to be dealt with by the project or policy. As a project or policy is formed, communication works to draw out and balance the different ideas about how to proceed. During implementation CEPA is used to mobilize networks and stakeholders, to explain benefits of participation and to build social responsibility. CEPA has different tasks around monitoring, evaluating and maintaining quality control of the policy or project. While the operational context for the use of CEPA instruments differs per country or cultural setting, some processes and functions of CEPA are valid worldwide.

Awareness brings the issues relating to biodiversity to the attention of key groups who have the power to influence outcomes. Awareness is an agenda setting and marketing exercise helping people to know what and why this is an important issue, the aspirations for the targets, and what is and can be done to achieve these.

Education is a set of processes that can inform, motivate and empower people to support biodiversity conservation, not only by making lifestyle changes, but also through promoting change in the way that institutions, business, and governments operate.

Communication is the two-way exchange of information and is a means to gain cooperation of groups in society by listening to them first and clarifying why and how decisions are made. In an instrumental approach, communication is used with other instruments to support biodiversity conservation to address economic constraints and to motivate action.



CEPA in practice

How can CEPA be used?

“If people are the main cause of environmental problems then presumably these same people can at least make a substantial contribution to the cure. The notion is the driving force for a wide range of activities carried out to improve community awareness and understanding of environmental issues.”

Government of Hong Kong

The challenge for the Contracting Parties, and organizations involved in the Convention, is to develop effective communication to stimulate a change in those practices that act against biodiversity conservation and the wise use of natural resources. To be effective, the Contracting Parties need to first engage stakeholders in defining the issues and possible solutions. In this consultation the role of communication and education is assessed as well as the need for it to support appropriate legal and economic instruments that can bring about change. This means that CEPA should form a central part of implementing the Convention by each Contracting Party.



CEPA helps to integrate CBD into other environmental issues

The IUCN programme ‘Biodiversity Conservation: Building Capacity for Communication’ has helped the Hungarian Ministry of Environment to integrate the agendas of the Convention on Biological Diversity and the Pan European Biological and Landscape Diversity Strategy PEBLDS with that of the Ramsar Wetlands Convention. The National Authority for Nature Conservation prepared the National Strategy for Communication, Education and Public Awareness in support of Wetland Conservation which provides focus and develops networks, strategies and tools to communicate policies along with guidelines for local level implementation. The capacity to do this was developed during the project.

CEPA is a tool for public participation in the implementation of CBD

In Lao PDR, IUCN has initiated dialogues with residents to help plan ways to co-manage new conservation areas so that conservation goals can be balanced with historic use rights and resource needs. With limited protected area staff, local co-operation will be key to success. Forest user groups that live around protected areas are engaged in trials of domestication, sustainable harvesting, community-based forest management and the processing and marketing of non-timber forest products in order to expand rural development and support conservation of the forests. Successful models are being expanded to other districts through training programs.



CEPA in practice

Planning

CEPA is a tool to manage the process of individual and community engagement of stakeholders. With appropriate handling this engagement provides a sense of ownership of the problem and solutions that helps to support people's more sustained involvement. Effective use of CEPA requires a planned systematic approach to really understand the interests of stakeholders and beneficiaries. Approaches need to be tailor-made to the local context, culture and traditions. Nonetheless, international experiences can guide national planners in formulating country-specific operational plans.

“Effective implementation of conservation policies can only be reached through involvement of stakeholders. There is simply no other way, as key problems for biodiversity are not generated in nature conservation but in other sectors.”

Peter Skoberne
State secretary
Slovenia



CEPA is a tool for education and social responsibility

In Uganda the IUCN-supported National Wetlands Programme started in 1990 to raise awareness at the political level of the value of wetlands. It was soon realized that the selling points were not biodiversity values but more related to human benefits like “wetlands are Uganda’s water bowl” and a moderator of flooding. To decentralize and build public responsibility for wetlands, all Districts were involved in developing the national wetland policy, and undertaking inventories of wetlands and resources. Now stakeholders are being mobilized to develop their action plans for management and sustainable use at District and community level.

CEPA helps to integrate biodiversity issues into other policy areas

In the Greenbelt biosphere reserve in coastal Brazil, the poor economic situation threatens the natural resource base and biological diversity. Consultation processes revealed the urgent need to cross the boundaries between these sectors and develop economic opportunities that are ecologically sustainable. The UNESCO Ecojobs training programme prepares young Brazilian men and women for economically reliable jobs that do not exert additional pressure on the fragile environment.



Current use of CEPA

From theory to practice

Biodiversity experts often are not aware of the benefits of using CEPA as a management and policy tool. Although endorsing the importance of communication to attain conservation and sustainable development objectives, in practice relatively few countries successfully apply CEPA in their planning and implementation of conservation agendas.

Perception is the only reality

Experts tend to think that scientific facts are convincing in themselves. However the exchange of scientific information does not necessarily motivate people who are not in these circles, and is insufficient to change attitudes and behaviour. Instead scientific information has to be translated into concepts and messages that appeal to stakeholders, are relevant to them, and connect with their emotions and personal benefits.

Building relationships

Managers often underestimate the commitment, human resources and time necessary to develop trusting relationships between communities and conservationists. The multi-sectoral nature of biodiversity-related issues has led to the development of complex and often fragmented programmes and action plans, with many departments responsible for parts of the problem.

Expertise

Biodiversity specialists find it difficult to step out of their role and take the distance that is required to understand the different perceptions that exist among different stakeholders. This requires expertise in communication and social science professionals. This expertise has become increasingly available to governments and implementing agencies through professional networks that aim to share and exchange this expertise across sectors.

Common factors hampering the implementation of National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans are:

- *Limited human and financial resources*
- *Lack of knowledge about biodiversity priorities*
- *Limited integration in other policies*
- *Conflicting interests*
- *Lack of knowledge of how to market biodiversity*
- *Limited understanding of the added value of CEPA*
- *Lack of understanding of the complex processes involved and hence the need for expertise*
- *Treatment of local stakeholders as 'targets' of conservation or education projects, instead of equal partners*
- *Local stakeholders having no true determining role, resulting in short term success but no sustainable change or impact.*



Support for CEPA

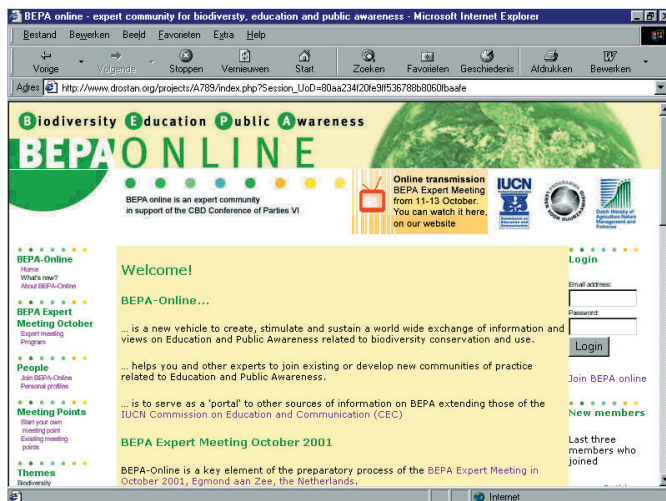
Needs

Communication and education instruments often lack appropriate funding and are inadequately advised by relevant professional expertise. This means that many biodiversity experts and planners are operating in a field that they recognise as important, but that is relatively unknown to them. Under these circumstances it is difficult to assess priorities and to commit managerial support.

Demands

The Parties would benefit from understanding about what is needed most to mobilize biodiversity planners into action at country level. The Consultative Working Group on Biodiversity Education and Public Awareness identified the following demands for support so that National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan co-ordinators can use CEPA successfully:

- Identifying realistic biodiversity priorities;
- Developing networks;
- Developing solutions for conflicting interests;
- Acquiring support for biodiversity from decision makers and stakeholders from other departments/regional governments;
- Developing strategies, methods and media to 'market' and communicate biodiversity to different target groups, including the general public.



Expertise Support for CEPA

Professional networks with the expertise, experience and skills needed to build the capacity for CEPA exist. The IUCN Commission on Education and Communication advises on the use of CEPA and provides capacity building programmes for managers and policy makers. Commission members can be found around the world.

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To make efficient and successful use of Communication, Education and Public Awareness as a tool to support biodiversity conservation, special expertise is required.



“The Contracting Parties shall:

(A) Promote and encourage understanding of the importance of, and the measures required for, the conservation of biological diversity, as well as its propagation through media, and the inclusion of these topics in educational programmes; and

(B) Cooperate, as appropriate, with other States and international organizations in developing educational and public awareness programmes, with respect to conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity.”

Article 13, Convention on Biological Diversity

“In 1998, the fourth Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity tackled for the first time the provisions under the Convention’s Article 13 on education and public awareness. It was recognised as a key issue for the implementation of the Convention in total. UNESCO proposed a Global Initiative on Biodiversity Education and Public Awareness and the Parties invited UNESCO to lead this process.

At COP5 in 2000 it was decided that a Consultative Working Group of Experts on Biodiversity Education and Public Awareness should be convened jointly by the Executive Secretary of the Convention and UNESCO. The Group met three times and benefited from the active participation and inputs from a range of non-governmental and inter-governmental institutions, as well as Contracting Party representatives. The results of this process were used by the Convention Secretariat as a basis for the preparation of a Programme of Work for the Global Initiative on Communication, Education and Public Awareness (CEPA) to be considered by the sixth meeting of the Conference of the Parties in April, 2002.

The elements of the three-year CEPA programme include:

- Developing a network of experts on biodiversity CEPA
- Exchanging knowledge on effective CEPA
- Providing capacity building programmes on CEPA”

*UNESCO
Division of Ecological Sciences
Man and Biosphere Programme*



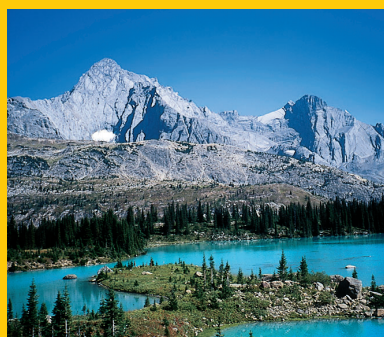
Public Support Motivation



Training Education



Feedback Marketing



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