

## Capacity Building for Mainstreaming Biodiversity in Poverty Reduction

### Note for discussion (version 17 November 2011)

There are many existing processes and guidance on mainstreaming and capacity development. Indeed this is core to the Biodiversity Convention. This note summarizes some key conclusions as a basis for discussion and provides three key questions to develop a capacity development framework.

#### 1. What is biodiversity for poverty reduction?

The Convention on Biological Diversity makes two clear links between that biodiversity and poverty – firstly that poverty is the key aim for developing countries and secondly that conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity can contribute to this poverty reduction:

*“Recognizing that economic and social development and poverty eradication are the first and overriding priorities of developing countries,*

*Aware that conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity is of critical importance for meeting the food, health and other needs of the growing world population, for which purpose access to and sharing of both genetic resources and technologies are essential,”*

#### 2. What is Mainstreaming biodiversity for poverty reduction?

This is core to the Convention on Biological Diversity and is highlighted in several articles of the Convention:

Article 6: “Each Contracting Party shall, in accordance with its particular conditions and capabilities:

(a) Develop national strategies, plans or programmes for the conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity or adapt for this purpose existing strategies, plans or programmes which shall reflect, *inter alia*, the measures set out in this Convention relevant to the Contracting Party concerned; and

**(b) Integrate, as far as possible and as appropriate, the conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity into relevant sectoral or cross-sectoral plans, programmes and policies.”**

Article 10: “Integrate consideration of the conservation and sustainable use of biological resources into national decision-making;”

This “integration” into “relevant sectoral or cross-sectoral plans, programmes and policies” is also known as mainstreaming.

The problem has been that this integration or mainstreaming has not been happening enough and so biodiversity has continued to decline.

#### 3. What is Capacity development?

**Capacity development** is the process through which individuals, organizations and societies obtain, strengthen and maintain their capabilities to set and achieve their own development objectives over

time. Components of capacity include skills, systems, structures, processes, values, resources and powers that together, confer a range of political, managerial and technical capabilities (UNDP, 2011).

Capacity development can occur at the level of the:

- individual,
- the organization and
- the enabling environment - which refers to the policy, legal, regulatory, economic and social systems within which organizations and individuals operate (UNDP, 2011)

#### **4. How can capacity development for mainstreaming biodiversity for poverty reduction be achieved?**

For a country to mainstream biodiversity for poverty reduction needs competent and *motivated individuals* working within *effective organizations*, operating in a *supportive enabling environment to achieve mainstreaming*.

For supportive enabling framework for mainstreaming biodiversity for poverty reduction requires capacity in :

- governance systems and incentives to promote mainstreaming. But this is lacking in many countries where biodiversity is dealt with by separate Ministries excluded from the major national planning and budgeting decisions with limited mechanisms for coordinated, inter-agency collaboration. In addition, biodiversity conservation and use brings few votes or political opportunities compared to other economic and sectoral investments.

For effective organizations, mainstreaming biodiversity for poverty reduction requires capacity in:

- organizational mandates and structures and management procedures to promote mainstreaming. But these are lacking in many countries where biodiversity is tackled in a projectised way with limited powers to coordinate across other Ministries to promote mainstreaming.

For individual mainstreaming biodiversity for poverty reduction requires capacity in:

- knowledge and skills of the processes of ways to mainstream. But this is lacking in many countries where biodiversity is the domain of administrators and scientists with limited knowledge of economics, governance and the private sector and so with limited knowledge and skills to convince and advocate with economic and sector decision-makers.

#### **5. Topics for discussion to reach a framework for capacity development to mainstream biodiversity for poverty reduction**

- a. How have Politicians and major government departments (eg. Finance, Transport, Agriculture) been convinced and acted to mainstream biodiversity for poverty reduction?
- b. What were the capacities needed in terms of enabling environment, organizations and individuals that made this happen?
- c. How where these capacities achieved?