



Convention on Biological Diversity

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Regional dialogue on national biodiversity strategies and action plans for countries in the Middle East and North Africa

Amman, 16–19 January 2024

Report of the regional dialogue on national biodiversity strategies and action plans for countries in the Middle East and North Africa

Introduction

1. The regional dialogue on national biodiversity strategies and action plans (NBSAPs) for countries in the Middle East and North Africa was held in Amman, from 16 to 19 January 2024, with the support of the Ministry of Environment of Jordan. The dialogue was the second in a series of regional or subregional dialogues on NBSAPs organized by the Secretariat in collaboration with relevant partners further to decision 15/6 and related decisions adopted by the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity at its fifteenth meeting, the Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety at its tenth meeting and the Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Nagoya Protocol on Access to Genetic Resources and the Fair and Equitable Sharing of Benefits Arising from their Utilization to the Convention at its fourth meeting, with generous funding from the Government of Japan, provided through the Japan Biodiversity Fund, and from the Department of Environment, Food and Rural Affairs of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the European Union.

2. The dialogue provided an opportunity for participating countries to share experiences and lessons learned in the revision or updating of NBSAPs, including the setting or revision of national targets, in alignment with the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework, address challenges that they had encountered and identify possible opportunities and solutions to enhance the development and implementation of NBSAPs. The dialogue included breakout sessions on capacity-building and development and national biodiversity financing.

Item 1

Opening of the meeting

3. The dialogue was opened on 16 January by the Acting Executive Secretary of the Convention, David Cooper, through a recorded video speech. The Resident Representative of the United Nations in Jordan, Renda Aboul-Hosn, made opening remarks. The Minister of Environment of Jordan, Muawieh Khalid Radaideh, delivered a welcome speech. Princess Basma bint Ali also made opening remarks.

Item 2

Introduction and overview of the objectives and programme of the dialogue

4. A representative of the Secretariat presented the objectives and programme of the dialogue, which was aimed at achieving three objectives: (a) provide countries with an opportunity to exchange experiences and lessons learned in the revision or updating of NBSAPs; (b) address common challenges faced by countries and identify possible solutions and opportunities; and (c) contribute to the continued piloting of an open-ended forum for voluntary country-by-country reviews of implementation under the Subsidiary Body on Implementation. She then presented the organization of work and the format for the dialogue, which comprised a mix of introductory presentations, presentations by countries and organizations, and facilitated plenary and group discussions.
5. A representative of the Secretariat gave an introduction to the Framework, including its goals and targets, as well as to other major outcomes of the fifteenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties, to contextualize the dialogue.

Item 3

Experiences and lessons learned in revising or updating national biodiversity strategies and action plans, including national targets

6. The country representatives shared national experiences and lessons learned in revising or updating NBSAPs, including when revising or setting national targets in alignment with the goals and targets of the Framework. The presentations and discussions were centred around the following four topics:
 - (a) The whole-of-government and whole-of-society approach;
 - (b) The integration of the provisions of the Protocols into NBSAPs;
 - (c) National target revision or setting;
 - (d) The development of a national monitoring plan.

7. The representatives of organizations and of indigenous peoples and local communities, women and youth also shared their perspectives on some of the topics. Presentations were followed by question-and-answer sessions and facilitated plenary or group discussions, as summarized below. Owing to time constraints, topic (e) on the provisional annotated agenda (challenges and opportunities for the overall revision or updating of NBSAPs), was not discussed. Instead, country representatives were asked to share briefly the countries' needs for further support.

(a) *Whole-of-government and whole-of-society approach*

8. The representatives of four countries (Lebanon, Mauritania, Sudan and Tunisia) made presentations on the institutional arrangements or mechanisms established to revise or update NBSAPs, the approaches employed to mainstream biodiversity issues and engage relevant ministries, sectors, indigenous peoples and local communities and relevant stakeholders, and the challenges encountered. They all noted the importance of engaging different stakeholders, including women, youth and the private sector, in activities.

9. The representative of Lebanon indicated that her country had established a steering committee for the updating or revision of its NBSAP that involved key stakeholders, including relevant government ministries, public institutions and universities, and had defined the roles of the committee. She said that a wider range of stakeholders, in particular vulnerable groups, had been identified to provide inputs and data for the revision of the NBSAP.

10. The representative of Mauritania, in presenting his country's plan for updating or revising the NBSAP, stressed that involving all relevant stakeholders would help to achieve the work required.

11. The representative of the Sudan said that her country had established coordination and working mechanisms involving relevant sectors, institutions and groups for the revision or updating of its

NBSAP. She also said that the roles of stakeholder groups in the process had been identified and included sharing information, contributing to setting or revising national targets, and reviewing their alignment with the global targets. She also shared a few key challenges encountered, such as limited capacities, limited finance and issues with the enforcement of relevant laws and policies, and suggested possible ways and means to address them.

12. The representative of Tunisia said that his country had involved relevant ministries, sectors and stakeholder groups in the updating or revision of its NBSAP. He shared a few key challenges encountered, including limited policy and law enforcement, lack of mainstreaming of biodiversity into relevant sectors, lack of resources for NBSAP implementation and limited awareness.

13. Representatives of indigenous peoples and local communities, women, youth and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations country office in Jordan shared their perspectives. The representative of the CBD Women's Caucus noted the importance of integrating Target 23, the Gender Plan of Action and a rights-based approach into NBSAPs. The youth representative highlighted the roles that young people had in and the contributions that they made to the updating and implementation of NBSAPs, in particular in driving transformative change.

14. In the plenary discussions that followed, participants noted the importance of undertaking studies on the values of biodiversity and ecosystem services in the region to convince policymakers and other stakeholders about the need for and importance of taking actions to address biodiversity issues. The representatives of Parties also noted the importance of gaining political attention and support for biodiversity issues, considering that some countries in the region did not give adequate political support and priority to biodiversity issues and the implementation of NBSAPs. A few participants highlighted the importance of communication, which they believe played a crucial role in engaging relevant sectors, government ministries and stakeholder groups.

(b) *Integration of the provisions of the Protocols into national biodiversity strategies and action plans*

15. A representative of the Secretariat made a presentation on the integration of the Protocols into NBSAPs. He highlighted that the decision-making bodies of the Convention and its Protocols called for an integrated implementation, as the objectives of those instruments were mutually supportive and many of the issues that they addressed were linked. He noted that the benefits of integration included cost savings and increased efficiency. He highlighted that Goal C and Targets 13 and 17 of the Framework could be used as entry points for integrating the Protocols into the NBSAP.

16. The representative of the United Nations Environment Programme Regional Office for West Asia made a presentation on synergies among biodiversity-related conventions, as well as linkages between the global targets of the Framework and targets under the Sustainable Development Goals. She identified six areas for cooperation that could be strengthened for relevant biodiversity-related multilateral environmental agreements, namely, institutional arrangements, information management and reporting, science-policy interface, capacity-building, resource mobilization and monitoring. She also highlighted benefits of coherent implementation, including enhanced capacities and a more efficient use of resources.

17. Representatives of the Islamic Republic of Iran and Morocco made presentations on their respective countries' experience in integrating the Protocols into the NBSAPs. The representative of Morocco said that his country had integrated the Nagoya Protocol into several of its national programmes and he mentioned some of the challenges met, including a lack of public awareness, a lack of regulatory frameworks, a lack of model agreements for benefit-sharing and a lack of mainstreaming of NBSAP into several sectors. He added that the implementation of Goal A and Target 13 of the Framework should provide an opportunity for integrating the Nagoya Protocol. The representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran said that domestic law and mechanisms were in place in his country for the implementation of the Cartagena Protocol. He also shared a few steps for integrating the Cartagena Protocol into the implementation of the NBSAP, noting such challenges as the undertaking of risk assessments.

18. In the plenary discussions that followed, participants noted the need to link issues for an integrated implementation of the Convention and its Protocols and the importance of mainstreaming biodiversity and Protocols-related issues into relevant sectors and of integrating capacity-building and development activities for the implementation of the three instruments. They also noted the need to enhance capacities for addressing digital sequence information-related issues while setting national targets for implementing Target 13 of the Framework.

(c) *National target revision or setting*

19. A representative of the Secretariat made an introductory presentation on the guidance for updating NBSAPs contained in annex I to decision 15/6. All updated NBSAPs should contain the following three elements: (a) national targets aligned with the Framework; (b) actions or programmes developed to implement the national targets; and (c) monitoring and evaluation of the implementation of the NBSAP, including the use of headline indicators. She emphasized that the revised or updated NBSAPs needed to include means of implementation and to be adopted as a policy or legal instrument to ensure their implementation by all actors, and that the revision or updating process should not interrupt the NBSAP implementation.

20. The representatives of Egypt and Jordan shared the progress made to date by their respective countries in revising or setting national targets, including by describing the processes followed and the challenges encountered. The representative of Egypt said that his country was following a quick-fix process by reviewing existing targets and identifying which targets needed to be revised and which new targets needed to be set, in particular against Target 15 and rights-based targets of the Framework. He also said that it would be important to distinguish which targets were global and which were national in nature, so as to ensure an adequate level of ambition in national targets.

21. The representative of Jordan presented his country's approach to developing national targets and an updated NBSAP. He said that it was important to understand the Framework, including its goals and targets, and to review existing national policies and targets before embarking on revising or updating the NBSAP. It was also important to set a strategic direction and align the NBSAP with the national strategy for development or modernization, with a view to addressing the main drivers of biodiversity loss and achieving transformative changes. He said that Jordan had identified several strategic directions, including investing in nature and people, investing in nature-based solutions, policy coherence, bringing positive changes into relevant sectors and removing harmful incentives. He also outlined the process followed, including setting goals and targets, developing actions, developing a financing and monitoring plan, developing a communication strategy and taking into consideration some cross-cutting issues, such as gender and human rights.

22. In the plenary discussions that followed, country representatives noted the need to start the process of updating or revising national targets and NBSAPs immediately, despite technical challenges. Participants noted that the NBSAP should be a living document and could be updated at any time, as needed. They also discussed the advantages and disadvantages of a quick-fix approach as opposed to introducing systemic changes and adopting a good plan for implementation. They noted the importance of having an implementable and financeable plan that would include a capacity-building and development action plan and a finance plan.

(d) *Development of a national monitoring plan*

23. The representative of the United Nations Environment Programme World Conservation Monitoring Centre began with a general introduction of the monitoring framework for the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework adopted at the fifteenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties, including its headline and other indicators, and the work undertaken by the Ad Hoc Technical Expert Group on Indicators for the Framework. He introduced considerations for the development of a national monitoring plan that would include indicators for the NBSAP and presented suggested steps and contents for a national monitoring system action plan.

24. The representative of Algeria made a presentation on his country's experience in monitoring biodiversity as part of the implementation of its ecological transition strategy.

25. The representative of the Regional Office for West Asia of the International Union for Conservation of Nature introduced her organization's initiatives related to the implementation of the Framework in the region, including the Red List of Threatened Species, the Green List of Protected and Conserved Areas and the World Database of Key Biodiversity Areas. The representative of the Sahara and Sahel Observatory, an international organization composed of 26 African countries, introduced her organization's long-term support for monitoring at various levels, national reporting under the Rio conventions and geoportals developed to provide such support. She also introduced her organization's support to scientific and technical cooperation and capacity-building activities under the Convention on Biological Diversity.

26. Following the presentations, participants worked in groups to identify key national needs for and challenges to monitoring the implementation of NBSAPs. Some country representatives identified ecosystem monitoring, performance and impact monitoring as main challenges, while a few noted the lack of cooperation from relevant sectors, such as the oil and gas sector, as one of key challenges to monitoring.

Item 4

Breakout sessions on capacity-building and development and national biodiversity financing

27. Breakout sessions were held on national biodiversity financing, in response to decision 15/7 on resource mobilization, and capacity-building and development, in response to decision 15/8 on capacity-building and development and technical and scientific cooperation. The decisions were of equal standing to the Framework and included invitations to Parties to develop biodiversity finance plans and capacity-building and development action plans to accompany NBSAPs. Each breakout session comprised introductory presentations, facilitated group discussions and group exercises on the assessment of capacity and financing needs and the development of national capacity-development plans and national biodiversity finance plans.

(a) Breakout session on national biodiversity financing

28. The following four subsessions were held under the present topic: (a) an overview of biodiversity financing policy and institutional frameworks; (b) assessing financing needs and biodiversity expenditure reviews; (c) preparing a national biodiversity finance plan; and (d) implementing financing solutions. All sessions featured online presentations and on-site facilitation of discussions by the United Nations Development Programme Biodiversity Finance Initiative (BIOFIN) team in the region, covering various aspects of biodiversity financing, from methodology and case studies to practical implementation strategies.

Session 1: overview of biodiversity financing policy and institutional frameworks

29. A representative of the Secretariat shared the main outcomes of the fifteenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties regarding resource mobilization (decision 15/7) and the financial mechanism (decision 15/15). He also highlighted Target 19, on financing, as well as the decision to establish a global biodiversity framework fund, which had been approved at the Seventh Assembly of the Global Environment Facility, in August 2023. The representative of the BIOFIN team made a presentation on the global biodiversity finance gap and financial flows into biodiversity conservation and highlighted the pivotal role that BIOFIN could play in tackling the lack of or inadequate biodiversity financing or investment.

30. Following the presentation, group discussions were held on two questions on hindrances to biodiversity financing from the public and private sectors. Many participants were of the view that biodiversity was not identified as a priority in budgeting, financing and investment policies. The challenges could be addressed by rallying decision makers, raising awareness of the value of

biodiversity and of possible investments needed in future to address biodiversity loss, increasing stakeholder participation and demonstrating the impacts of actions taken.

Session 2: assessing financing needs and estimating biodiversity expenditure

31. The representative of the BIOFIN project in Egypt shared his country's biodiversity finance policy and institutional review, offering insights into its biodiversity expenditure review and assessment approach. The representative of the BIOFIN team introduced key features of biodiversity expenditure reviews and financial needs assessments, including primary and secondary biodiversity expenditure, the attribution of expenditure, the nine BIOFIN categories and the estimation of unmet needs. He also noted that countries could adapt the methodology to national circumstances, for example, by categorizing biodiversity expenditure in accordance with national targets and projected future expenditure. In costing actions, he noted that countries should produce a detailed and comprehensive NBSAP to be able to estimate costs on the basis of a result-based budgeting approach, including by consulting experts to prioritize activities. He also introduced the Global Biodiversity Expenditure Taxonomy.

32. Following the presentations, participants discussed policy initiatives for innovative financing, essential features of future NBSAPs for better cost estimates, and practices for estimating biodiversity expenditure from both the public and private sectors. A few country representatives described the practices or policies that their respective countries implemented to encourage investment in biodiversity from both sectors.

Session 3: preparing a national biodiversity finance plan

33. In his introductory presentation, the representative of the BIOFIN team said that the objectives of a biodiversity finance plan needed to have: (a) a comprehensive list of potential financing solutions; (b) detailed technical proposals to implement financing solutions; (c) a rigorous prioritization setting of financing solutions; (d) a clear investment case for each prioritized financing solution; and (e) clear financial targets, priorities, milestones, budget and responsibilities. He also said that the finance plan needed to address the following: (a) how to generate revenues; (b) how to realign expenditure; (c) how to deliver better; and (d) how to avoid future expenditure. He outlined the steps that needed to be taken for the development of a national biodiversity finance plan, including preparations, information gathering, the creation of a comprehensive list of potential financing solutions, rapid screening and the development of technical proposals for priority financing solutions.

34. Following the presentation, participants held plenary discussions on finance solutions currently in use for carrying out biodiversity actions, possible financing targets to support NBSAP implementation and suitable financing mechanisms for individual countries. Some country representatives shared their countries' practices in that regard. For example, in the Islamic Republic of Iran, a tax of one thousandth of all industry income was levied as the environmental tax and pollution charges for environmental management and sustainable development; in Iraq, the oil sector was charge a fee; and in Lebanon, fees were collected from the mining sector for mitigating its environment impacts.

Session 4: implementing financing solutions

35. The representative of the BIOFIN team made a presentation on the implementation of finance solutions, addressing initiation, planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation, and ensuring sustainability at the programme or finance-solution level. The representatives of a few countries outside the region shared their countries' experiences or examples in identifying and implementing various finance solutions. A representative of the Securities and Exchange Commission of Zambia shared his country's experience in using various instruments as finance solutions to increase investment in biodiversity, such as green bonds and green finance tagging. A representative of Kyrgyzstan presented her country's approach to phasing out subsidies or harmful incentives in the agricultural sector, While a representative of Kazakhstan mentioned biodiversity offsets, ecotourism certification and carbon offsets from the international market.

36. The representative of the BIOFIN team introduced the Finance Resources for Biodiversity database, emphasizing its potential as a valuable tool to close the financing gap for biodiversity, after which participants held group discussions on implementing finance solutions.

(b) *Breakout session on capacity-building and development*

37. A representative of the Secretariat made an introductory presentation on capacity-building and development assessment, planning, monitoring and evaluation. He provided an overview of related outcomes of the fifteenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties, specifically decision 15/8 and decision 15/16, on knowledge management and the clearing-house mechanism. He elaborated on Target 20 of the Framework and on key elements of the long-term strategic framework for capacity-building and development and of the technical and scientific cooperation mechanism.

38. Following the presentation, participants worked in three groups and undertook two group exercises, one on country-led capacity assessments and the other on stakeholder analysis in the development of capacity for meeting specific targets of the Framework. During the first part of the breakout session, each of the three groups engaged in the capacity assessment exercise, which included taking stock of existing capacities and identifying capacity needs and priorities for various targets of the Framework selected by the groups. The assessments covered the three levels of capacity, namely, enabling-environment capacities, institutional capacities and individual capacities. In terms of enabling-environment capacities, participants looked at governance and leadership, policy and legal frameworks, incentives, accountability frameworks and budget allocation. In terms of institutional capacities, they looked at institutional mandates, structures, processes, resources availability, communication, knowledge management systems and coordination mechanisms. In terms of individual capacities, they looked at knowledge, expertise, skills and competences.

39. A representative of the Secretariat introduced the matrix for stakeholder analysis and mapping to help countries to identify relevant stakeholders, including their interests, roles and responsibilities and the resources that they could make available in the capacity-development process. Participants selected Target 1 for the group exercise.

40. In the discussions that followed, the participants identified the media and the general public as other important stakeholders for all targets, but in particular Targets 1 and 2. It was noted that the media could play an important role in communicating relevant issues, raising public awareness and sharing relevant information. Trade groups were also identified as important stakeholders, as trade had an important impact on the environment and the sustainable use of natural resources. Hotel and restaurant owners could also contribute to sustainable consumption by reducing food waste. A few examples of relevant programmes, such as the programme on trade in forest products of the European Union, were noted.

Development of a national plan for capacity-building and development

41. After the group exercises, a representative of the Secretariat made a presentation on the key elements to consider in the development of a national capacity-building and development action plan based on the capacity assessments and stakeholder mapping. He stressed that the lead government agencies needed to bring together various stakeholders to find solutions, propose concrete actions and identify mechanisms to address the identified priority capacity needs and gaps. He also elaborated on the key elements and steps for the preparation of a national capacity-building and development action plan. He highlighted the importance of defining a vision and articulating clearly what was to be included in the plan, such as the desired capacity-development results (outcomes and outputs), strategic actions, methods and pathways, time frames, the roles of various stakeholders and the required resources.

42. After the presentation, country representatives worked together on preparing a draft national capacity-building and development plan, focusing on one or two targets of the Framework. A few representatives presented their draft plans.

Item 5

Recommendations of the dialogue

43. Participants discussed and provided key conclusions from the dialogue (see annex). Country representatives were also invited to share their plans for their next steps. Some representatives indicated that their countries would aim to complete the NBSAP revision or updating process and submit the national targets and the revised or updated NBSAP before the sixteenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties, while others noted challenges ahead and possible delays in doing so.

Item 6

Closure of the meeting

44. Following closing remarks from the representatives of the Ministry of Environment of Jordan and the Secretariat, the dialogue was closed at 4 p.m. on 19 January 2024.

Annex

Key conclusions from the dialogue

The following key conclusions emerged from the discussions held during the dialogue.

1. There is a need to revise or update national biodiversity strategies and action plans (NBSAPs) as rapidly as possible, keeping in mind the following:
 - (a) Technical challenges that are encountered should not be considered as a reason for delaying the process of revising or updating the NBSAPs in alignment with the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework, recognizing that NBSAPs are a living document and can be adjusted as needed;
 - (b) The process of revision or updating NBSAPs could be kept as simple as possible by building on and adjusting as necessary the elements of the earlier and current NBSAPs, while recognizing the need to have a good strategy and action plan for implementation;
 - (c) Existing coordination mechanisms could be used, or new mechanisms could be set up, for revising or updating NBSAPs so that a whole-of-government and whole-of-society approach is applied, by engaging relevant ministries, sectors, indigenous peoples and local communities and relevant stakeholders, to ensure ownership and buy-in among all relevant actors;
 - (d) The Framework and its goals and targets need to be communicated to all relevant actors using clear language, including by translating the goals and targets into national and local languages.
2. In order to implement a whole-of-government and whole-of-society approach, there is a need to:
 - (a) Build political support for the updating or revision and implementation of NBSAPs, as such support is lacking in some countries;
 - (b) Identify and map stakeholders to be involved in the NBSAP process and use customized approaches to engaging different stakeholders in order to build consensus, as much as possible, on national targets and actions, noting the different interests, needs and perspectives that each stakeholder may have;
 - (c) Mobilize commitment and action from all relevant stakeholders through awareness-raising and religious activities, among others.
3. National target revision or setting aligned with the Framework is a foundation for implementing the Framework and NBSAPs, and the following steps are essential:
 - (a) Reviewing existing targets or commitments, including their level of ambition and implementation, and identifying which targets need to be revised and which new targets need to be set;
 - (b) Matching national ambition with the global ambition, where possible;
 - (c) Considering the inclusion of targets or commitments developed by relevant sectors and non-State actors and linking them to broader national development strategies or plans;
 - (d) Focusing on transformative change or systemic change that will address both direct and indirect drivers of biodiversity loss.

4. It is important to integrate the Cartagena and Nagoya Protocols and relevant multilateral environmental agreements into the NBSAPs, as many issues addressed by those instruments are closely linked and synergies in implementation produce many benefits, including increased resource efficiency. This can be done by:

- (a) Using Goal C and Targets 13 and 17 of the Framework as entry points to include relevant national targets and actions into the NBSAPs for the implementation of the Protocols;
- (b) Integrating related targets or issues addressed by relevant multilateral environmental agreements and Sustainable Development Goals into the NBSAPs and developing actions or policies for synergetic implementation.

5. There is a need to invest and expend more efforts in the development of a national monitoring plan for the NBSAP and a national monitoring system, noting that further guidance and support are urgently needed, in particular for:

- (a) Assessing national monitoring needs, identifying lead agencies and relevant actors, developing actions, identifying resources and developing and using relevant indicators;
- (b) Developing a financial reporting framework and system.

6. It is important to develop a national plan for capacity development for the implementation of NBSAPs, including by:

- (a) Assessing the capacity-development needs and capacities and the roles of relevant national bodies, partners and other stakeholders, including with regard to governance and institutional and individual capacities, with a view to developing effective national plans for capacity-building and development;
- (b) Engaging and forging strategic partnerships among various national bodies, partners and other stakeholders to enhance capacities for the implementation of the Framework and NBSAPs.

7. It is important to develop and include a national biodiversity finance plan as part of an updated NBSAP, including by:

- (a) Assessing financial needs through biodiversity expenditure reviews and costing of actions included in the updated NBSAP;
- (b) Identifying and implementing various financing solutions, including by avoiding future expenditure through preventive actions, using innovative financial instruments, phasing out subsidies and harmful incentives and linking the financial flows with the implementation of the Framework and the NBSAP;
- (c) Establishing effective national financing mechanisms for the implementation of the NBSAP;
- (d) Addressing systemic barriers to increase financial flows to biodiversity.

8. Dialogues such as the regional dialogue on NBSAPs for countries in the Middle East and North Africa are an effective way to promote exchanges and mutual learning among countries and to enhance the implementation of the Convention and the Framework at the national level, which is the intended objective of the open-ended forum for voluntary country reviews of implementation under the Subsidiary Body on Implementation. The Subsidiary Body could take the experience from the present dialogue into account. In future dialogues, more time could be allocated to discussions in plenary or group sessions to allow country participants to benefit further from one another's good practices, experiences and perspectives.

9. Regional organizations and international organizations based in the region could play a role in supporting countries in the region with the development and implementation of NBSAPs, in particular by:

- (a) Facilitating cooperation and communication among countries in the region;
- (b) Facilitating data- and information-sharing;

(c) Supporting national assessments of the economic values of biodiversity and ecosystem services in the region;

(d) Supporting national capacities in taxonomy.

10. It is important to improve the management and implementation of the Global Environment Facility projects in order to support the updating or revision of NBSAPs by:

(a) Involving the Convention national focal points of eligible countries directly in the implementation of the projects;

(b) Increasing the countries' ownership of the national process and its products;

(c) Focusing more attention on building national capacities for implementation through the implementation of related project activities;

(d) Providing funds or support directly to those ministries or agencies leading the updating or revision of NBSAPs;

(e) Communicating with countries on a regular basis to address their concerns or challenges in project implementation.
