



Convention on Biological Diversity

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CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES TO THE
CONVENTION ON BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY
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Agenda item 16

DECISION ADOPTED BY THE CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES TO THE CONVENTION ON BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY

XII/5. Biodiversity for poverty eradication and sustainable development

The Conference of the Parties,

Recalling decision X/6 and decision XI/22,

Also recalling the eight Millennium Development Goals adopted in 2000 at the Millennium Summit,¹ the objectives and provisions of the Convention on Biological Diversity, the 20 Aichi Biodiversity Targets of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 adopted at the tenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties, and the United Nations Decade on Biodiversity,

Further recalling the outcome document of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development, entitled “The future we want”,² in which, inter alia, Heads of State and Government reaffirmed the intrinsic value of biodiversity as well as its critical role in maintaining ecosystem services, recognized the severity of global biodiversity loss and ecosystem degradation and emphasized that these undermine global development, and also affirmed that eradicating poverty is the greatest global challenge facing the world today and an indispensable requirement for sustainable development,

Welcoming the processes on the post-2015 United Nations development agenda and the sustainable development goals and the outcome document of the Open Working Group on Sustainable Development Goals in July 2014,

Noting that the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services defined “nature’s benefits to people” to refer to “all the benefits that humanity obtains from nature. Ecosystem goods and services considered separately or in bundles, are included in this category. Within other knowledge systems, nature’s gifts and similar concepts refer to the benefits of nature from which people derive a good quality of life. Aspects of nature that can be negative to people, such as pests, pathogens or predators, are also included in this broad category. All nature’s benefits have anthropocentric value, including instrumental values – the direct and indirect contributions of ecosystem services to a good quality of life, which can be conceived in terms of preference satisfaction, and relational values, which contribute to desirable relationships, such as those among people and between people and nature, as in the notion of ‘living in harmony with nature’”,³

¹ See General Assembly resolution 55/2.

² General Assembly resolution 66/288, annex.

³ Report of the Second Session of the Plenary of the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services, held in Antalya, Turkey, 9-14 December 2013 (IPBES/2/17, p. 44).

Recognizing the need for increased capacity for mainstreaming biodiversity and ecosystem services into poverty eradication and development processes at all levels and for all sectors and actors, being aware of the Busan Partnership for Effective Development Cooperation from the Fourth High-level Forum on Aid Effectiveness,⁴

Taking note of the work under the Reviewed Strategic Framework of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations for the period 2010-19⁵ and its strategic objectives, endorsed by the FAO Conference in 2013, in particular as regards food security and nutrition,

Taking into account that many currently poor communities have traditionally been very effective conservers of nature and its biodiversity, such as through various forms of indigenous and community conserved areas and territories, and have been users of biodiversity and ecosystem services,

Also taking into account relevant initiatives, such as the Satoyama Initiative, consistent with decisions X/32 and XI/25, Living Well in Harmony and Balance with Mother Earth,⁶ and initiatives from indigenous and community conserved areas and territories as well as The Economics of Ecosystems and Biodiversity (TEEB),

1. *Expresses its appreciation* to the Expert Group on Biodiversity for Poverty Eradication and Development for completing the work requested in decisions X/6 and XI/22; and *receives with appreciation* the Dehradun/Chennai Recommendations and the Guidance developed by the Expert Group on Biodiversity for Poverty Eradication and Development, from which the Ad Hoc Open-ended Working Group on Review of Implementation of the Convention at its fifth meeting has extracted and revised elements, as annexed to this decision;

2. *Welcomes* the Chennai Guidance for the Integration of Biodiversity and Poverty Eradication, annexed to this decision;

3. *Encourages* Parties to integrate biodiversity and nature's benefits to people, including ecosystem services and functions, into poverty eradication and development strategies, initiatives and processes at all levels, and vice versa, to integrate poverty eradication and development concerns and priorities into national biodiversity strategies and action plans and other appropriate plans, policies and programmes for the implementation of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 and the achievement of the Aichi Biodiversity Targets, and to monitor, evaluate and report on these integration efforts, through appropriate indicators and tools, and include this information, inter alia, in their national report;

4. *Also encourages* Parties to integrate biodiversity and ecosystem benefits, including services and functions, into national budgeting processes in order to capture the value of biodiversity in national development planning across all sectors for the implementation of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 as well as the achievement of Aichi Biodiversity Targets;

5. *Further encourages* Parties to enhance the contribution of biodiversity to sustainable development and poverty reduction through the fair and equitable sharing of benefits arising from the utilization of genetic resources and associated traditional knowledge, the conservation of biological diversity and the sustainable use of its components;

6. *Encourages* Parties to develop approaches to build resilience of ecosystem functions and services to climate-change risks and to natural hazards, and other anthropogenic pressures, as well as for adaptation to environmental stress, for consideration in strategies and national development/sectoral plans, among others;

7. *Invites* Parties to raise awareness on best practices of sustainable use, including agro-ecological approaches with positive impacts on the conservation of biodiversity in order to address pressures on biodiversity;

⁴ See www.aideffectiveness.org/busanhlf4/images/stories/hlf4/OUTCOME_DOCUMENT-FINAL_EN.pdf.

⁵ See www.fao.org/docrep/meeting/027/mg015e.pdf.

⁶ <http://ucordillera.edu.bo/descarga/livingwell.pdf>.

8. *Encourages* Parties to promote actions compatible with biodiversity conservation to strengthen food security and nutrition as mechanisms for poverty eradication in rural areas;

9. *Also encourages* Parties, other Governments, international organizations, multilateral and regional development banks and the private sector and communities to recognize and take into account the diverse and holistic intrinsic values of biodiversity, including its spiritual and cultural values, and to use appropriate and effective non-market-based, market-based and rights-based approaches, taking into account national circumstances, visions and approaches, such as Living Well in Harmony and Balance with Mother Earth, and the construction of a resource-efficient society, in the efforts mentioned above;

10. *Also encourages* Parties, other Governments, international organizations and relevant stakeholders to ensure that, in their efforts to integrate biodiversity into poverty eradication and development strategies, initiatives and processes, they identify and promote policies, activities, projects and mechanisms on biodiversity and development that empower indigenous and local communities, the poor, marginalized and vulnerable, who depend directly on biodiversity and ecosystem services and functions for their livelihoods, recognizing the role of collective action in the conservation of biodiversity and the sustainable use of its components;

11. *Further encourages* Parties, other Governments, international organizations and relevant stakeholders to support indigenous and community conserved areas and territories, community-based management, customary sustainable use and community governance of biodiversity, and ensure the full and effective participation of indigenous and local communities in decision-making processes, taking into account international instruments and law related to human rights in accordance with national legislation;

12. *Encourages* Parties, other Governments, international organizations, and other relevant stakeholders, and indigenous and local communities to identify best practices and lessons learned on how to integrate biodiversity, poverty eradication, and sustainable development, and to share this information using the clearing-house mechanism of the Convention and, as appropriate, other relevant means;

13. *Encourages* Parties to consider traditional knowledge related to biodiversity conservation in their national policies and initiatives;

14. *Encourages* Parties, other Governments, international organizations, relevant stakeholders and indigenous and local communities to take steps to identify and overcome barriers to the implementation of decisions of the Conference of the Parties, such as lack of cross-sector coordination, resources and political prioritization, in order to effectively integrate biodiversity, poverty eradication and development, and to share lessons learned and the approaches or methods used to overcome barriers using the clearing-house mechanism;

15. *Calls upon* Parties and others, as appropriate, to develop or strengthen the enabling environment and the capacity of Parties, communities, organizations and individuals, to effectively integrate the interlinkages between biodiversity and poverty eradication and sustainable development, and relevant cross-cutting issues by providing the necessary technical, scientific support and financial resources;

16. *Encourages* Parties to apply the Chennai Guidance for the Integration of Biodiversity and Poverty Eradication, annexed to this decision, as appropriate, in accordance with national laws, circumstances and priorities, to their related plans, policies and actions, and in the implementation of related programmes;

17. *Requests* the Executive Secretary, subject to the availability of funding and human resources:

(a) To continue the work requested by the Conference of the Parties in decisions X/6 and XI/22, for the effective integration of biodiversity for poverty eradication and development, taking into account also the related decisions of the Conference of the Parties at its twelfth meeting;

(b) To assist Parties in disseminating and utilizing the Chennai Guidance for Implementation of the Integration of Biodiversity and Poverty Eradication contained in the annex to the present decision, and provide support in particular on cross-cutting issues, including those associated with integration of

the plan of action on customary sustainable use of biological diversity in actions identified under section 3 (B) of the Chennai Guidance, and to report to the Subsidiary Body on Implementation at its first meeting.

Annex

**CHENNAI GUIDANCE FOR THE INTEGRATION OF BIODIVERSITY
AND POVERTY ERADICATION**

1. Biodiversity is crucial to eradication of poverty, due to the basic goods and ecosystem functions and services that it provides. It is integral to key development sectors such as agriculture, forestry, fisheries, pastoralism, and tourism, among others, on which around 1.5 billion people heavily depend for their livelihoods. The impacts of environmental degradation in general and biodiversity loss in particular are most severe among people living already in poverty since they lack other livelihood options.

2. Although the relationship between biodiversity and poverty is complex, multidimensional (environmental, social, political, cultural, and economic) and multi-scale, and involves multiple actors, the integration of biodiversity and poverty eradication and development can be achieved by identifying and using opportunities and entry points specific to each context, reflecting on the different root causes and drivers of biodiversity loss that exacerbate poverty and taking measures to overcome them. This is highly dependent on the different visions and approaches of countries to achieve sustainable development and poverty eradication as recognized in the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development outcome document, “The future we want” (para. 56). These visions and approaches may include: green economy as a tool available for achieving sustainable development, contributing to eradicating poverty as well as sustained growth; and Living Well in Harmony and Balance with Mother Earth, enhancing social inclusion, improving human welfare and creating opportunities for employment and decent work for all, while maintaining the healthy functioning of the Earth’s ecosystems.

3. Integration of biodiversity and poverty eradication needs to take into consideration the differences in national circumstances, goals and priorities, as well as cross-cutting issues related to gender, indigenous and local communities, smallholders, and inequalities, and to promote an understanding that maintaining biodiversity is not a problem to be solved but rather an opportunity to help achieve broader social and economic goals in addition to a healthy environment and society. This is important for adaptation and resilience to continuously changing environmental and socioeconomic conditions. The implementation of the integration of biodiversity considerations into sectoral and cross-sectoral policies at the regional and national levels and in the budget process at the national level, as well as the incorporation of the sustainable development dimensions and the issue of poverty eradication into national biodiversity strategies and action plans and subnational strategies and action plans, are also important.

4. The following voluntary Guidance is proposed to facilitate the integration of biodiversity and poverty eradication for development and thereby to overcome some of the main root causes and drivers of biodiversity loss that hinder poverty eradication and to address key issues to enhance relevant policies and facilitate poverty eradication. This guidance takes into account countries’ own visions, approaches and national priorities as well as cross-cutting issues related to gender, indigenous and local communities, and inequalities, and special circumstances of countries, in particular developing countries, as well as the outcome document of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development, “The future we want”. It is of the utmost importance to take into consideration that there is not a single approach valid for all countries and that this guidance, if applied, needs to be adapted to national circumstances and priorities.

5. This guidance is intended for use by Parties and organizations engaged in the issues of biodiversity and poverty eradication and development, as appropriate, in accordance with national laws, circumstances and priorities, and to be taken into account in their related plans, policies and actions, and in the implementation of related programmes;

1. *Integration of biodiversity and poverty eradication for sustainable development*

(a) Identify linkages between biodiversity and poverty eradication for sustainable development, as well as drivers of biodiversity loss and poverty, inter alia, by using specific voluntary tools such as mapping of social and environmental vulnerability, regional poverty-environment profiling, and distributional studies assessing country- and region-specific links between biodiversity and poverty, ensuring that the selected tools are gender sensitive and consider the diversity of views from indigenous and local communities, women, the poor, marginalized and vulnerable;

(b) Promote the integration of poverty eradication and development concerns and priorities into national biodiversity strategies and action plans, local and regional biodiversity strategic action plans, and other appropriate plans, policies and programmes for the achievement of the objectives of the Convention and the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020, taking into account different visions and approaches of countries to achieve sustainable development;

(c) Promote the integration of biodiversity and ecosystem functions and services concerns into national development strategies and sectoral development plans, fiscal and, as appropriate, national accounting systems, and their implementation and reporting. The use of national economic tools may be effective for mainstreaming poverty-environment into national planning and budgets;

(d) Use, as appropriate, the biodiversity indicators adopted by the Conference of the Parties of the Convention on Biological Diversity, as well as the indicators used in the Millennium Development Goals, the Rio Markers, and indicators addressing both biodiversity and poverty for sustainable development, adapted, as appropriate, to national circumstances and priorities;

(e) Integrate biodiversity and ecosystem services and functions in implementing the agreements reached in the United Nations General Assembly on the post-2015 United Nations development agenda and the sustainable development goals;

2. *Minimizing adverse impacts, and facilitating participation*

(a) Prepare and implement effective biodiversity management plans for minimizing and/or mitigating any potential adverse impacts on the biological resources and the well-being of society, in the context of poverty eradication and development, including through:

(i) Identifying resource persons and organizations at the national (for example the national focal point of the Convention or development cooperation agency) and subnational levels (for example indigenous and local communities) to provide technical assistance or advice on developing such plans for each sector where biodiversity is integrated into poverty eradication and development, and promote the implementation of these plans;

(ii) Designing and implementing tools/mechanisms to avoid negative impacts on customary use and access to biological resources enjoyed by communities, in accordance with national legislation;

(iii) Improving farming systems in order to secure food and nutritional security while conserving biodiversity;

(iv) Including indigenous and local communities, and smallholder experts in all processes, as appropriate;

(b) Encourage the understanding and implementing of the Voluntary Guidelines on the Responsible Governance of Tenure of Land, Fisheries and Forests in the Context of National Food Security issued by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations⁷ to promote secure tenure rights and equitable access to land, fisheries and forests as a means of eradicating hunger and poverty, supporting sustainable development and enhancing the environment;

⁷ www.fao.org/docrep/016/i2801e/i2801e.pdf.

(c) Promote wide stakeholder consultations that are gender sensitive, including, as appropriate, through the principle of prior-informed consent or approval and involvement and accounting for the input from this process during the development of sectoral integration plans in order to identify potential adverse impacts, develop appropriate measures to minimize/mitigate them, implement the plans, and monitor and evaluate them;

(d) Promote, as appropriate, the implementation of safeguard measures, such as mitigation hierarchy, to avoid adverse impacts on biodiversity and ecosystem integrity, and to improve long-term livelihood and well-being of indigenous and local communities, and smallholders, with special attention to women, the poor, marginalized and vulnerable people in particular, according to national circumstances and priorities by:

- (i) Taking measures to promote land management transparency and access to natural resources for the poor and landless, paying special attention to women, indigenous and local communities and marginalized groups;
- (ii) Taking measures, as appropriate, in all sectors and from local to national level, to promote more sustainable patterns of resource use that conserve biodiversity and ecosystem functions and services for the poor and vulnerable communities in particular, in line with the outcome document of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development, “The future we want”;
- (iii) Strengthening community-based management and the role of collective action in the management of natural resources and traditional indigenous knowledge systems and local communities and smallholders’ traditional knowledge systems;
- (iv) Instituting mechanisms of redress, at the national and local level including restoration and compensation for damages caused to biodiversity and the poor, with the liabilities to be borne by the responsible party, in accordance with national laws, circumstances and priorities.

3. Capacity-building, enabling environment and funding support

A. Enhancing capacity-building

(a) Support the development of curricula that are gender sensitive and intercultural, on the importance, linkages and interaction of biodiversity, ecosystems and poverty eradication for sustainable development, in particular sustainable production and consumption patterns, for primary, secondary, and tertiary education, taking into account traditional knowledge;

(b) Support joint training of practitioners among relevant ministries and other bodies (e.g., on use of indicators and monitoring systems among others);

(c) Encourage coordination of activities and creation of synergies among the providers of capacity-building by:

- (i) Ensuring capacity-building programmes that include both scientific and traditional knowledge and involve participatory processes, community-based management, and the use of the ecosystem approach, and the management of systems of life, and take into consideration the needs of relevant stakeholders, and particularly indigenous and local communities, women, the youth, vulnerable and marginalized;
- (ii) Giving special attention to gender and social equity, access to genetic resources and fair and equitable sharing of benefits arising from the utilization of genetic resources, including non-market-based approaches, sustainable management of ecosystem services, appropriate incentive mechanisms in accordance with the Convention on Biological Diversity, scaling-up of best practices, and to the empowerment of indigenous and local communities;

- (iii) Encouraging and facilitating North-South, South-South and triangular cooperation and the exchange of experiences;
- (iv) Enabling local decision makers to assess the effective outcomes of investments and development projects as regards poverty eradication and biodiversity protection.

B. Strengthening the enabling environment

(a) Take into consideration national, regional and international successful experiences and best practices, such as the landscape approach, ecosystem-based adaptation, stewardship, the mitigation hierarchy, environment safeguards and transparent land management for integration of biodiversity and poverty eradication at the local, national and regional levels, in order to enhance holistic views, understanding and values of biodiversity, through cross-sector coordination, and strengthening oversight bodies;

(b) Consistent with Article 10(c) on customary use, take into account, inter alia, the work on customary use of the Ad Hoc Open-ended Inter-sessional Working Group on Article 8(j) and Related Provisions, and the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples⁸ in dealing with issues of natural resource governance, the need to appropriately recognize indigenous and community conserved territories and areas and their traditional knowledge and conservation practices as the basis for local biodiversity conservation plans without interfering in their customary governance systems (helping to meet Aichi Biodiversity Target 11), and to set local biodiversity conservation plans as the basis for programmes aimed at poverty eradication for sustainable livelihoods in order to enhance the basis for the achievement of sustainable development goals.

C. Providing adequate funding

(a) Mainstream the link between biodiversity and poverty eradication for sustainable development into development cooperation programmes and technical assistance;

(b) Provide technical and financial support to capacity development activities that combine biodiversity and poverty eradication for sustainable development, and for the scaling up of biodiversity financing mechanisms.

⁸ General Assembly resolution 61/295.