



## CONVENTION ON BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY

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### REGIONAL WORKSHOP FOR AFRICA ON SYNERGY AMONG THE RIO CONVENTIONS AND OTHER BIODIVERSITY-RELATED CONVENTIONS IN IMPLEMENTING THE PROGRAMMES OF WORK ON DRY AND SUB-HUMID LANDS AND AGRICULTURAL BIODIVERSITY

Gaborone, 13-17 September 2004

Item 3 of the provisional agenda\*

#### LESSONS LEARNED FROM INTERNATIONAL INITIATIVES ON SYNERGY IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE THREE RIO CONVENTIONS

##### I. INTRODUCTION

1. This document synthesizes information on lessons learned from previous reviews of ways to increase and capitalize on synergy among the Rio conventions to provide background for the further realization of synergies at the national level, in particular in relation to the programmes of work of the Convention on Biological Diversity on dry and sub-humid lands and agricultural biodiversity in such areas.

2. A number of initiatives were reviewed for this purpose and summaries of experiences are included in the annexes to this document. Annex I includes summaries of eight synergy-related international conferences, including:

(a) The Expert Meeting on Synergies among the Rio conventions, which was held in Sede Boquer, Israel, from 17 to 20 March 1997, organized under the Sustainable Energy and Environment Division (SEED) initiative of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP);

(b) The United Nations University (UNU) International Conference on Inter-Linkages: Synergies and Coordination between Multilateral Environmental Agreements, which was held in Tokyo, Japan, from 14 to 16 July 1999, organized by UNU and the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP);

(c) The Workshop on Desertification, Climate Change, Biodiversity and Forest: Synergies for an Inter-Regional Agenda Between Northern and Southern Mediterranean Countries, which was held in Rome, on 18 February 2000, organized by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and the Italian National Committee to Combat Drought and Desertification;

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\* UNEP/CBD/WS-Syn.Afr/1/1.

(d) The Focal Points Consultation on Synergies between Rio conventions, which was held in Marrakech, Morocco, from 27 to 31 January 2003, organized by the Agence Intergouvernementale de la Francophonie and the Institut de l'Energie et de l'Environnement de la Francophonie;

(e) The Ad Hoc Technical Expert Group on biological diversity and climate change, which was held in Helsinki, Finland, from 13 to 16 May 2003;

(f) The Workshop on Synergies and Cooperation with other conventions, which was held in Espoo, Finland, from 2 to 4 July 2003, organized by the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC);

(g) The Sub-Regional Workshop on Agrobiodiversity in West Africa, which was held in Bamako, Mali, from 15 to 19 December 2003, organized by the Mali Environment Ministry in collaboration with the German Agency for Technical Cooperation (GTZ), FAO, the International Development Research Center (IDRC) and the Technical Centre for Agricultural and Rural Cooperation (CTA); and

(h) The Workshop on Forests and Forest Ecosystems: Promoting synergy in the implementation of the three Rio conventions, which was held in Viterbo, Italy, from 5 to 7 April 2004, jointly organized by the Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity and the Secretariat of the Convention to Combat Desertification, in collaboration with the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change.

3. Annex II includes country cases from Africa. These were submitted by the respective Governments as case-studies, including to the first meeting of the Committee of the Review of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (CRIC 1), which considered synergy as one of the review themes. <sup>1/</sup>

## II. MECHANISMS AND AREAS FOR SYNERGY

4. An analysis of lessons learnt in implementing the Rio conventions in a synergistic manner (annex I) indicates that mechanisms and areas for synergy differ between the international, national and local levels. This document focuses on opportunities and challenges for synergy at the national level.

5. Although the importance of each area may differ between international, national and local levels, the following six areas of synergy are identified:

- (a) Institutional arrangements;
- (b) Information systems and reporting;
- (c) Planning;
- (d) Policy formulation;
- (e) Capacity building;
- (f) Financing.

6. Synergy should be **demand driven and support national priorities**, in order to avoid reflecting donor priorities. Synergistic initiatives will be more effective if adapted to national developmental priorities and national institutional strategies. Issues of joint relevance to national development priorities and MEAs include poverty alleviation, food security, deforestation, sustainable development and technology transfer. Such issues may serve as starting points for developing national synergy initiatives. For example, where poverty alleviation is a chief national concern, synergistic planning for the Rio conventions can integrate sustainable livelihoods protection measures into national economic, including employment policies. Furthermore, a demand driven approach will favour the integration of multilateral

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<sup>1/</sup> See document ICCD/CRIC (1)/9, <http://www.unccd.int/> for an overview.

environmental agreements (MEAs) into broader national development plans and promote stakeholder participation.

7. It is clear that when national priorities focus on development targets, the conventions will be most effective where they clearly support the achievement of those targets. Likewise, synergies between them will likely be more effective when they build upon contributions towards development targets. To achieve this requires the identification of not only potential synergies but linkages between the Conventions and human development priorities.

#### *A. Institutional arrangements*

8. Responsibility for the implementation of biodiversity-related conventions is often found to be spread over different departments, ministries or authorities. Cooperation and coordination between agencies or units responsible for the conventions is sometimes hindered by sectoral divisions, conflict of interests, or institutional rivalry. While it is usually difficult and slow to change institutions and their responsibilities, **improved coordination of national focal points**, including focal points from the Global Environment Facility (GEF), can be facilitated within existing institutional arrangements and structures. This would enable national focal points from several conventions and GEF focal points to collaborate, where appropriate, on planning, policy design, capacity building, fundraising, research coordination and reporting.

9. Decentralization of implementation activities to the regional, provincial or municipal level, can lead to a greater adaptation of activities to local needs but also can make the establishment and implementation of a coordinated policy more arduous.

#### *B. Information systems and reporting*

10. Since information limitations can be an important constraint to synergy initiatives, developing **effective mechanisms for data collection, dissemination and analysis, as well as early warning systems** can benefit joint planning and policy making. Many countries have prioritized the creation of national databases and clearing-house mechanisms on national environmental issues and synergy between MEAs to disseminate and circulate information. Information generated through the processes of different conventions is frequently used together for State of the Environment reporting. A project implemented by UNEP-WCMC on Harmonization of Information Management and Reporting for Biodiversity-related Treaties has developed national mechanisms to **coordinate and harmonize the reporting process** and can alleviate burden caused by reporting requirements (see the final report on UNEP pilot projects on harmonization of information management and reporting for biodiversity-related treaties UNEP/CBD/WS-Syn.Afr/1/INF/2).

#### *C. Planning*

11. Use of existing tools and structures, such as planning and policy mechanisms amongst others, can facilitate synergistic endeavours while avoiding duplication of efforts. Planning processes need to be conducted in a manner that recognizes and makes use of potential synergies between MEAs. At the same time planning for MEAs should be linked with national development plans to ensure that they are supportive and compatible.

12. One common approach to achieve the integration of the various conventions with socio-economic development plans is to streamline national action programmes (NAPs), national biodiversity strategies and action plans (NBSAPs) and national adaptation programme of action (NAPAs) and then incorporate them into broader sustainable development plans. This needs to be done in a way that ensures that the conventions support socio-economic plans and are not just compatible with them. Planning activities should further aim to include stakeholders in policy development and implementation, taking account of past experiences.

#### *D. Policy formulation*

13. **Political will and commitment** is required for cooperation and implementation of the conventions in a synergistic manner. Political will and commitment is a precondition to making progress

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on environmental issues and mainstreaming them to the national agenda, as well as to enabling adequate institutional arrangements, policies and legislation. The closer and more explicit alignment of synergies between conventions to national development priorities, and its articulation to policy makers, should help in this process.

### *E. Capacity building*

14. Most Parties identified **capacity building and strengthening** as an overarching and pressing need that should be carried out in a synergistic manner. National Capacity Needs Self Assessment (NCSA), a GEF-UNDP initiative, emphasizes the need for countries to assess their capacity-building needs in a holistic and integrated manner, taking into account synergies between conventions and links with broad national development strategies. <sup>2/</sup> Human resources training, including all stakeholders, and infrastructure building are among the capacity-building activities that can be conducted jointly.

15. **Dissemination of information and awareness raising** of policy makers and stakeholders concerning the conventions and their decisions, national and local environmental issues, inter-linkages, good practices, and opportunities for synergy, together with a clear indication of their importance to sustainable development targets, are crucial to the success of the conventions. Mechanisms such as training sessions, workshops, and creation of websites and documentation centres should be developed to raise stakeholder awareness and participation. The relevance of training materials to stakeholders should also be improved.

### *F. Financing*

16. For many Parties, including developed country Parties, **inadequate funding at the national level** remains a major impediment to the synergistic implementation of the conventions. In many instances, governments depend to a large extent on donors and NGOs to support implementation of the conventions. This again reflects the low priority of the conventions at national government level and the need to enhance linkages between the conventions and other government priorities.

17. Possible avenues to overcome inadequate funding may include (i) taking advantage of opportunities for synergy, (ii) private sector involvement, and (iii) mainstreaming the programmes into national plans and national budgets by clearly linking them to development targets:

(a) Increasing synergetic initiatives can maximize the utilization of scarce resources, avoid duplication and enhance the outcomes of relevant initiatives. It is also increasingly a requirement of donors to demonstrate synergies with other related processes.

(b) Private sector involvement can provide stable financial means and/or effective implementation allowing programmes and projects to become sustainable.

(c) Mainstreaming the programmes into national plans and national budgets can also help secure funds to ensure the long-term survival of programmes and project outputs.

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<sup>2/</sup> Source: Operational Guidelines for Expedited Funding of National Self Assessments of Capacity-Building Needs (September 2001)

[http://www.gefweb.org/Documents/Enabling\\_Activity\\_Projects/Operational\\_Guidelines\\_-\\_English.pdf](http://www.gefweb.org/Documents/Enabling_Activity_Projects/Operational_Guidelines_-_English.pdf)

*Annex I*

**SUMMARIES FROM EIGHT SYNERGY-RELATED INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCES**

**I. EXPERT MEETING ON SYNERGIES AMONG THE RIO CONVENTIONS**

Sede Boquer, Israel: 17-20 March 1997

UNDP-SEED initiative

Funded by the Governments of Israel, Japan, Norway, Denmark and UNDP

**A. Background and objectives**

1. The objective of the expert meeting was to identify ways to create synergy between and among Rio conventions, particularly at the national level, to encourage implementation and a holistic approach to sustainable development. Two fundamental principles were recognized by participants and stakeholders, including: (i) the planning and implementation process must recognize and integrate potential synergies from the beginning; and (ii) strengthening and building national capacities is central to synergy production and implementation of the conventions. Outcomes of the meeting included proposals, options, and recommendations to improve national-level synergetic implementation of the Rio conventions, with a focus on developing countries.

**B. Participants**

2. Experts involved in implementing the agreements, including some representatives from focal points, and representatives from UNEP/SEED. Most expert participants were from developing countries.

**C. Key recommendations**

(a) Financial and technical support from the international community is necessary in order for the Parties to be capable to produce synergy.

(b) Effective strategies to address synergy vary from one country to another, depending on existing institutions, and priority environmental concerns, thus synergy initiatives should be adapted to the national context.

(c) Communication and coordination among government bodies responsible for implementation is often deficient and must be improved. The same holds for communication and coordination between stakeholders and government officials.

(d) Sectoral divisions of responsibility at national and local levels of government often hinder the integrative implementation of environmental and sustainable development holistic programmes.

(e) The creation of focal points may lead to over centralization. A democratic and decentralized approach should be supported, with efforts to ensure involvement and participation of local populations.

(f) Data gathering, analysis, dissemination and reporting is often a burden on parties but could be carried out jointly to diminish financial and task burden on Parties.

(g) Joint capacity-building and strengthening represent an opportunity for synergy by meeting common requirements. Capacity-building activities are required especially in three main areas: human resources, infrastructure development, as well as coordination. Local stakeholders must also be beneficiaries of these capacity-building activities to ensure the effectiveness and sustainability of the programmes.

(h) Planning is essential and should be carried out cohesively and coherently by anchoring the conventions' implementation plans into national development priorities.

(i) Stakeholders should participate in the planning process.

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**Source**

UNDP/ SEED: Synergies in National Implementation: the Rio Agreements. 1997.  
Link: <http://www.undp.org/seed/guide/synergies/>

## II. **UNU INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON INTER-LINKAGES: SYNERGIES AND COORDINATION BETWEEN MULTILATERAL ENVIRONMENTAL AGREEMENTS**

Tokyo, Japan: 14-16 July 1999  
Organized by UNU and UNEP

### *A. Background and objectives*

1. The aims of the conference were (i) to raise awareness on the importance of synergies and coordination at all levels (ii) to survey existing initiatives on synergies and coordination between MEAs (iii) to foster discussion and interaction among international institutions, policy-makers, practitioners, and stakeholders, (iv) to identify concrete mechanisms, actions, and win-win paths forward on this issue. The conference was divided into four thematic working groups and recommendations were extracted from each's discussions. The four thematic areas were: information systems and information exchange, finance, issue management, and scientific mechanisms.

### *B. Participants*

2. Representatives from a number of environmental agreements, various members of the United Nations family, and the governments of the concerned countries.

### *C. Key recommendations*

(a) Harmonization of information systems should be a high priority for MEAs, taking into account the hindrance of incompatibility in data requirements, methodologies and schedules for assessment and reporting.

(b) Scientific assessments and expert advice are crucial for the advancement of environmental policy making and consensus building. Mechanisms which can help promote cooperation between scientific endeavours on interlinkages should be put in place.

(c) Capacity building should be thematic and institutional to help raise awareness on interlinkages as well as to assist countries with information systems and exchange.

(d) Many cross-cutting issues such as renewable energy, trade and investment, technology transfer, and water management, are relevant to many environmental agreements and thus may serve as useful tools for enhancing and developing synergies between the MEAs. Goals, criteria, indicators, and projects linked to those cross-cutting issues can be designed jointly.

(e) Funding initiatives have potential to catalyse synergetic initiatives. Donors should create eligibility criteria, monitoring and evaluation mechanisms to promote the channeling of funds to synergistic projects.

(f) National planning processes for MEAs implementation should be incorporated into national development strategies, ensuring that national priorities are reflected.

#### **Source:**

UNU: Inter-Linkages: Synergies and Coordination between Multilateral Environmental Agreements. July 1999.

Link: <http://www.unu.edu/hq/rector%5Foffice/press%2Darchives/press99/pre%2D13.99.html>

IISD coverage

Link: <http://www.iisd.ca/sd/interlinkages/index.html>

### **III. DESERTIFICATION, CLIMATE CHANGE, BIODIVERSITY AND FOREST: SYNERGIES FOR AN INTER-REGIONAL AGENDA BETWEEN NORTHERN AND SOUTHERN MEDITERRANEAN COUNTRIES**

Rome, Italy: 18th February 2000

Organized by

FAO and Italian National Committee to Combat Drought and Desertification

#### ***A. Background and objectives***

1. The workshop was organized to discuss approaches adopted by Northern and Southern Mediterranean countries to develop synergies between policies and actions implementing the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD), the Convention on Biological Diversity, UNFCCC and Forest Principles. The workshop aimed to (i) improve the knowledge of participants on the policies, approaches and initiatives adopted and undertaken at the national level, (ii) improve the relationship networks among Mediterranean countries to exchange experiences, (iii) discuss an inter-regional joint programme agenda of priorities, and (iv) promote the establishment of a common system for the diffusion and exchange of information among Northern and Southern Mediterranean countries.

#### ***B. Participants***

2. Representatives from relevant ministries of Northern and Southern Mediterranean countries, research centers and universities, United Nations bodies (the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), UNCCD Secretariat and UNEP), and lastly, few representatives from NGOs including GTZ.

#### ***C. Key recommendations***

(a) Improve information exchange among countries and within their administrations. Notably, networking of existing information mechanisms should be encouraged.

(b) Link scientific knowledge with policy making, in view of increasing efficiency.

(c) Identify and transfer of appropriate, cost effective, clean techniques and practices.

(d) Consider debt swap for environment swap.

(e) Make use of existing financial resources to achieve synergies.

(f) Synergies should be extended towards other existing Mediterranean fora and main donors to ensure achievement of objectives in a sustainable way.

(g) National Action Programmes to combat desertification and Subregional Action Programmes should integrate other conventions' objectives.

(h) Identify appropriate ways to promote on the ground implementation of the Convention to Combat Desertification (CCD) in synergy with other conventions taking into account socio-economic aspects and scientific evidence.

(i) Integrated pilot projects should be promoted.

(j) Promote the participatory approach and involvement of all stakeholders, including civil society organizations to contribute to implementation, increase visibility and help to identify eventual gaps.

#### **Source:**

National Agency for New Technology, Energy and Environment (ENEA). Proceedings of the Workshop. (2000)

Link:[http://www.unccd.int/regional/northmed/meetings/interregional/2000workshopRome\\_CCD\\_FCC\\_BDC-eng.pdf](http://www.unccd.int/regional/northmed/meetings/interregional/2000workshopRome_CCD_FCC_BDC-eng.pdf)

#### **IV. WORKSHOP FOR FOCAL POINTS CONSULTATION ON SYNERGIES BETWEEN RIO CONVENTIONS**

Marrakech, Morocco: 27-31 January 2003  
Organized by Agence Intergouvernementale de la Francophonie et  
L'Institut de l'Energie et de l'Environnement de la Francophonie

##### ***A. Background and objective***

1. The objectives of this workshop were to create a platform to share information and experiences on implementation of the three Rio conventions, to explore the possible action paths to establish and reinforce strategies as well as to extract country priority needs, particularly capacity-building requirements. A session was dedicated to information sharing on country experiences with synergetic implementation. Working groups were formed subsequently to discuss three key themes linked to synergy and a last session was used to synthesize and formulate recommendations. The three key themes were (i) the diagnosis and identification of constraints for better synergy; (ii) capacity strengthening at national and local level; and (iii) management of information exchange.

##### ***B. Participants***

2. Focal points and other ministry representatives from African francophone countries, environmental secretariat representatives, and a number of experts.

##### ***C. Outcomes***

3. Five main constraints to synergetic implementation were identified:

- (a) Communication and coordination deficiency among the planning and implementation bodies responsible for the three conventions
- (b) Insufficient programme integration
- (c) Lack of capacity building and strengthening at the local and national levels
- (d) Limited information circulation
- (e) Insufficient stakeholder participation

4. Key recommendations made in working groups:

- (a) Secretariats are encouraged to organize training sessions and synergy-building workshops for all stakeholders including focal points and policy-makers. These training sessions and workshops should address funding procedures.
- (b) Organize awareness campaigns focusing on policy makers in order to favor the integration of the conventions' objectives in the national socio-economic development plans.
- (c) Identify and implement pilot projects taking into account the three conventions' objectives and perpetuate synergetic actions through the diffusion of successful initiatives.
- (d) Harmonize information mechanisms into one common mechanism.
- (e) Extend biodiversity Clearing-House Mechanisms to other conventions which will allow integrated management of development initiatives
- (f) Open and flexible coordination framework for the three conventions should be put in place at the national level.
- (g) Capacity-building needs at national and local levels need to be assessed, particularly relating to MEAs negotiations and implementations.

##### **Source:**

Synthesis Report: [http://www.iepfr.org/docs\\_prog03/pol\\_envir03/0103\\_Synerg\\_marr/Sommaire.htm](http://www.iepfr.org/docs_prog03/pol_envir03/0103_Synerg_marr/Sommaire.htm)

**V. AD HOC TECHNICAL EXPERT GROUP ON BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY AND CLIMATE CHANGE**

Helsinki, Finland, 13 - 16 May 2003

**A. Background and objective**

1. The ad hoc technical expert group, established in paragraph 5 of SBSTTA recommendation VI/7, had the following terms of reference:

(a) Analyse possible adverse effects on biological diversity of measures that might be taken or are being considered under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and its Kyoto Protocol;

(b) Identify factors that influence biodiversity's capacity to mitigate climate change and contribute to adaptation and the likely effects of climate change on that capacity;

(c) Identify options for future work on climate change that also contribute to the conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity.

**B. Participants**

2. Experts nominated by governments and observers from organizations; Environmental Secretariat representatives.

**C. Outcomes**

3. The Ad Hoc Technical Expert Group on Biodiversity and Climate Change made the following observations regarding project design and policy recommendations for acting on synergy opportunities:

1. *Approaches for supporting planning, decision making and public discussions*

4. There is a clear opportunity to implement mutually beneficial activities (policies and projects) that take advantage of the synergies between the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and its Kyoto Protocol, the Convention on Biological Diversity and broader national development objectives.

5. Experience shows that transparent and participatory decision-making processes involving all relevant stakeholders, integrated into project or policy design from the beginning, monitoring and evaluation, can enhance the probability of long-term success and sustainability.

6. Environmental impact assessments and strategic environmental assessments can be integrated into the design of climate change mitigation and adaptation projects and policies to assist planners, decision-makers and all stakeholders and mitigate potentially harmful environmental and social impacts and enhance the likelihood of positive benefits such as carbon storage, biodiversity conservation and improved livelihoods.

7. National, regional and possibly international systems of criteria and indicators could be useful in monitoring and evaluating the impact of climate change and to assess the impacts of climate change mitigation and adaptation activities on biodiversity and other aspects of sustainable development. A critical evaluation of existing criteria could assist in assessing their utility to evaluate the impact of activities undertaken by Parties to the UNFCCC and its Kyoto Protocol.

2. *Lessons learned from case-studies: harmonization of climate-change-mitigation and adaptation activities with biodiversity considerations*

8. There is scope for afforestation, reforestation, improved forest management and avoided deforestation activities to be harmonized with biodiversity conservation benefits.

9. The linkages between conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity with community livelihood options provides a good basis for projects supported under the Clean Development Mechanism to advance sustainable development.

10. The neglect and/or omission of social, environmental and economic considerations can lead to conflicts which could undermine the overall success of carbon mitigation projects, and long-term biodiversity conservation.
11. Countries and key stakeholders need to have the necessary information, tools and capacity to understand, negotiate, and reach agreements under the Kyoto Protocol to ensure that the resulting projects are balanced with respect to environment, social and development goals.
12. Some minimum environmental and social norms (or guiding frameworks) when purchasing carbon credits through the Clean Development Mechanism (CDM) projects could avoid perverse outcomes.
13. The application of appropriate analytical tools and instruments can provide constructive frameworks for ex ante analysis to guide decisions making; provide adaptive management options during implementation; and provide a basis for learning and replication through ex post evaluations.
14. Measuring the impact of CDM and joint implementation projects on biodiversity requires baseline data, inventories and monitoring systems.
15. The ecosystem approach provides a good basis to guide the formulation of climate change mitigation policies/projects and conservation of biodiversity.

**Source:** <http://www.biodiv.org/doc/publications/cbd-ts-10.pdf>

## VI. UNFCCC WORKSHOPS ON SYNERGIES AND COOPERATION WITH OTHER CONVENTIONS

Espoo, Finland: 2-4 July 2003

Organized by UNFCCC

### *A. Background and objectives*

1. Both the Subsidiary Body on Implementation (SBI) and the Subsidiary Body on Scientific and Technological Advice (SBSTA) held separate workshops in response to requests made by the seventh meeting of the Conference of the Parties and the seventeenth meeting of SBSTA respectively. The Subsidiary Body on Implementation (SBI) workshop concentrated on possible synergies and cooperation with other MEAs. Following presentations on different approaches to synergy and discussions of synergy from biological diversity and combating desertification perspectives by international organizations representatives, working groups were formed to discuss guiding principles for achieving synergies, practical ways of achieving synergies at the national level, the international community's role in providing impetus to achieving synergies, and ways in which the international community can enhance synergies at the conventional level.

### *B. Participants*

2. Representatives of government, intergovernmental organizations, NGOs, and environmental Secretariats participated in the workshop.

### *C. Outcomes*

3. The following key lessons learned were identified through the compilation of case-studies and analytical research:

- (a) Institutional roles and responsibilities are often unclearly defined and conflicting;
- (b) Social challenges to synergies, such as nepotism and turf wars, remain;
- (c) Donor-driven activities are not always coordinated.

4. They concluded by recommending that synergies should not be imposed but demand-driven, while adding value and supporting sustainable development.

5. Furthermore, participants jointly identified the importance of the following elements in achieving national level synergy:

- (a) Involvement of high-level politicians and stakeholders;
- (b) Balance of bottom-up and top-down approaches;
- (c) Incorporation of Rio conventions' synergies into national strategies;
- (d) Facilitation communication between national focal points for different conventions and agencies responsible for their implementation;
- (e) Use of the ecosystem approach at the national level;
- (f) Establishment and strengthening clearing-house mechanisms.

6. Participants also stressed the need for the international community's involvement in providing funding for national and local level synergy initiatives, providing technical advice, identifying best practices, and optimizing reporting requirements.

7. The SBSTA workshop focused on national experiences in achieving synergy and cross-cutting issues under the conventions such as technology transfer, education and public awareness, and capacity building, reporting, impacts and adaptation. Participants noted the need for awareness raising and involvement of all stakeholders. A request for further harmonization of reporting requirements was made along with noting a strong need for building national reporting capacity. Adaptation was recognized as an

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important cross-sectoral issue because of the multiple and diverse impacts of climate change and thus could be one entry point for synergetic initiatives.

**Source:**

IISD coverage: <http://www.iisd.ca/climate/cespo/>

## VII. SUB-REGIONAL WORKSHOP ON AGROBIODIVERSITY IN WEST AFRICA

Bamako, Mali: 15-19 December 2003  
Organized by the Mali Environment Ministry  
In collaboration with GTZ, FAO, CRDI and CTA

### *A. Background and objectives*

1. The workshop's goal was to contribute to national policy development for sustainable use and conservation of agrobiodiversity in order to align local needs with regional and international agreements. The workshop included both the Convention on Biological Diversity and CCD in its treatment of conservation of agrobiodiversity and addressed synergy between both conventions. Participants, which constituted of national focal points and NGO partners, received detailed explanations on international instruments' functioning such as the Convention on Biological Diversity, the Convention to Combat Desertification, the development of a global strategy for AnGNER (Animal Genetic Resources) management, and Global Action Plan on PGNR (Plant Genetic Resources), and the African Union model law on biosafety. This exposed the existing synergy and complementarities amongst the international judicial instruments.

### *B. Participants*

2. Representatives from West African Government, including some from focal points, and NGO representatives, including GTZ, FAO, the Centre de Recherche pour le developpement international (CRDI), International Plant Genetic Resources Institute (IPGRI), the Centre de coopération internationale en recherche agronomique pour le développement (CIRAD) and HELVETAS.

### *C. Recommendations*

- (a) Make available adequate financing for the implementation of strategic and political frameworks as well as for capacity building of all stakeholders involved.
- (b) Promote successful strategies and traditional knowledge.
- (c) Promote access to information on agrobiodiversity.
- (d) Improve synergy and coordination among the agro-environmental structures of all countries (the Convention on Biological Diversity, AnGNER, PGNR, CCD) through decentralized planning and developing.
- (e) Support sub-regional cooperation to design and implement agrobiodiversity projects.
- (f) Increase added value to local products and open new markets for them.
- (g) Improve communication and coordination at the national level.
- (h) Support a legislative and judicial framework for sustainable use, access and benefits sharing of agrobiodiversity, including provisions on biosafety.
- (i) The ecosystem approach could be used to integrate research and development efforts for sustainable use and conservation of genetic resources.
- (j) Involve all stakeholders in the design and implementation of mechanisms to strengthen natural resources management and agrobiodiversity.

#### **Source:**

Rapport de travail

Link: <http://www.gtz.de/agrobiodiv/download/bamako-rep.pdf>

**VIII. WORKSHOP ON FORESTS AND FOREST ECOSYSTEMS: PROMOTING SYNERGY IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE THREE RIO CONVENTIONS**

Viterbo, Italy: 5-7 April 2004

Jointly organized by SCBD and SCCD, in collaboration with UNFCCC

**A. Background and objectives**

1. Forest related initiatives and programmes have been recognized as one area where the objectives of the three conventions may be addressed simultaneously. Through the participation of national focal points, agencies and international processes such as the United Nations Forum on Forests (UNFF) and Collaborative Partnership on Forests, the Viterbo workshop aimed to catalyse the exchange of views on synergetic processes in the forestry sector and identify opportunities for synergetic actions. An explicit goal was to encourage the implementation of specific actions at the local level relating to forests and forest ecosystems. The workshop addressed two main themes: (i) potential for synergies through forest landscape management and soil conservation; and (ii) ecosystem services and poverty reduction. Presentations were made on the two themes, and working groups on synergy at the local level were formed.

**B. Participants**

2. Representatives from developing and developed Parties attended along with representatives from United Nations bodies, intergovernmental organizations and NGOs.

**C. Recommendations**

(a) Existing tools and mechanisms at local, national, regional and international levels should be used as platforms for fostering synergism in the implementation of the Rio conventions in order to avoid duplication of efforts.

(b) Additional funding for implementation initiatives and awareness raising is needed and should be maximized through synergetic processes.

(c) Indicators for success of synergy work should be developed.

(d) Case-studies, success stories and lessons learned should be collected and disseminated.

(e) Reporting requirements should be harmonized by secretariats and joint preparation of reports and national plans should be encouraged at the national level.

(f) Information exchange mechanisms on synergy, including clearing-house mechanisms should be strengthened.

(g) Better coordination and communication among national focal points and GEF and UNFF focal points.

(h) Increase and strengthen capacity building of national actors, local and indigenous communities.

(i) The participation of all stakeholders and local communities should be encouraged.

(j) Political will and commitment were noted to be lacking in cooperation, coordination and implementation efforts.

(k) Integration of the conventions' objectives into other national and local strategies, such as poverty eradication, will ensure alignment of global environmental concerns with national priorities.

**Source:**

Final Report

Link: <http://www.unccd.int/workshop/docs/finalreport.pdf>

IISD coverage

Link: <http://www.iisd.ca/desert/cwfee/>

*Annex II*

**COUNTRY CASES FROM AFRICA**

**I. BURKINA FASO**

**A. Key features**

1. The tools and programmes for implementation of the Rio conventions were designed separately leading to constraints for their coordinated application/implementation such as discrepancy between the tools and programmes' entry into force, different specific objectives, different partners, etc. Nonetheless, the need for concerted action was recognized by the Government.

**B. Tools and processes**

2. An action plan was designed, identifying five priority intervention areas:

- (a) Improvement of soil productivity and integrated management of natural resources
- (b) Promotion of renewable and alternative energy sources
- (c) Fight against poverty and improvement of living conditions
- (d) Strengthening of scientific and technical cooperation as well as research at regional and international levels
- (e) Capacity strengthening of all actors at different levels

**C. Challenges encountered**

- (a) Multiple responsibilities and inadequate human resources overload the coordination body.
- (b) Institutional rooting of the Secretariat leads to weak coordination and harmonization implementation efforts of the conventions.
- (c) Action plans' low transferability into eligible GEF projects, largely a result of the exigencies of answering immediate needs and inadequate mastery of GEF criteria.
- (d) Difficulty of access to multilateral funds because of complex eligibility criteria.
- (e) Weak national funding capacity of development actions.

**D. Solutions**

- (a) Conception and promotion of National Strategy for Sustainable Development following the rereading of the National Action Plan for the Environment in order to take into account different strategies and sectorial plans elaborated in the country after Rio 92.
- (b) Strengthen the National Council for Environment and Sustainable Development (CONEDD) authority for a greater consideration of its actions by all actors.
- (c) Create a common website for information exchange on the Conseil National pour L'environnement et le Developement Durable (CONEDD) and the three conventions.
- (d) Develop a manual on linkages and relevant issues for Burkina Faso.
- (e) Training of actors on project design and formulation for GEF funding requests.
- (f) Press forward the decentralization process to encourage local control of development and natural resources management.
- (g) Capacity strengthening of actors' negotiation skills.

**Source:**

Country reports to Marrakech workshop

[http://www.iepf.org/docs\\_prog03/pol\\_envir03/0103\\_Synerg\\_marr/Exp.paysparticipants/Mauritanie.doc](http://www.iepf.org/docs_prog03/pol_envir03/0103_Synerg_marr/Exp.paysparticipants/Mauritanie.doc)

National Country Reports – CRIC 1

<HTTP://WWW.UNCCD.INT/COP/REPORTS/AFRICA/AFRICA.PHP#NATIONAL>

## **II. ETHIOPIA**

### **A. Key features**

1. The Environmental Policy of Ethiopia has 10 sectoral and 10 cross-sectoral policy issues including biodiversity, desertification and climate change. The Environmental Protection Authority (EPA) serves as focal points for the Convention on Biological Diversity and UNCCD while the National Meteorological Service Agency (NMSA) serves as focal point for UNFCCC.

### **B. Tools and processes**

2. A Steering Committee and multi-disciplinary working groups were created to undertake different projects of the conventions. As of April 2004, no institution was specifically responsible for the coordination of the three conventions. In preparation of a national workshop, EPA prepared a document providing country-specific background information on the conventions and the importance of their implementation, identifying thematic areas of synergy, and proposing strategies to reach the conventions' objectives. For each proposed strategy, specific actions were put forward and relevant implementing agencies identified. One of the proposed strategies is to endow an existing institution with the mandate to coordinate and take lead in synergetic actions. The EPA proposed to take on the madate.

### **C. Challenges**

- (a) Limited availability and circulation of information and data.
- (b) Inadequate information exchange between the focal points and implementing agencies.
- (c) Limited awareness of conventions.
- (d) Frequent restructuring of institutions.
- (e) Absence of a policy framework for achieving synergy between the conventions.
- (f) Weak coordination of steering committees and multi-disciplinary working groups.
- (g) National development programs/projects have not mainstreamed activities related to the conventions.
- (h) Different timing of the various action plans makes it hard to coordinate actions.
- (i) Need to popularize and mainstream the existing relevant policies to actively involve regional governments and sector institutuions.

### **D. Solutions**

- (a) Integrate the national strategies and action plans for the three conventions into the national/regional/local development plan.
- (b) Adopt an integrated approach addressing the physical, biological and socio-economic aspects of the processes of desertification and drought; as well as conservation and sustainable use of biological diveristy and adress climate change and effects.
- (c) Strenghten traditional institutional mechanisms developed traditionally for the management of socio-economic affairs so as to incorporate in their programs the implementation of the three conventions.
- (d) Initiate and strengthen national and regional legislative instruments for the implementation of strategies and action plans of the three conventions.
- (f) Develop and revitalize existing information and monitoring system (i.e. clearinghouse mechanism)and networks as well as R&D system.
- (g) Establish a standard reporting mechanism.

(h) Build capacity to administer Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) in order to protect important sinks, ecosystem components for conservation of biodiversity and combat desertification.

(i) Promote awareness raising in public education programs, which recognize ecological, social, economic advantages of the three conventions as well as tailor awareness programs to the need of farmers, pastoralists and concerned sectors of the society.

(j) Ensure the involvement of concerned actors in planning, implementation, monitoring, evaluation and benefit-sharing.

**Source:**

Synergistic implementation of the three conventions in Ethiopia. Environmental Protection Authority, Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia. April 2004.

### **III. MAURITANIA**

#### **A. Key features**

1. One secretariat is in charge of planning programmes, action plans and reports on desertification, biodiversity, and climate change. The secretariat's team is constituted of the environmental conventions' coordinators including the Convention on Biological Diversity, CCD, UNFCCC, CMS, and CITES.

#### **B. Tools and processes**

2. Three generations of projects have been planned and implemented to this day with various counterparts including UNEP, UNDP, FAO, GEF, the Caisse Française de Développement (CFD), World Bank, and GTZ. Many of these projects were integrative and multisectoral reflecting the complexity of issues addressed. Projects ranged from agroforestry to village reforestation and synergy project between CCD and the Convention on Biological Diversity, amongst others. A council project allied the GTZ and the government for the implementation of international conventions (CBD and CCD). This project's objectives are the improvement of the institutional and judicial frameworks, dissemination of environmental information and support to the design and implementation of projects and programmes articulating the conventions with agenda 21.

#### **C. Challenges to implementation**

- (a) Limited financial means;
- (b) Top-down complex and heavy institutional structures in spite of civil society participation;
- (c) Lack of knowledge and dissemination concerning the three conventions;
- (d) Weak institutional support.

#### **D. Solutions**

3. Counterbalance the decrease in funds by establishing synergy, avoiding duplication and taking into account ecological priorities.

- (a) Management decentralization;
- (b) Promotion of state disengagement while a more nominative and orientational role;
- (c) Simplification of communication and coordination bodies by granting key roles to traditional structures and civil society;
- (d) Promotion of transparent decision-making.

#### **E. Future plans**

- (a) Capacity strengthening of convention coordinators;
- (b) Prepare a common programme of implementation for the three conventions;
- (c) Train stakeholders on GEF project formulation as well as design and evaluation of environmental impact assessments;
- (d) Capitalize information on the three conventions;
- (e) Create a website and documentation centre for information exchange.

#### **Source:**

Mauritania report to Marrakesh Workshop:

[http://www.iepf.org/docs\\_prog03/pol\\_envir03/0103\\_Synerg\\_marr/Exp.paysparticipants/Mauritanie.doc](http://www.iepf.org/docs_prog03/pol_envir03/0103_Synerg_marr/Exp.paysparticipants/Mauritanie.doc)

Mauritania report to CRIC 1: <http://www.unccd.int/cop/reports/africa/africa.php#national>

## IV. SOUTH AFRICA

### A. *Key features*

1. South Africa had instored a number of programmes focusing on land degradation. In order to achieve synergy, the national action programme under UNCCD (NAP) aims to coordinate and strengthen these existing programmes rather than create new programmes. Linkages and synergies were identified with other national programmes under other departments. Such programmes included Working for Water, Desert Margin Programme and Coast Care, respectively under the Water Affairs and Forestry, Agriculture, and Environmental Affairs and Tourism Departments. Linkages and synergies were also identified between the National Natural resource Management Framework and the Convention on Biological Diversity, CCD and UNFCCC.

### B. *Challenges encountered*

- (a) Lack of adequate coordination and integration between organs of the state in the national and provincial spheres of government.
- (b) Lack of adequate capacity and competence in government and civil society locally in rural areas.
- (c) Inadequate financial and other resources for sustainable land management.
- (d) Poor delivery of information and knowledge for local sustainable land management, inadequate recognition and mobilization of local indigenous knowledge.

### C. *Solutions*

- (a) New efficient institutional arrangements to ensure coordination and integration of related policies and policy instruments that are needed for sustainable rural development at the national, provincial and local level.
- (b) Creation of efficient partnerships between government departments, the private sector, overseas development assistant partners, civil society and owners and managers of land.
- (c) Establishment of a system for diagnosing and responding to problems at national and local levels.
- (d) Keeping poverty alleviation, promotion of sustainable livelihoods and enhancement of sustainable land management as overarching goals.

2. In order to do so, a strategy was built on eight distinct but complementary priority areas.

- (a) Strengthened governance at all levels for an integrated and coordinated [thrust] in sustainable land management.
- (b) Strengthened local institutions and instruments for projects contributing to sustainable land management, poverty alleviation, and social assets protection.
- (c) Mobilization of effective and adequate financing and resources.
- (d) Effective generation and dissemination of knowledge and information.
- (e) Assessment and improvement of policies that impact land management.
- (f) Assurance of sustainable outcomes from the Land Reform Programme.
- (g) Monitoring, evaluation and continuous improvement of the programme.
- (h) A strategy for local implementation projects.

**Source:**

Ministry of Environmental Affairs and Tourism

South Africa's response to the Workshop on Forests and Forest Ecosystems: Promoting Synergy in the Implementation of the Three Rio Conventions. Viterbo, Italy 5-7 April 2004.

<http://www.environment.gov.za/>

## **V. TANZANIA**

### **A. Key features**

1. Division of Environment under the Vice President's Office is national focal point for the Convention on Biological Diversity, CCD, and UNFCCC. The focal point for the Ramsar Convention is the Ministry of Natural Resources and Tourism. The focal points rely on multi-sectoral committees, made of members for various institutions, for the implementation of the conventions.

### **B. Tools and processes**

2. National Environment Management Council (NEMC) created to advise the government on environmental management as well as to promote, catalyse and coordinate all environmental issues.

### **C. Challenges**

- (a) Low level of awareness on conventions at national and local levels.
- (b) Environmental issues and related concerns of the conventions are not well articulated in the Poverty Reduction Strategies Paper (PRSP).

### **D. Solutions**

- (a) Strengthen cooperation at sub-regional, regional and international level in the implementation of environmental conventions.
- (b) Institute mechanisms to mainstream conventions' concerns and other environmental issues and their linkage to poverty eradication into the national development planning and national budget.
- (c) Strengthen the Division of Environment for the coordination and planning of the implementation of these conventions among the various sectors.
- (d) Establishment of a multi-sectoral Technical Committee including the private sector, NGOs and CBOs for the environmental conventions to address issues of synergies amongst them.
- (e) Hold periodic meetings on the Forum to discuss synergies amongst environmental conventions.
- (f) Promote exchange of information, sharing and dissemination, among stakeholders of the conventions.
- (g) Promote capacity building at all levels for the effective and efficient implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the conventions.
- (h) Promote awareness raising at all levels concerning the potential and existing synergies in these conventions.

**Source:** Report on National Forum on Developing Synergies amongst the Environmental conventions. The United Republic of Tanzania. 2001.

## **VI. UGANDA**

### **A. Key features**

1. Focal points for the conventions are under two different ministries, namely the Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries and the Ministry of Water, Lands and Environment (Convention on Biological Diversity, UNFCCC, and the Ramsar Convention). Nonetheless, the Government recognized the interlinkages between the Rio conventions and the Ramsar Convention as well as with broader national goals.

### **B. Tools and processes**

2. The National Environment Management Authority (NEMA) initiated the Multi-stakeholder Integrative and Sustainability Planning Approach (MISP), for integrating the Rio conventions into national, sector and district plans and strategies. The MISP was created to prioritize issues of the conventions and improve efficiency and cost effectiveness in environmental governance at national and local levels. It was supported by the GEF through the Earth Council. In addition, a committee made of the four conventions' administrative staff was established. Lastly, an information handbook on the four conventions targeting planners was printed.

### **C. Challenges**

- (a) Insufficient integration of the conventions' concern into poverty eradication plans and other national development plans;
- (b) Lack of successful synergy project case-studies;
- (c) Low level of awareness at national and local levels;
- (d) Lack of political will;
- (e) Conflicts of interest;
- (f) Weak institutional coordination.

### **D. Solutions**

- (a) Government should show stronger commitment and political will to implement the conventions.
- (b) Further capacity building of relevant institutions (government departments, NGOs, CBOs, etc.) should enable them to access resources (i.e. GEF).
- (c) A national multi-stakeholder forum on the environment (including conventions) and development should be institutionalized as to develop a lasting network of stakeholders.
- (d) Harmonization and improved enforcement of policies and other regulatory frameworks.
- (e) Strengthening and institutionalization of the MISP.
- (f) Strengthening the regulatory framework to enhance the implementation of the conventions. Particularly, the local government should develop and enforce bylaws, undertake surveillance on the environment should therefore be developed.
- (g) Coordination, networking and information exchange mechanisms.
- (h) Joint action planning and implementation of programmes focusing on community needs and demonstrating community benefits.
- (i) A multi-media awareness programme on the conventions should be developed and implemented, including material translated into local languages.

(j) Capacity building, particularly at local government level, covering environmental awareness, information exchange, infrastructure development, and training in environmental planning and issues of the conventions.

(h) Indigenous knowledge, know-how and practices relevant to implementation of the four conventions should be documented and disseminated.

**Source:**

Forum Proceedings: National Forum on Development of Synergies between Four International Conventions on Environment in Uganda. Prepared by Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries. 2001.

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