



Convention on Biological Diversity

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REGIONAL DIALOGUE AND LEARNING MISSION ON INTEGRATING CLIMATE CHANGE ACTION AND BIODIVERSITY ACTION AT THE NATIONAL LEVEL IN SOUTHERN AFRICA

Durban, South Africa, 2-6 October 2017

BACKGROUND AND PROPOSED AGENDA

1. A series of regional dialogue seminars and field visits will be held in order to raise awareness, capacity and identify opportunities for effective policy coherence, implementation and mainstreaming of nature-based solutions at the national level. These will specifically focus on the challenges and opportunities in incorporating the role of ecosystems in nationally determined contributions (NDCs) under UNFCCC, as well as related policies under other Rio Conventions and biodiversity-related multilateral environmental agreements, and national implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals.

2. The dialogue seminars will bring together relevant experts, policy makers and practitioners on biodiversity, ecosystem services and climate change at local, national and regional levels. The purpose of the sessions will be to provide an informal setting for open discussions on existing approaches and challenges as seen by the various participants, and opportunities for improved policy making and implementation. The field visits will allow the host countries to demonstrate how related activities and the link between policy and action, as well as to introduce the range of governmental and non-governmental stakeholders involved.

3. The specific objectives of the seminars and field visits are:

(a) To exchange experience of developing the role for ecosystem-based approaches in climate-related work at the national level;

(b) To identify synergies among potential ecosystem-based approaches for delivering benefits related to multiple NDC objectives;

(c) To empower those concerned with the well-being of nature to engage with those responsible for achieving NDCs.

4. In order to support the discussions, a series of background documents will be prepared and distributed:

- (a) A review of role of ecosystems in existing (I)NDCs;
- (b) A review of a series of sectoral reviews already in existence or under way;
- (c) A summary of relevant actions included, and their explicitly-stated objectives and benefits;
- (d) A review of available information on challenges and solutions identified;

(e) An outline of other potential benefits and especially possible synergies to be achieved across NDC objectives using ecosystem-based approaches.

5. The agenda will allow for discussions that will include the following topics:

- (a) NDC content and development;
- (b) Existing associated plans, including NBSAPs;
- (c) Relevant stakeholder involvement and experiences in engagement across sectors;
- (d) Challenges and solutions for implementing and mainstreaming ecosystem-based approaches, including financial mechanisms;
- (e) Potential benefits and synergies across NDC objectives and beyond.

6. The immediate outcome of the dialogue seminars and the field visits will be greater understanding of the differing viewpoints, the opportunities and the challenges of incorporating nature-based solutions into NDCs. At the end of the series of the regional seminars, a report will be produced that will detail the lessons learnt, and presented at relevant UNFCCC and CBD forums.

Proposed agenda

Day 1 – Understanding ecosystem-based approaches

Time	Item	Facilitation notes
08:30-09:00	Registration	Coffee and tea provided
09:00-09:30	Welcome and introductions	Welcome addresses by host(s) and organisers. Roundtable introductions by participants
09:30-10:30	Setting the scene: Defining the concepts (EbA, EbM, policy tools). Status of NDCs	Presentation to explain the terms and providing initial examples from the regions and other areas.
10:30-11:00	Setting the scene: non-state actors	Civil society and IPLC presentations (x2) on their perspectives, roles, responsibilities and challenges faced
11:00-11:30	Coffee/tea	
11:30-13:00	EbA approaches in use at the national level – what is being done, and why?	Group discussions (x5) on current EbA activities. Participants to also consider the co-benefits to climate-related EbA, e.g., eco-DRR, national sustainable development, community-based endogenous development, conservation. 30-minute report back in plenary
13:00-14:00	Lunch	
14:00-15:00	EbA approaches not in use, and why?	Inspired by earlier presentations and discussions, group discussions (x5) on EbA activities not currently being undertaken. 20-minute report back in plenary
15:00-15:30	Coffee/tea	
15:30-17:00	Ecosystem-based approaches to mitigation (EbM) – what is being done, what is not being done, and why?	Group discussions (x5) on EbM activities 30-minute report back in plenary
17:00-17:15	Wrap-up summary of the day	Brief overview of the day's discussion and some parting thoughts for the consideration overnight
18:00	Group dinner (optional)	

Day 2 – The need for policy coherence

Time	Item	Facilitation notes
09:00-09:30	Recap of day 1	Summary of the EbA activities being taken and reasons for not using others
09:30-10:00	Setting the scene: The benefits of policy coherence and what sectoral policies are relevant	Presentation to provide the argument for policy coherence between climate / conservation / development sectors. Country presentations (x2) as example approaches
10:00-11:00	Link between NDCs and other climate strategies	Group discussions (x5) on how NDCs and NAPs overlap. Are there gaps and why? 20-minute report back in plenary
11:00-11:30	Coffee/tea	
11:30-13:00	Link between climate and biodiversity strategies	Group discussions (x5) on how NDCs overlap with NBSAPs. Are there gaps and why? 30-minute report back in plenary
13:00-14:00	Lunch	
14:00-15:00	Link between climate and sustainable development strategies	Group discussions (x5) on how NDCs link to national SDG implementation, national/subnational development plans. Are there gaps and why? 20-minute report back in plenary
15:00-15:30	Coffee/tea	
15:30-17:00	How to improve national policy coherence?	Plenary discussion on what is needed to improve coherence? Group discussions (x5) on how to improve awareness raising, clarity on the concepts/science, better coordination. How to improve national policies and action on the ground? 30-minute report back in plenary
17:00-17:15	Wrap-up summary of the day	Brief overview of the day's discussion and some parting thoughts for the consideration overnight

Day 3 – Overcoming the challenges

Time	Item	Facilitation notes
09:00-09:15	Recap of day 2	Overview of the policy linkages and gaps
09:15-10:30	Knowledge and awareness – tools and approaches	Group discussions (x5) on what government, civil society and community-based organisations are involved and how they coordinate. Group discussions (x5) on what legislation exists and does it facilitate cross-scale and cross-sectoral collaboration? Who else needs to be involved? 20-minute report back in plenary
10:30-11:00	Coffee/tea	
11:00-12:30	Climate-related finance – GEF, GCF, AF, national finances, PES Safeguards for: finance mechanisms; EbA	Group discussions (x5) on the availability and use of climate-related financial mechanisms, including REDD+ 30-minute report back in plenary Group discussions (x5) on the availability, appropriateness and use of safeguards. 20-minute report back in plenary

Time	Item	Facilitation notes
12:30-13:00	Next steps: what actions will arise from this dialogue, and what support is needed Thanks and wrap-up of the dialogue	Group discussions (x5) on next steps at the local, national and international levels, including where support is needed. 30-minute report back in plenary Final words from host(s) and organizers
13:00	Start of field visits	

UNFCCC and CBD context

7. Article 3 of the Paris Agreement (2015) provides that all Parties are to undertake and communicate ambitious efforts as nationally determined contributions (NDCs) to the global response to climate change. The efforts of all Parties will represent a progression over time, and the opportunity for mainstreaming biodiversity into national climate change mitigation and adaptation is considerable.

8. The outcomes of the twenty-first meeting of the Conference of the Parties (COP) to UNFCCC in Paris still recognizes the importance “of adequate and predictable financial resources, including for results-based payments, as appropriate, for the implementation of policy approaches and positive incentives for reducing emissions from deforestation and forest degradation, and the role of conservation, sustainable management of forests and enhancement of forest carbon stocks; as well as alternative policy approaches, such as joint mitigation and adaptation approaches for the integral and sustainable management of forests; while reaffirming the importance of non-carbon benefits associated with such approaches” (decision 1/CP.21, para. 54).

9. Article 4 urges Parties to “achieve a balance between anthropogenic emissions by sources and removals by sinks of greenhouse gases in the second half of this century, on the basis of equity, and in the context of sustainable development and efforts to eradicate poverty”. By adding the sinks and removals of anthropogenic emissions – as can be done through land management conservation and restoration - the agreement opens a wide possibility of nature-based solutions to contribute to curb emissions and to adaptation. REDD+ mechanisms can be used for these goals as stated in Article 5.

10. Article 4 also called on each Party to prepare, communicate and maintain successive National Determined Contributions (NDCs) that it intends to achieve. Parties shall pursue domestic mitigation measures with the aim of achieving the objectives of such contributions. Each Party’s successive NDC will represent a progression beyond the Party’s then-current contribution and reflect its highest possible ambition, reflecting its common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capabilities, in the light of different national circumstances. Each Party shall communicate their NDC every five years.

11. At its thirteenth meeting, the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity recognized that ecosystem-based approaches can be technically feasible, politically desirable, socially acceptable, economically viable and beneficial and that implementation and investment in these approaches are, in general, increasing at the international and national levels, and encouraged Parties, other Governments and relevant organizations to integrate ecosystem-based approaches to climate change adaptation and mitigation, and disaster risk reduction, into their strategic planning across sectors. More specifically, the Conference of the Parties encouraged “Parties and other Governments, when developing their nationally determined contributions and, where appropriate, implementing associated domestic measures, to fully take into account the importance of ensuring the integrity of all ecosystems, including oceans, and the protection of biodiversity, and to integrate ecosystem-based approaches” (decision XIII/4, para. 2). The dialogues and learning exchanges also serve to help implement the request by the Conference of the Parties to “support, as appropriate, Parties and relevant organizations and processes to design and implement ecosystem-based approaches for mitigation and adaptation as they relate to biodiversity” (decision X/33, para. 9(e)).

12. NDC development is inherently a top-down process, with unclear guidance on the process for its development. While this brings about challenges for many national and non-national actors in setting appropriate targets and actions, it does allow for opportunities to influence the adoption of atypical approaches, including the use of nature-based solutions.
