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### AD HOC OPEN-ENDED WORKING GROUP ON REVIEW OF IMPLEMENTATION OF THE CONVENTION

Second meeting

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Items 3, 4 and 7 of the provisional agenda\*

### **SYNTHESIS AND ANALYSIS OF OBSTACLES TO IMPLEMENTATION OF NATIONAL BIODIVERSITY STRATEGIES AND ACTION PLANS: LESSONS LEARNED FROM THE REVIEW, EFFECTIVENESS OF POLICY INSTRUMENTS AND STRATEGIC PRIORITIES FOR ACTION**

*Note by the Executive Secretary*

#### SUMMARY

The Conference of the Parties is due to consider, at its ninth meeting, the in-depth review of goals 2 and 3 of the Strategic Plan. The results of the review process will be used *inter alia* to recommend priority areas for capacity-building, access to and transfer of technology and technology cooperation in relation to implementation of the Convention and to develop voluntary guidance to Parties to assist in overcoming barriers to implementation of national biodiversity strategies and action plans. This note has been prepared in response to the request of the Conference of the Parties to prepare a synthesis/analysis of obstacles encountered, lessons learned, effectiveness of policy instruments and strategic priorities for action, to inform review process. The present note complements the note by the Executive Secretary on the status of implementation of goals two and three of the Strategic Plan focussing on implementation of national biodiversity strategies and action plans and availability of financial resources (UNEP/CBD/WG-RI/2/2).

The note summarizes the status of national biodiversity strategies and action plans: while most Parties have developed these instruments, 43 have not done so, and many others have not updated them. Further, there are a number of limitations with regard to the establishment of targets, integration of the ecosystem approach, funding of action plans and communication of the Strategy. Integration of biodiversity concerns in broader national planning processes has been limited.

The note reviews obstacles to implementation of Article 6 of the Convention, based on information provided in the third national reports. The most widespread challenges are “lack of financial, human and technical resources” and “lack of economic incentive measures”.

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\* UNEP/CBD/WG-RI/2/1.

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The lessons learned from the above information are analysed and options are identified for a limited number of priority actions that can be implemented immediately to address the major limitations observed in relation to the development and implementation of national biodiversity strategies and action plans. These are reflected in the suggested recommendations below. It should be noted that a more comprehensive set of guidance for the development and implementation of NBSAPs is provided in the note by the Executive Secretary on the subject (UNEP/CBD/WG-RI/2/3).

### SUGGESTED RECOMMENDATIONS

The Working Group may wish to recommend that the Conference of the Parties, at its ninth meeting:

1. *Urge* Parties that have not yet done so to develop a national biodiversity strategy and action plan (NBSAP) or adapt existing strategies, plans or programmes, as required by Article 6 of the Convention, as soon as possible, and preferably no later than the tenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties;

2. As priority actions, *encourage* Parties to:

(a) Prioritize activities in the action plan, focusing on strategic actions to reduce biodiversity loss and contribute to sustainable use, and develop a plan to mobilize financial resources in support of priority activities;

(b) Establish national targets, including as appropriate quantified and time bound targets, consistent with the flexible framework established in decisions VII/30 and VIII/15;

(c) Establish or strengthen national institutional arrangements for the promotion, coordination and monitoring of the implementation of the national biodiversity strategy and action plan, including as appropriate inter-ministerial coordination committees and stakeholder consultative bodies;

(d) Develop and implement a communication strategy for the implementation of the national biodiversity strategy and action plan;

(e) Through national focal points, and others responsible for the implementation of the Convention, engage with existing planning processes in order to mainstream biodiversity concerns in other national strategies, including, in particular, poverty reduction strategies, national strategies for the Millennium Development Goals, sustainable development strategies, and strategies to adapt to climate change and combat desertification, as well as sectoral strategies, and ensure that national biodiversity strategies and action plans are implemented in coordination with these other strategies;

(f) Promote local action for the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity, by integrating biodiversity considerations into sub-national and local level assessments and planning processes, and, as and where appropriate, the development of sub-national and local biodiversity strategies and/or action plans;

(g) Monitor implementation of national biodiversity strategies and action plans and progress towards national targets, to allow for adaptive management, and provide regular reports on progress to the Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity; and

(h) Review national biodiversity strategies and action plans to identify successes, constraints and impediments to implementation, and revise them, as necessary;

3. *Emphasize the importance* of securing high-level government support In the process of developing, updating and implementing national biodiversity strategies and action plans, and the need to engage all relevant sectors and stakeholders, including government departments, local authorities, local and indigenous communities, civil society, the private sector in the process;

4. *Note* that, in line with the guidelines for the fourth national reports developed in accordance with decision VIII/14, Parties should report on progress in implementing national biodiversity

strategies and action plans and on mainstreaming as part of their fourth national reports, and *reiterate* the importance of submitting their fourth national reports on or before 30 March 2009;

5. *Encourage* those Parties that prepare other reports on implementation of national biodiversity strategies and action plans and/or of the Convention to make those reports available through the clearing-house mechanism under the Convention;

6. *Encourage* Parties to establish or strengthen national clearing-house mechanisms to promote scientific and technical cooperation with other Parties, in particular with developing countries and countries with economies in transition;

7. *Request* the Executive Secretary, in cooperation with partner organizations to facilitate the exchange of best practices and lessons learned for the preparation, updating and implementation of national biodiversity strategies and action plans, through the clearing-house mechanism, strengthened cooperation with regional processes, South-South cooperation, and by facilitating technical support from partner organizations;

8. *Welcome* the development of “One UN” programmes <sup>1/</sup> as an opportunity to integrate biodiversity issues and encourage Parties that are developing such programmes, including the pilot countries, to give due consideration to biodiversity issues as identified in their national biodiversity strategies and action plans in the development of the programmes.

9. *Welcome* the “Message from Paris: integrating biodiversity into European development cooperation” from the participants in the Conference on Biodiversity in European Development Cooperation, held in Paris from 19 to 21 September 2006 <sup>2/</sup> and *invite* all bilateral and multilateral development cooperation agencies to promote the integration of biodiversity into development cooperation activities.

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<sup>1/</sup> <http://www.undg.org/?P=7>

<sup>2/</sup> <http://countdown2010.net/paris2006/MessageEN.pdf>

## I. INTRODUCTION

1. At its eighth meeting, the Conference of the Parties decided to consider, at its ninth meeting, the in-depth review of goals 2 and 3 of the Strategic Plan and that the results of the review process would be used to:

(a) Recommend priority areas for capacity-building, access to and transfer of technology and technology cooperation in relation to implementation of the Convention;

(b) Develop voluntary guidance to Parties to assist in overcoming barriers to implementation of national biodiversity strategies and action plans;

(c) Provide inputs to the process of revising the Strategic Plan beyond 2010.

2. The Conference of the Parties requested the Working Group on Review of Implementation to prepare for the in-depth review, and requested the Executive Secretary to compile relevant information and to prepare a synthesis/analysis of obstacles encountered, lessons learned, effectiveness of policy instruments and strategic priorities for action, and to make this compilation and synthesis/analysis available to the regional and/or subregional meetings, and to the second meeting of the Working Group on Review of Implementation.

3. The note by the Executive Secretary on the status of implementation of goals 2 and 3 of the Strategic Plan focussing on implementation of national biodiversity strategies and action plans and availability of financial resources (UNEP/CBD/WGRI/2/2) and the supporting information documents listed therein, provide an overview of the status of goals 2 and 3 of the Strategic Plan based on national reports, submissions from Parties, the Global Environment Facility (GEF) and other sources. The present document provides a summary of the review (section II), consider the obstacles encountered (section III), reviews some external challenges and opportunities (section IV) analyses the lessons learned and effectiveness of policy instruments (section IV), and proposes some strategic priorities for action, and identifies priority actions and voluntary guidance (section V). Consolidated and updated guidance for the development, updating and implementation of NBSAPs is provided in another note by the Executive Secretary (UNEP/CBD/WGRI/2/3), while inputs to the process of revising the Strategic Plan beyond 2010 are provided in an information document (UNEP/CBD/WG-RI/2/INF/6).

## II. SUMMARY OF THE STATUS OF IMPLEMENTATION OF GOALS 2 AND 3

4. The overview of the status of implementation of goals 2 and 3 of the Strategic Plan (see UNEP/CBD/WG-RI/2/2) shows that nearly all Parties have developed or are developing NBSAPs or equivalent instruments, the majority having finalized them, and that some Parties have revised their NBSAPs or are in the process of doing so. However, 43 Parties have not yet prepared their NBSAP.

5. The review also identified some limitations concerning NBSAPs:

(a) Most NBSAPs lack quantitative targets

(b) The ecosystem approach is not integrated into most NBSAPs

(c) Action plans are often not sufficiently strategic and, frequently, there is no provision for funding of the actions listed;

(d) Effective communication programmes are lacking; and

(e) Many NBSAPs are not up-to-date in that they do not fully address all national challenges or reflect recent guidance from the Conference of the Parties, and are not linked to the 2010 biodiversity target.

6. In general, the review suggests that while NBSAPs have been successful in providing a framework for conservation activities they have been far less successful in integrating biodiversity concerns in national planning processes or in the policies and programmes of most of the economic sectors.

7. Mobilization of the necessary financial, technical and human resources has also generally been limited. Technology transfer and cooperation under the Convention has been very limited and while there has been significant international scientific and technical cooperation in the field of biodiversity, the role of the clearing house mechanism in supporting such collaboration is unclear.

### III. FURTHER CONSIDERATION OF OBSTACLES TO IMPLEMENTATION

8. In their third national report, Parties were asked to indicate the relative importance of various obstacles <sup>3/</sup> to implementation of the provisions of the Convention and the thematic programmes of work, by ranking them as “high-level”, “medium-level”, or “low-level” challenges.

9. Taking all reporting Parties together, the following ten challenges were ranked as “high” or “medium-level” by more than 70% of Parties for the implementation of Article 6:

- Lack of financial, human, technical resources (84%);
- Lack of economic incentive measures (82%);
- Loss of biodiversity and the corresponding goods and services it provides not properly understood and documented (76%);
- Lack of public education and awareness at all levels (75%);
- Lack of effective partnerships (74%);
- Lack of horizontal cooperation among stakeholders (73%);
- Unsustainable production and consumption patterns (72%);
- Lack of mainstreaming and integration of biodiversity issues into other sectors (71%);
- Inadequate capacity to act, caused by institutional weakness (70%);
- Lack of knowledge and practice of ecosystem-based approaches to management (70%).

10. These may be considered as significant challenges by most groups of countries. Four of these challenges, and two others, were ranked as high-level challenges by a significant number of Parties overall:

- Lack of mainstreaming and integration of biodiversity issues into other sectors (about 31%);
- Lack of financial, human and technical resources (39%);
- Lack of economic incentive measures (about 40%);
- Unsustainable consumption and production patterns (33%);
- Poverty (35%);
- Weak law enforcement (35%).

11. In addition to the list of high or medium challenges for all countries, more than 70% of the developing countries, as a group, identified “lack of benefit sharing” and “lack of capacities of local communities”. Within this group, the least developed countries further identified “lack of adequate scientific research capacities”, “lack of transfer of technology and expertise”, and “lack of synergies at national and international levels”. Small island developing States highlighted “loss of traditional knowledge”, “existing scientific and traditional knowledge not fully utilized”, “lack of appropriate policies and laws” and “weak law enforcement capacity”, while the remaining developing countries highlighted “lack of precautionary and proactive measures” in addition to the general list. Among countries with economies in transition, the following additional challenges were ranked as high or medium by 70% or more in addition to the general list: “Lack of precautionary and proactive measures”, “Limited public participation and stakeholder involvement” and “Lack of political support and will”. Among developed countries, the only challenges to be ranked as high or medium by more than 70% were: “Lack of public education and awareness at all levels” and “Lack of financial, human and technical resources”.

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<sup>3/</sup> These obstacles correspond generally, but not exactly, to the list appended to the Strategic Plan (decision VI/26).

12. Table 1 summarizes this information. As might be expected, only a small number of challenges (two) are identified as high- or medium-level challenges by the industrialized countries, while many more (9-13) are identified by the other groups. The most widespread challenges are “lack of financial, human and technical resources” and “lack of economic incentive measures.”

*Table 1: Obstacles identified as high- or medium-level challenges in third national reports by 70% or more of Parties in each country grouping.*

	ALL	In.	ET	OD	LD	SI
Lack of political will and support to implement the CBD			●			
Limited public participation and stakeholder involvement			●			
Lack of mainstreaming and integration of biodiversity issues	●		●			
Lack of precautionary and proactive measures, reactive policies.			●	●		
Inadequate capacity to act, caused by institutional weaknesses	●			●	●	●
Lack of transfer of technology and expertise					●	
Loss of traditional knowledge						●
Lack of adequate scientific research capacities					●	
Lack of knowledge & practice on ecosystem-based management	●		●	●		●
Lack of accessible knowledge/information						
Loss of biodiversity, goods & services not properly understood, documented	●		●	●	●	●
Existing scientific and traditional knowledge not fully utilized.						●
Lack of public education and awareness at all levels.	●	●	●	●	●	
Lack of financial, human and technical resources	●	●	●	●	●	●
Lack of economic incentive measures	●		●	●	●	●
Lack of benefit-sharing.				●	●	●
Lack of synergies at the national and international levels					●	●
Lack of horizontal cooperation among stakeholders	●		●		●	
Lack of effective partnerships	●		●		●	●
Lack of engagement of scientific community.						
Lack of capacities for local communities.				●	●	●
Lack of appropriate policies and laws						●
Weak law enforcement capacity						●
Poverty						
Population pressure						
Unsustainable consumption and production patterns	●		●		●	
Natural disasters and environmental change.						

*Note:* Column Headings: All = All reporting countries; IN = industrialized countries, ET+ countries with economies in transition; OD = other developing countries (i.e developing countries excluding LDCs and SIDS); LD = Least developed countries; SI = small island developing States.

13. The submissions received from countries in response to decision VIII/8 (UNEP/CBD/WGRI/2/INF/7) are broadly consistent with these conclusions, and in addition they

highlight the following challenges: low profile of the NBSAP; priority of economic interests; inadequate coordination or lack of clear distribution of responsibilities; and absence of quantifiable targets. They also point to the additional global problem of climate change.

14. These challenges identified in the third national reports are also broadly consistent with those identified in a preliminary review of national capacity self-assessment reports. Major challenges (highlighted by six or more of the nine reviewed: see UNEP/CBD/WG-RI/2/INF/9) are: lack of human and financial resources; lack of coordination and collaboration, and unclear definitions of responsibility, among agencies; lack of public education and awareness at all levels; and lack of legislation/ regulations.

#### IV. EXTERNAL CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

15. There are a number of other external challenges and opportunities that need to be taken into account in the identification of priority actions, namely:

(a) The eradication of hunger and poverty and the achievement of the full set of Millennium Development Goals remains a major challenge and is the priority issue for many developing countries. As recognized in the preamble to the Convention, economic and social development and poverty eradication are the over-riding priorities of developing countries. Therefore, there is a need therefore to demonstrate more clearly the contribution of conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity to the development and poverty eradication as well as developing tools to deal with biodiversity-development trade-offs when they occur. Participants of the Conference on Biodiversity in European Development Cooperation Paris, 19-21 September 2006, adopted a “Message from Paris integrating biodiversity into European development cooperation”; <sup>4/</sup>

(b) Poor people, who are often particularly dependent on biodiversity and ecosystem services, tend to be marginalized by existing political structures and excluded from involvement in setting policies. Reaching these people, for example by engaging with indigenous and local, communities, is necessary therefore to address both conservation and poverty reduction goals;

(c) There is considerable momentum at present for reform of the United Nations. Two aspects in particular are relevant. First the proposal to develop “One UN” programmes at country level further highlights the importance of mainstreaming biodiversity concerns into these programmes, including the eight pilot countries (Albania, Cape Verde, Mozambique, Pakistan, Rwanda, United Republic of Tanzania, Uruguay and Viet Nam). <sup>5/</sup> The “One UN” pilot initiative will test in eight countries how the United Nations system—with its many and diverse agencies—can deliver in a more coordinated way at country level. The objective is to ensure faster and more effective development operations and accelerate progress to achieve the Millennium Development Goals. The creation of the “One UN” pilots was recommended by the Secretary-General’s High-Level Panel on United Nations System-wide Coherence. Second, the consideration of ways to enhance international environmental governance could be used to advance the objectives of the Convention. (see also the information note on the United Nations reform processes on international environmental governance and system-wide coherence and other United Nations initiatives relevant to the Convention on Biological Diversity (UNEP/CBD/WG-RI/2/INF/11));

(d) Climate change is posing new challenges and opportunities for all countries. The increased political and public attention to the issue provides also an opportunity to raise awareness about other global environmental challenges such as loss of biodiversity and ecosystem services and the potential for the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity to contribute to activities for both mitigation of and adaptation to climate change. The development of incentives for avoided deforestation (which is now being considered under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and its Kyoto Protocol) could significantly benefit biodiversity. On the other hand, the increased use of biofuels may, in some circumstances, increase pressures on biodiversity and ecosystems unless

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<sup>4/</sup> <http://countdown2010.net/paris2006/MessageEN.pdf>

<sup>5/</sup> <http://www.undg.org/?P=7>

biodiversity-friendly criteria are developed (see also UNEP/CBD/SBSTTA/12/9). The role of biodiversity in contributing to ecosystem resilience – and the potential therefore to contribute to adaptation – needs to be emphasized;

(e) There is an improved understanding internationally of the importance of biodiversity, of the value of ecosystem services and of the consequences of their loss. The Millennium Ecosystem Assessment has contributed to this improved understanding and highlighted the need to address trade-offs. Moreover, the “Group of Eight plus Five” is considering biodiversity on its agenda for the first time and has commissioned a study of the economic value of biodiversity;

(f) New technologies are available for more effective, real-time monitoring and surveillance of land and sea contributing and where there is capacity to apply them they can contribute to enhanced law enforcement. For example, better surveillance and enforcement of deforestation in the Brazilian Amazon has contributed to substantial reductions in the rate of deforestation in the last two years.

## V. ANALYSIS OF LESSONS LEARNED

16. The following analysis draws on the review in the note by the Executive Secretary on the status of implementation of goals two and three of the Strategic Plan focussing on implementation of national biodiversity strategies and action plans and availability of financial resources (UNEP/CBD/WG-RI/2/2) and also earlier reviews (UNEP/CBD/WG-RI/2/INF/9), and relates the limitations and lessons with the ten obstacles identified above.

17. *Awareness of and participation by public and key decision makers.* One of the ten major challenges to implementation of Article 6 identified by Parties is “lack of public education and awareness at all levels”. This supports the finding of earlier reviews, that in most countries, the constituency supporting biodiversity conservation is too narrow to sustain major support for this purpose, and therefore NBSAPs are rarely able to have a significant impact on key decisions affecting biodiversity. There is thus clearly a need for greater emphasis on awareness-raising, both public and among decision makers. This is reflected in Article 13 of the Convention and has been highlighted by Conference of the Parties, which has adopted a comprehensive CEPA programme of work. Yet the review also finds that communication strategies are integrated into only a minority of NBSAPs.

18. *Knowledge and understanding of biodiversity and ecosystem services.* Another of the major challenges identified by Parties is “loss of biodiversity and the corresponding goods and services it provides not properly understood and documented”. Again this is consistent with the findings of earlier reviews that political support for NBSAPs is limited due to a general lack of awareness of the economic value of biodiversity, which has led to biodiversity being ignored in planning processes. In general, most countries are short on integrating economics and economic development with conservation.

19. *Application of the ecosystem approach.* There is also lack of experience in applying knowledge of biodiversity and ecosystem services through the ecosystem approach (“lack of knowledge and practice of ecosystem-based approaches to management” is another major challenge identified by Parties). The ecosystem approach is intended to be the primary framework for implementation of the Convention yet it is not incorporated into most NBSAPs. The in-depth review of the ecosystem approach (UNEP/CBD/SBSTTA/12/2) also finds that while most countries have some experience of the ecosystem approach, it is not widely applied. The ecosystem approach should be incorporated into all NBSAPs as they are revised, and employed in the implementation of existing NBSAPs as a key tool in integrating biodiversity considerations into broader planning processes, including those related to strategies for the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals and poverty eradication.

20. *Key policy measures.* Limited knowledge and understanding, insufficient public support, and lack of awareness of the importance of biodiversity among decision makers together result in three major challenges for implementation:

- (a) Lack of mainstreaming and integration of biodiversity issues into other sectors;
- (b) Lack of financial, human, technical resources;

- (c) Lack of economic incentive measures.

21. Without progress in these areas it will not be possible to address the underlying drivers of biodiversity loss, including “Unsustainable production and consumption patterns”, which are themselves considered by parties to constitute a major challenge. But achieving progress in each of these would involve fundamental changes in national policy and thus a broad constituency of support.

22. Earlier reviews concluded that most countries have not seriously addressed inter-sectoral issues, with little involvement of key sectoral agencies in NBSAP preparation. The main reasons seemed to be:

(a) Lack of biodiversity knowledge and awareness outside the traditional biodiversity constituency;

(b) The relative weakness of lead ministries (environment ministries) as compared to finance, planning and sectoral ministries;

(c) Inadequate institutional arrangements and instability;

(d) Lack of methodologies or guidelines; and most seriously;

(e) Environmental issues are widely seen as constraints to development. This view is apparent in almost two thirds of the reports on the Millennium Development Goals reviewed in a study by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP);

(f) An unwillingness to address the real and politically difficult tradeoffs necessary to reduce current rates of biodiversity loss.

23. *The planning process.* A key finding of earlier reviews of NBSAPs has been that stakeholder involvement has been insufficient. Without engagement of stakeholders it is unlikely that there will be a sufficient sense of ownership over the NBSAP, or that the most effective methods of integrating biodiversity into other sectors will be identified. Insufficient stakeholder engagement is perhaps a significant factor behind “lack of mainstreaming and integration of biodiversity issues into other sectors” as well as two other challenges identified by parties: “lack of effective partnerships”, and “lack of horizontal cooperation among stakeholders”.

24. Two aspects of stakeholder engagement have been highlighted in particular:

(a) The need to involve those with the power to influence policy and practice in the sectors and in planning and finance ministries; and

(b) Indigenous and local communities need to be fully involved since they are frequently those who work most closely with biodiversity and depend on it for their livelihoods.

25. According to the reviews of GEF enabling activities, in some cases, insufficient time was allotted for NBSAP preparation and this may have precluded an effective consultative process.

26. In several countries, NBSAP preparation has not been linked or coordinated effectively with other, concurrent, planning initiatives, limiting prospects for effective implementation where priorities of different plans prove incompatible. More effective engagement in other national strategies, including, in particular, poverty-reduction strategies, national strategies, sustainable development strategies, and strategies to adapt to climate change and combat desertification, as well as sectoral strategies, offers opportunities for mainstreaming of biodiversity concerns.

27. *Need for local action.* Reviews also suggest that delegation of biodiversity planning below the national level seems likely to emerge as a high priority for future planning efforts, and especially for the implementation of action plans. It is at the sub-national level, and in particular, the local authority level where many day-to-day planning decisions that impact on biodiversity are made.

28. *Coordination mechanisms.* One of the obstacles identified by Parties in their third national reports is: “inadequate capacity to act, caused by institutional weakness”. Frequently, no plan or structures are put in place to facilitate implementation once the NBSAP has been developed. Sometimes an effective legal

framework is also lacking. As a result, Parties have trouble coordinating actions between sectors, obtaining financial resources, and putting in place laws and regulations. There is a clear need to strengthen institutional arrangements for NBSAP implementation and mainstreaming.

29. *NBSAP design.* NBSAPs are often too centralized and prescriptive (not fine tuned to specific priorities and constraints of government departments) and over-ambitious (leading to inaction by agencies faced with an impossible agenda). They also tend to be developed by biodiversity specialists who lack capacity to engage economic sectors and build links to development planning.

30. *Action plans are not all addressing the politically sensitive root causes of biodiversity loss.* Many plans are little more than unprioritized lists of projects for international funding, aimed more at international donors than a national audience. In addition, very few action plans emphasize domestic resource mobilization. The majority aim to conserve biodiversity through a project-based approach, rather than proposing national policy and institutional changes.

## VI. OPTIONS FOR PRIORITY ACTIONS.

### A. *Strategic approach*

31. The foregoing analysis highlights two inter-related strategic thrusts that should be pursued with priority: awareness raising and mainstreaming. These two thrusts are mutually supportive: on the one hand greater awareness among all sectors of society on the role that biodiversity and ecosystem services play in supporting human well-being is necessary to stimulate action across the sectors; on the other hand integration of biodiversity into these sectors will provide opportunities for the broader relevance of biodiversity to be demonstrated and understood. Awareness-raising and mainstreaming must also be essential components of a strategy for resource mobilization (see UNEP/CBD/WG-RI/2/4).

32. Awareness-raising and mainstreaming can only be achieved through effective engagement of stakeholders from all relevant sectors of society and the economy in the process of developing, updating and implementing NBSAPs. This has several benefits: allows the diversity of needs and priorities to be understood, and therefore facilitates the definition of objectives; maximizes the number of actors in biodiversity conservation and sustainable use; increases a sense of ownership over the national strategy; and builds a constituency of support, helping to generate political and practical support for the strategy. By engaging all stakeholders and addressing their concerns and priorities the NBSAP can be made truly “national”

33. While the process of preparing and implementing the NBSAP is important, the NBSAP itself should also be an enabling instrument. It should provide a strategic framework for action and not be overly proscriptive.

### B. *Priority actions at the national level*

34. Within this broad strategic approach, the following eight priority actions at the national level can be identified. All of the suggested actions are consistent with existing guidance by the Conference of the Parties. Parties may wish to give priority to implementing these activities and to building capacity for them:

(a) *Develop a communication strategy.* Communication strategies for NBSAP implementation should be developed in order to develop support from the public, decision makers, and stakeholders in all sectors. This would be in line with the CEPA priority activities adopted in decision VIII/6, which call for national CEPA strategies to be linked to NBSAPs. The communication strategy should “make the case for biodiversity” in terms of the country’s national development priorities;

(b) *Establish effective national coordination structures.* Clear institutional arrangements are needed to drive the implementation of NBSAPs and the mainstreaming of biodiversity. These might include:

- (i) An administrative structure in the lead ministry to drive implementation, promote the communication strategy and to act as focal point for the Convention;

- (ii) A mechanism for ensuring support for mainstreaming across government, such as an inter-ministerial committee;
- (iii) A mechanism to facilitate action at subnational and local level and
- (iv) A mechanism to facilitate continued consultation with all stakeholders including indigenous and local communities, civil society, academia and the private sector;
- (v) A body to monitor progress in implementing NBSAPs and achieving the objectives of the Convention;

(c) *Engage in national planning processes.* Officials involved in the implementation of the Convention should engage with existing planning processes in order to mainstream biodiversity concerns in other national strategies including in particular poverty reduction strategies, national strategies related to the Millennium Development Goals, sustainable development strategies, and strategies to adapt to climate change and combat desertification, as well as sectoral strategies. NBSAPs should be implemented in coordination with these other strategies. In addition, NBSAPs should be integrated in the new “One UN” country programmes;

(d) *Promote local action on biodiversity.* Parties should promote local action on biodiversity, by integrating biodiversity into local planning processes, and as and where appropriate, through the development of local biodiversity strategies and/or action plans. New or revised NBSAPs could provide an enabling framework and overall strategy for local action. The ecosystem approach should be applied in the implementation of NBSAPs and local plans. The Millennium Ecosystem Assessment conceptual framework may be useful in this respect. Local actions can be pursued by municipal and regional local authorities. Some Parties, in particular federal states, may also wish to develop state or provincial biodiversity strategies and/or action plans;

(e) *Establish national targets.* Agreed targets can provide a focus for the activities of multiple partners across government and beyond. A limited number of targets should be selected focussing on national priorities. Where possible, targets should be quantitative and measurable, and be accompanied by corresponding indicators. They should be ambitious but achievable. The framework of goals, targets and indicators for assessing progress towards the 2010 Biodiversity Target provide a flexible framework within which national targets can be set. Similarly, national targets can provide a framework for local targets;

(f) *Prioritize and identify implementation and funding opportunities.* Those Parties with comprehensive action plans may need to prioritize activities, focussing on those strategic actions to achieve the necessary changes that are likely to have most impact on reducing biodiversity loss and contributing to the sustainable use of biodiversity for the national benefit. It will be necessary to assign responsibilities and obtain commitments from key stakeholders and institutional partners and to develop a plan to mobilize financial resources. Further guidance on the latter will be provided in the strategy for resource mobilization to be adopted by the Conference of the Parties at its ninth meeting;

(g) *Monitoring, reporting and information exchange.* Implementation of NBSAPs should be monitored in order to provide feedback on progress and allow for adaptive management. Reports on progress towards agreed targets can help to galvanize public and stakeholder support. Lessons learned can be exchanged nationally and shared with other Parties through the clearing house mechanism;

(h) *Keep the NBSAP under review.* Planning is a cyclical process and the national biodiversity strategy and action plan should be reviewed regularly, and, as necessary revised. However sufficient time and resources need to be allowed for a full revision. NBSAPs may also be updated or enhanced through the targeted development of particular elements – such as national targets, sector-specific action plans, or a communication component. Each Party will need to consider the need to update their NBSAP, the preferred modality, and the balance between effort devoted to planning and implementation.

### C. *Supporting priority actions at the level of the Convention*

35. The national priorities identified above may be supported by the following actions at the Convention level – to be pursued by the Conference of the Parties, the secretariat, and/or partner organizations, and supported by funding agencies.

(a) *Additional guidance on NBSAPs.* As requested by the Conference of the Parties, draft updated and consolidated guidance for the development, updating and implementation of NBSAPs is provided in the note by the Executive Secretary on guidance for the development, implementation and evaluation of national biodiversity strategies and action plans (UNEP/CBD/WG-RI/2/3);

(b) *Tools, guidelines and training modules.* The Secretariat and partner organizations should make available enhanced voluntary guidelines, training modules, and other tools to support the development, implementation, evaluation and updating of NBSAPs. The guidelines should include country examples and best practices, and be relevant to regional and national contexts. The guidelines should specifically address integration of 2010 targets into NBSAPs, and methods for effective mainstreaming;

(c) *Mechanisms to assist countries in developing NBSAPs and national reports.* The Conference of the Parties may wish to consider developing voluntary peer review mechanisms for NBSAPs and national reports;

(d) *Mechanisms to support capacity-building.* Funding bodies, including the GEF, could be invited to provide support for capacity building in support of the national priorities identified above.

(e) *Mechanism to support technical cooperation.* The Conference of the Parties may wish to consider developing a programme to facilitate technical cooperation, including South-South cooperation, building upon the plan being developed by the Secretariat at the request of the Chairman of the Group of 77;

(f) *Mechanisms to support engagement of major groups.* The Secretariat could enhance existing initiatives to engage major groups in the implementation of the Convention, including local authorities, parliamentarians, non-governmental organizations and the private sector;

(g) *Enhancing support from international agencies to support implementation of NBSAPs and the mainstreaming of biodiversity.* The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and the United Nations specialized agencies could provide enhanced technical assistance to countries, in their areas of their mandates. United Nations country offices could assist countries in mainstreaming biodiversity into development programmes. The United Nations regional economic commissions could assist with the mainstreaming of biodiversity in regional plans and programmes. In addition, the bilateral development cooperation agencies could promote stronger integration of biodiversity in development cooperation;

(h) *Strengthening understanding of the role of biodiversity in supporting human well-being, contributing to sustainable development, and eliminating poverty.* The Secretariat, in partnership with other relevant organizations could compile information, including case-studies, on the value of biodiversity, and biodiversity-poverty linkages, to contribute to considerations by Parties on the role of biodiversity in national development;

(i) *Enhancing the review of the implementation of the Convention by the Conference of the Parties, including NBSAPs and national reports.* The Conference of the Parties should regularly review NBSAPs, as part of its obligation to review implementation of the Convention. Countries should be given opportunities to exchange experiences and learn from one another at regular regional preparatory meetings;

(j) *Knowledge management.* The clearing-house mechanism could play an enhanced role in promoting exchange of experiences and lessons learned among countries.