

Anglophone Group 2 (14 Dec 2006)

Practical principle 11: Users of biodiversity components should seek to minimize waste and adverse environmental impact and optimize benefits from users.

Note: The group had no specific comment on the wording or intent of the principle. Our discussion focused on specifying operational guidelines that were suited to the case of agrobiodiversity.

Operational Guidelines.

Environmental Impact Assessment guidelines should include indicators of agrobiodiversity.

Establish policies and programs to prevent new problems associated with alien invasive species and effectively manage historical introductions of alien invasive species that threaten agrobiodiversity.

Ensure judicious application of Genetically-modified organisms (GMOs) to minimize potential for negative impact on agrobiodiversity.

Users of biodiversity components and biodiverse landscapes should seek through best practices to minimize waste and adverse environmental impact (eg plantation crops or trees).

Practical Principle 12: The needs of indigenous and local communities who live with and are affected by the use and conservation of biological diversity, along with their contributions to its conservation and sustainable use, should be reflected in the equitable distribution of the benefits from the use of those resources.

Note: The group concluded judged that this principle is worded very weakly relative to agrobiodiversity. That is, indigenous and local communities who live with biodiversity should not just share in the distribution of benefits of agrobiodiversity, but also be recognized as the owners of that diversity. This is already recognized in article 8j of the CBD and in the Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources (check reference). Therefore, for the case of agrobiodiversity, the principle should be reworded to better reflect the rights of local and indigenous communities, including traditional plant breeders' rights. These rights should cover local and indigenous peoples' rights to long-term access and benefits to agrobiodiversity that they have helped to create and conserve. There is a need to rework this principle with the adhoc group of the CBD that deals with Article 8j.

Operational Guidelines:

1. Local and indigenous groups should have long-term and secure access to agrobiodiversity

2. Local and indigenous groups that are the stewards of agrobiodiversity resources should retain the rights to benefit from any commercialization or further development of those resources.
3. There should be due recognition and, where possible fair compensation in particular in the development of new products, for past investments by local or indigenous communities into sustainable use and conservation of the resources.
4. There should be fair distribution of benefits to the entire community that has been involved in the conservation and sustainable use of the resources, through open and transparent community processes.
5. Efforts should be undertaken to raise awareness about the values of agrobiodiversity among local and community groups, including new commercial opportunities and business practices.
6. Intellectual property rights to key resources should be safeguarded at the appropriate level.
7. Certification programs should be considered to generate price premiums for the products of local and indigenous communities.

Principle 13. The costs of management and conservation of biological diversity should be internalized within the area of management and reflected in the distribution of the benefits from the use.

Note: The group concluded that, taken at its extreme, this principle and the first operational guideline imply that the rural communities that manage agrobiodiversity should be made responsible for meeting all costs of maintaining agrobiodiversity, even though the benefits may accrue to others far removed from the local situation. For the case of agrobiodiversity, the principle would have to be reworded to reflect issues raised in the following operational guidelines.

Operational guidelines:

1. All management costs should be calculated transparently calculated and reported openly.
2. Revenues generated from agrobiodiversity – by a community or other agency with management responsibility -- should be invested into management and maintenance of the resource. (eg South Africa Fair Trade agreements that some of the price premiums will be used to maintain the resources)
3. Management and upfront investment costs should be fairly shared among those who benefit from the agrobiodiversity.

Principle 14. Education and public awareness programmes on conservation and sustainable use should be implemented and more effective methods of communications should be developed between and among stakeholders and managers.

Note: The group had no specific comment on the wording or intent of the principle. For the case of agrobiodiversity, we noted that multiple education and public awareness needs, with information adapted to the needs of different groups:

Education and policy agencies with mandates related to biodiversity, including forestry, wildlife and agriculture. There is a need to clarify and simplify the multiple concepts and terms that are used in this area, eg ecosystem services, ecosystem management, agrobiodiversity, ecoagriculture, agroforestry, below ground biodiversity, total economic value, etc. There is a need to develop materials for training of trainers.

Farmers need to be provided information about the need to conserve and sustainably use agrobiodiversity. There is a special need to train farmers on the need for good soil health and management practices such as agroforestry and conservation agriculture that can foster the below-ground biodiversity necessary for soil health.

Local community groups, especially groups that are managing public and common lands, require information to help them to better understand the value of the resources in those lands.

Multi-stakeholder groups involved in landscape management need to recognize the need to conserve agrobiodiversity – including community groups, physical planning agencies, forestry agencies, water institutions, etc.

Research organizations should play roles in generating information about agrobiodiversity, with appropriate partnerships with other organizations to process and disseminate that information for the benefit of local people.

Consumers and retailers, should be made aware of the value of agrobiodiversity and provided opportunities to pay for agrobiodiversity conservation through the food marketing system.

School children – School curricula should better address agrobiodiversity.

Conservation organizations should be better acquainted with the values of agrobiodiversity and the potential for farmers to contribute to conservation objectives through sustainable use.