



COMMUNIQUÉ

Regional workshop on updating national biodiversity strategies and action plans being held in Congo

Brazzaville, 21 June 2011 – Biodiversity experts and officials from across Central Africa are working towards implementing the Nagoya Biodiversity Compact at the Regional Workshop for Central Africa on Updating National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans (NBSAPs), being held in Brazzaville from 19 to 23 June 2011.

Organized by the Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) in collaboration with the Ministry of Sustainable Development, Forest Economy and the Environment (MSDFEE) of the Republic of the Congo, and with the financial support of the Government of Japan, the Regional Workshop for Central Africa aims to strengthen national capacities for the development, implementation, reviewing, updating, and communication of national biodiversity strategies and action plans; help facilitate national implementation of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020; and translate the Strategic Plan into national targets and commitments.

Specifically, the workshop, which includes the participation of all nine of the region's countries, is reviewing the findings of the third edition of the Global Biodiversity Outlook and providing an overview of the Aichi-Nagoya outcomes before discussing the review and updating of national biodiversity strategies and action plans, with a focus on lessons learned and next steps. A major focus of the workshop is on setting national and regional targets in the framework of the Aichi biodiversity targets, including integrating biodiversity into relevant national and local planning processes. As financing the national biodiversity strategies and action plans is an important issue in most regions, and one highlighted by participants in this workshop, the workshop also covers the issue of resource mobilization for NBSAP implementation as well as stakeholder engagement and strategic communication.

The workshop offers the opportunity for regional biodiversity actors to contribute to and participate in capacity-development. Representatives of the Congo Basin Forest Partnership and the Central African Forests Commission (COMIFAC) were present at the workshop, together with participants from: Burundi, Cameroon, Chad, Democratic Republic of Congo, Central African Republic, Gabon, Equatorial Guinea, Republic of the Congo, and Sao Tome and Principe.

In a statement, Mr. Ahmed Djoghlaif, Executive Secretary of the Convention on Biological Diversity, said: "The Central African region has the necessary tools to ensure a sustainable relationship with rich ecosystems. I invite citizens and governments to seize this opportunity to revise their NBSAPs in order to achieve the goals of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020." He thanked the MSDFEE for hosting the workshop and noted that it was in response to the historic Nagoya biodiversity summit, where Parties to the Convention were requested to facilitate the implementation and revision of NBSAPs. Mr. Djoghlaif also highlighted the importance of forest protection, since forests contain a significant proportion of terrestrial biodiversity wealth. In doing so, he noted that forest biodiversity is important not only in efforts to mitigate climate change, but also in adapting to its negative consequences.

Speaking on behalf of the President of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention, Mr. Kazuhiko Fujita, chargé d'affaires of the Japanese Embassy in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, reiterated Japan's support to developing country Parties of the Convention in revising their NBSAPs. He highlighted the announcement made by Mr. Naoto Kan, Prime Minister of Japan, at the tenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties of US\$ 2 billion to support the *Living in harmony* initiative. He also highlighted the announcement made by Mr. Ryu Matsumoto, Japan's Minister of Environment, that Japan will reserve 1 billion yen to support activities to achieve the Aichi Biodiversity Targets. Finally, he stressed the importance of sustainable management in order to preserve natural resources in the Central African region. Mr. Fujita said that he hoped the workshop would offer a productive opportunity to execute the decisions adopted in Nagoya.

Mr. Henri Djombo, Minister of Sustainable Development, Forest Economy and the Environment of the Republic of the Congo, in a statement delivered by Mr Sébastien M'poussa, MSDFEE Director of the Cabinet, thanked participants for making the event possible. He said that the Central African region is located in the core of important ecological issues and that there exists a need to balance the ecological, economic and social functions of forests. Consequently, he noted that biodiversity management is a priority for Central African States. He thanked the Secretariat of the Convention and the Japanese Government and declared the workshop opened.

At its tenth meeting, held in Nagoya, Aichi Prefecture, Japan, in October 2010, the Conference of the Parties (COP 10) to the CBD, adopted a Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020, which contains five strategic goals and 20 headline targets, also known as the Aichi Biodiversity Targets. In adopting this strategy for the next decade, the Conference of the Parties urged Parties to develop national and regional targets, using the Strategic Plan as a flexible framework.

Following workshops for Southern Africa (held in Botswana), Europe (held in Germany), North Africa and the Middle East (held in Lebanon), East, South and South-East Asia (held in China) and West Africa (held in Senegal), the workshop in Brazzaville is the latest in a series of regional and subregional capacity-building workshops to strengthen national capacities for the development, implementation, reviewing, updating, and communication of national biodiversity strategies and action plans. The next capacity building workshop, for East Africa, will be held in Kigali from 27 to 30 June 2011.

For additional information, please see: www.cbd.int/nbsap/workshops2.shtml
