

**THE FIRST NATIONAL REPORT OF THE  
DPRK TO THE CONFERENCE OF  
PARTIES TO THE CONVENTION  
ON BIODIVERSITY**

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## **FOREWORD**

The DPRK has ratified the Convention on Biodiversity in October, 1994 which was adopted at UNCED in July, 1992.

The DPRK, implementing the obligations as a Party to the Convention, holds, continuously, the principle of environmental protection policy for the sake of the working people.

The DPRK is under difficult economic condition due to the flood damages in 1995 and 1996, severe drought in 1997 and other continuous natural disasters, yet, has organised works necessary for the convention with the recognition that the successful biodiversity conservation is related with present and coming generations, and also with the interest of nation, local and the world. And we could get some successes from the above efforts.

This National Report reflects the efforts for conservation and sustainable utilization of biodiversity for DPRK, especially the works to fulfill the Article 6 after the ratification of the Convention. The paper has been worked out in cooperation with the Enabling Activity project of the GEF. The paper has been drawn up with the efforts of several Ministries including Ministry of Land & Environment Protection. It follows the Decision and Appendix 2/17 of the 2nd COP which reads "Principle on National Report for Implementing Article 6".

A workteam of experts has been organised for the report. The workteam involves experts from the Ministry of Land & Environment Protection (MLEP) and the Academy of Sciences including experts from Ministries of Agriculture, Fishery, Education, Public Health, Forestry and State Construction Supervisory.

Two national workshops were held so far in the course of draft report. And the second national workshop was held with participation of experts and specialists of various sectors that contributed to the draft report and also, representatives of academic and civil organizations and of relevant sectors. The opinions collected from two national workshops have been of important influence to the report accomplishment. It will be the first national report of DPRK for the implementation of the Convention on Biodiversity.

Producing the report, we are looking forward to the biodiversity conservation enhanced, and to learn successful experiences of other nations in fulfilling the Convention, and to expand and develop the cooperation and exchange in this field to contribute to the global biodiversity conservation.

# **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

## **1. Biodiversity in DPRK.**

The physio-geographical condition composed of long peninsula that is linked with the Eurasian continent has continental and marine affection and is characterised with distinct eco-environment and ecological linkage from north to south. It also has long historical geography, that is long historical processes of evolution of diverse biologies. This special features brought diversity of ecosystem, bio-species and genes compare to the small size of territory.

Since the whole topography is covered by 80% of mountainous area, it has diverse forest ecosystems. There are unique alpine ecosystem in mountain terrains of 2,000m high above sea level, and unique river ecosystem covering 3.0% of the whole area for its having dense river network, and agricultural ecosystem covering 17% of the whole territory for its having long history of agricultural development.

According to the primary survey, there are 8,785 species of plant, 1,431 species of vertebrate which account 3.2% of world vertebrate species, 416 species of bird which account 4.5% of world aves.

It has about 6,000 years of history for agricultural development and long history of cultivation of medical plant. This enriched the gene resource.

The DPRK has numerous characteristics of biodiversity for having long history of biological formation; among vascular plant, 315 species of about 10% are of endemism and 41 species and sub species of about 2.9% of vertebrate are of endemism. And there are endangered, vulnerable and rare species in higher plant and vertebrate that account 158 species and 157 species, respectively. For this, it has high international and regional values.

## **2. National Strategy and Action Programme.**

The DPRK has ratified the "Convention on Biological Diversity" in October, 1994 and took several measures for its implementation and drew out the BSAP.

To the most, the DPRK has taken measures to strengthen the biodiversity conservation through strict execution of state law for environment protection, and the Government has adopted, promulgated and is carrying out the updated "Enforcement Regulations for Environment Protection Law". The protracted target for biodiversity conservation in DPRK is to put focus on turning the whole country into golden tapestry full of birds and animals, and to providing people with real benefits of natural resources through integrated and sustainable development and use of mountains, rivers and sea.

The BSAP reflects the 25 detailed objectives for the implementation of strategy for biodiversity conservation, which are the works to meet the state and international acknowledgement.

## **3. Cross-sectoral Action Plan and Policy**

The state level strategy and action plan are developed followed by sectoral plan under the detailed action targets, and the steps for its implementation are being specified.

The biodiversity conservation and its sustainable utilisation in relevant sectors such as land management, environmental protection, agriculture, fishery, forestry and construction are

closely linked with each sectoral action programme. Such sectoral programmes are to be combined in "General Plan for Land Construction".

#### **4. Sectoral Policies, Regulations, Action Plans and Programs**

For the practical execution of the Article 6 in the "Biodiversity Convention" in DPRK, great efforts are being made in those sectors such as Ministry of Land and Environment Protection, Ministry of Agriculture, Ministry of City Management, Ministry of Forestry, Ministry of Fishery, Ministry of Public Health, Ministry of Education and Academy of Sciences, and cross sectoral legislations, action plans and programmes and ways and means are, also, being presented and under execution.

The Ministry of Land and Environment Protection fulfilling its role as a subject unit for biodiversity conservation supports the legal and regulational basis of several aspects and prepares correct action plan. The "Law on Land and Environment Protection Control" was proclaimed in 1998 following the adoption and its promulgation of the "Law on Water Resource", which fortified the legal basis for the biodiversity conservation. In addition to this, 1996 presented the 10 Year Plan for Tree Plantation of 2 million ha. And in the period of 1996-1998, about 398,939ha were tree planted. Presently, the government vigorously pushes forward the resolution "For Covering the Whole Mountains with Green Forest" which was adopted in 1995 and combine it closely with restoration of damaged ecosystems caused by natural disaster. These efforts are incorporated with relevant sectors such as Ministry of Forestry and Ministry of Education.

Several units including Ministry of Fishery are in great efforts for biodiversity conservation in the sea, rivers and lake waters and following the adoption of the Convention, focused its efforts to the development and promulgation of the laws; the "Law on Fishery" in 1995 and the "Law on Controlling Sea Pollution". And assorted programmes for the protection and proliferation of the marine resource are mapped out and annually implemented one by one which result in successful execution with conservation of species diversity and ecosystems in the sea, rivers and lake waters.

The Academy of Sciences has worked out the detailed action plan to find scientific and theoretical answer for; concrete survey and review, scientific conservation and management and the way of sustainable use and etc., and is in success for its practical execution, providing scientific basis for enactment of all related laws.

#### **5. Future Actions and Measures for the Convention.**

For the first step to implement the "Biodiversity Convention" in the procedure of developing the National Report, the DPRK made efforts in formulating BSAP and thus resulting some progress. Yet, intensification is required for establishing laws and regulations to provide a legal basis for biodiversity conservation and its sustainable use. Especially, it is still necessary to organise the focal point to coordinate the practical activities, to perfect the integral system of conservation and management and to accelerate the personal training for biodiversity conservation.

The urgent action programme for specific review and conservation steps, mass enlightenment and public education on biodiversity is to publish the "Red Book".

Proposals and action programme for review of gene resource and its conservation and management reflect the foundation of Gene Bank and its operation however, it is, still, far for

its realisation.

To solve these issues, it is necessary to increase the Government concern and fund and at the same time, receives international aid for technical transfer and equipment. It is also essential to exchange good experiences with other countries, in time and this aims the scientific and technical exchange.



## **Chapter 1. INTRODUCTION.**

### **1.1. Biodiversity for DPRK and its Importances.**

#### **1.1.1. Present Status of Biodiversity.**

##### ***(1) Ecosystem diversity***

The DPRK is a peninsula which is a part of north-east Asia, and due to its physio-geographical conditions, its ecosystem can be classified into ecosystems of ; forest, alpine, rivers and lakes, wetland, coast and, sea and farm lands.

Forest ecosystem is composed of three types of forest which are; coniferous forest, broad leaved forest, coniferous and broad leaved mixed forest. The typical forests of coniferous trees are; *Abies nephrolepis*-*Picea jezoensis*, larch/*Larix olgensis*, pine-nut/*Pinus koraiensis* and pine/*Pinus densiflora* which belong to the subarctic forest zone. The broad leaved forest is composed of subarctic deciduous broad leaved forest and temperate deciduous broad leaved forest with oak as main species. The coniferous and broad leaved mixed forest is divided into 3 types according to the climate zone: subarctic evergreen coniferous-deciduous broad leaved forest; subarctic deciduous coniferous and broad leaved mixed forest; and temperate evergreen-deciduous coniferous and broad leaved mixed forest.

In the region of more than 2,000m high above the sea level are alpine ecosystems where the typical alpine vegetation communities are distributed. Because of high density of rivers, about 3.0% of total land area is covered with river ecosystem. And the DPRK has various sizes of wetland ecosystem in areas of tidelands, estuaries, large lakes, wetland of high mountain region and peatland. And as it is a peninsula, there is original coastal and marine ecosystem respectively in West and East Seas. Besides, about 17% of territory is composed of farmland ecosystem.

Thus, although the DPRK covers a small land area, it has special features of ecosystem diversity.

##### ***(2) Species diversity***

According to the primary survey, the number of plant species in DPRK is around 8,785, among which are higher plants of about 3,900 species. It is peculiar that DPRK with small territory is, relatively, rich in number of species that vascular plant has 204 families of 790 genera of 3,176 species. Among 1,431 species of vertebrates so far surveyed, fish has 865 species, amphibian 17, reptile 26, bird 416, mammal 107(79 species inhabit in land). It takes around 3.2% of world vertebrate species (45,417).

Presently, the studies on lower plant, invertebrate animals, bacterium and Actinomycetes are undergoing.

##### ***(3) Gene diversity***

The DPRK has a long history of agriculture and has files on history for 6,000 years of domesticated rice, bean, millet, sorghum and others.

The DPRK is recorded to have about 600 species of domesticated crops and is rich of gene resources. What is peculiar in cultivated plants of DPRK is that it has a very high rate of medicinal plants.

The livestock in DPRK are 50 races of 7 species such as cattle, pig, goat and sheep, while poultry has 30 breeds of 4 species such as hen, duck, goose, quail. And besides, there are several animals for leather production and medicinal use, and insects.

At present, the importance is considered to the survey on gene resource for wild fauna and flora that has deep relations with the domesticated species, and the study on this field has, recently, intensified.

### 1.1.2 Features of Biodiversity in DPRK

The DPRK is characterised to have rich species of fauna and flora and also, diversified in the formation of bio-species compare to the territorial size.

This places reason to that the DPRK is a peninsula geographically and that the southern and northern types of species had migrated and distributed actively during the glacial and interglacial epoch. And here includes number of species that have developed into endemic species through dynamics to the diverse natural and geographical conditions of the country after the glacial epoch.

This historical processes lay as a reason for having a number of relic species, the "living fossils" of tertiary period in the country.

The DPRK has high rate of endemic species in total plant species.

The endemic species among higher plant, so far, recorded are 315 species (including varieties and modifications that will be 542 species) which account for 10% of total higher plant species. There are 6 endemic genera that of 1 species of 1 genus in the world. In animals, 41 species and sub-species are endemism which takes 2.9% of vertebrate and of which takes fish the most of endemism which account for 33 species and sub-species in number.

There can be found a number of vulnerable and rare fauna and flora which are being decreased for their biological properties and for a number of artificial factors such as habitat loss.

We can divide the fauna and flora species in DPRK in line with the criteria of the World Conservation Union(WCU). And as for higher plant, they are as follows;

1. endangered species.....10
2. vulnerable species .....42
3. rare species .....76
4. reducing local populations .....26

**Total** .....158, which takes account 4.0% of total higher plant.

As for vertebrate, they are as follows;

1. endangered species 9
2. vulnerable species 29
3. rare species 119, which takes about 11% of total vertebrates.

### **1.1.3 International Importance of the Biodiversity in DPRK**

Biodiversity is a source of global life-support system and a principle basis for sustainable development of economy, as well.

The DPRK is not so rich in number of fauna and flora species as compared to the tropical countries such as Brazil and Indonesia. However, our country occupies an importance in location of north-east Asia for historical migration of fauna and flora, since it has geographical characteristics of composing a peninsula in north-east Asia. Especially, the peninsula is considered as a major transit site for migratory birds in north-east Asia.

Another importance occupied by DPRK for north-east Asia is that since it covers about 80% of mountains of whole area, the conservation and enhancement of forest ecosystem diversity plays a significant role in prevention of global warming. And also, the peninsula is considered to contribute to the sustainable development of fish industry of this tract with well conservation of aqua fauna and flora of coastal and marine ecosystem. Therefore, despite of small land area, the DPRK takes an indigenous place in north-east Asian biodiversity conservation and further, in global biodiversity conservation, which needs national and/or regional level of integrated measures for the active contribution to the country's biodiversity conservation.

## **1.2 The Objectives and Obligations of the Article 6 of the Convention**

### **1.2.1 The Position of the Article 6 in the Convention**

The text of the Article 6 in the Convention which reads "General measures for Conservation and Sustainable Use" is as follows;

- (a) Develop national strategies, plans or programmes for the conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity or adapt for this purpose existing strategies, plans or programmes which shall reflect, inter alia, the measures set out in this Convention relevant to the Contracting Party concerned; and
- (b) Integrate, as far as possible and as appropriate, the conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity into relevant sectoral or cross-sectoral plans, programmes and policies.

The Article 6 of the Convention has two principal meanings.

- To develop the strategies and policies of biodiversity conservation and its sustainable utilisation according to the situations of each countries, and reflect them into the national economic development programme.
- To work out the sectorial policies, programmes and counter measures with full considerations of biodiversity conservation and its sustainable utilisation in biodiversity sectors and relevant sectors of the government for each parties.

### **1.2.2 The Theme and Background for the First National Report to COP**

The Article 26 in the Convention stipulates as follows;

"Each Contracting Party shall, at intervals to be determined by the Conference of the Parties, present to the Conference of the Parties, reports on measures which it has taken for the implementation of the provisions of this Convention and their effectiveness in meeting the

objectives of this Convention."

The (a) in Item 4 in Article 23 of the Convention instructs that the COP shall formulate a framework and to examine the reports submitted by each parties. The way to submit the national reports of the parties is confirmed through 1st (December, 1994) and 2nd COP (November, 1995).

The three possible forms of national report for each party settled at 2nd COP are as follows;

The subject should be identified in advance and point out the focal point for the assessment report for the implementation of the Convention, however the items and priority projects identified in interim action programme of each party should be covered in the reports. The first theme shall address the adaptation measures for the implementation of the Article 6 in the Convention.

- It shall be the all-sphere assessment report of the implementation for each item in the Convention. This shall cover the present situation of the biodiversity of the country and general and concrete measures for the implementation of the convention.
- The above both forms shall be chosen, yet, in the primary stage, the former one and in follow-up stage, the latter one shall be chosen.

The 2nd COP reviewed the suggestion put by Secretariat of the Convention and adopted the decision 2/17 of the "the form and timing for the presentation of the national reports of the parties" and decided to evaluate the reports taking focus to the " general measures for conservation and sustainable utilisation" of the Article 6 in the Convention. Therefore, the time limit for the national report submission is settled to be up to the 4th COP and the future form and timing for presenting national report is to be settled at 4th COP.

In this connection, the 1st national report of the DPRK is prepared in proportion to the above extent.

### **1.2.3 The Objectives and Main Obligations for the preparation of the National Report under Article 6**

The objectives for the preparation of the national report under Article 6 are: to review the achievements and experiences of each party gained during the implementation of Article 6 of the Convention following the decision of the COP; to find out the gaps; to present papers on the further objectives and actiones for implementing the Article 6 of the Convention, so as to propel the work of each party to make full implementation of the obligation under each article of the Convention.

In this context, the detailed objectives for preparing the 1st National Report of the DPRK are;

- to review the state of preparation of national strategy, plan and measures for implementing the obligations of the Article 6 of the Convention post the assignment of the "Biodiversity Conservation" in 1992 and
- to review the effectiveness of the present strategy, policy, plan and measures pertaining to the biodiversity conservation and present statement of biodiversity conservation, clarify the gaps currently raised during the implementation of the Convention, define the actiones to be taken currently in DPRK, and assess the requirements from the execution of actiones.

Upon the above efforts, the draft report should be worked out, have a full consultation on it and complete at national workshop and submit it to the Secretariat of the Convention and 4th COP.

### **1.3 National commitment to the Convention, especially its Article 6 for the DPRK.**

#### **1.3.1 The National Strategy and Action Plan for Biodiversity Conservation.**

In order to implement all items in the "Biodiversity Convention", especially its Article 6 of the Convention, the development of National Strategy and Action Plan for Biodiversity Conservation should be given preferential treatment.

The "Biodiversity Conservation Strategy" is a programme for nation wide scale conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity. And it should define the principles and ways for implementing the "Biodiversity Convention" upon the basis of integral assessment of national bio-resources, personnel and institutional abilities, facilities and financial resources. In addition to this, the following contents:

- targets , policy and its ways and means for execution ,
- principles to comprise biodiversity conservation and its sustainable utilisation to the National Economic Plan,
- laws and regulations for biodiversity conservation and its sustainable use, and
- steps and measures, action plans for biodiversity conservation and its sustainable use in various sectors of national economy should be reflected and laid out in the "Biodiversity Strategy".

The Action Plan should lay out those actiones, priorities and implementing steps for achieving strategic targets.

Accordingly, the Action Plan should reflect concrete activities and tasks for biodiversity conservation and its sustainable utilisation, while presenting responsibilities of relevant sectors.

Also, show the timing of execution for each item and necessary budget account.

The National Strategy and Action Plan for Biodiversity Conservation is mapped out integrally with reflection of above requirements.

#### **1.3.2 The Existing Institutions and Responsibilities**

The importance in implementing the Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan is that all the relevant sectors shall work out concrete plans and proposals for implementation and execute with responsibility.

The bodies relevant to the biodiversity conservation and its sustainable use are; State Planning Commission, Ministry of Land and Environment Protection, Ministry of City Management, Academy of Sciences, Ministry of Forestry, Ministry of Agriculture, Ministry of Fishery, Ministry of Public Health, Ministry of State Construction Supervisory and Ministry of Social Security.

What is important for above ministries is that each sector should develop and implement detailed

plans for biodiversity conservation and its sustainable use, while at the same time, ensure full connections between sectors from the viewpoint of international and national significance.

And since the biodiversity conservation and its sustainable use is considered with regional features, it requires to enhance the role of local administration bodies.