



Convention on
Biological Diversity



Integrating Gender Considerations in National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans

Pilot Project Process and
Initial Considerations

November 2016



> Executive Summary

This note provides an overview of a pilot project undertaken in 2016 to build the capacity of developing country Parties to integrate gender into their revised national biodiversity strategies and action plans (NBSAPs). This project has been implemented by the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN), in collaboration with the Secretariat of

the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), under the framework of the CBD 2015-2020 Gender Plan of Action. This note focuses on three pilot country initiatives carried out in Mexico, Uganda and Brazil, outlining the approach undertaken, initial outcomes and considerations of relevance for developing country Parties.

> Introduction

Gender considerations have been reflected consistently in decisions under CBD since the adoption of the Convention, wherein Parties have recognized the need for women's full participation in efforts to manage and conserve biodiversity. Over the last two decades, over 50 CBD decisions have strengthened the mandate for an approach that reflects gender considerations. Most notably, the adoption of the 2015-2020 Gender Plan of Action by the Conference of the Parties at its twelfth meeting further reinforced the link between gender equality and biodiversity. A specific objective of the Gender Plan of Action is to mainstream gender into national biodiversity

strategies and action plans (NBSAPs), which themselves are required to be updated and strengthened in accordance with the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020, and its Aichi Biodiversity Targets.¹

The extent to which gender issues are integrated into NBSAPs, the principal instruments for implementation of the Convention at the national level, is significant in setting the framework for gender-responsive biodiversity planning and programming at the national and local levels.

> Pilot Project

With generous financial support from the Government of Japan, a pilot project was undertaken in 2016 to build the capacity of developing country Parties to integrate gender into their NBSAPs, as part of the process of revising these

plans to align with the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020. Implemented by the IUCN Global Gender Office (GGO) in collaboration with the Secretariat of the CBD, this project comprises three main components: (a) a global analysis

¹ Decision X/2, para 3 (c), urges Parties and other Governments, with the support of intergovernmental and other organizations, as appropriate, to implement the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 and in particular to review, and as appropriate update and revise, their national biodiversity strategies and action plans, in line with the Strategic Plan and the guidance adopted in decision IX/9 [...].

of NBSAPs transmitted to the Secretariat from 1993 to mid-2016;² (b) a series of three pilot country initiatives; and (c) communication and dissemination of recommendations and advice to other developing country Parties, through a variety of means.

Pilot country initiatives were carried out with the national Governments and stakeholders of Mexico, Uganda and Brazil to address the following objectives:

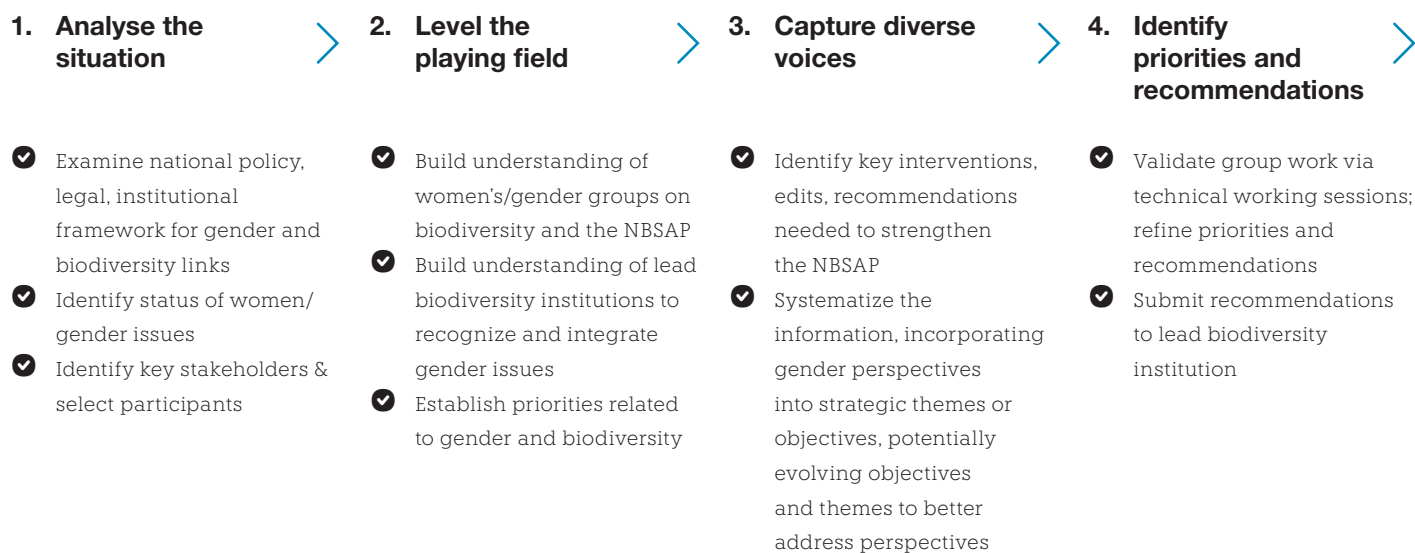
- Stimulate and facilitate efforts by developing country Parties to mainstream gender into their work under CBD;
- Promote gender equality, including building capacity of developing country Parties and relevant partners;
- Foster the full and effective contributions of women in the implementation of the Convention and the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity.

Pilot countries were at similar stages of revision of their NBSAPs, each having developed a draft document, which was then used as the basis for assessment and for the integration of key gender issues and targeted actions.

Process for Consideration of Gender Issues

Building on methodologies developed and applied to identify and integrate gender considerations for related environmental issues, such as climate change,³ IUCN developed a four-part approach to engage governments and stakeholders, strengthen national capacity on gender and biodiversity concerns, and integrate priority actions into the NBSAPs.

Summary of Methodology:



² A summary of the analysis is available in the note by the Executive Secretary on progress in implementing the Gender Plan of Action: update on mainstreaming gender considerations in national biodiversity strategies and action plans (UNEP/CBD/COP/13/8/Add.3).

³ <http://genderandenvironment.org/works/ccgaps/>

Step 1:

Analyse the situation

An analysis of the policy, legal and institutional framework related to gender and biodiversity was carried out for each country, as was a review to identify existing literature, national and subnational data, research and examples on gender and biodiversity specific to the country context.

Analysis revealed that each of the countries has relatively strong frameworks for integration of gender considerations in policies related to natural resource management and in national development plans. For example, Uganda's National Gender Policy (1997) promotes the integration of gender concerns in environmental policy planning, decision making and implementation at all levels to ensure sustainable social and economic development, while the country's policies pertaining to wildlife, forestry, fisheries and agriculture sectors each call for attention to gender issues. Mexico's National Development Plan 2013-2018 mandates the inclusion of gender perspectives as a cross-cutting issue, and the national programme for equality of opportunities and non-discrimination against women 2013-2018 (PROIGUALDAD) includes specific reference to harmonizing the rights of women with the implementation of the Convention. Brazil's national plans relating to women address the need for equitable sustainable development and to promote women's land rights, while gender equality is included as a cross-cutting element in national environmental policies.

The analysis also involved identifying key stakeholders and the selection of participants for the consultative process to identify and reflect gender issues. Selection criteria for participants included regional representation; participation in groups engaged in the use and management of natural resources, including biodiversity-related projects; and ability to effectively engage in discussions.

Step 2:

Level the playing field – Establish a common basis of knowledge

Consultation with lead national government offices on the opportunities for presentation and review of the draft NBSAPs led to the planning of a set of two consecutive workshops in each country, the first to engage women's groups and others active on gender issues on NBSAPs and gender and biodiversity links, and the second to share and review gender issues with national Government representatives and stakeholders. Workshops were designed to meet the following objectives: (a) to enhance stakeholder understanding of the NBSAP; (b) to strengthen understanding of the links between gender and biodiversity; (c) to enhance awareness of and capacity to address links with the international and national legal framework and the NBSAP, and implications for promoting gender equality in biodiversity discussions; and (d) to incorporate actions that promote gender equality in the NBSAP.

In the first workshop, information was shared with women's groups on the following topics:

- the CBD and its processes, including the CBD 2015-2020 Gender Plan of Action;
- national policy, legal and institutional frameworks related to gender and biodiversity;
- the national context regarding the status of women and of gender considerations with respect to biodiversity;
- the draft NBSAP.

These discussions provided the basis for women's groups and associated organizations to begin analysis of the draft NBSAP for inclusion of gender considerations, for which participants divided into groups to review the main strategic themes or objectives outlined in the document. These workshops revealed a low level of awareness of the NBSAP by women's groups, even those particularly active on environmental issues at the local level. This lack of awareness related to the biodiversity planning process stood in contrast to awareness and previous engagement in some cases in national processes related to climate change.

The second workshop provided an opportunity for discussion and exchange between national government officials and representatives of the women's and associated groups on the reflection of gender issues in the draft NBSAP document, involving further consideration of key strategic and thematic areas of the NBSAP. In Brazil, the second workshop was also expanded to serve as the national launch of the draft NBSAP, to open it for public consultation.

Step 3:

Capture diverse voices

During the course of a series of working group sessions and reporting back to the larger group, key gender issues and considerations emerged, first in the women's workshop, and reinforced, further discussed and prioritized in the national stakeholder workshop. In addition to specific text inputs, general recommendations were made, relating to institutional, thematic and process needs and issues.

Step 4:

Identify priorities and recommendations

Following the second workshop, technical sessions were held to review input received, to improve clarity and coherence of text edits, and to further prioritize issues where needed. A small number of participants were brought together for the technical review, including IUCN staff, national Government representatives and representatives from women's and associated groups. Participants were selected due to their diverse technical capacity, areas of work, and as representatives from different strategic objective working groups. The primary output from this final step of the process was a draft revised NBSAP incorporating gender considerations and submitted to the lead national biodiversity institution which, in some cases, was later made available for a formal process of public consultation.⁴

⁴ Brazil published its revised NBSAP reflecting inputs from the workshop, on 31 August 2016. Uganda transmitted its revised NBSAP reflecting workshop inputs on 19 October 2016.

> Initial Outcomes⁵

In addition to strengthening the integration of gender equality and women's empowerment in the NBSAPs, inputs developed through the workshop discussions also highlighted the importance of cultural diversity, through the enhanced reflection of indigenous peoples and local communities, and other aspects of diversity, such as intergenerational equity. The process itself also served to expand the consultation on the NBSAP, which was particularly valuable in some of the countries that had not yet undertaken a participatory process of development of the draft document.

As well as an extensive range of text inputs, this process also raised a number of key issues and recommendations related to NBSAP development and implementation, including policy and institutional considerations. Workshop participants identified gaps in the implementation of the legal, policy and institutional frameworks concerning gender and biodiversity, citing the need for greater policy and institutional coherence to promote and implement commitments on women's rights and gender equality across

sectors. Recommendations included the establishment of a gender task force under Brazil's official structure for the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity (PainelBio), as well as ongoing engagement with workshop participants on the revision and implementation of Uganda's NBSAP via a similar task force.

Limitations to this process were also acknowledged, a primary one being the short time during which the project activities were carried out. Ideally, the process of gender mainstreaming would have been initiated at the start of the NBSAP revision process, to ensure that the perspectives of women's groups and other stakeholders could fully inform development and planning, and further strengthen a shared understanding of gender and biodiversity issues among stakeholders. However, this process demonstrates the potential to recognize gender gaps at any point and to incorporate gender considerations even at later stages of planning. Implementation, monitoring and evaluation will all present new opportunities to strengthen gender responsiveness as well.

> Initial Considerations

Increase Awareness and Knowledge of NBSAPs and their Implementation

- Lack of awareness of the NBSAP (or the Convention) by women's groups and related stakeholders active in environmental management suggests opportunities to take advantage of synergies to support NBSAP implementation in a gender-responsive manner, and to maximize alternative funding streams may be lost. Lack of awareness also contributes to lesser input into NBSAP development and revision, as
- many people are not aware of opportunities such as public consultation processes, held primarily via the Internet.
- Lead ministries and agencies responsible for NBSAP development and implementation can take advantage of a wide network of strategic partners, including ministries responsible for women's affairs, women's organizations and those working to target women and gender issues in contexts relevant for biodiversity to support more effective, gender-responsive NBSAP implementation.

⁵ Initial outcomes do not include analysis of final revised NBSAPs from pilot countries.

Engage diverse participants in NBSAP development and implementation

- It is important that targeted stakeholders, such as women and women's groups, "see themselves" in the NBSAP and ensure that they are viewed as necessary stakeholders and agents for change, with their needs, ideas and priorities made visible. Involving stakeholders that can address gender considerations does not only ensure a more inclusive and participatory process of NBSAP development, it can also help to engage these stakeholders to support or lead implementation efforts.
- Likewise, ongoing engagement with these representatives is needed to ensure that they and the national and local groups they represent are aware of key points in the process where they can intervene. Discussions highlighted the need to plan how to bring the information and knowledge in the NBSAP to the local level, to bring in different actors for implementation. This engagement could also include non-traditional partners where relevant, such as non-governmental organizations, faith-based organizations, civil society organizations, community-based organizations, and others.

Develop/strengthen coordination mechanisms on gender and environment issues

- Development or strengthening of networks and/or task forces working on gender and environment issues is an important means to build capacity to coordinate efforts, strengthen knowledge and support a gender-responsive approach to biodiversity actions. Such coordination mechanisms can also enhance collaboration across ministries, departments and agencies responsible for environmental and gender issues to promote and implement gender commitments across sectors.

Apply gender mainstreaming principles

- It is important that women and indigenous peoples and local communities are explicitly included in the NBSAP and have specific initiatives to address their needs and priorities.
- Attention needs to be paid to how women are characterized in the NBSAP, to reflect and guide how they may be engaged in implementation processes. Rather than primarily focusing on women's vulnerabilities, women should be featured as key actors and agents of change, as important stakeholders in contributing to biodiversity conservation and sustainable use.
- Attention must also be paid to avoid implicit gender bias in the NBSAP. For example, some programmes and activities may be linked to land ownership, which limits the availability of the programmes to women in particular, given their limited ownership and access to land in most developing countries.
- Addressing gender considerations in NBSAPs includes targeting financing for gender mainstreaming and gender-specific activities.

Maximize synergies in the international and national context

- Mainstreaming gender considerations in NBSAPs aligns with the approach under the Sustainable Development Goals, wherein gender equality and women's empowerment are cross-cutting issues, and promotes links with national development plans where gender issues are important themes. Opportunities should be maximized to reinforce these links and build synergies in measures to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals and implement national development plans. This approach can further demonstrate the importance of biodiversity as the source of livelihoods and the contribution to the national economy.

Undertake research on gender and biodiversity linkages in the national context

- There are opportunities to capture more experience from initiatives at the local level, which can support objectives of the NBSAP and strengthen national reporting. Further research on gender and biodiversity can usefully build on the knowledge base on gender and environment themes, and gender and climate change in particular. Research and sharing of experience are also needed to promote and strengthen understanding and awareness of the relevance of gender to biodiversity conservation and sustainable use in the national context.

Collect sex-disaggregated data

- Sex-disaggregated data is lacking for most biodiversity initiatives, including to inform indicators
- the collection of sex-disaggregated data pertaining to NBSAP activities and outcome indicators is needed to identify gender gaps and opportunities to ensure equitable sharing of costs and benefits related to biodiversity. Similarly, qualitative impact indicators should be included as part of the monitoring and evaluation framework for NBSAPs, to better capture gender and biodiversity impacts and links.

For more information

As part of this project IUCN GGO has undertaken analyses on the extent that gender has been mainstreamed in NBSAPs and the Fifth National Reports presented by Parties to the CBD. A comparative analysis on the reflection of gender considerations in the draft and final revised NBSAPs by pilot countries is also being undertaken. Information on these analyses can be found on the websites of

IUCN

<http://genderandenvironment.org/>

CBD

<http://www.cbd.int/gender/>



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