

Item 5

Conceptual framework and guidance on how to assess the role of collective actions and the efforts of Indigenous and Local Communities

1. In paragraph 4(d) of the annex to decision XI/22 on biodiversity for poverty eradication and development, the Conference of the Parties requested the Expert Group on Biodiversity for Poverty Eradication and Development to “*develop a conceptual framework and guidance on how to assess the role of collective action and the efforts of indigenous and local communities in conserving biodiversity considering the critical role of indigenous and local communities in the stewardship and sustainable management of natural renewable resources, including exploring the role of non-market based approaches in this endeavour*”.

2. The world’s indigenous and local communities are as diverse as the ecological environments in which they live. Rather than being united by a common culture or experience, they are united by a common set of aspirations, including the aspiration to enjoy their traditional territories, to use traditional cultural practices, to have recognized rights to territories and resources on which their subsistence depends, to have the ability to participate in and have a say in decision-making processes that impact their well-being, and to pass all these on to future generations. Even if not all indigenous people are poor, indigenous and local communities are, in general, amongst some of the poorest communities in the world and even in relatively wealthy developed countries can be marginalised and suffer from discrimination. They frequently experience low educational participation rates and attainment levels, high levels of unemployment, poor health and lower life expectancy than the majority of the national population in the countries in which they live. Many indigenous and local communities remain marginalised from national modern day political and development processes.

3. Most indigenous and local communities inhabit areas of significant biodiversity. Many of them have cultivated, developed and used biodiversity in a sustainable way for thousands of years. Some of their practices have been proven to enhance biodiversity at the local level, and aid in maintaining healthy and productive ecosystems. Their contribution to the conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity goes far beyond their role as natural renewable resource and ecosystems managers. Their skills, knowledge and techniques provide valuable information to the global community and useful models for biodiversity and sustainable development policies. Furthermore, as on-site communities with extensive knowledge of local environments, indigenous and local communities are most directly involved with conservation and sustainable use. As highlighted by the Intergovernmental Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES) International Expert and Stakeholder Workshop on the Contribution of Indigenous and Local Knowledge Systems to IPBES: Building synergies with Science, held in June 2013, “in the face of unprecedented declines in biodiversity over past decades, it has become increasingly apparent that synergies must be built among knowledge systems in order to provide policy-makers and science practitioners with the best available knowledge to decide what urgent action must be taken to halt the rapidly accelerating degradation and loss of the biodiversity and ecosystem services that underpin sustainability, as well as resilience in the face of global change”.¹

4. Furthermore, many indigenous and local communities with access to their traditional territories and resources would not consider themselves poor. Poverty from an indigenous and local community perspective is likely to depend on the ability to exercise and enjoy their rights, including the freedom to practice and pass on to future generations, their traditional lifestyles.

5. As many natural renewable resources are common-pool resources, the role of collective action and of collective institutions in managing the sustainability of these resources is crucial both for biodiversity and for human wellbeing. Such role and practices explain why and how indigenous and local communities maintain and use biological resources and ecosystems in a sustainable way.

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The vanishing or weakening of such management systems, as well as changes in governance structures could explain many cases of overharvested and destroyed common-pool resources, referred as the “tragedy of the commons”². Scientific analysis on these systems, including research analysing the economic governance of the commons by Dr. Elinor Ostrom³, identified some “design principles” for the sustainable management of such resources⁴ and a framework for analysing sustainability of Social-Ecological Systems⁵. More recently, a conceptual framework was proposed for understanding the relationships between ecosystem services and poverty alleviation⁶.

6. Studies show that collective actions play a substantial role in enhancing adaptive capacity, and that it is beneficial to consider them in strategies. Social networking is an important component of collective actions for conservation of biodiversity, building adaptive capacity and enhancing well-being. The effectiveness of collective actions can be influenced by the mandate, capacity, and structure of government agencies both positively and negatively.

7. A conceptual framework and guidance could assist in identifying and recognizing the role of collective action and the efforts of indigenous and local communities in conserving biodiversity, including the contribution of their traditional knowledge, innovations and practices, and in doing so, could also explore the role of non-market based approaches in this endeavour. Such a framework should build upon existing and updated scientific and technical knowledge, and guidance and standards developed under the Convention including the ecosystem approach, the Addis Ababa Principles and Guidance for the Sustainable Use of Biodiversity and the draft Plan of Action on Customary Sustainable Use of Biological Diversity⁷ and other relevant CBD and related instruments.

8. Highlighting the role of collective action in biodiversity management for poverty eradication and development, the expert group meeting could propose that a framework consider:

- the research and analysis of common-pool resources and the factors that influence the emergence and performance of collective actions to develop a framework on collective actions. This may require a specific analysis approach;
- the types and roles of collective actions for biodiversity conservation, poverty alleviation, and adaptive capacity building, and to develop mechanisms or tools to monitor, account for and promote them;
- the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats to collective actions and provide guidelines for their effective recognition, support and enhanced implementation . This may include assessment of biological resource system characteristics, group characteristics, institutional arrangements, external environment;
- the key factors for successful collective actions, as well as the barriers to be addressed;
- the roles, contributions, and benefits of non-market based approaches as complementary to the market based ones;
- the development of guidelines for monitoring, accounting and valuation of non-market based approaches that benefit biodiversity for poverty eradication and sustainable development in

² The tragedy of the commons, in economics, refers to the depletion of a shared resource by individuals, acting independently and rationally according to their self-interest instead of the group’s long-term best interest

³ Sveriges Riksbank Price Awarded 2009 in Economic Sciences in Memory of Alfred Nobel

⁴ Orstom, E.,1990. *Governing the Commons: the Evolution of Institutions for Collective Action*. Cambridge University Press.

⁵ Orstrom, E. 2009. A General Framework for Analyzing Sustainability of Social-Ecological Systems. *Science* 325 (5939) : 419-422

⁶ Fisher J.A. and al. , 2013. *Understanding the relationships between ecosystem services and poverty alleviation : A conceptual framework, Ecosystem Services* : in press.:

⁷ Need to include the number for the report of the 8WG8j – draft decision on Plan of Action – to be considered for adoption at COP 12.

assessments, planning, decision-making and monitoring and reporting frameworks and activities.

The Expert Group may wish to consider the following ideas for possible inclusion in new recommendations and/or guidance for implementation

9. *Invites* Parties, other Governments, relevant organizations as well as indigenous and local community organizations, to submit relevant information, including best practices, and their views on a conceptual framework and guidance on how to recognize, assess and promote the roles of collective action and the efforts of indigenous and local communities in conserving biodiversity, considering the critical role of indigenous and local communities in the stewardship and sustainable management of natural renewable resources, including exploring the role of non-market based approaches in this endeavour.

10. *Requests* the Executive Secretary, taking into account the report of the expert group biodiversity for poverty eradication and development, in order to assist the SBSTTA in its work:

(a) To prepare a study on the role of collective action on biodiversity for poverty eradication and development with relevant partners, including through the development of special quantitative and qualitative indicators, as well as monitoring and reporting tools for incorporation of the information in National reports, and key guidelines to be considered during NBSAP revisions and their implementation.

(b) To prepare a study on the role, contributions and benefits of non-market based approaches to biodiversity for poverty eradication and development with relevant partners, through the development of special quantitative and qualitative indicators as well as monitoring and reporting tools for incorporation of the information in National Reports, and key guidelines to be considered during NBSAP revisions and their implementation.

11. *Requests* the Executive Secretary, in order to assist the Working Group on Review of Implementation in its work:

(a) To compile the information and views received and make the compilation available to the next meeting of the Working Group on Review of Implementation;

(b) Taking into account the information and views received, analyse the information and views received and to prepare draft elements of a conceptual framework.

12. *Requests* the Executive Secretary to make the information and views submitted, as well as the compilation available on a dedicated web page on biodiversity for sustainable development, as a tool to assist Governments and indigenous and local communities on these matters;

13. Finally, the Ad Hoc Working Group on Review of Implementation at its next meeting may wish to, based on the analysis of the information, the consideration from SBSTTA and views received and other relevant information, including a gap analysis, develop main elements of the conceptual framework, as well as suggest an indicative list of tasks, actors and timeframes for consideration by the Conference of the Parties.
