

EU submission in reply to Notification 2008-076 on the revision of the Strategic Plan of the CBD

In Decision IX/9, the Conference of the Parties invited Parties and observers to submit further views on the revision and updating of the Strategic Plan. This EU submission provides preliminary views on the revision and updating of the Strategic Plan, including a revised biodiversity target. The EU preliminary views on the MYPOW and the periodicity of COP meetings will be provided at a later stage during 2009.

Additionally, in the present submission, the EU also provides some preliminary views in response to the Notification 2008-125 on streamlining and making more explicit the roles of the CBD and the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands.

The EU recommendations for developing the draft strategic plan could be divided into three categories: design, content and implementation.

1. Design

- **Reviewing the current strategic plan** to identify achievements, as well as actions which remain to be partially or completely implemented and analyse the reason behind shortcomings in implementation. The revised Strategic Plan should **build upon the existing one**. Actions currently undertaken under the CBD as well as actions which have not yet -or only partially- been implemented should be considered in the elaboration of the next Strategic Plan.
- Applying a **fully inclusive, participatory and consultative approach**, considering the contributions and roles of relevant MEAs, international NGOs, UN agencies and other IGOs, including biodiversity-related conventions and the UNFCCC, as well as regional conventions in the development of the draft Strategic Plan, and develop further the particular role of the CBD and how synergies and efficiency can be improved, e.g. by avoiding the duplication of work and by promoting the use of the TEMATEA modules. The opportunities could be explored for coordinated discussions on the efficiency of operation of the so-called conservation cluster in the IEG process.
- As regards the Ramsar Convention in particular, several areas could be looked at in order to streamline and make more explicit the roles of the CBD and Ramsar Convention:
 - Explore ways to harmonise reporting (level, type and precision of data and time schedule) in order to avoid unnecessary workload on Parties to both Conventions;
 - Explore ways to avoid parallel treatment of same topics in both fora through enhanced discussions between national experts, the Governing bodies and Secretariats of both Conventions;
 - Explore ways to enhance coordination at the national level, for example by using the NBSAPs to strengthen implementation of common objectives of CBD and the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands;
- Emphasising the fact that the three objectives of the Convention are connected and equally important, the new Strategic Plan should pay particular attention to **sustainable use**. The challenges posed by a growing human population to biodiversity and ecosystem services would be a politically relevant focus of attention in this process. The achievement of the targets is highly dependent on what important “external” players do, e.g. business, civil society, other policy sectors. The EU flags the need to apply and further develop sectoral instruments and processes to enable mainstreaming, cooperation, involvement and partnerships at an ever-increasing scale.
- Considering the CBD strategy for **resource mobilisation** as an integral part of the strategic plan and as a priority for further elaboration.
- Applying **Communication, Education and Public Awareness** about biodiversity and its importance for human well-being, building on the approved Agenda for Action (this is different from increasing awareness about the CBD Secretariat).

2. Content

- Developing a **political long term vision or target** for the Convention building on the established three goals in its Article 2. The evaluation of the 2010 Target achievements should be taken into account. The vision/target should be designed to increase political momentum and therefore be easily understood by all stakeholders –including policy makers, business and the general public, and should ideally give an indication to actors in relevant sectors how they can contribute to its fulfilment. The long term vision/target should have a timeline.
- Formulating in addition **shorter term targets/goals**. These targets would act as milestones on the route towards the long term vision/target in order to promote concrete actions and implementation efforts, and guide the process towards the fulfilment of the long term vision/target.
- Targets and goals should be SMART (specific, measurable, achievable, realistic, timebound) whenever this is applicable, take into account actions currently undertaken and build on robust scientific evidence. The strategic plan should be specific on HOW and WHEN to achieve the targets/goals: the process and key steps to achieve long term vision/target and short term targets/goals should be made explicit. SMART targets/goals should be based upon the existing appropriate data sets with measurable variables related to biodiversity, having the baseline/reference year, ideally based on existing monitoring schemes and robust scientific evidence and being common for the range of biogeographic, geopolitical, social, economical and cultural conditions among Parties.
- **Building on existing 2010 indicators** -particularly those using time series data based on monitoring schemes- by analysing them and setting a baseline to assess progress.
- Considering including in the revised Strategic Plan the issue of improving quantitative measures of the status and values of biodiversity components and ecosystem services.
- Considering the complementary role of the CBD and other MEAs, including the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands when developing the goals and targets.
- Considering the need to recognize the services provided by ecosystems, in particular through economic valuations initiatives such as the TEEB (The Economics of Ecosystems and Biodiversity) report.

3. Implementation

- Emphasising the need for mutual reinforcement between the National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans on one side, and sectoral instruments such as those aiming to reach the UN Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), such as Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers and Strategies, on the other side.
- Prioritising the integration of biodiversity concerns into national sectoral and cross-sectoral policies as those policies are commonly the drivers of biodiversity loss, individually or by synergic effects and might also provide for positive effects.
- Highlighting the need to implement the CEPA priority actions at the national level, encouraging Parties to pay special attention to the need for CEPA materials and tools in local languages to raise the profile of biodiversity and its importance worldwide
- Further consider the role that the Millennium Ecosystem Assessment Conceptual Framework can play in the development and revision of NBSAPs.

Final remarks:

Monitoring and assessment of the implementation of the updated Strategic Plan was not explicitly mentioned by the COP. This is nevertheless a crucial issue, especially with regard to the work of the CBD bodies. The CBD has for some time emphasised its shift from policy development to practical implementation and the role of the Strategic Plan is essentially to guide this process. The MYPOW should then be developed to operationalise the Strategic Plan.

Furthermore it is essential for the Strategic Plan to be broadly endorsed; therefore the process should involve all relevant stakeholders from the very beginning. The long term vision should be adopted at the highest level. Taking into account the need for involving other UN agencies and bodies as well as other biodiversity related conventions and relevant stakeholders in the development and implementation of the Strategic Plan, due consideration should be given in establishing a fully inclusive mechanism for the development of the Strategic Plan, including an UN interagency group and, in parallel a broad consultation process with stakeholders to feed into the CBD process on the drafting of the Strategic Plan.