

OCTOBER 2012 • Issue 7

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CBD NEWSLETTER FOR CIVIL SOCIETY

## SPECIAL FOCUS

### ACHIEVING THE Aichi Biodiversity Targets

Five Heads of Agencies of the Aichi Biodiversity Targets Task Force (CITES, FAO, GEF, IFAD, UNESCO) discuss the Aichi Targets, the challenges, and civil society involvement



### Synthetic biology

A new and emerging issue for the CBD

### Global biodiversity financing

The great challenge for Hyderabad



Secretariat of the  
Convention on  
Biological Diversity

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[square brackets] is a newsletter focusing on the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) and civil society. It aims to draw content and opinion from relevant individuals, organizations and members of civil society and provide information on issues of importance to the CBD, and on views and actions being undertaken by civil society organizations.

This newsletter aims to present a diversity of civil society opinions. The views expressed in the articles are the views of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the views of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity, its Secretariat or the CBD Alliance.

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## Link to previous editions of [square brackets]

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Convention on  
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## MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE SECRETARY

# Moving towards implementation

with **Braulio Ferreira de Souza Dias** ●

Executive Secretary of the Convention on Biological Diversity

Building on the momentum of the successful biodiversity summit in Nagoya, with the adoption of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 and its Aichi Targets, the global biodiversity community is set once again to rise to the challenge of ensuring the conservation and preservation for future generations of our planet's biological diversity. The eleventh meeting of the Conferences of the Parties (COP 11) to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), being held in Hyderabad under the motto 'Nature protects if She is protected', will attempt to mobilize the forces necessary to mainstream biodiversity into all sectors of society, assess progress made in translating the Aichi Targets into National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans, and, importantly, discuss resource mobilization strategies required at the global, national and local levels to realize the Strategic Plan.

My priorities during my term as Executive Secretary are to try to move the CBD process towards reducing the number of decisions on policy and dedicate more time towards enabling implementation. This includes pushing for an early ratification and entry into force of the Nagoya Protocol on Access to Genetic Resources and the Fair and Equitable Sharing of Benefits Arising from their Utilization; enhancing the support from the Secretariat and the process to the implementation of the Convention and its Protocols; and, mainstreaming biodiversity into all societal and economic sectors and sustainable development. To achieve this we need the full engagement of all sectors – from business to NGOs to indigenous peoples and local communities.

The NGO community has played, and continues to play, a key role in advancing the three objectives of the Convention. In this edition of the *[square brackets]* newsletter we feature a range of articles and viewpoints covering several of the issues up for discussion in Hyderabad that help stress this important role, such as articles on community action and getting young people actively involved in combatting biodiversity loss. We also have articles examining resource mobilization, what to expect at COP 11, and synthetic biology, a new and emerging issues for the CBD.

In addition, we have a very interesting and informative Question & Answer segment featuring the Heads of six of the 27 international agencies, organizations and environmental conventions that comprise the Aichi Biodiversity Targets Task Force that was established in September 2011 to help bring cooperation and coherence of action among major organizations to the implementation of the Strategic Plan and the realization of the Aichi Targets. The Heads of Agency replied to questions on the challenges of



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achieving the Aichi Targets and how best civil society, indigenous peoples and local community organizations can work together with these organizations in our mutual efforts towards achieving the Targets.

Much as the purpose of this newsletter is to encourage dialogue between, and provide a voice to, a broad range of civil society stakeholders on significant biodiversity issues, it is critically important that all stakeholders become actively involved in helping to implement the Strategic Plan. In Hyderabad, government delegates will be joined by representatives of civil society, sub-national and local authorities, the private sector, youth, indigenous leaders, development agencies and parliamentarians in discussions and parallel meetings that have, as their goal, support for achievement of the objectives of the Convention on Biological Diversity. For our well-being and that of our planet, we have to act now. We cannot allow ourselves to take nature for granted. ❖

# PERSPECTIVES

At the margins of the Sixty-sixth session of the United Nations General Assembly in September 2011 27 of the largest international agencies, organizations and environmental conventions signed a memorandum of understanding that created the Heads of Agencies of the Aichi Biodiversity Targets Task Force. The Task Force provides a platform for agencies to coordinate their activities in support of the achievement of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 and its Aichi Biodiversity Targets. The [square brackets] editorial board posed three questions to the heads of six of the member organizations asking how their agency is contributing to the objectives of the task force, the challenges in doing so, and how civil society, indigenous peoples, and local community organizations can work with their respective agencies in achieving the Aichi Targets.



## Achim Steiner

*Executive Director, United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP)*

### How is UNEP contributing to the objectives of the Task Force?

UNEP's Green Economy Initiative and the Economics of Ecosystems and Biodiversity are bringing forward new avenues for wealth generation, development and employment opportunities and pathways to eradicate poverty that put biodiversity and ecosystems at the centre of economies North and South.

We are also directly supporting governments to address many of the Aichi Biodiversity Targets in order to achieve the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020. In collaboration with IUCN for example, another member of the Task Force, UNEP's World Conservation Monitoring Centre (WCMC) maintains the World Database on Protected Areas.

It is an invaluable information source for governments and non-governmental stakeholders which informs the CBD and the wider world on progress in achieving Aichi Target 11 on protected areas. In addition, UNEP facilitates the Biodiversity Indicators partnership that brings together many organizations, including several Task Force members in developing indicators for measuring progress toward the full suite Aichi Biodiversity Targets.

UNEP is currently assisting six African countries to develop, implement, and review their Access and Benefit-Sharing (ABS) frameworks with a view to enhancing ratification and implementation of the Nagoya Protocol through several initiatives. In addition, UNEP has developed guidance on Bio-cultural Community Protocols (BCPs), to guide development of local systems for access and benefit-sharing of natural resources for local communities. A follow-up phase has recently been initiated specifically to address access and benefit-

sharing of coastal and marine resources through guidance on coastal BCPs.

### What are the main challenges to achieving the Aichi Targets and how can your agency help overcome them?

The underlying causes for the continuing loss of biodiversity are less well understood than the direct causes but at the centre of many environmental challenges are unsustainable patterns of consumption and production that in turn are driving habitat degradation, pollution, invasive alien species and climate change with direct impacts on biodiversity. An inclusive Green Economy is now, as a result of RIO +20, accepted as an important tool towards achieving a sustainable century. As cooperation is the key word of the Task Force, there is also the important analysis and guidance being set by the United Nations Management Group which UNEP hosts on behalf of the UN System and is chaired by the Executive Director—it brings together specialized agencies programmes of the UN, including the environmental conventions such as the CBD. Through the EMG, the UN System collaborates on a range of issues that address the underlying causes of biodiversity loss through Issue Management Groups on green economy, sustainability management, environmental and social sustainability, international environmental governance, and on biodiversity itself. Let me also highlight UNEP's work with the financial and business sectors, through, among others, our work on valuation, economics and trade, and the UNEP Finance Initiative.

### How can civil society, indigenous peoples, and local community organizations work with your agency to achieve the Aichi Targets?

UNEP cooperates with non-governmental actors on a variety of issues. For example, as a partner in the Indigenous and Community Conserved Areas (ICCA) Consortium, UNEP works with indigenous peoples on a registry for ICCAs, with the aim of increased information about these special areas, documentation of their values, enhanced understanding of their purposes and impacts, and increased engagement of local and traditional communities in the biodiversity conservation and policy arenas. This supports in particular Aichi targets 11 and 18. The above-mentioned Biodiversity Indicators Partnership, supporting measuring progress toward all Aichi Targets, includes a number of civil society and indigenous peoples organizations.

## PERSPECTIVES



## John E. Scanlon

*Secretary-General, Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES)*

### How is CITES contributing to the objectives of the Task Force?

The CITES Secretariat has been working with Parties and other stakeholders to revise the CITES Strategic Vision: 2008 – 2013 in light of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 and its Aichi Targets, adopted at the 10th meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the CBD. This work is broadly mandated under Decision 15.10 of the Conference of the Parties to CITES and currently includes the following actions: proposed revision of the CITES Strategic Vision to expressly refer to the Strategic Plan and Aichi Targets; proposed extension of the Strategic Vision to 2020; mapping of the Strategic Vision objectives and indicators against the Aichi Targets; proposed revision of the CITES national biennial report format so that it gathers information on the implementation of indicators for the CITES Strategic Vision and relevant Aichi Targets; and proposed decisions for consideration at the 16th meeting of the Conference of the Parties (CoP16) to be held in Bangkok, Thailand from 3 to 15 March 2013. Additional contributions to the objectives of the Task Force will be based on future policy guidance provided by CoP16.

CITES actively participates in other cooperative mechanisms such as the Biodiversity Liaison Group (comprising the executive heads of six global biodiversity-related conventions) and the Environment Management Group (a UN system-wide coordination body, with an Issue Management Group on Biodiversity), which are helping to coordinate the efforts of conventions and UN agencies towards achieving the Strategic Plan and Aichi Targets.

### What are the main challenges to achieving the Aichi Targets and how can your agency help overcome them?

There is a recognized need for more effective cooperation and coherence among national-level counterparts for CITES and other international conventions and agencies. To address this need, the CITES Secretariat has developed guidance for CITES Parties on contributing to the development, review, updating and revision of National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans (NBSAPs). It has also been pro-active about and supportive of visible and practical cooperation with other agencies in the Task Force, for example in connection with meetings of international instruments (like CBD), organizations (like UNEP and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations) and bodies (like the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services).

The Aichi Targets are quite ambitious and currently available human, technical and financial resources for their achievement are fairly modest. The CITES Secretariat has been working intensively to improve Parties' access to finance, including through the Global Environment Facility and various innovative sources of funding - and it is also helping to make best use of other funding opportunities.

The Aichi Targets are largely outcome-oriented targets, while existing CITES targets are largely process-oriented targets. Work has therefore been underway to more closely align these two types of targets and related activities. Such an alignment will help to demonstrate more clearly and consistently how CITES has contributed to the recovery or maintenance of animal and plant species throughout their range at a level consistent with their role in relevant ecosystems—and how it has contributed in a tangible manner to human well-being.

### How can civil society, indigenous peoples, and local community organizations work with your agency to achieve the Aichi Targets?

Since its coming into force in 1975, there has been extensive participation in CITES by a range of civil society actors. With a few notable exceptions, however, indigenous and local communities have not had a very active role in CITES meetings.

In Resolution Conf. 8.3 (Rev. Cop13) of the Conference of the Parties to CITES, it is recognized that commercial trade may be beneficial to the conservation of species and ecosystems or to the development of local people when carried out at levels that are not detrimental to the survival of the species in question. It is further recognized that implementation of CITES-listing decisions should take into account potential impacts on the livelihoods of the poor.

A Working Group on Livelihoods, established under the CITES Standing Committee, has visited the local communities in South America which play an important role in the management of vicuña populations (a camel species) and which engage in the legal, sustainable and traceable trade of vicuña wool and products. This visit and related discussions helped to inform the Working Group's development of a proposed resolution on CITES and livelihoods, as well as a draft toolkit for the rapid assessment of impacts of the implementation of CITES listing decisions and draft voluntary guidelines to address any negative impacts, for consideration at CoP16.

Paragraph 203 in *The Future We Want*, adopted at Rio+20, recognizes “the important role of CITES, an international agreement that: stands at the intersection between trade, environment and development; promotes the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity; should contribute to tangible benefits for local people; and ensures that no species entering into international trade is threatened with extinction”. Such text is reflective of the continued relevancy of this almost 40-year old Convention to achievement of the Aichi Targets.



## José Graziano da Silva

*Director-General, Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO)*

### How is FAO contributing to the objectives of the Task Force?

The mandate of FAO is to raise levels of nutrition, improve agricultural productivity, better the lives of rural populations and contribute to the growth of the world economy including through sustainable management and utilization of natural resources, such as land, water, air, climate and genetic resources, for the benefit of present and future generations. FAO's governing bodies adopt policies, global plan of actions and instruments that promote sustainable agriculture.

With the participation of FAO, the knowledge related to food and nutrition security, as well as the views of the food and agriculture sector, is brought to the attention of the Task Force. In this context and as per *The Future We Want*, agreed in Rio in 2012, where Heads of State and Government, in renewing their commitment to sustainable development, reaffirmed (Para 111) *"the necessity to promote, enhance and support more sustainable agriculture, including crops, livestock, forestry, fisheries and aquaculture, that improves food security, eradicates hunger and is economically viable, while conserving land, water, plant and animal genetic resources, biodiversity and ecosystems and enhancing resilience to climate change and natural disasters. We also recognize the need to maintain natural ecological processes that support food production systems."* FAO, in cooperation with other members of the Task Force and others including the civil society, will continue to promote sustainable agriculture.

### What are the main challenges to achieving the Aichi Targets and how can your agency help overcome them?

The Aichi Targets are very comprehensive, they have been developed to address all the facets of biodiversity and to mobilize all the sectors that are dependent or can have an impact on it. Through the different processes and intergovernmental bodies established within FAO, countries have developed and adopted a number of instruments, conventions, codes of conducts, guidelines, designed to improve our ability to produce more food while, at the same time, reducing our impact on the planet. Many of these instruments are biodiversity related and, it is my belief that when fully implemented, our biodiversity would be much better off and livelihoods improved.

We should also never forget that while the targets are global the challenges are at the local level. Implementing the instruments that the international community has developed at local level will require a continuous dialogue and an increasingly effective collaboration between sectors: the

agriculture world should increasingly be able to speak with the environment world and with the many others involved and vice versa.

To give you an example, member countries of FAO have established a number of national focal points on agriculture issues in sectors that are also directly relevant to biodiversity, such as forestry, fisheries, genetic resources of plants, of animals, of fishes and others. These focal points should be working with national CBD and other focal points. In addition, FAO's decentralized structure, with regional, subregional and national offices, can facilitate the involvement of these focal points in the design and implementation of national or local policy and action plans related to biodiversity.

### How can civil society, indigenous peoples, and local community organizations work with your agency to achieve the Aichi Targets?

Civil Society through its different associations, organizations and platforms, is playing a key role in participating along with policy makers and decision makers in FAO's food security and other technical discussions. In these discussions, Civil Society constantly reinforces the message of finding ways of producing food and using natural resources in a more respectful and sustainable manner.

Of particular relevance are the interventions and work of indigenous peoples and local communities. Through centuries, indigenous people, and other minority and ethnic groups have developed their own livelihoods in close contact and harmony with nature. Unfortunately, mainstreamed economic growth thinking, has ended up in constant violations to their ancestral rights and culture (customs, traditions, knowledge, and values). Being the people at the ground level and thus in close contact with biodiversity and nature, FAO recognizes them as the custodians of biodiversity, holders of traditional and adapted agroecological practices and of relevant knowledge that is embodied in their cosmogony and beliefs. Their practices are critical for the conservation and sustainable utilization of biodiversity along the Aichi targets.

The biodiversity knowledge of indigenous peoples and local communities is crucial in the quest for expanding the number of crop families and varieties that will constitute the future food baskets of the world. Some of these "forgotten crops" were long abandoned in favor of mass production and mono-culture. Civil Society and FAO will work together to promote agroecological practices, restore biodiversity and ecosystem resiliency, improve rural livelihoods, protect heritage production systems and produce enough, good and nutritious food in a sustainable way.

FAO in its work with indigenous peoples and local communities, is committed to respect the principles of Free, Prior and Informed Consent and their rights over land and natural resources. Instruments like the 2012 endorsed Voluntary Guidelines on the Governance of Tenure are a good example of how the collaboration between FAO, Civil Society, local communities and indigenous peoples can result in tangible outputs aligned with the Aichi targets.

## PERSPECTIVES



## Kanayo F. Nwanze

*President, International Fund  
for Agricultural Development  
(IFAD)*

### How is IFAD contributing to the objectives of the task force?

Biodiversity is key to the goal of global food and nutrition security and to the creation of resilient livelihoods for poor rural people. The International Fund for Agricultural Development works to help poor rural women and men in developing countries escape from poverty. These people often farm some of the most remote and ecologically fragile areas in the world, and neglected and under-utilized species may contribute significantly to their diets and incomes. As a contribution to the Aichi Biodiversity Targets, IFAD works to better promote biodiversity conservation, and to tackle factors contributing to habitat loss due to agricultural activities.

IFAD has funded loans worth over US\$500 million for 39 investment projects that explicitly focus on biodiversity and natural resource management, and 44 grants with a total value of US\$42 million. With a particular concern for indigenous peoples and poor smallholder farmers, we focus on several themes related to biodiversity, including crops that grow in marginal areas; medicinal plants; natural resources management; eco-tourism; and institutional capacity building for climate change adaptation.

For example, an IFAD grant to Oxfam Italia, “Addressing marginalization of poor farmers and migrants from Morocco, Senegal and Ecuador through market linkages and promotion of diversity”, has underlined the importance of neglected and underutilised species to promote more integrated and diversified cropping patterns. Their added value lies in their nutritional properties, the interest they create in national and international markets and thus their positive impact on small-scale producers’ incomes. These species are also more resilient to climate change, as they are often more drought tolerant, have shorter cropping seasons and thrive with the use of traditional and organic inputs. The grant programme achieved major results. In Ecuador for example, production of amaranth increased by 180% and sales by 115%. The producers involved in the pilot projects saw their annual incomes increase by 20%.

### What are the main challenges to achieving the Aichi Targets and how can IFAD help overcome them?

Mainstreaming biodiversity requires concerted efforts, strong partnerships and united voices. IFAD has made ecosystem resilience a strategic objective. This means ensuring a natural resource and economic asset

base for poor rural women and men that is more resilient to climate change, environmental degradation and market transformation. To do this, we promote environmental sustainability and resilience to risks associated with natural resource degradation and climate change. We also help poor rural women and men to manage natural resources more efficiently and sustainably.

Through a grant of US\$1.5 million approved in 2011, IFAD is supporting a new mechanism to prioritize conservation and use of biodiversity for poverty reduction – the Benefit-sharing Fund of the International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture. We also share knowledge with other organizations working on biodiversity, including Bioversity International, Oxfam Italia, Oxfam Novib and the United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity itself. An IFAD-funded grant to Bioversity International, “Development of Strategies for In Situ Conservation and Utilization of Plant Genetic Resources in Africa”, showed that farmers in Mali and Zimbabwe maintain biodiversity on their farms, producing 11 different kinds of corn. They do so for three main reasons: to manage risk, maximising stability for drought years or against pests and diseases; to optimise factors of production, for example to balance labour, water or other input requirements such as wood necessary for cooking; and for diversity of uses, including for different recipes.

### How can civil society, indigenous peoples and local community organizations work with IFAD to achieve Aichi Targets?

IFAD works to empower poor rural women and men, including marginalized groups such as indigenous peoples and ethnic minorities. IFAD has developed expertise in strengthening the skills, knowledge and confidence of poor rural people and in supporting their capacity to organize effectively and participate in the decisions that affect their lives. The organization coordinates the Farmers Forum and the Indigenous Peoples Forum, providing platforms for dialogue between representatives of these groups and IFAD Member States. IFAD has a recognized comparative advantage in helping to build the capacity of smallholder farmers, indigenous peoples and community-based organizations to bring tangible benefits to their members, and to participate in relevant institutional and governance processes. Ongoing activities include:

- Expanding policy engagement in IFAD’s developing Member States by working with governments, farmers’ organizations (local, national and regional), indigenous peoples’ organizations and other partners to promote comprehensive and coherent rural development policies for poverty reduction and food security.
- Assisting governments in putting in place policy, legal and regulatory frameworks, and in developing the necessary institutions to enable dynamic agricultural value chains to emerge, which can respond to market demand and contribute to national food and nutrition security.
- Continuing to work with indigenous peoples and ethnic minorities to ensure that they play a more effective role in policy debates and institutional processes that affect their lives.





## Irina Bokova

*Director-General, United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)*

### **How is UNESCO contributing to the task force's objectives?**

In November 2011, two months after the establishment of the Task Force, I presented a plan to the 36th session of the UNESCO General Conference to reorganize UNESCO's rich portfolio of biodiversity-related programmes and activities, including its normative work, into a more effective and coherent UNESCO Biodiversity Initiative.

This is UNESCO's concrete response to the need to mainstream biodiversity through all of its work, in line with the UN system-wide Strategic Plan on Biodiversity. I intend to share the lessons we learn from our experience with all members of the Task Force, in order to strengthen inter-agency coordination and effective action.

I see the UN Decade on Biodiversity as an opportunity we must seize to raise the profile of biodiversity with Governments, societies and all actors. UNESCO is gearing up to play a central role -- in educating about and communicating on biodiversity, in strengthening the biodiversity science-policy interface, and in promoting diversity for sustainable development, including the mutually-reinforcing links between cultural and biological diversity.

### **What are the main challenges to achieving the Aichi Targets and how can your agency help overcome them?**

Our goal is to deepen communication, to enhance education and to raise public awareness for and about biodiversity. Through each of these angles—known as CEPA—UNESCO actively contributes to the implementation and periodic revision and evaluation of the Convention on Biological Diversity CEPA programme.

UNESCO is also leading the UN Decade on Education for Sustainable Development, in which biodiversity is a priority. We are promoting formal as well as non-formal educational materials in order to support the conservation of biodiversity and the maintenance of biodiversity-

dependent services. Only education can lay the ground for a paradigm change in thinking and behaving.

We work also to strengthen communication between science, policy and society on issues pertaining to biodiversity, its values and the services it provides for human well-being. UNESCO can help here, by promoting and supporting mechanisms and platforms for exchange between science and policy—through the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services, as well as UNESCO scientific programmes and initiatives in the areas of terrestrial ecosystems, water, oceans, biodiversity, science education, science policy, disasters reduction and engineering.

### **How can civil society, indigenous peoples, and local community organizations work with your agency to achieve the Aichi Targets?**

UNESCO works with civil society, indigenous peoples and local community organizations in a range of ways. At the local level, the Organization facilitates community engagement in biodiversity conservation and management through such mechanisms as the Local and Indigenous Knowledge Systems (LINKS) programme and the World Network of Biosphere Reserves. These allow for local leadership and engagement in conservation, research, education and management. I would point, for instance, to the ongoing development through LINKS of indigenous educational materials by the Mayangna indigenous communities of the BOSAWAS Biosphere Reserve in Nicaragua, as well as the community-driven establishment of the Utwe Biosphere Reserve in the Federated States of Micronesia.

At the global level, UNESCO supports the engagement of indigenous peoples and local communities and their exchange of knowledge and views on environmental change through, for instance, such internet platforms as Climate Frontlines. UNESCO engages closely with international indigenous non-governmental organizations and forums -- such as the International Indigenous Forum on Biodiversity, which coordinates indigenous input to the Convention on Biological Diversity and other international environmental meetings and provides advice to government parties.

We do all of this, and we are gearing up to do more. Currently, we are developing an organization-wide policy to guide our engagement with indigenous peoples. Once completed, this policy will further strengthen the ability of the Organization to work effectively towards their empowerment.

## PERSPECTIVES



**Dr. Naoko Ishii**  
*CEO and Chairperson, Global  
 Environment Facility (GEF)*

#### How is GEF contributing to the objectives of the Task Force?

As the financial mechanism for the CBD for more than 20 years, the GEF has been funding the achievement of the Aichi Targets even before the targets were ever formalized at COP-10. Working in partnership with the GEF agencies and GEF-eligible Parties, the GEF has provided \$3.1 billion in grants and leveraged an additional \$9 billion in co-financing for more than 1,000 biodiversity projects in over 155 countries. These country-driven GEF projects leverage biodiversity investments and help mainstream GEF resources into development planning at the national level, thereby coordinating resource flows to projects and programs that can make significant contributions to the Aichi Targets.

Key progress to date includes:

- As the largest funding mechanism for protected areas (PAs) worldwide, the GEF has invested in over 2,809 PAs, covering more than 708 million ha. The GEF has provided more than \$ 2.2 billion to fund protected areas, leveraging an additional \$5.55 billion in co-financing from project partners.
- The GEF has supported 60 countries to implement system-wide protected area finance strategies through a combination of conservation trust funds (40 worldwide totaling \$300 million), payment for ecosystem services schemes, revolving funds, tourism fees, ecosystem service valuation and other financial mechanisms to provide steady, reliable funding for protected area management and biodiversity conservation.
- The GEF has supported 233 projects supporting marine protected area management totaling \$1.4 billion of GEF resources from all GEF focal areas, which has leveraged \$6.8 billion for a total of \$8.2 billion.
- The GEF has supported the mainstreaming of biodiversity in 274 million ha of productive landscapes and seascapes.
- The GEF has funded more than 57 projects for a total of \$239 million in grants to build capacity in Access and Benefit Sharing (ABS). The grants leveraged approximately \$593 million in co-financing from various partners for a total of \$832 million directed toward ABS objectives.

#### What are the main challenges to achieving the Aichi Targets and how can your agency help you overcome them?

The Aichi Targets provide a discrete measuring stick for assessing progress in achieving the Strategic Plan's mission to "take effective

and urgent action to halt the loss of biodiversity in order to ensure that by 2020 ecosystems are resilient and continue to provide essential services thereby securing the planet's variety of life, and contributing to human well-being and poverty eradication."

Clearly, a plan of such scope and vision will require creative responses from all stakeholders, particularly to find the necessary financial resources to translate decisions into actions on the ground. Assessments of the global financing requirements for implementation of the strategic plan are underway, including the financial needs assessment for the GEF-6 replenishment and the High-Level Panel on Global Assessment of Resources for Implementing the Strategic Plan, co-sponsored by the Governments of India and the United Kingdom. In addition, the GEF is currently supporting countries to revise their National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans (NBSAPs); a key element of the revised NBSAPs will be resource mobilization strategies to help close the funding gap at the national level. Although none of these studies have yet concluded, initial estimates of the financial resources required are very high.

The GEF, in its role as the financial mechanism of the CBD and consistent with its mandate, is poised to provide the catalytic funding necessary to help countries realize the objectives in the Strategic Plan. However, achieving the Aichi Targets will require more than money: it demands new ways of designing and implementing biodiversity projects and programs. The GEF believes that from a resource programming perspective, a response of sufficient scale to achieve the Aichi Targets will at least require the following elements:

- Embarking on creative financing strategies for protected area systems that marry old and new approaches to catalyze diverse and larger funding streams from Government as well as the private sector for protected area expansion and management.
- Designing protected area systems to be resilient to the impacts of climate change so that they are sustainable.
- Working across sectors and GEF focal areas to advance the expansion of marine protected areas and improve fisheries management, while leveraging greater co-financing than can be done by biodiversity funding alone.
- Ensuring that biodiversity mainstreaming exploits the critical added value provided by many non-traditional actors (i.e., productive sectors, banking and finance) in advancing the sustainable use of biodiversity, thereby unleashing capital to support and build capacity of biodiversity-based businesses and producers of certified and biodiversity-friendly goods and services.
- Scaling-up investments through creative use of programming approaches now possible in the GEF, such as the SFM/REDD+ program that brings together resources from multiple-focal areas to leverage greater amounts of co-finance, while generating multiple global benefits in biodiversity, sustainable land management and climate change mitigation and adaptation.

- Building capacity to support ratification and entry into force of the Nagoya Protocol so that the potential of ABS can be realized.
- Continuing to engage civil society and NGOs through appropriate financing mechanisms to realize synergies between local and national level actions.

### How can civil society, indigenous peoples, and local community organizations work with your agency to achieve the Aichi Targets?

The GEF has developed strong partnerships with civil society organizations (CSOs), including non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and indigenous and local communities through its biodiversity program. CSOs have been active in all aspects of the GEF biodiversity program since its inception primarily through their involvement in GEF projects and through the GEF-NGO network, which serves as a vehicle for CSOs to participate in NGO Consultations and GEF Council Meetings.

Of particular note are two programs that have been the operational centerpieces for CSOs and indigenous peoples to work with the GEF and to contribute to the achievement of the Aichi Targets.

Established in 1992, the GEF Small Grants Programme has supported more than 7,827 community-based biodiversity projects totaling \$185 million, leveraging a further \$139 million in cash co-financing, and \$137 million in in-kind contributions. Between 2007 and 2010, SGP supported over 11.9 million ha of PAs and indigenous peoples' and community conserved areas and territories (ICCAs), with at least 618 projects in critical landscapes such as World Heritage sites, Biosphere Reserves, biological corridors, hotspots, important bird areas and flyways.

Initially funded in 2001, the Critical Ecosystem Partnership Fund (CEPF), with a program budget that has grown to more than \$223 million, has reached out to more than 1,600 CSOs and researchers in 100 countries and territories countries to help conserve the world's most important biodiversity hotspots. To date, CEPF has helped improve management of 30 million ha of key biodiversity areas and 3.5 million ha of production landscapes, as well as helped create more than 12 million ha of new protected areas.

Through its projects and policies, the GEF has fostered innovative partnerships among governments, CSOs, indigenous peoples, and communities to work together to advance the objectives of the CBD. Ranging from international NGOs at the global level to Community Based Organizations (CBOs), CSOs have significantly contributed to the success of the GEF and we expect this to continue as we work together to achieve the Aichi Targets. ❖

## MESSAGE FROM THE BOARD OF THE CBD ALLIANCE

# Do today what is due for tomorrow

by **Tasneem Balasinorwala** ● Coordinator of the CBD Alliance on behalf of the CBD Alliance Board

**Kaal Kare So Aaj Kar, Aaj Kare So Ub  
Pal Mein Pralaya Hoyegi, Bahuri Karoge Kub**

*Translation: Do today what is due for tomorrow and do now what is due for today. You never know what is there in the next moment; you may not get the chance to do your work then.*

Our Indian friends would recognise these words instantly. Written by Saint Kabir, famous for his couplets, nothing could be a stronger message than this—and not just to COP 11 participants, but to all those, including regular citizens, who feel that they should do their bit in saving the earth, the environment—our life system and the core of our existence.

In the context of the Convention on Biological Diversity, we have SAID it all... all the keywords, right words, rhetoric, jargon, political messages, practically everything that could be said by words has been said. But we have not still DONE it all, maybe what we have achieved is just a fraction of what we promise ourselves (time and again) we would fulfil. It is not hard to imagine that it is by no means an easy task to prioritise biodiversity and environment on the same platform as economics, growth and profit. This needs to appeal not only to the sensibilities of the politicians but also the common man. But then one cannot help wonder if we were we too ambitious in setting our targets continuing to believe that political will would change, while at the same time systemic thinking would evolve. Or do we still sincerely believe that we can achieve our 20 targets in the next eight years?

**Bada Hua To Kya Hua Jaisay Paid Khajoor,  
Panthi Ko Chhaya Nahin, Phal Laagen Ati Door**

*Translation: In vain is the eminence, just like a Date palm. There is no shade for travellers, and the fruit is hard to reach*

But do not mistake this note as that of pessimism. It is truly heartening to see the faith and enthusiasm that continues to infuse civil society and also the youth to participate at the CBD meetings. What we need is to now to sincerely act upon the progressive policy decisions we have taken.

Having said that and continuing to state the obvious, implementation of the Convention must take centre stage in all the political discourse and negotiation at the COP 11, and beyond. For precisely this reason, [square brackets] continues to bring focus on the implementation aspect of the CBD. The articles in this issue try to focus on what is being done—by agencies task force, groups, communities and organisations vis-à-vis implementation, and also touches upon on what is not being done. We hope you find them useful, as we have. See you in Hyderabad. ❖

# Global biodiversity financing: The great challenge for Hyderabad

by **Günter Mitlacher** ● Director Biodiversity,  
WWF Germany, guenter.mitlacher@wwf.de

Scientific findings show that biodiversity loss and the decline of ecosystem services are occurring at an unprecedented rate, with the causes intensifying rather than lessening. The Convention on Biological Diversity's (CBD) ambitious Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 and the Aichi Biodiversity Targets can only be achieved if in addition to legislative and sustainable economies, adequate financial resources are available in all countries, and particularly in developing countries and countries with emerging economies that harbour the greatest biodiversity. The Strategy for Resource Mobilization, adopted at the ninth meeting of the Conference of the Parties (COP 9) to the CBD in Bonn, serves this purpose.

The Strategy's implementation was underpinned with indicators to provide information on the flow of money from, for example, official development assistance, national budgets, financing from the private sector, NGOs, and foundations. All States were to have provided such information by 30 June 2011; however, data collection proved to be a big problem. These reference values are needed to quantify the current expenses (the so-called 'baseline'). In Hyderabad, a funding target will only be decided upon once a baseline is accepted and a reporting framework is decided upon. Presently, a preliminary reporting framework concept has been agreed upon; however, the proposed period of 2006 - 2010 for determining the baseline remains controversial.

We do not know exactly how much money is currently being spent globally on biodiversity. Estimates using a bottom-up ap-

proach are currently not possible due to the lack of data, hence global studies must be relied upon (the so-called 'top-down approach'). The updated *Little Biodiversity Finance Book* estimates the expenditures to be about US\$50 billion per year (2010). This amount is considered insufficient to achieve a turnaround in biodiversity loss.

## How much money is needed?

We do not presently know how much money is needed to achieve the Aichi Targets. Due to insufficient information from CBD Parties regarding their financing needs, a global synopsis cannot yet be carried out. This despite the fact that all Parties are required to prepare such national needs assessments.

In order to advance the discussion on setting funding targets at COP 11, the *High-Level Panel on Global Assessment of Resources for implementing the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020*, co-sponsored by the governments of the UK and India, was established to assess the resources needed to achieve the 20 Aichi Targets. In parallel, a group of experts is working on calculating the Global Environment Facility's financing needs for the funding period 2014 to 2018. COP 10 adopted the terms of reference for a full *Assessment of the amount of funds needed for the implementation of the Convention for the sixth replenishment period of the Global Environment Facility Trust Fund*. Both reports are expected to stimulate discussion in Hyderabad on the amounts needed to achieve the Strategic Plan. Several NGOs are also contributing case studies to identify funding gaps.

## Where should the money come from?

Despite the financial crisis, public funds will have to cover the lion's share of financing for biodiversity. If bailouts are being made available for banks, then they are also urgently needed for our natural capital that provides the basis of life. Big amounts of money are available for environmentally harmful subsidies, but according to Target 3 of the CBD's Strategic Plan this funding should be eliminated, phased out, or reformed and instead preferably be used on biodiversity-friendly incentives. As implementation of the Strategic Plan is an extremely ambitious challenge, all governments are required to provide more money or direct funds for climate change mitigation, REDD+, sustainable agriculture, forestry, and fishery to achieve synergies with the biodiversity targets of the Strategic Plan. In addition, the private sector must do its part to develop sustainable production measures.

The lack of adequate financial resources is one of the major obstacles to halt the worldwide loss of biodiversity. In addition to more money; more efficiency, scaling-up of existing funding instruments and capacity in implementation are necessary. In light of tight national budgets and the urgency for political action, the mobilization of additional financing and setting ambitious funding targets will be a major challenge for COP 11. ❖



MATEJUSZ BANSKI

# What can we expect at COP 11?

by **Friedrich Wulf** ● International Biodiversity  
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The Convention on Biological Diversity's (CBD) Tenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties (COP 10) was undoubtedly a major success. Those of us in Nagoya at the time still remember the joy and relief when on the last day of COP 10 all decisions were adopted, including the three main ones of the "Nagoya Package": Access to genetic resources and the fair and equitable sharing of benefits arising from their utilization (Nagoya Protocol), the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 and the Aichi Biodiversity Targets and the Strategy for resource mobilization in support of the achievement of the Convention's three objectives. The conference certainly marked a milestone in the history of the Convention.

With all these important decisions being taken one might wonder what remains to be decided in Hyderabad. Is now not the main task to implement these decisions nationally? But that is where COP 11 comes in: Implementation is impossible without sufficient financial resources. This will likely be the main issue for COP 11: to further specify and decide on ways of financing and to agree on—and commit to—financial targets so that Parties can fulfil obligations taken. In Nagoya, Parties decided to postpone the adoption of concrete financial targets until COP 11—"provided that robust baselines have been identified and endorsed and that an effective reporting framework has been adopted". The same decision sets out a number of indicators that should have been reported by mid-2011 to give a baseline on how much money is spent on biodiversity, how much money is needed (gap analysis) and also how much money is currently spent on perverse subsidies. Unfortunately, reporting on this has been rather limited, and reports submitted to the Secretariat only cover some of the indicators.

While assessments of biodiversity finance and needs are rare, it is clear that funding must be increased. As long as biodiversity has not been mainstreamed into every economic sector, and as long as the economy is unsustainable, there is an urgent need to remedy this, beginning with strengthening efforts to remove perverse incentives. However, it is obvious that additional financial resources are needed. Recent analyses show that current funding in agriculture must be tripled if the European Union's (EU) biodiversity targets are to be achieved; Natura 2000 finance must be scaled up by a factor of 5-10 to enable this system of protected areas to fulfil its goal of maintaining the EU's biodiversity. In Switzerland, funding for national inventories must be doubled. The draft recommendations on the GEF replenishment estimate that at least a tenfold increase is necessary for the period 2014-18 in order to implement the Strategic Plan. This will largely have to be straightforward money from public sources. Putting a price on nature, turning it into a product or reducing biodiversity to ecosystem services either has

serious methodological flaws or is dangerous and unacceptable. With largely less than 0.1% of national GDPs being dedicated to biodiversity, it should be possible to double or even multiply public spending on biodiversity by ten without affecting the budget too much, but it can make a huge difference for biodiversity... and for our well-being.

Thus success in Hyderabad will—to a large extent—depend on whether industrialized countries agree on clear and bold financial commitments and agree on sufficient financial targets instead of hiding behind "unclear baselines" and a lack of data—to which they've largely contributed themselves by not doing the homework agreed upon in Decision X/3. Developing countries would have every reason to be upset if industrialized countries did not fulfil their part of the Nagoya deal after having consented to the Strategic Plan, a plan they cannot implement without financial help. Without progress here, the success achieved in Nagoya would be jeopardized.

Still, implementation of the Strategic Plan is the second most important issue in Hyderabad. According to the CBD, only 13 Parties have yet to adapt their National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans (NBSAPs) to accommodate its targets. For a successful implementation of the Strategic Plan, Parties in Hyderabad should:

- Agree on enhanced integration (into NBSAPs and national policies) and implementation of the Strategic Plan
- Adopt the proposed indicators contained in SBSTTA XV/1 for all Aichi Targets
- Agree on a reference to the milestones contained in the annex of SBSTTA 15/3: While it is clear that progress in implementation of the Strategic Plan will vary significantly from country to country due to national circumstances, it is also clear that there must be a road map to truly achieve the Plan and to gauge whether we are still on track globally.

Closely related to this is the expected decision on Global Biodiversity Outlook 4.

**Putting a price on nature, turning it into a product or reducing biodiversity to ecosystem services either has serious methodological flaws or is dangerous and unacceptable.**

Other issues for a successful outcome include a decision for advice towards the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change on biodiversity safeguards in REDD+, on agrofuels and a successful decision on marine biodiversity. But if these two main issues—resource mobilisation strategy and the Strategic Plan—are successfully dealt with, Hyderabad will be a COP to remember for the big step taken towards achieving the three objectives of the Convention. ♡

# Ecosystems, economy and employment

by **Ana Belén Sánchez** ● asanchez@sustainlabour.org and **Laura Martín Titimu** ● lmartin@sustainlabour.org, Sustainlabour

The world today faces a number of interconnected crises in their origin and consequences. There is a major economic crisis whose biggest impact has been seen in employment, reflected by the need to create 600 million jobs over the next 10 years, and, there is the social crisis: poverty continues to affect more than 900 million people living on income below the poverty line. Two of the most important factors underlying the environmental crisis are climate change and biodiversity loss: as many as two thirds of all species are in danger of extinction. Put another way, we are exceeding the limits of the planet in terms of the exploitation of resources.

Loss of biodiversity leads to a decline in ecosystem services. This not only has social effects, such as the loss of employment and income, an increase in food insecurity and the poverty level, as well as impacts on human health and wellbeing, but also causes the collapse of economic activities such as fishing and farming. Furthermore, climate change will make this situation even worse.

## Jobs and biodiversity

In labour terms, biodiversity has a threefold relationship with employment. Firstly, in terms of today's jobs, biodiversity and ecosystems form the basis of a significant part of the economy and a large part of existing jobs therefore directly depend on their state of health. It is estimated that in the European Union (EU) 14.6 million jobs, in other words 7% of the labour market, are directly related to biodiversity. In the case of developing

countries, this figure rises to around 927 million, in other words 35% of their labour market. As far as jobs related to ecosystem services are concerned these figures are even higher, with 55% of jobs in the EU and 84% of jobs in developing countries being closely related to these services.

Secondly, the creation of future jobs and proper environmental management which protects biodiversity and ecosystems is an important source of the creation of new green employment. Clear examples can be seen in farming, where it is calculated that organic farming production creates a third more employment than non-organic farming practices. In the case of the forestry sector it is calculated that as many as 10 million new jobs could be created as a result of sustainable forest management, whereas in the fishing sector 100,790 new jobs would be created in Europe alone if 43 of the 150 European fish populations were renewed. This would mean a 28% increase in the total number of jobs in the EU.

Thirdly, there is the loss of jobs: when managed in an unsustainable manner, the economic sectors whose survival depends on biodiversity are also the main sectors responsible for the sometimes irreversible damage caused to natural resources, biodiversity, ecosystems and employment in these sectors. Losses in biodiversity will also have a significant direct impact on employment in primary sectors (farming, fishing, forestry and water supply) due to their low level of replacement. However, the degree of replacement in production and processing industries which depend on raw materials provided by biodiversity, such as wood and fuels, is relatively high; in other words, other raw materials can be found to replace those which come from ecosystems, and the loss of biodiversity in these sectors will therefore have a lower effect provided that they are able to find replacements. Industries affected by the loss of biodiversity will thus tend to seek these types of alternative options and their investments will therefore be profitable and not endanger their income. However, workers who live off the extraction of natural resources will lose their employment when the resource runs out, and their chances of finding an alternative job will depend on countless other factors, many of which will be out of their reach.

Attention must also be paid to employment quality. Biodiversity-friendly production is usually responsible for better working conditions. A prerequisite for the success of policies, programmes and measures for the conservation of natural biodiversity and ecosystems is social and gender equality.

## Drastic transformation

Bringing the crisis to an end will mean a drastic transformation of extremely important economic and employment sectors, such as farming, fishing, water supply and management and



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tourism. Understanding what this transformation will entail in labour terms means understanding who will benefit from this change to the development model, who will lose out, and to what extent existing systems are able to respond to these opportunities and challenges. This is the objective of the just transition framework.

For the development of this framework, governments must include among their policies and measures the evaluation of employment creation opportunities arising from biodiversity-friendly management, incorporating an evaluation of the social, economic and environmental impact on biodiversity into decision-making, implementing labour policies to promote this creation of employment, including professional training programmes in green jobs. These labour policies must be supplemented by economic and social policies such as green taxation measures and the strengthening of social protection systems in the areas affected. Lastly, the participation of workers in social dialogue in decision-making relating to biodiversity should be improved.

For their part, the global demands of trade unions, as an active and specific part of society and the economy, range from a general demand for more biodiversity-friendly framework policies to the improvement of working conditions in affected sectors. Specifically, trade unions could promote regulations and public administration strategies in accordance with the seriousness of the problem, demanding a new production model which conserves biodiversity, where all costs are interiorised and the

**Valuing the services that biodiversity and ecosystems provide is the first step. The next step is to incorporate this value into economic, social and environmental decision-making.**

gains and losses of the natural resource are assessed. They could also demand the inclusion of the biodiversity variable in different public policies and private projects in all fields and sectors, particularly transport, industrial and tourism infrastructures. They can fight for the funding of biodiversity policies, demand the protection of ecosystems and manage them with the help of the communities that live and depend on them. They could help avoid changes in land use and urban development made without taking nature conservation criteria into account, promote new farming, fishing and cattle breeding methods, such as organic farming or cattle breeding, traditional fishing or sustainable aquaculture, and promote alliances with other social players with these same objectives.

Reducing biodiversity loss, improving working conditions, creating employment and preventing the loss of employment is all in our hands. Valuing the services that biodiversity and ecosystems provide to our societies and our ecosystems is just the first step. Incorporating this value into economic, social and environmental decision-making is the next step. Workers and trade unions have an essential role to play in this process. ♡



## LOCAL VOICES ON IMPLEMENTATION

*Giovanni Reyes, Secretary-General, Koalisyon ng Katutubo at Samahan Ng Pilipinas (KASAPI), isagadazoo2@yahoo.com*

### How is your organization involved in implementation?

In recent months, KASAPI mounted sub-national and national Indigenous Community Conservation Area (ICCA) conferences that saw customary law practitioners, government, academe and civil society working together to craft guidelines to advance ICCA policy work. International participant-observers included the Global ICCA Consortium, UNEP-WCMC and UN-CBD secretariat. Complementing policy engagements are ICCA models on the ground: documentation of conservation sites, training of youth leaders on GPS, community mapping, participatory construction of 3D map, resource inventory, diagnosing state of health of forests, threats and participatory conservation planning.

### Any success stories you can share?

The Maporac ICCA model's source of strength is drawn from elders whose indigenous knowledge has been shaped by centuries of coming to terms with the environment.

Second, Maporac demonstrated what right to self-determination is. Since the village people's declaration of Maporac as an ICCA, inspired communities engaged Maporac through cross-site visits to learn from experience. An adjacent community is following in on the footsteps of Maporac.

### What key aspects (apart from finance) play an important role in implementation but sometimes get overlooked?

The role played by indigenous elders. On the surface, 'experts' are more skillful. Unobtrusively however, experience honed by daily interaction with nature shape an elder's mastery of the environment. Indigenizing implementation, the better.

### What are your expectations for COP 11 with regards to implementation of the Strategic Plan? What would you like to see happen?

An assessment of implementation by indigenous communities compared to those by government or non-indigenous entities. We would also like to see the integration of biodiversity, anti-poverty and development as a strategy. ♡

*Maporac is an Aeta Abellen indigenous community in the village of New San Juan, Cabangan Municipality, Province of Zambales. It is located in Region 3 of Central Luzon. Aetas in general are believed to be the Philippine's first inhabitants.*



# Integrating health concerns into biodiversity planning

by **Catherine Machalaba** ● EcoHealth Alliance, machalaba@ecohealthalliance.org, **William B. Karesh** ● EcoHealth Alliance, karesh@ecohealthalliance.org and **Anne-Hélène Prieur-Richard** ● anne-helene@diversitas-international.org, DIVERSITAS

Through the Aichi Biodiversity Targets, the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) has committed to integrating biodiversity into other sectors to promote biodiversity relevance and mainstreaming. Health is one major sector that the CBD is engaging, through its growing relationship with the World Health Organization (WHO), as well as collaboration with scientific organizations working on health issues. There are strong opportunities for the CBD and the overall conservation community to leverage health to advance progress towards achievement of the Aichi Targets and the end goal of sustainable use of biodiversity.

Health and biodiversity are inextricably linked. Biodiversity sustains our well-being through the provision of ecosystem services, affording us clean water and air, medicines, and food security. Diseases which affect animals can be transmitted to humans - over 60% of human infectious pathogens are zoonotic, the majority from wildlife. These diseases put humans at risk and threaten the sustainability of non-human species. Importantly, several of the main drivers of biodiversity loss for mammals, birds and amphibians - such as agricultural expansion, logging, and overexploitation - overlap with the drivers of disease emergence in humans (e.g. land use, food industry and agricultural industry changes, and international travel and commerce). There are prime opportunities for collaboration between the health and biodiversity communities to promote practices that minimize disease risks and drivers of biodiversity loss.

Our conventional view of “health” has benefitted from an increasingly wider view. The WHO has expanded its definition of health to “a state of complete physical, mental, and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity”. Going forward, the CBD would benefit from presenting biodiversity’s relevance to the health sector and encouraging formal recognition of environmental well-being within the WHO definition. The goal is to emphasize a “One Health” approach that recognizes human, animal and environmental health linkages and how integrating health into conservation efforts can help strengthen efficacy of biodiversity promotion. To do this successfully, CBD Parties should strive to involve government ministries of environment, health, forestry and related interests—ideally, in a coordinated and ongoing fashion- in their efforts.

## Advancing progress towards Aichi Targets

Collaboration with the health sector at international, national and local levels can help promote the Aichi Targets, especially Targets 2, 4, 10, 14, 17 and 19, through increased public awareness and wider relevance around the importance of biodiversity; engagement of governments, including ministries of health; effective science-policy interactions; and establishment and implementation of best practi-

es to decrease anthropogenic pressures that drive both biodiversity loss and disease emergence.

Beyond health and biodiversity benefits, extending biodiversity-promoting planning and action to encompass health considerations can yield gains in capacity-building, as well as present economic benefits. Emerging diseases are increasingly costly due to the globalization of their impacts: H5N1 Influenza and SARS, both zoonotic diseases, each cost the global economy an estimated US\$30-50 billion.

## Moving forward

There are successful models of growing synergies between the biodiversity and health communities. The One Health Alliance of South Asia is helping to overcome health and biodiversity challenges through a regional network of ministry representatives, recognizing that animals and diseases are not confined by national borders, and the foundations of health are based on sound environmental stewardship. The World Organization for Animal Health (OIE) working with the CBD, recently developed guidelines for addressing challenges with invasive alien species, which pose threats to both conservation and health. Additionally, IUCN, International Union for Conservation of Nature, through its Species Survival Commission’s Wildlife Health Specialist Group, acknowledges the important role of health in species conservation. The global volunteer network allows access to 300+ leaders in the wildlife health field, providing a first response for wildlife health concerns in support of species conservation.

The CBD should formalize its recognition of health’s role in biodiversity by establishing health as a standing agenda item in its programme of work, developing a pathway for ongoing information flow from the scientific community to the CBD to help in decision-making processes, and working with Parties to adopt a “One Health” approach.

Civil society also has an important role in furthering biodiversity and health collaboration. Health organizations should engage the conservation community in international, national and local health discussions, meetings and decision making, and provide information to guide science-based policy. Conservation organizations should integrate health considerations into their own species and ecosystem preservation efforts, seeking to proactively address health concerns that could compromise biodiversity goals.

At a time when global pressures are growing on both health and biodiversity, the CBD, through its strong party representation and linkages to the other Rio Conventions, has an excellent opportunity to obtain and leverage support of the health community for biodiversity-promoting actions. 🦋



THE TOURISM DEVELOPMENT COMPANY LIMITED OF TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO

## Putting the focus on enforcement

by **S. Faizi** ● Chair, Indian Biodiversity Forum,  
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The Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) has the unenviable distinction of being challenged by certain contracting Parties without denouncing the treaty or without attempting to amend the treaty text. The treaty has categorical and legally-binding provisions on access and benefit-sharing (ABS), yet when the proposal for an international instrument on ABS was mooted several Parties thought the instrument too legally non-binding. The ABS Protocol negotiators had to overcome this challenge, not the least with the support of the World Summit on Sustainable Development's decision that called for a legally binding international ABS regime. The Protocol text remains incomplete without addressing the compliance mechanism, and yet when the issue of compliance mechanism came up for discussion at the New Delhi meeting of the Intergovernmental Committee for the Nagoya Protocol, opposition to the legally binding nature of the compliance mechanism was raised by some countries.

Attempts to argue away the legal strength of CBD has been part of an effort to weaken the comprehensive and well balanced treaty that it is. If the CBD is not a legally binding treaty, then what is it? Is it an international declaration like the Rio Declaration, that countries respect but are not obliged to implement? Is it like the World Charter for Nature, a declaration by the UN General Assembly (UNGA), that countries have a moral/political obligation to follow but no legal obligation to implement? Is it like the World Conservation Strategy, a useful document the concepts of which were adopted by many countries voluntarily and through pressure from the environmental community? Is it like the Agenda 21, negotiated by governments but are not legally obliged to implement though they have a political/moral obligation to follow? Is it a multilaterally agreed program like MAB, which countries have no legal obligation to implement? The CBD is not like any of these.

The CBD is international law. It is a multilateral treaty that contracting Parties are legally obliged to implement. It is not a 'framework convention' that some players tacitly try to portray it as—a framework convention was a very early idea to incorpo-

rate all existing biodiversity-related conventions to the new CBD, as came up in the United Nations Environment Programme Governing Council meeting in 1989 but rejected in the subsequent negotiations in the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee (INC). The articles of the CBD are there for enforcement, not for further negotiation. However, articles committing Parties to 'endeavour to' or bearing caveats like 'as far as possible' are less binding. There are only two issues in the CBD that called for further development in order to take the implementation course: biosafety and liability and compensation beyond national jurisdiction. (Further, the Nairobi Final Act called for addressing the issue of pre-CBD germplasm collections). The CBD explicitly states that it does not provide for exemptions; and it has also provided an in-built mechanism for dispute settlement, yet to be activated.

The CBD was negotiated, adopted, signed, ratified, and came into force in line with provisions of the Vienna Convention on the Law of Treaties. The Group of 77 (G-77) had negotiated hard, in the INC CBD, to reach the present text of the treaty, and if the treaty's provisions are so easily regarded as being legally non-binding, then it calls for the attention of the Parties. A legally binding treaty is put to disuse by straying away into legally non-binding programmes of work, Strategic Plan, formulation of new and selective targets etc., and undermines the fairly clear and categorical provisions of the treaty. It is worth noting that the conference of the parties (COP) simply 'urges' the implementation of the Strategic Plan. The US had correctly assessed the legal strength of the treaty, and feared that it can harm their vested economic ambitions and hence stayed away from the treaty. But the enforcement of CBD proved the US wrong- it has been rendered ineffective to combat the vested economic interests such as those engaged in biopiracy, which the provisions of the CBD make an international offense.

The ABS provisions of CBD are categorical and binding. Access to genetic resources is determined by the concerned Party, based on mutually-agreed terms, and prior informed consent; these provisions are categorical and binding. What is its implication? For example, according to information released by India's Ministry of Environment in 2010, over 2000 patents based on Indian genetic resources and traditional knowledge were taken abroad in the preceding year without the consent of the Indian government. This continuing biopiracy is in glaring violation of the binding provisions of CBD, but even then, the binding provisions of CBD are not invoked- neither in a civil court in an offending country or raised at a COP or in meetings of its subsidiary bodies. There is no secretariat monitoring infractions, no COP reviewing infractions/non-compliance. Article 15.7 requires Parties to take legislative, administrative and policy measures for benefit sharing, yet over the past two decades the COP has not reviewed or acted upon the failure of Parties to enact these enabling measures.

The weakening of the G-77 in CBD negotiations- that had played an effective role in the formative period of the treaty- and its subsequent disappearance from the CBD parlance is a key reason for the straying of the CBD process. The main reason why the

CBD, despite being a progressive treaty, has failed to deliver is the sidestepping of the legally binding nature of the treaty: e.g. escalating biopiracy, no reduction in the loss of biodiversity, continuing alienation of indigenous communities, creation of several sets of administrative, policy and legal measures required by the Convention remains neglected.

Treaties, even as they are legally binding, are implemented based on the interests of powerful countries. The Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty is perhaps the most powerful legally binding multilateral treaty, but what happens to its Article VI (that calls for the negotiated elimination of nuclear weapons) even after four decades of existence of the treaty. In spite of several UNGA resolutions this Article is not allowed to be implemented though the massive majority of Parties stand for it. In the case of MEAs, the CBD process has a lot to learn from CITES whose legal status is exactly the same as that of the CBD.

The COP is expected to "keep under review the implementation of the Convention" but a critical review of the progress/failure in implementing the provisions of the Convention has yet to happen at a COP. The SBSTTA is mandated to review the effectiveness of the measures taken in accordance with the provisions of the Convention, but SBSTTA has been kept busy producing more and more documents, and disregarding the need to review the effectiveness of enforcement of the Convention's provisions. ❖

**The main reason why the CBD, despite being a progressive treaty, has failed to deliver is the sidestepping of the legally-binding nature of the treaty.**



MATEJUSZ BANSKI

# From community voices to community action

by **Clint Jacobs** ● [Clint.Jacobs@wifn.org](mailto:Clint.Jacobs@wifn.org) and  
**Jared Macbeth** ● Walpole Island Heritage Centre

Tucked away on the northern shores of Lake St. Clair in south-western Ontario, Canada, lies the First Nation community of Bkejwanong (Where the waters divide). Bkejwanong, one of the largest freshwater deltas in the world, forms part of the ancestral home of over 4,000 Anishnaabe (Ojibwe, Odawa, and Potawatomi) people that are members of the Walpole Island First Nation.

Today, we live in a region that has had most of its natural resources exploited and lost. The three neighbouring counties that surround our community all have less than 15% of their original natural land cover remaining—one has less than 5%. These counties are primarily covered by intensive agriculture, and we are south of Canada's petrochemical industry complex known as Chemical Valley.

Yet, Bkejwanong is a biodiversity hotspot. This biodiversity includes five major ecosystems; tallgrass prairies and oak savannas (both deemed critically imperilled at the global level); one of the largest tracts of contiguous woodlands in southern Ontario; one of the largest coastal wetlands in the Great Lakes basin; and a system of waterways rich in over 70 native fish species.

Over the past two decades, the Walpole Island Heritage Centre and its Natural Heritage Program have worked on a variety of initiatives to sustain the First Nation's biodiversity. In 2010 we undertook a research project to document community concerns relating to the local environment of the island as well as customary ways, values, and practices relating to how we care for the land. This resulted in many interviews in which community participants shared their knowledge, practices and words of wisdom regarding ways to rekindle old customs, which would inform present and future environmental decision-making through community-based input and guidance.

**We are working towards establishing an internal knowledge base that can contribute existing and future initiatives that will result in a healthier environment and enhanced biodiversity. We believe that awareness leads to appreciation, which then leads to action.**

Towards the end of 2010, we held a series of "Ecosystem Circles" in which community members were invited to get together to chat about the ecosystems of Bkejwanong, their status, share concerns, and discuss what needs to be done to ensure they are here for the benefit of future generations. The concept of the Ecosystem Circles was to actively engage the Bkejwanong

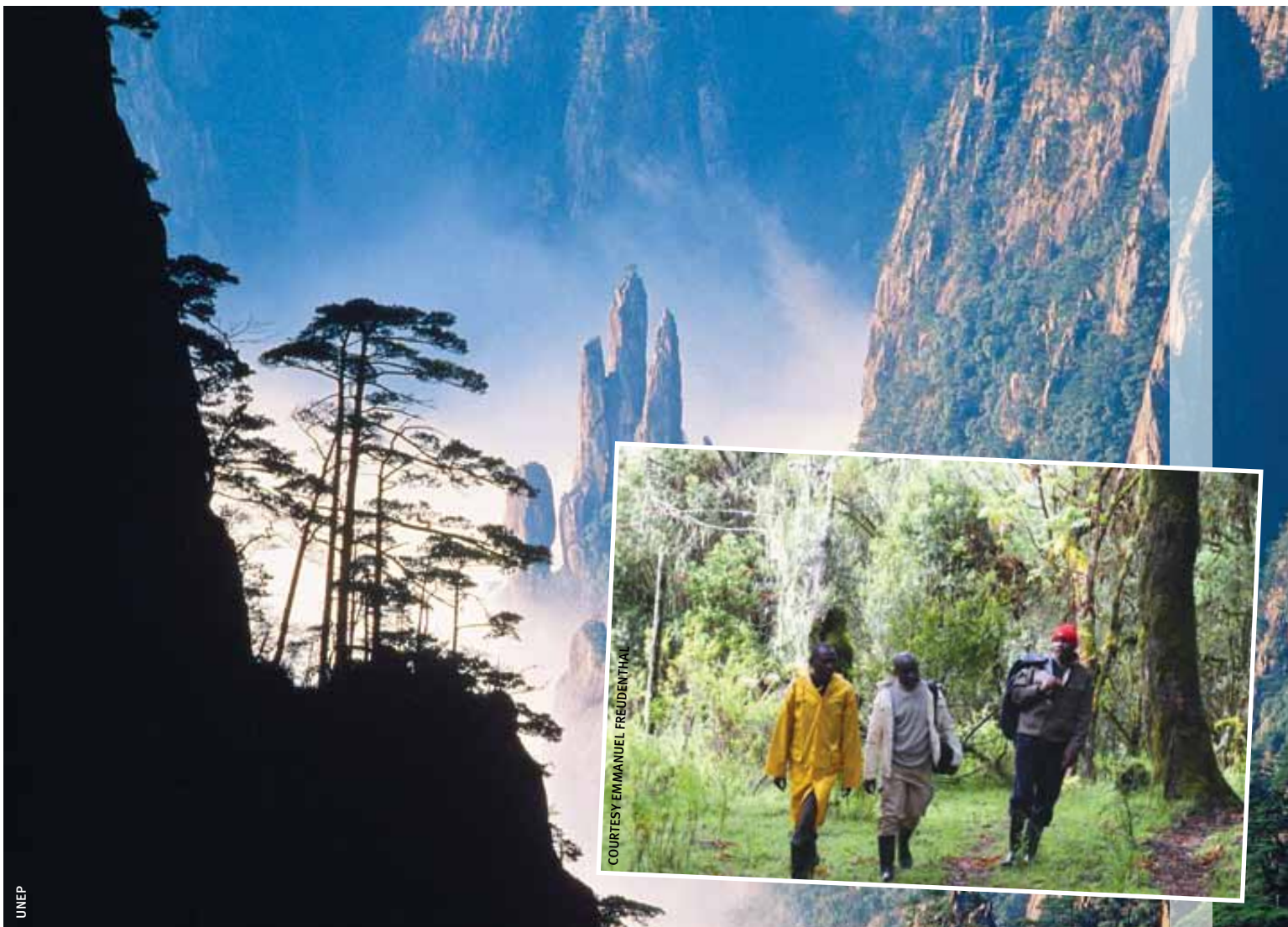
community in coming up with constructive ways to care for and improve the health of the ecosystems of Bkejwanong that have sustained our people for thousands of years. These Circles further helped us to document additional community concerns regarding our lands and waters, what needs to be done, and how we can move forward with community-based courses of action.

In 2011, we enhanced the Ecosystem Circles by hosting two to three gatherings each month. Open to everyone in the community, the Circles provided a forum for guest speakers to share information—including information relating to projects and activities occurring outside of the Island in our traditional territory that might interest or affect our people. These Circles have also provided a venue for community members to raise concerns about our local environment and discuss ways to deal with those concerns—very much like a "think tank".

As a result, there is increased community awareness, dialogue, and input into proposed and existing initiatives throughout the local and regional area. The Circles' open format allow for community participants to become actively involved in planning the agenda for each Circle. Circle participants provided valuable insight, reflected on how they could be part of the solution and came up with the phrase "Let's Create Solutions Together" as a driving theme. This, for example, led to increased awareness of local and regional initiatives, outdoor educational outings with students from the Walpole Island Elementary School, submissions of project funding applications, planning towards the restoration of local trees and shoreline rehabilitation, and implementation of a community day of action.

The Ecosystem Circles have been working together with the Walpole Island Land Trust, a registered charity. The message of active stewardship is working its way through the community. Our land trust not only secures important properties for protection, but also encourages the community to respect the land they have been entrusted with.

This year we are organizing special field trips and site visits to view restoration projects of shorelines, wetlands, and other habitats. These site visits allow participants to see first-hand the results of some of the local projects and help to generate ideas for similar community projects. Throughout the year we will be facilitating community input on local and regional plans, projects, and policies that may be of interest, and guest speakers will be invited to speak about their initiatives as a way to improve their engagement and consultation processes. These Circles will allow community participants the opportunities to ask questions and get answers directly from the source. We are working towards establishing an internal knowledge base that can contribute to and be involved in existing and future initiatives that will result in a healthier environment and enhanced biodiversity. We believe that awareness leads to appreciation, which then leads to action. ❖



UNEP

# Addressing equitable governance and management in protected areas

by **Emmanuel Freudenthal** ● Project Officer,  
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The Whakatane Mechanism is an International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) initiative to assess respect for human rights in protected areas, to provide recommendations to address conflicts and to facilitate a dialogue between the management authorities and indigenous peoples in order to reach joint solutions. It also celebrates and promotes best practices in conservation and successful partnerships between indigenous peoples and conservation authorities in protected areas.

The Mechanism emerged from meetings between IUCN and indigenous representatives at the IUCN CEESP Sharing Power Conference in Whakatane, New Zealand, in January 2011. It is the implementation of IUCN resolutions relating to indigenous peoples' rights and therefore contributes to realizing the obligation of the Union as a whole to deal with these crucial issues. It also builds on the intentions and progress made through many other agreements, such as the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP), the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) Programme of Work on Protected Areas (PoWPA), the Durban Accord and Action Plan, and an array of initiatives focused on enhancing governance, equity and respect for human rights led by Indigenous Peoples' Organisations (IPOs) and some conservation organisations.

Member of the Kenya Wildlife Service with an Ogiek leader and a representative of the IPACC collecting data for the Whakatane Assessment in Mt Elgon, Kenya, in 2011

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The Whakatane Mechanism assesses respect for human rights in protected areas, provide recommendations to address conflicts, and facilitate dialogue between management authorities and indigenous peoples in order to reach joint solutions.

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In 2011 and 2012 two pilot Whakatane Assessments were conducted in Mt Elgon, Kenya, and Ob Luang National Park, Thailand. Both these areas have experienced conflicts between indigenous peoples and conservation authorities for several decades. A taskforce comprising men and women from IPOs, IUCN staff, government officials, conservation NGOs, local NGOs, and the Forest Peoples Programme spent about two weeks in and around each of these protected areas. In both instances, the results were extremely encouraging, showing that the Whakatane Mechanism can be very effective at bringing about change at the local and at the national level.

As such, the Whakatane Mechanism promotes best practices in the implementation of the CBD's Programme of Work on Protected Areas and contributes to the implementation and achievement of Aichi Target 11 by promoting and ensuring equitable governance and management of protected areas. It is directly relevant to the Eleventh meeting of the Conference of the Parties (COP 11) Agenda item 3.3 on the *Implementation of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 and progress towards the Aichi Biodiversity Targets: Further development of tools and guidance for monitoring implementation, including indicators*. The Whakatane Mechanism aims to monitor the implementation of relevant CBD COP decisions and promote their further implementation.

It is also relevant to Agenda item 13.4 on Protected Areas. The draft recommendations by the Executive Secretary relating to the progress in the implementation of PoWPA and the achievement of Aichi Target 11 provides further encouragements to the scaling out of the Whakatane Mechanism para 1. b) invites parties to "Undertake major efforts to achieve all elements of Aichi Biodiversity Target 11 and in particular (...) ensuring that marine protected areas and terrestrial protected areas are: (...) managed effectively and equitably". The Whakatane Mechanism, along with other initiatives at the CBD will be able to contribute to that crucial effort.

In order to scale up the Whakatane Mechanism, a framework has been drafted by the Forest Peoples Programme, the Director of IUCN's Nature-Based Solutions Group, the Senior Adviser on Social Policy, SPICEH and the IUCN Commission on Environmental, Economic and Social Policy (CEESP) with feedback from the IPOs involved in the two pilot assessments, WCPA and several IUCN Thematic Programmes. This framework, which details the aims and functioning of the Whakatane Mechanism, will be distributed to IUCN Members for their feedback, with the aim of reaching an agreement on next steps in September at the 5th World Conservation Congress in Jeju, Korea. A side event at COP11 is also planned where the Whakatane Mechanism will be presented. ♡

Further information and the latest news on the Whakatane Mechanism at: [www.whakatane-mechanism.org](http://www.whakatane-mechanism.org).

# Creating positive policy synergies

by **Nigel Crawhall** ● Chair, Theme on Indigenous and Local Communities Equity and Protected Areas (TILCEPA), [nigel.tilcepa@gmail.com](mailto:nigel.tilcepa@gmail.com)

In 2011, the IUCN Theme on Indigenous Peoples, Local Communities, Equity and Protected Areas (TILCEPA) set up a specialist group on the social policy of marine protected areas. Both in TILCEPA and in some other parts of the IUCN system, there is a growing concern about marine biodiversity loss, and that the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) is driving urgent policy changes which could negatively impact local and indigenous stewardship, livelihoods and knowledge systems. It is a long standing principle of both the IUCN and CBD that conservation needs to be based on a model of consent, participation, equity and human rights.

Central to the policy discussion is Aichi Target 11, which falls under Goal C of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity: *“Improve the status of biodiversity by safeguarding ecosystems, species and genetic diversity”*. Target 11 reads: *By 2020, at least 17 per cent of terrestrial and inland water, and 10 per cent of coastal and marine areas, especially areas of particular importance for biodiversity and ecosystem services, are conserved through effectively and equitably managed, ecologically representative and well-connected systems of protected areas and other effective area-based conservation measures, and integrated into the wider landscape and seascapes.*

The target speaks to different facets of protected areas including increased coverage, connectivity, management, governance and equity. A sensitive issue inside the IUCN is what is meant by ‘other effective area based conservation measures...’ Some Commissioners would like to see greater attention to seascape / reef conservation that draws on non-State institutional capacity, such as fishing cooperatives or traditional authorities. Others fear that this may be used as a loophole by States not to enact a robust Marine Protected Area system.

In the Pacific Region, there has been substantial work on the use of Locally Managed Marine Areas (LMMAs) as a way to connect national marine conservation with long established traditional and local systems of reef, coastal and marine conservation and sustainable use. The Pacific was an obvious region for such efforts, with a majority indigenous population and a high reliance on marine protein. A number of Pacific countries have used existing non-State traditions of marine and reef conservation as the basis for their new national MPA strategies.

The challenge is how civil society can draw out positive examples from around the globe of synergies between LMMAs and emerging national marine protection systems, as defined by Target 11 in the Aichi decisions taken at the Tenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the CBD (COP 10)? At the Sixteenth meeting of the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice

(SBSTTA 16), the principle of Marine Protected Areas was not up for discussion. However, a substantial part of the agenda of the meeting dealt with marine biodiversity. Those interest groups keen to embed equity, rights and custodianship were active in Montreal to ensure that this type of language would carry over to COP 11.

At the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) COP 17 in Durban, we saw a major take-up by Parties of the theme of adaptation and food security. This was mostly an African – World Bank agenda, but clearly it resonated for many countries. It was, however, not clear whether it only applied to land-based crop agriculture. The Indigenous Peoples of Africa Coordinating Committee (IPACC) lobbied African states to recognise that nomadic pastoralism was key to Africa’s historical capacity to cope with climate instability and must be recognised. There was little clarity about how fisheries, particularly artisanal fisheries, should be integrated into adaptation policy for the food and agriculture sector. In Durban, IUCN did not have a clear policy position or lobbying strategy on human adaptation in the marine environment.

In COP 10 decision X/29 the CBD was asked to work with FAO on the theme of sustainability. Under UNEP/CBD/SBSTTA/16/7/Add.1, we also see extensive discussion on Marine Environmental Impact Assessments (EIAs). It is not clear at this stage whether Marine EIAs and new frameworks to recognise sustainable fishing will lead to greater coherence in restricting destructive trawling in the open seas, and greater rights for artisanal fishing peoples, or the converse.

Whereas the indigenous peoples’ caucus has a formidable presence at the CBD and to some degree at UNFCCC, the world’s fishing peoples are not well represented. Some of the figures quoted at COP10 included that one billion people primarily rely on marine protein to survive, and one hundred million earn their livelihoods from marine biodiversity.

No one is debating the urgency of the oceanic biodiversity and genetic diversity conservation or the threat of the acidification crisis. The challenge at COP 11 is who is going to be recognised as legitimate stakeholders and rights holders, with a say on the solutions, and will all three pillars of the CBD survive the negotiations? One of TILCEPA Marine’s main contributions at the SBSTTA was to promote language that called on states to recognise that science must be complemented by other types of knowledge systems, including local and indigenous knowledge. This is congruent with the language associated with adaptation planning at the UNFCCC and will likely get a fair hearing at COP 11 in Hyderabad.

TILCEPA Marine hopes to raise awareness in the IUCN system about the importance of LMMAs, other types of area-based conservation, and the importance of involving artisanal fishing peoples in policy related to biological and genetic marine conservation. If this is successful at the IUCN Congress and at COP 11, it will increase the chance of positive policy synergies between IUCN, CBD and the UNFCCC. ♣



CREATAS/THINKSTOCK

CLOCKWISE FROM TOP: Youth participants during the opening ceremony of the High-Level Segment at COP 10 in Nagoya; Participants at the Kick-Off Conference of the Global Youth Biodiversity Network, held August 2012 in Berlin; Youth expressing their hopes for biodiversity at COP 10 in Nagoya.

## Building a global coalition of young people to combat biodiversity loss

by **Christian Schwarzer** ●

NAJU (German Youth Association for the Protection of Nature) on behalf of the GYBN interim steering committee, [Christian.Schwarzer@NAJU.de](mailto:Christian.Schwarzer@NAJU.de)

Countless young people around the world take daily actions to protect our biodiversity. Be it protecting sea turtles in Mexico, managing marshland conservation projects in Benin, fighting deforestation and illegal logging in Indonesia, running environmental awareness campaigns on university campuses in Canada, volunteering for national parks in Germany or lobbying governments to improve their national biodiversity strategies, young people in the thousands are volunteering for youth environmental organizations and participating in various environmental activities and nature conservation projects.

For this year's International Day for Biological Diversity, hundreds of youth groups, NGOs and schools throughout the world participated in the Convention on Biological Diversity's (CBD) *The Green Wave* global biodiversity campaign by planting a tree in their neighbourhood or schoolyard, and reminding governments and decision-makers about their commitment to halt biodiversity loss. There is no doubt that young people are concerned about their future, and are making significant contributions in helping raise awareness about the value of biodiversity.

However, when it comes to youth involvement on the international level, and specifically in the CBD process, much remains to be done.

Let's not forget that the purpose of international environmental policy is to preserve our world and its natural resources for future generations. Agenda 21, adopted at the 1992 Rio Summit, was



one of the first United Nations (UN) documents to officially recognize the right of young people to participate in UN processes—*“It is imperative that youth from all parts of the world participate actively in all relevant levels of decision-making processes because it affects their lives today and has implications for their futures.”* Agenda 21 also confirms that youth participation can add value to decision-making, as young people bring invaluable and unique perspectives into issues that affect them.

The CBD Secretariat has always been committed to supporting the biodiversity-related activities of young people, but, when compared to other UN processes like the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) or the Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD), youth participation in the CBD-process remains relatively weak.

According to the CBD Secretariat, 18,650 accredited participants attended the CBD’s Tenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties (COP 10). This makes the Nagoya biodiversity summit not only one of the most successful but also the largest biodiversity conference in the history of the UN. However, of these participants, only about 90 were youth delegates, representing 31 countries. Of these 90 youth representatives, the majority were Japanese and only about 30 to 40 of them attended the entire conference. The remaining 50 to 60 youth representatives only followed the proceedings of the High-Level Segment, held during the last three days of the COP.

In comparison, over 1,500 youth delegates from more than 130 countries travelled to Copenhagen, Denmark, for the UN Climate Summit in December 2009. While Copenhagen did not deliver what many young people were hoping for, over 500 youths attended the following UN climate conference in Cancún, Mexico, and more than 1,000 youth delegates out of 14,400 accredited participants came to UNFCCC COP 17 in Durban, South Africa, in December 2011. There, some 7% of all participants were youth delegates. At Nagoya, that percentage was only 0.48%.

However, it should be noted that participation figures alone cannot evaluate whether youth participation is successful. The number of youth representatives at COP 10 was quite small, but the group worked efficiently and accomplished a lot. They, for example, organized daily coordination meetings, hosted two side events, established youth working groups to follow the main issues, held a press conference and delivered statements during the opening-ceremony, the high-level segment and the closing session. Their work received widespread coverage in several Japanese, Canadian and international newspapers. Motivated by the strong support from the CBD Secretariat and inspired by the great successes of youth representatives in other UN processes, the idea to create a global network to unite young people working on biodiversity led to intensive discussions.

The need for such an international youth network had been discussed for several years. It was also on the agenda of the Aichi-Nagoya International Youth Conference on Biodiversity in August 2010. There, a small group of participants formed a working group

and developed a first rough concept for what would eventually become the Global Youth for Biodiversity Network (GYBN).

At COP 10, following discussions between youth delegates from 31 countries, a decision was taken to start preparatory measures for the establishment of GYBN. To coordinate this process and to liaise with the CBD Secretariat an interim steering committee, comprising 16 members from 13 countries (Japan, Indonesia, India, Germany, Belgium, Czech Republic, Canada, Mexico, Brazil, Benin, Cameroon, Egypt and Uganda), was formed. With the explicit support of the CBD Executive Secretary and in close coordination with the CBD Secretariat’s NGO focal points, the interim steering committee worked from November 2010 on to help create a democratic, transparent and globally representative youth network.

As adopted by COP 10, the GYBN aims to raise global awareness among young people about the intrinsic value of biodiversity, and to strengthen and support youth efforts to promote and protect biodiversity. Thus the GYBN provides a unique global platform where youth organizations and individuals can communicate with each other and join forces for the protection of biodiversity. It also aims to become the international coordination platform for youth participation in negotiations under the CBD, and is committed to bringing the opinions and positions of youth into the negotiations.

Thanks to financial support from the German Federal Agency for Nature Conservation (BfN), an international youth conference officially launching the GYBN was held in August 2012. Held in Berlin and hosted by the NAJU (German Youth Association for the Protection of Nature) the conference brought together 35 young environmentalists from all regions of the world. The six-day conference focused on establishing the GYBN and preparing for the participation of youth at COP 11 by, among other things, holding capacity-building sessions and policy briefings on the CBD and the main issues on the COP 11 agenda.

## The Global Youth Biodiversity Network provides a unique global platform where youth organizations and individuals can get in touch with each other and join forces for the protection of biodiversity

In addition to these measures an international mailing list to facilitate discussions on biodiversity and the CBD among young people was set up in May 2012. Over 360 youths joined the mailing list within a couple of weeks, highlighting the fact that many young people have been eagerly anticipating the creation of an international youth network on biodiversity and that the protection of biodiversity is an important issue for youth.

The driving-force behind the Global Youth Biodiversity Network is the conviction that biodiversity doesn’t stop at national borders, and that we can only halt the loss of biodiversity when we join forces and together create a global coalition of young people. ❖

# Synthetic biology: A new and emerging issue for the CBD

by **Eric Hoffman** ● Ehoffman@foe.org and  
**Kathy Jo Wetter** ● ETC Group, kjo@etcgroup.org

Synthetic biology, sometimes described as ‘extreme genetic engineering,’ refers broadly to the use of computer-assisted, biological engineering to design and construct new synthetic biological parts, devices and systems, and to redesign existing biological organisms. Synthetic biology differs from “conventional” genetic engineering in its technique, scale, and its use of novel and synthetic genetic sequences—raising new risks.

*The Principles for Oversight of Synthetic Biology*, which has been endorsed by 113 organizations from around the world, outlines what the precautionary governance of synthetic biology would entail.

Synthetic biology is a rapidly growing but nascent field, worth over \$1.6 billion in annual sales. Many of the world’s largest energy, chemical, forestry, pharmaceutical, food and agribusiness corporations are investing in synthetic biology R&D or establishing joint ventures. A handful of products derived from synthetic biology have already reached the commercial market and many others are in pre-commercial stages.

Despite synthetic biology’s rapid growth its possible environmental and social impacts have not been assessed, and there are neither national nor international regulations that could help ensure that synthetic biology does not harm biodiversity and livelihoods.

## Risks to biodiversity

While it is already difficult to assess the safety of single transgenic organisms, synthetic biology raises the level of complexity enormously. There has been no scientific effort to thoroughly assess the environmental or health safety of synthetic organisms, which can have tens or hundreds of entirely novel genetic sequences.

Most of the organisms being engineered through synthetic biology (algae, yeast, *E. coli*, viruses) naturally and regularly swap genes, and so genetic contamination from escaped organisms should be expected. Unlike other types of pollution, genetic pollution is permanent and impossible to clean up.

Synthetic organisms could also displace wild organisms or interfere with existing ecosystems. Once a synthetic organism finds an ecological niche in which to survive, it has the potential to become a new class of invasive species or could produce new toxins directly in the environment.

## Increased demand for biomass

Industry groups argue that widespread application of synthetic biology will enable a new “bioeconomy,” in which products previously made from fossil petroleum will be fermented by engineered microbes feeding on living biomass. Synthetic biologists want to turn microbes into “living chemical factories” that can be engineered to produce substances they would not produce naturally. Not only is equating a factory with a living and evolving organism inadequate and problematic, microbial production processes depend on industrial-scale supplies of feedstocks, notably sugars derived from agricultural and forest biomass.

Since 86% of the world’s biomass is found in the tropics, increased demand for biomass to feed synthetic microbes for a new bioeconomy could have enormous impacts on biodiversity and the livelihood and food security of smallholder farmers, forest-dwellers, livestock-keepers and fishing communities.

## Natural product replacement

Synthetic biology-derived fuels have gotten the most investment and media attention to-date, but scale-up has proved difficult. So synthetic biology companies are now partnering with the world’s largest flavour and fragrance, cosmetics, food ingredients and pharmaceutical companies to get engineered microbes to produce compounds naturally found in plants. Products already in development include flavourings such as vanilla, liquorice and



saffron, sweeteners such as stevia, oils such as jojoba, and strategic materials such as tyre rubber and medicines.

Commercial applications of synthetic biology's designer organisms have the potential to de-stabilize traditional commodity markets, disrupt trade, displace workers, and eliminate jobs.

Three options, each in square brackets, were provided by the Fifteenth meeting of the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice (SBSTTA 15) on how best to address synthetic biology as a new and emerging issue:

- **Option 1:** *Decides* not to add any new and emerging issues (including synthetic biology) to SBSTTA's agenda
- **Option 2:** *Requests* that the Executive Secretary compile and synthesize information on the possible impacts of synthetic biology on biodiversity (including social, economic, and cultural considerations), as well as possible gaps and overlaps with other provisions of the Convention, its Protocols, and other relevant agreements to be made available for review by SBSTTA, and *invites* Parties and other relevant stakeholders to submit additional information
- **Option 3:** *Invites* Parties, other Governments, and other relevant stakeholders, including indigenous and local communities, to submit further information to be synthesized by the Executive Secretariat, peer-reviewed, and provided to SBSTTA for further review.

Additional language, also in square brackets, was proposed that would establish a de-facto moratorium on the environmental release and commercial use of synthetic biology until there is an adequate scientific basis on which to justify such activities and due consideration is given to the associated risks for biological diversity, including socio economic risks and risks to the environment, human health, food security, livelihoods, culture and traditional knowledge, practices and innovations.

#### Recommendations to COP 11

The Eleventh meeting of the Conference of the Parties (COP 11) to the CBD should establish a moratorium on the release and commercial use of synthetic biology until there is an adequate scientific basis to justify their use and release as well as to assess associated risks for biodiversity, socio-economic risks, culture and traditional knowledge, practices and innovations.

Additionally, COP 11 should support Option 2, which would provide Parties with the most relevant information when considering risks posed by synthetic biology.

Synthetic biology poses new and major threats to biodiversity. The CBD is the only body with the ability to rein in this unregulated and untested technology before it harms biodiversity. ❖



ISTOCKPHOTO/THINKSTOCK

Synthetic biology poses new and major threats to biodiversity. The CBD is the only body with the ability to rein in this unregulated and untested technology.

# World Wide Views on Biodiversity

by **Malte Timp** ● The Danish Board  
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On 15 September 2012, thousands of people took part in citizen consultations to express their views on global biodiversity policies and actions. The ambition of the World Wide Views on Biodiversity project (WWViews) was to engage ordinary citizens, young and old, men and women, in as many countries as possible in the process of policymaking and awareness-raising to sustain a living and healthy planet.

Public awareness and support among citizens are essential conditions for successful implementation of environmental politics and hence one of the targets of the global biodiversity strategy and action plan agreed on at the UN biodiversity conference in Aichi Prefecture, Japan, in October 2010.

WWViews on Biodiversity, a series of parallel citizen consultations around the world, was developed by the Danish Board of Technology Foundation with the support and promotion of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), to contribute to the first strategic goal of the Aichi Targets - making people aware of the values of biodiversity and giving them a platform to make their voices heard. The project was sponsored by the VILLUM Foundation, the Danish Ministry of the Environment and the Japan Biodiversity Fund. National and regional partners were responsible for financing the citizen meetings in their country or region.

On the World Wide Views day in September, these partner organisations held day-long citizen meetings with hundreds of participants in over 20 countries. The first meetings started at dawn in the Pacific and the last closed at dusk in the Americas. In some countries like in Canada and India, several meetings in different regions were held.

Citizens invited to participate in the meetings were selected with the aim of representing the demographic distribution in the region with regards to age, gender, occupation, education and further criteria. In that way, fishermen and academics, students and farmers, entrepreneurs and pensioners met for a day in small groups around a table in Nepal, Uganda or Bolivia to share and discuss their views. A broad range of issues and questions were put on the table: Who is affected by the loss of biodiversity? How are agriculture, fishery and other small and large-scale industries related to biodiversity? Which interest should be taken under consideration when it comes to the protection of natural habitats? Who should pay for the conservation of the environment and who should have the right to benefit from natural resources? No easy questions yet all will have an impact on the future of our planet and the resources available for the next generations.

Participants were not expected to have an in-depth knowledge of biodiversity or the questions on the CBD agenda. They all were provided beforehand with balanced information material in their local

language introducing the major issues on biodiversity on land, in the sea, and on access and benefit-sharing.

Based on this information, and on their own experience, citizens participated in group discussions before voting on a set of questions individually. All meetings followed the same schedule, with questions being similar for each country, thus making international, quantitative comparisons possible. The results of WWViews were instantly reported to [wwviews.org](http://wwviews.org), where everyone is able to see and compare the votes from different meetings, countries or regions.

The most significant outcomes of all WWViews citizen meetings will be published in a policy report that includes recommendations to national politicians and decision-makers gathered at the tenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties in Hyderabad, India in October 2012. A follow up event is planned for 2020 to evaluate whether the views of citizens on biodiversity issues have changed.

The World Wide Views on Biodiversity project is the second attempt to introduce democratic deliberation on global scale. While science, business and other interest groups have established ways to contribute to the agenda-setting and decision-making process under the UN umbrella, the voices of non-organized citizens rarely reach international conference halls. However, as markets, technologies and environmental issues became global in scale, so did policymaking. In this new reality, the distance between citizens and policymakers increases, thereby diminishing the citizens' sense of ownership in decision-making.

To bridge this widening democratic gap, the first World Wide Views project was launched in 2008 leading up to the UN Climate Conference in Copenhagen in December 2009. About 4,000 citizens in 38 countries took part in citizen deliberations to contribute with their opinions on global warming. Clover Moore, Lord Mayor of Sydney, said at the presentation of the WWViews on Global Warming results at the last day of the negotiations in Copenhagen, that world leaders should accept the view of the people as a call to action and a reminder that if they would only take bold steps, the community would support them.

The same applies to the biodiversity conference in India, where citizens from around the world will be engaged in the political debate and discuss how nature's diversity can be conserved and used in a sustainable way. Now it is time for the politicians to make the right decisions and, perhaps more importantly, involve their citizens in the process of policymaking and implementation, as they are the ones who will have to live with the decisions and their consequences. ❖

*The first results of World Wide Views on Biodiversity arrived as this magazine went to print. In summary, three quarters of citizens are very concerned about biodiversity loss, people in developing countries feel more affected. Citizens agree that all countries should pay for protection, but the main part should come from developed countries. Further information and results available at: <http://biodiversity.wwviews.org/>*



## LOCAL VOICES ON IMPLEMENTATION

*Dr. M. Kamarudeen, Co-ordinator, Biodiversity Management Committee, Peringammala Grama Panchayat, Thiruvananthapuram District, Kerala State, India; and, Assistant Professor in Botany, Iqbal College, drmkamarudeenbotany@gmail.com*

### How is your organisation involved in implementation? Any success stories you can share?

The Peringammala Biodiversity Management Committee (PBMC) was established by the Peringammala Gram Panchayat (Elected Village Council) in 2009 as a statutory body as provided in the Biological Diversity Act of India. Peringammala is a village of around 30,000 people located in the biodiversity rich hotspot of Western Ghats in Kerala covering an area of 217 km<sup>2</sup>. The village has a large population of Adivasis (indigenous people) composed mainly of the Kani Tribe, known for their knowledge of herbal medicine. The current President of the Panchayat is Mrs. PValsala, a political activist of the Kani Tribe. She also chairs the BMC. The PBMC was established to promote the conservation and sustainable use of the biodiversity, and to use these resources for the wellbeing of the people of the Panchayat. The Panchayat receives scientific and technical advice from State Biodiversity Board, Jawaharlal Nehru Tropical Botanic Garden and Research Institute and Iqbal College

The PBMC is well equipped to deal with biodiversity issues such as protection, conservation, promotion and restoration. We prepared one of the first People's Biodiversity Registers in the State with participation of people particularly the Adivasis, and it has been widely used as a model by other villages. The Register contains elaborate documentation of flora, fauna, traditional tribal knowledge, folklore uses, cultural practices etc. We have documented the rich Adivasi knowledge and have taken measures to protect their rights. The Peringammala Panchayat actively supported the benefit-sharing agreement developed between TBG&RI and Kani Tribe on their traditional knowledge related to *Trichopus zeylanicus*, which was developed into a commercial product (which was awarded the Equator Initiative Prize).

Different kinds of wild resource harvesting schemes have been developed and are being implemented with the full involvement and leadership of the Adivasi population. Areas for resource harvesting have been designated as well as the quantities and seasons. The previous method of harvesting of *Myristica* fruits (wild nutmeg), which was proving to be harmful to this extremely rare species has been replaced. *Acacia intsia*, widely used as a bath scrub (as vermicide), harvesting is also rigorously managed by the local communities. Marketing support for the wild produce is also provided through a marketing society.

On the advice of the BMC and with its technical support the Panchayat has established three centres for practicing Adivasi medicine and these hospitals attract a large, regular flow of patients from all over the State. The BMC has taken steps to recruit Adivasi youths to work with experienced tribal physicians so this traditional adivasi medicine knowledge can be transferred to the youth. This is particularly important since the younger generation of Adivasi people is rather reluctant to get in to herbal medicine.

We have initiated steps for the rejuvenation of traditional crops like wild rice, wild nutmeg, pepper, wild tamarind, cinnamon, wild tubers etc. The BMC has taken several other measures like banning plastic and substituting monoculture plantations with indigenous medicinal plants and timber crops, implementation of biogas plants for waste management, rain water harvesting, bio-fencing etc. The BMC is actively involved in conducting eco education programmes to various schools and colleges to create environment and ecological awareness among children.

### What key aspects (apart from finance) play an important role in implementation but sometimes get overlooked?

60% of the population are marginal farmers and belong to low income groups, around 30% is middle income group and 10% comes under high income group who hold large plantations or have high income from other sources including remittance. In our Panchayat, 12 out of 19 village council representatives are from the low income group, five of them from the Adivasi community and therefore the views and concerns of the marginalised communities are adequately represented. The BMC regularly holds meeting and consultations to provide the village with various kinds of support by liaising with the government departments. Support for agricultural practices and marketing of produce have been crucial in building partnership with local communities.

By involving youth and school children, we have been able to effectively communicate the conservation and sustainable use message to the larger community, and the women are at the forefront of all our activities.

The Panchayat is keen to implement the Forest Right Act that recognizes different kinds of forest rights of the Adivasi community and the BMC is gearing itself up to assist the Panchayat in this respect. The Panchayat was not able to implement the Act so far largely due to the lack of technical advice. The Forest Right Act when properly implemented will enhance the sense of ownership of forest by the Adivasi community and provide them the legal right to protect it while at the same time allowing them to sustainably use the resources.

### What are your expectations for COP 11 with regards to implementation of the Strategic Plan? What would you like to see happen?

We invest high expectations in the COP 11 held in our country. Since India is predominantly an agricultural country we expect COP 11 to ensure that our crops are not contaminated by GMOs. We are deeply concerned about biopiracy, because we are also a direct victim. Our biodiversity has been stolen several times and therefore we want the COP 11 to ensure that cases of biopiracy of the past and the current are addressed and legally punished. Those who have not paid compensation for accessing biodiversity in violation of CBD provisions should be forced to pay compensation in the form of equitable benefit sharing with historical consideration. We also look forward to the early entry into force of the Nagoya Protocol on Access and Benefit-Sharing, accompanied by a comprehensive legally binding compliance mechanism. We also expect the developed countries to pay adequate funding for the CBD process taking into account their historical plunder of our biodiversity and valuable traditional knowledge.

Finally we warmly welcome all participants of COP 11 to our country and wish a fruitful time. 🍀







Convention on  
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