



Strengthening the national biodiversity strategies and action plans: **revision and implementation**



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I. Introduction

The enhancement of synergies among the more than five hundred biodiversity-related conventions and multilateral environmental agreements in force has increasingly been recognized as a means for the effective implementation and governance of biodiversity. Considering national implementation as a key opportunity for enhancing synergies, the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) has embarked on a series of actions to promote synergies among the conventions and multilateral environmental agreements.

One such action is to support countries in finalizing and implementing the national strategy cum policy document on biodiversity – the national biodiversity strategies and action plans (NBSAPs) – to effectively consider the linkages among key biodiversity conventions for the effective achievement of national, regional and global biodiversity objectives.

The present document has been produced to support and enhance a better understanding of seven key biodiversity conventions, namely the Convention on Biological Diversity, the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora, the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals (Convention on Migratory Species), the Convention on Wetlands of International Importance especially as Waterfowl Habitat (Ramsar Convention), the Convention concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage (World Heritage Convention), the International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture and the International Plant Protection Convention in the context of updating/revising/reviewing the NBSAPs and their subsequent implementation.

The present document is aimed at supporting the national focal points of the above conventions and providing options for integrating the objectives, targets, indicators and implementation plans in such a manner that they are mutually supportive and fully considered at the national level within the NBSAPs. The document draws significantly from previous guidance from conventions such as the Convention on Migratory Species and the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora and provides an overview of how each convention relates to the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011–2020 and the Aichi Biodiversity Targets.¹

1 <https://www.cbd.int/sp/>.

II. Background

Biodiversity is life, biodiversity is our life! The role and relevance of biodiversity and ecosystems in securing our current and future lives, both urban and rural, cannot be overstated. Countries and stakeholders have addressed global biodiversity and ecosystems decline through a series of legal, policy and regulatory mechanisms. Though there are a number of national, subregional, regional and global agreements and conventions related to ecosystems and biodiversity, seven are considered the key biodiversity conventions: the Convention on Biological Diversity, the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora, the Convention on Migratory Species, the Ramsar Convention, the World Heritage Convention, the International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture and the International Plant Protection Convention.^{2,3} The secretariats of those conventions form the Liaison Group of Biodiversity-related Conventions (Biodiversity Liaison Group), which was established under the Convention on Biological Diversity.^{4,5}

While some of those conventions, such as the Convention on Biological Diversity, have specific mandates related to ecosystems and biodiversity, others such as the Convention on Migratory Species, the Ramsar Convention and the International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture have a specific focus on habitats, ecosystems and species. Given

- 2 All information as of 20 December 2015 is taken from the respective multilateral environmental agreement websites.
- 3 For the purposes of the present document, the conventions listed are considered key biodiversity-related conventions. The terms “biodiversity-related multilateral environmental agreements”, “biodiversity-related conventions” and “biodiversity-related agreements” are used interchangeably. The term “biodiversity-related conventions” is used in the present paper for reasons of clarity.
- 4 Decision VII/26 (paras. 1–2) of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity.
- 5 <https://www.cbd.int/brc/>.



their mandates to implement actions, guided by their respective governing bodies and assisted by their subsidiary bodies and scientific advisory bodies, national implementation of the seven key biodiversity-related conventions is crucial to achieving effective biodiversity conservation, including the global Aichi Biodiversity Targets.

Synergies in action to implement the conventions are essential for maximizing the results and impacts of implementation and to ensure the most efficient use of limited financial resources. However, national actions on synergies are still suboptimal. Achieving synergies requires additional impetus, most importantly at the national level, where the parties to the seven biodiversity-related conventions identify needs through the governing bodies of the relevant conventions.⁶

Recognizing the need for enhanced cooperation among the biodiversity-related conventions, several governing bodies have called for synergies in implementation at the national, regional and global levels.⁷ Such requests were also made by United Nations agencies (e.g. UNEP,⁸ the Environment Management Group,⁹ the Joint Inspection Unit¹⁰ and others).

⁶ "Elaboration of options for enhancing synergies among biodiversity-related conventions" (see UNEP/EA.2/12/Add.1). Available from <http://unep.org/environmentalgovernance/>

In paragraph 89 of the outcome document of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development, entitled "The future we want", Heads of State and Government and high-level representatives called for enhanced synergies among the multilateral environmental agreements.¹¹

III. Role and relevance of NBSAPs in promoting cooperation and synergies

Article 6 of the Convention on Biological Diversity provides that each party shall, in accordance with its particular conditions and capabilities, develop national strategies, plans or programmes for the conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity or adapt for this purpose existing strategies, plans or programmes, and integrate, as far as possible and as appropriate, the conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity into relevant sectoral or cross-sectoral plans, programmes and policies. NBSAPs are the principal instruments for implementing the Convention at the national level in accordance with article 6.

In its decision X/2,¹² the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity urged parties and other Governments to review, and as appropriate

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