

Summary of CBD-COP10 Pre-Conference Nagoya, March 21-22, 2010

The scientific and policy community who gathered in Nagoya at the COP10 Pre-Conference meeting (Agenda, Annex) co-organized by the Ministry of the Environment of Japan, DIVERSITAS, Nagoya University, and the Secretariat of Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) welcomed the opportunity to contribute to on-going discussion on: 1) the establishment of a new assessment mechanism for biodiversity and ecosystem services (IPBES, Intergovernmental Panel on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services); 2) the development and implementation of the new CBD Strategic Plan and its 2020 targets; and 3) the further development of plans for a global biodiversity observation system, GEO-BON, and its regional network, AP-BON. A summary of discussions during the meeting is as follows:

1- Establishment of a new assessment mechanism for biodiversity and ecosystem services, IPBES

- The community supported IPBES as an instrument to provide scientific assessments (analogous to IPCC). It was stressed that the creation of IPBES is critically important to support implementation of the new CBD Strategic Plan (and other MEAs). IPBES will reduce the disconnection between the scientists & policy makers that is exacerbating losses to biodiversity and ecosystem services, and impeding the generation of policy-relevant science. It will ensure that incentives being developed to protect biodiversity and ecosystem services are scientifically informed. It will provide a generally accepted source of credible information on biodiversity and ecosystem services.
- As key operating principles, scientific independence should be a prerequisite for IPBES. So it is recommended that it not be a subsidiary body to an existing intergovernmental organization. Its outputs should be subject to critical peer review to secure the credibility of IPBES.
- General views on the scope, legal status and programme of work of IPBES was also discussed during the session. IPBES should provide scientific support to biodiversity-related international agreements (CBD, Ramsar, CITES, CMS, WHC, ITPGRFA, etc.) and to the UNCCD (Convention to Combat Desertification). Also, IPBES should be established as a body in which intergovernmental and some non-governmental entities, such as key scientific organizations, are represented.

- It is important that a bottom up approach through regional working groups be encouraged as the foundation of IPBES to take into account local and regional scales.
- Role of scientists in IPBES was also highlighted. Scientists should be considered as full stakeholders in this process, and not only as producers of information, and their representative organizations (e.g. ICSU, the International Council for Science, and ISSC, the International Social Sciences Council) might be represented on the governing body of IPBES.
- Capacity building should be considered to ensure a strong contribution of developing country scientists to the core scientific activity of IPBES.

2- Development of the new CBD strategic plan and its 2020 targets

New CBD strategic plan

- It was stressed that the post 2010 target should address not only direct but also indirect drivers of biodiversity change, such as socio-economic changes, which are key in driving biodiversity changes.
- Biodiversity management will be critical for addressing the development agenda, and the development agenda will be critical for addressing biodiversity loss.
- The community will be looking for win-win situations, but in reality we will often have to deal with trade-offs between protecting biodiversity and other social goals. On the other hand, large gains in biodiversity can be obtained at low cost, by the integration of biodiversity in planning processes, especially spatial planning. Incentives are an essential tool, but subsidies can be harmful to biodiversity, and current subsidies are sub-optimal.
- Restoring biodiversity and ecosystem services will be an important tool in the next decade and can contribute to broader goals including climate change adaptation.
- There needs to be stronger links between CBD and the climate change agenda. There will be thresholds and irreversible tipping points in biodiversity change, as the Global Biodiversity Outlook-3 of the CBD will show, that are real, but currently not well characterized - uncertainty is no justification for inaction.
- Even taking direct action now, it will take years for some systems to recover (e.g. certain marine fisheries). Freshwater systems and wetlands are under particular threat, and critical to the biodiversity agenda.

- In many cases, multiple drivers of change interact to cause biodiversity loss (e.g.: decline of coral reefs).
- Changing disturbance regimes are an important direct driver of biodiversity change - experience from "Satoyama" and High Nature Value farmland in Europe shows that underuse can actually be a problem for biodiversity.
- The concept of ecosystem services is very useful in articulating how biodiversity relates to ecosystem functioning and human well-being and thus in communicating with decision makers.
- Despite continuing biodiversity loss and many increasing pressures, there are grounds for hope from science and there is room for informed policy to make an impact and prevent irreversible change.

2020 targets

- The community welcomes the use of targets and indicators because this gives a real opportunity for evidence-based decision-making and adaptive management of biodiversity.
- Addressing 20 targets would be challenging for some countries and for the community as a whole, but there are inter-dependencies between targets that present opportunities for synergies in addressing them.
- Targets should be ambitious but at the same time realistic, and strategic in addressing the CBD mission. We have noted targets where we feel that these criteria are not met.
- The tension between wanting the target to be simple and at the same time unambiguous could possibly be addressed by separating each into a headline part and an elaboration part.
- Given the inter-dependencies among targets, they could be organized hierarchically so that they build to a smaller group of 2020 targets (e.g. Mace et al, 2010).
- The baseline should be specified. Where feasible this might be relative to 2001 to 2010 period.
- A glossary might keep the text uncluttered while tightening up words and phrases such as 'overfishing' or 'ecological critical loads'.

3- Promotion of global biodiversity observations

- The community commended the establishment and development of GEO-BON and its regional network, AP-BON to provide science-based information for policy/decision making on conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity. While globally coordinated observation systems are well established for physical parameters (e.g. air temperature, sea surface temperature, etc.), there is no organized observation system for most biodiversity indicators.
- However, biodiversity observations such as taxonomic inventories, plot-based observations, vegetation mapping, satellite monitoring of vegetation index, phenological observations and many others have been made in various areas. Unfortunately, the processes and systems associated with these observations remain uncoordinated, and many observed data are not published or published only in local languages and are not integrated with broadly accessible data bases.
- The meeting agreed with the importance to coordinate and integrate these observations by supporting the activities of GEO-BON and AP-BON. In the AP-BON Workshop following the COP10 Pre-Conference, a draft implementation plan including data collection, integration and provision was discussed.