

Mainstreaming biodiversity into development

Supporting African countries to integrate biodiversity into development policy and planning



In brief

IIED and UNEP-WCMC have been working with four African countries – Botswana, Namibia, Seychelles and Uganda – since 2012, helping them to think about poverty and development issues as they revised their National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plans (NBSAPs). Now we want to work with an expanded group of African countries to support how revised NBSAPs are used. We hope that they can be vehicles to mainstream biodiversity into national economic or sectoral development plans, and national budgeting processes and monitoring systems.

Our ambitions

We will continue the NBSAP journey from revision through to implementation from now until March 2017. Having already built skills and capacity within environment ministries and improved engagement with development ministries in four African countries, this new project will:

- Provide the opportunity for the learning and capacity development that has taken place during the NBSAP revision process to continue into the NBSAP implementation phase.
- Identify entry points for engaging with key development processes in each country – whether that is the national development plan, the agriculture sector strategy or the public expenditure review.
- Build relationships beyond the biodiversity sector – moving beyond the environment ministries who were the focus of the first phase to those that influence development processes in key sectors or at the national level.

The project will engage with the four original countries – Uganda, Namibia, Botswana and the Seychelles – but will also expand our 'African Leadership Group' to include Malawi and Zimbabwe, which have participated in a number of our previous activities already, and new partners Ghana and Zambia.

Approach

We intend to use technical support and peer-to-peer learning as we successfully did in the first project. This will mean:

- Face-to-face meetings
- Development of tools and guidance for continuous improvement in reciprocal biodiversity-development mainstreaming
- Review of experiences and lessons learnt.

The project participants from each of the countries will form the African Leadership Group. This group will be instrumental in effecting this learning approach throughout the project period, with technical assistance from IIED and UNEP-WCMC.

We will share what we find out at the next CBD Conference of the Parties in 2016 and will invite debate throughout the project via LinkedIn and Twitter, as well as on our web pages at www.iied.org/nbsaps and the NBSAPs Forum at www.nbsapforum.net.

Photo right:

Lilongwe, Malawi, known as the 'Garden City' (Gome Jenda)

Our theory of change

The twin priorities of national development and biodiversity conservation will not be achieved effectively without 'reciprocal mainstreaming'. This means getting development priorities reflected in biodiversity plans and ensuring biodiversity needs are reflected in development plans. Both mainstreaming tracks are important.

We have already started to change the way biodiversity planners think about development priorities in their strategies for conservation; now we want to change the way development planners think about biodiversity. Whereas many still see biodiversity as a barrier to development ambitions, we want them to recognise it as a major development asset.

We will consider linking up with natural capital accounting initiatives to support decisions about managing a country's natural resources. And we will provide development and biodiversity partners with a significant head-start in producing systematic and sustainable approaches to integrating biodiversity across the activities designed to meet the post-2015 Sustainable Development Goals.

If successful in influencing development planners we expect to see the following changes over the next few years:

- Increased budget allocations for managing biodiversity across the spectrum of stakeholders who benefit
- Sectoral plans that include recognition of potential impacts on biodiversity and strategies to manage these impacts
- Enhanced awareness of biodiversity values among development planners.

These changes will help to bring about a more secure natural resource base on which many people's livelihoods depend. They will help to focus attention on previously overlooked poverty concerns within biodiversity planning processes and increase the opportunities for poor people to benefit from the sustainable use of biodiversity.



Who we are

This project is a joint partnership between the International Institute for Environment and Development (IIED) and the World Conservation Monitoring Centre (UNEP-WCMC), working with partners in eight African countries.

IIED is a policy and action research organisation promoting sustainable development and linking local priorities to global challenges. It is based in London and works on five continents with some of the world's most vulnerable people to

strengthen their voice in the decision-making arenas that affect them.

UNEP-WCMC is the specialist biodiversity assessment centre of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), the world's foremost intergovernmental environmental organisation. The centre has been in operation for over 30 years, combining scientific research with practical policy advice.

Where we work



Our activities 2015 - 2017



Get involved

If you would like to know more about the project or want to share what you have already learnt about implementing an NBSAP, please get in touch. We welcome feedback, ideas and support.

Get in touch

Dilys Roe: dilys.roe@iied.org or [@dilysroe](https://twitter.com/dilysroe)

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Read more

We have a wealth of publications prepared during the lifetime of the first project, plus a range of short videos. In these project participants talk about what they see as the important issues to consider when integrating biodiversity and development concerns – good communications, proper attention to governance issues, and participation of communities reliant on natural resources in decision-making processes, for example.

Visit our website

www.iied.org/nbsaps

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