Mainstreaming Biodiversity in Development and the Sustainable Development Goals: sharing and developing workable solutions

Workshop Summary Report

Sunday, 11th December 2016,
The Universal Centre, Moon Place Hotel, Cancun, Mexico

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1. Introduction

This report summarises key issues emerging from presentations, discussions and conclusions from a full day workshop on "Mainstreaming Biodiversity in Development and the Sustainable Development Goals: sharing and developing workable solutions" co-hosted by the UN Environment World Conservation Monitoring Centre, the International Institute for Environment and Development and the Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity. The workshop was held on Sunday, 11th December 2016 in the margins of the thirteenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity in Cancun, Mexico, 4 - 17 December 2016.

The workshop brought together ~90 people during the course of the day, including representatives from national governments, development cooperation agencies, international and intergovernmental organisations, research institutions, universities, private sector and non–governmental organisations.

The main objectives of the workshop were to:

1) Take stock of existing biodiversity mainstreaming initiatives.
2) Share case studies of how governments are linking National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans and biodiversity considerations with sectoral priorities, development planning and Sustainable Development Goals implementation processes.
3) Share examples of successful and less successful approaches, solutions to identified barriers, and how better collaboration amongst international and national organisations can help to increase mainstreaming impacts.

Presentations were grouped into five sessions: an overview of international experience; the development cooperation agencies perspectives; country experiences; sectoral mainstreaming experiences; and tools and support for scaling up mainstreaming. The key points and conclusions from the workshop are summarised against the three workshop objectives above.

2. Stocktake of existing biodiversity mainstreaming initiatives

The workshop took stock of existing biodiversity mainstreaming initiatives by United Nations agencies, development cooperation agencies, national governments and other international organisations.

SwedBio presented results of an **analysis of the links between the Aichi Biodiversity Targets and the Sustainable Development Goals**. The analysis concluded that there are many potential complementarities, though unsurprisingly Aichi Biodiversity Targets are more explicit regarding biodiversity, with more specific and quantified targets. However, a more inclusive and extensive in-depth analysis is needed to review the degree of overlap and identify elements not covered under the Sustainable Development Goals for development of the post-2020 Convention on Biological Diversity Strategic Plan.

The United Nations Development Programme presented results of a **review of 60 National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans to understand linkages between their actions and the Sustainable Development Goals**. The review showed that National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans actions extend far beyond Goal 14 (Life below water) and Goal 15 (Life on land). The actions would, if fully implemented, catalyze progress in national food security, water security, livelihoods, economic growth, disaster risk reduction, health, gender, and climate resilience, among other goals. The results of the review also show that many actions focus more on planning and research than implementation. Drivers of biodiversity loss are also not well addressed (e.g., wildlife trade, pollution) and there are major mainstreaming opportunities missed (e.g. private conservation and aligning policies).

The Global Environment Facility (GEF) Secretariat presented findings from **a systematic review of final evaluations of 66 biodiversity mainstreaming projects funded by the Global Environment Facility since 2004**. Some of the key conclusions from the review are that:

- Spatial and land-use planning projects consistently reported impacts at scale.
- Most of the successful spatial and land-use planning projects blended work on protected areas and surrounding production landscapes.
- Success of spatial and land-use planning as a mainstreaming investment requires political skill to ensure that the results are integrated into government decision-making machinery at the correct governance

level.
- Mainstreaming takes time and requires the engagement of the right stakeholders from the very start.
- Science-based biophysical and socio-economic spatial information is a key building block for success.
- The need for monitoring and evaluation of biodiversity mainstreaming projects using robust proxy indicators to assess their real contribution to biodiversity status and condition.
- Policy work in the agriculture and forestry sector failed to elucidate clear cause and effect relationships between proposed policy changes and biodiversity benefits on the ground.

Three development cooperation agencies – the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida), Germany's Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) and the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) presented on how they handle biodiversity mainstreaming issues in development cooperation. All three agencies **recognise biodiversity as a central element to implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its Sustainable Development Goals, the Aichi Biodiversity Targets and the Paris Agreement, and include biodiversity mainstreaming in the design of development cooperation programmes and projects**. For example, mainstreaming biodiversity and ecosystem services is explicit in the Swedish Government policy framework for development cooperation and in Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency's draft environment policy and several operational strategies which are key for programming. The three development cooperation agencies use mixed biodiversity mainstreaming approaches and a wide range of tools in support of mainstreaming. The aim is to minimise risks by addressing the drivers of biodiversity loss, and use opportunities to safeguard and enhance positive contributions of biodiversity and ecosystem services to development and human wellbeing. The mainstreaming approaches include:
- Standard processes such as environmental, climate and social impact assessments for all projects and programmes, guidelines for project planners and integrating safeguarding policies on biodiversity into development planning.
- Raising awareness of the importance of biodiversity and ecosystem services for productive sectors and human wellbeing through sharing success stories and good practice fact sheets, and political dialogues with experts from other sectors.
- Capacity building and tools such as training development cooperation experts and partners
- Supporting use of integrated landscape scale approaches to managing social and environmental issues such as biodiversity loss, climate change, and poverty and food insecurity.
- Promoting growth/green economy including through value-added agricultural/forest production, ecotourism, payment for ecosystem services and access and benefit sharing.

The agencies noted biodiversity mainstreaming requires strong leadership, continued guidance and political steering, linking successful mainstreaming examples to real political agendas, building ownership within other sectors and developing practical tools for mainstreaming that can be tailored to different contexts. In addition, more support and joined up thinking is needed on how to use the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and Paris Agreement for biodiversity mainstreaming and better policy coherence.

Countries also presented their work on mainstreaming. Through **the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development and UK Government Darwin Initiative funded Mainstreaming Biodiversity in Development initiative (hereafter, the NBSAPs 2.0 Initiative), the UN Environment World Conservation Monitoring Centre and the International Institute for Environment and Development are providing support to eight sub-Saharan African countries - Botswana, Ghana, Malawi, Namibia, Seychelles, Uganda, Zambia and Zimbabwe - to help them use their revised National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans to mainstream biodiversity priorities into strategic national and sectoral planning processes.** Some of the strategic national and sector planning processes for biodiversity mainstreaming which these countries are focusing on include national development plans (Zambia), Blue Economy Roadmap and Marine Spatial Planning (Seychelles), Sustainable Development Goal domestication process (Zimbabwe), National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan implementation and resource mobilisation (Namibia), land use planning and national development planning process, review of Environmental Impact Assessment legislation (Malawi), and energy sector and budgeting processes (Uganda).

The NBSAPs 2.0 Initiative has also **catalysed the establishment of the African Leadership Group on Biodiversity Mainstreaming, comprising stakeholders from biodiversity, finance and planning authorities in**

the eight project countries. The Group also includes independent members from across Africa who offer relevant mainstreaming expertise and experience. The Group's role is to offer support and leadership on different aspects of the link between biodiversity and development, and on mainstreaming biodiversity. The African Leadership Group approach is providing great opportunities for the Group to learn from each other about biodiversity mainstreaming in policy and practice. The African Leadership Group has offers a successful model for building a broader mainstreaming community of practice.

Conservation International presented Costa Rica's mainstreaming success story. Costa Rica's mainstreaming approaches focussed on **changing institutions, for example, merging the Ministry for Energy and the Ministry of Environment to ensure policy coherence, creating positive incentives for biodiversity conservation, elimination of perverse incentives, improved coordination across government ministries and agencies, and granting land rights to people**. Costa Rica also shared a 'recipe' for mainstreaming success based on their experience, stressing the need for creating a conducive policy environment for biodiversity conservation and its sustainable use through multi-stakeholder consultations.

Mexico, represented by the National Commission for the Knowledge and Use of Biodiversity (CONABIO), presented on Mexico's revised National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan and mainstreaming biodiversity in agriculture, forestry, fisheries and tourism sectors. Mexico has developed **Strategies for Biodiversity Mainstreaming in the Agriculture, Forestry, Fisheries and Tourism Sectors (2016-2022)** through a collaborative process involving federal government branches, civil society organizations, producers, service providers and academics. The strategies are structured around three main axes:

- Substantive axes refer to central tasks needed to integrate the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity. These include participation, sectoral impact on biodiversity and instruments and mechanisms for management and development.
- Coordination axes are actions aimed at promoting linkage and inter-relation of different branches and institutional instruments to facilitate the integration of both sustainable use and preservation of biodiversity at all instances. These include institutional capacity and arrangements, instruments for sectoral planning, and communication and divulgation.
- Support axes are the actions and elements required to achieve input supply and enabling necessary features at institutional level to integrate effectively the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity. These include financing, legal framework and monitoring and evaluation mechanisms.

South Africa, through the South African National Biodiversity Institute (SANBI) presented their work on **mainstreaming biodiversity into national and sector development plans, processes and projects.** In South Africa, substantial successes have been achieved in integrating biodiversity in planning processes and sectors such as the national development plan, water, mining and plantation forestry sectors, municipal and urban sector and environmental authorisations through the Environmental Impact Assessment process. South Africa's revised National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (2015 – 2025) has a focus on mainstreaming biodiversity in production sectors and national development plans. South Africa has also developed vital practical tools for mainstreaming including maps of biodiversity priority areas based on best available science, guidelines to accompany and add value to maps of biodiversity priority areas and online access to this information available via the Biodiversity Advisor website: http://www.sanbi.org/

A representative from the IUCN Commission on Ecosystem Management - Fisheries Experts Group (IUCN-CEM-FEG) presented work on **mainstreaming biodiversity in fisheries management.** The presentation stressed that biodiversity and fisheries are already well entrenched in policy, and that guidance on mainstreaming already exists (e.g. Malawi Principles for the Ecosystem Approach (CBD COP/4/inf.9) and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries). The major challenge in the fisheries sector is capacity to implement existing mainstreaming guidance. The presentation highlighted that coherence between actions of relevant conservation agencies including fisheries management agencies is necessary but still lacking. Mainstreaming in the marine sector and in developed countries were raised as areas for further exploration.

UN Environment presented work on **mainstreaming biodiversity into nutrition, food and livelihood security strategies and programmes, and in particular a 5 year project (2012 -2017) aimed at strengthening the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity with high nutritional potential.** The project will generate

evidence to demonstrate the nutritional value of local biodiversity for food and nutrition and the role it plays in promoting healthy diets and strengthening livelihoods, use the evidence to influence policies and markets that support the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity for food and nutrition for improved human nutrition and wellbeing, and raise awareness through developing tools and best practices for scaling up the use biodiversity for food and nutrition in development programmes, value chains and local community initiatives.

The International Development Law Organization (IDLO) are **developing a legal assessment tool for biodiversity mainstreaming. The key objective is to provide a concrete tool for Convention on Biological Diversity Parties and civil society to assess how existing domestic legal and policy frameworks are advancing or blocking efforts to mainstream biodiversity**. The tool will focus on mainstreaming into sectors (e.g. agriculture, forestry, fisheries, tourism, mining) and cross-sectoral integration (e.g. human rights, climate change, disaster risk reduction, innovative biodiversity financing). The legal assessment tool includes a checklist of national legal/policy issues such as guiding principles, biodiversity-related incentives, biodiversity financing and safeguards, fair and equitable benefit-sharing, and biodiversity-related certification mechanisms. The tool will be pilot tested in Kenya in 2017.

The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development presented their work on **monitoring and evaluating biodiversity mainstreaming including some examples of possible indicators to measure inputs, process, outputs, and outcomes/impacts.** Several National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans reviewed as part of this work refer to indicators to monitor progress towards mainstreaming. One such example in South Africa is number of tools developed to support mainstreaming of biodiversity assets and ecological infrastructure in production sectors and resource management. Examples of indicators from international organisations include those from the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development database on policy instruments for the environment, such as revenues from environmentally related taxes in percentage Gross Domestic Product, trends in potentially environmentally harmful agricultural support, and global trends in the state of world marine fish stocks. The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development Rio markers capture mainstreaming in development finance. Some of the biodiversity mainstreaming monitoring and evaluation challenges include lack of data and information to set baselines and targets, lack of capacity and technical expertise, especially at regional and local levels, and poor vertical and horizontal coordination in organisations and government. The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development are working to improve monitoring and evaluation of mainstreaming and invited inputs on the subject from workshop participants.

The Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit presented their work on **capacity development for mainstreaming and the five dimensions of mainstreaming framework.** The training on biodiversity they provide focuses on the following themes:

- *Mainstreaming* – for example, integrating ecosystem services into development planning, strengthening biodiversity policy and principals of ecosystem services assessments for policy impacts.
- *Tools* –for example, economic valuation, payments for ecosystem services, environmental fiscal reform and The Economics of Ecosystems and Biodiversity (TEEB) Dialogues.
- *Marine ecosystems* – for example, climate change adaptation in coastal and marine areas, marine spatial planning.
- *Climate change* – for example, include MARISCO training courses, ecosystem-based adaptation, climate change adaptation in coastal and marine areas and Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Degradation plus (REDD+) Summer School.
- *Sectors* – for example, farmer business schools, agricultural value chains, green economy and sustainable economic development.
- *General support* – for example, protected areas governance and Access and Benefit-sharing.

The Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit's five point mainstreaming framework for structuring and focussing the discussion on specific dimensions of mainstreaming covers (1) institutional arrangements, (2) range of (policy) topics, (3) societal anchoring, (4) (policy) instruments, and (5) financial resources. The framework has been applied in Namibia to support the country's National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan Steering Committee to reflect on their challenges, investigate entry points for mainstreaming, and integrate their revised National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan into their 5th National Development Plan and sector plans such as agriculture, fisheries and tourism.

The Economics of Ecosystems and Biodiversity office of the UN Environment presented on **the Economics of Ecosystems and Biodiversity Phase III, focussing on national implementation in a few selected countries (e.g. Tanzania, Liberia and Bhutan), sectoral/ biome studies including macro-level accounting (with United Nations Statistics Division) and focusing on the System of Environmental-Economic accounting (SEEA) Experimental Ecosystem Accounts**. The presentation also touched on the six step approach of The Economics of Ecosystems and Biodiversity country studies and over-arching questions to identify policy issues that are critical to the host case study country. A case study - The Economics of Ecosystems and Biodiversity in Bhutan - was presented, the aim of which is to inform the Sustainable Hydropower Development Policy (2008) and the Alternative Renewable Energy Policy (2013), both of which call for a diversification of energy sources and that each scenario is designed to meet Bhutan's 2020 energy goals.

3. Case studies of how governments are linking National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans and biodiversity considerations with sectoral priorities, development planning and Sustainable Development Goals implementation processes

Participants shared several case studies and successful approaches to biodiversity mainstreaming. **Six sub Saharan African countries (Malawi, Namibia, Seychelles, Uganda, Zambia and Zimbabwe***)* shared their successes as members of a community of practice that uses peer-to –peer learning approach and that was supported through the NBSAPs 2.0 Initiative. The Initiative established an **African Leadership Group for Biodiversity Mainstreaming** consisting of staff from planning, finance and biodiversity/environment authorities at national level, to drive the integration of development priorities into revised National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans, and to use their revised biodiversity plans to mainstream biodiversity priorities into strategic national and sectoral planning processes.

An African Leadership Group member from Malawi presented on the group's successes, including: peer-to peer learning between African Leadership Group members; peer reviews of biodiversity mainstreaming progress between countries; in-country training of key mainstreaming stakeholders; co-development and testing of simple tools and guidance to support mainstreaming; review of experiences and lessons learnt; developing measures of mainstreaming progress and success; and co-producing and sometimes co-promoting Declarations at the meetings of the Conference of Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity. The African Leadership Group has provided great opportunities for members to learn from one other about all the elements that need to be in place to achieve successful biodiversity mainstreaming. Individual members of the African Leadership Group have also benefited from being seen as mainstreaming mentors in their home countries and beyond, and sharing experiences in their countries to develop and broaden learning, leadership and capacity. The African Leadership Group has great potential for catalysing a wider community of practice on mainstreaming, and should be scaled up to accelerate biodiversity mainstreaming in policy and practice. During the November 2016 NBSAPs 2.0 Initiative workshop held in Ghana, the UN Environment World Conservation Monitoring Centre and the International Institute for Environment and Development were given a mandate to work with African Leadership Group members on a proposal for scaling up the African Leadership Group peer-to-peer learning approach to capacity building for biodiversity mainstreaming.

African Leadership Group members from Malawi, Namibia, Seychelles, Uganda, Zambia and Zimbabwe also presented country specific examples of biodiversity mainstreaming success.

- In **Malaw**i African Leadership Group members have supported the integration of biodiversity into policies and regulations which include draft land use planning policy, review of environmental impact assessment guidelines and environment Management Bill, integration of biodiversity in Malawi's Growth Development Strategy III (in progress), supporting Lilongwe City Council Local Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan.
- In **Namibia**, African Leadership Group members are supporting the incorporation of biodiversity mainstreaming into the 5th National Development Plan. They are also supporting the development of a communication, education and public awareness strategy for their National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan and resource mobilisation strategy for the revised National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plan. Namibia's National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan steering committee members from all line ministries have been trained on biodiversity mainstreaming.
- **Seychelles'** African Leadership Group members are engaging in national planning processes such as the development of the Blue Economy Roadmap, Marine Spatial Planning and the Biodiversity Finance Initiative (BIOFIN) process. They have also managed to conduct reviews of key strategic document (e.g.

Tourism Strategic Action Plan), Seychelles Sustainable Development Strategy, National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan, Blue Economy Roadmap) to determine where biodiversity can be mainstreamed.

- In **Uganda,** through the work of the African Leadership Group members, a Budget Call Circular for 2017/18 issued by the Ministry of Finance advised and guided sectors to implement the national biodiversity targets stipulated in their revised National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan. Sectors including local governments are expected to plan for and allocate resources for implementing the revised National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan beginning financial year 2017/18 up to 2025 (National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan II runs from 2015 -2025). There is also renewed understanding and appreciation of the role of biodiversity in development reflected in Uganda Presidential Directives on Biodiversity especially wetland restoration and deforestation.
- **In Zambia** African Leadership Group members are focusing integrating biodiversity in the formulation process of the seventh National Development Plan, resulting in a member of the African Leadership Group invited to serve on the technical team finalizing the 7th National Development Plan.
- **Zimbabwe** African Leadership Group members have worked to influence the creation of a new cluster under the Sustainable Development Goals domestication process which focuses on Sustainable Development Goals related to Water, Climate and Environment, including biodiversity. The National Biodiversity Forum in Zimbabwe is part of the Steering Committee for the new Sustainable Development Goals Cluster.

In **South Africa** significant mainstreaming successes have been achieved. These include integration of biodiversity into the following planning processes and sectors: National Development Plan 2030, National Strategy for Sustainable Development and Action Plan, the National Water Resource Strategy and Water Pricing Strategy, mining and plantation forestry sector, business and biodiversity initiatives, municipal and urban sector and environmental authorisations through the Environmental Impact Assessment process. South Africa has also developed practical tools for mainstreaming including maps of biodiversity priority areas, guidelines to use the maps and free access to this information online. South Africa also shared some useful lessons and critical key success factors of mainstreaming emerging from their work and these include the importance of providing science-based leadership and expertise, delivering high quality mainstreaming tools, making a strong business case for biodiversity, strengthening capacity to mainstreaming biodiversity, convening focussed discussion platforms and proving science based advice. South Africa's reviewed National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan has a strong mainstreaming component, and future efforts will focus on mainstreaming biodiversity into production sectors and national development plans.

Costa Rica also shared a 'recipe' for biodiversity mainstreaming success, which was made possible through establishing institutions that are key to mainstreaming and its implementation. The government of Costa Rica merged the Ministry for Energy and the Ministry of Environment to improve coherence in policy and practice. The government also supported policies that:

- Recognize and reward ecosystem services and cover opportunity costs.
- Ensure private sector decisions account for non-market impacts, operational benefits and site choices.
- Identify and reduce perverse incentives.

The government of Costa Rica also supported the inclusion of green economy concepts/assessments at the highest possible level of development planning and policy, and improvements in the measurement of Gross Domestic Product to account for the green economy via credible, existing metrics. Currently, Gross Domestic Product does not account for key development issues.

Building institutional capacity to generate science-based biophysical and socio-economic spatial information, and to use it in land-use planning was identified as an investment strongly correlated with project impact. This can be seen as building a kind of "biodiversity mainstreaming readiness" for future mainstreaming actions. The success of spatial and land-use planning as a mainstreaming investment requires political skill to ensure that the results are integrated into government decision making and planning at the correct governance level. This process takes time and requires the engagement of the right complement of stakeholders from the very start. These key factors of success are reflected in other stories that were shared by participants during the workshop. The Global Environment Facility Secretariat review also showed that support to the sustainable use of agrobiodiversity and the protection and/or sustainable use of crop wild relatives is an investment niche

where global biodiversity benefits are clear and where the Global Environment Facility has had measurable success and a unique role to play.

Central African Forests Commission (COMIFAC) presented best practices on mainstreaming mapped against the five dimensions of mainstreaming developed by the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit:

- *Institutional arrangements* – political mandate from the creation of the Central African Forest Commission by the head of states of the 10 countries, coordination and implementation of projects with several components (local development, education, participation of civil society), multi-stakeholder collaboration at local, national and regional levels in implementation of transboundary protected areas agreements and establishment of multi-sectoral platform to implement several instruments (e.g. sub regional Convergence Plan for the conservation and sustainable management of forests)
- *Range of topics* – the sub-regional Convergence Plan, priority actions for the conservation and sustainable management of forests, training and capacity building research, and development, and communication, awareness, information and education.
- *Instruments* – actions plans/strategies, guidelines and legislation (e.g. sub regional Convergence Plan, Central African Forests Commission's sub-regional guidelines on non-timber forest products, sub-regional Wildlife Law Enforcement Action Plan and toolkit on integrating the Right to Adequate Food in the non-timber forest products sector in Central Africa).
- *Societal anchoring* – involving civil society and other stakeholders including capacity building of civil society networks on biodiversity and forest ecosystems issues, support to the Network of Central African Forest and Environmental Training Institutions to take into account biodiversity in the curricula, training and research programs.
- *Financial resources* – several sources of funding (e.g. national, international, private sector, research) which meet in the framework of Congo basin Forest Partnership (CBFP) and financing of biodiversity activities through multiple bilateral and multilateral partners.

4. Common barriers to biodiversity mainstreaming

Participants shared common barriers to mainstreaming biodiversity into development cooperation, sectoral and national development planning, and Sustainable Development Goals implementation processes. The common barriers identified during the presentations and discussion are summarised below:

- *Monitoring and evaluation* – assessing the outcomes of biodiversity mainstreaming projects and their real contribution to biodiversity status and condition remains a critical challenge for many organisations and countries. Many believe intuitively that mainstreaming has worked but that they are not well positioned to quantify impacts or assess effectiveness of specific mainstreaming approaches. The main challenges to monitoring mainstreaming include: lack of data and information (including national assessments and valuation studies) to set baselines and target; lack of capacity and technical expertise, especially at regional and local levels; lack of vertical and horizontal coordination; and lack of sufficient resources and information.
- *Insufficient budgets for biodiversity mainstreaming* – limited funding for biodiversity mainstreaming was described as a major barrier in many countries and organisations. Budgets of authorities responsible for biodiversity mainstreaming are often inadequate, and this undermines full implementation of planned mainstreaming activities.
- *Making an economic case for biodiversity* – participants noted that making a convincing and compelling case for biodiversity as a critical asset for development and its contribution to economic growth, economic diversification, rural job creation, water security and energy security remains a challenge. Capacity to carry out natural capital accounting and economic valuation is often not available in many developing countries. Some participants shared examples of how financial and market innovation (e.g. marine trust fund) and incentives for biodiversity (green market labelling), public-private partnerships and natural capital accounting have raised the general profile of natural capital and biodiversity in economic decisions.
- *Silo mentality and institutional fragmentation* – institutional, political and mental silos were also highlighted as key barriers to mainstreaming. These could be within or between institutions and in some case agencies within the same Ministry. While coherence of polices, measures and actions of biodiversity and development agencies is recognised as a key ingredient of mainstreaming success, it is difficult to achieve in practice.
- *Capacity for biodiversity mainstreaming* – inadequate capacity to implement existing mainstreaming

guidance and to carry out work that supports mainstreaming, such as natural capital accounting (how to account for biodiversity) was also highlighted as a major problem. For example, in many countries where Environment Impact Assessment (EIA) legislation exists, Assessments are either not conducted, or the results are not appropriately applied to minimise negative impacts on biodiversity. Finding a champion within the production sectors and the time to develop good relations with the targeted production sectors were also highlighted as major barriers to biodiversity mainstreaming into production sectors.

- *International and national policy incongruence* – national policy planning cycles are not always aligned to global agendas and frameworks such as the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its Sustainable Development Goals. This can present challenges for biodiversity mainstreaming in many countries as budget allocations tend to be aligned to 4 - 5 years national development plans. This also create challenges for development cooperation agencies who have to adjust ongoing programmes and funding mechanisms to address goals and objectives of new international policy frameworks.
- *Lack of science-based biophysical and socio-economic data and knowledge at appropriate spatial scales* – many participants noted the lack of available good spatial data and information on linkages between biodiversity with other sectors and national development priority issues. This presents several hurdles in informing and influencing decision making process such as land use planning decisions, demonstrating linkages between biodiversity and economic growth, and making an economic case for biodiversity as a key asset for national development.
- *Community of practice on mainstreaming* – participants noted that there is no community of practice on biodiversity mainstreaming. In addition, there is general lack of collaboration between national and international organisations working on biodiversity mainstreaming. However, participants noted that many organisations working on mainstreaming are seeing the advantage of working in collaboration to improve mainstreaming impact and to find common ground on critical mainstreaming issues that might otherwise be marginalised.
- *Weak mainstreaming frameworks in policy documents such as National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans* – National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans are often seen as weak policy documents with weak mainstreaming frameworks and small implementation budgets are often allocated. In some cases, National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans are not approved and adopted as a key policy document at the highest level in government including Parliament and the Office of the President.
- *Issue literacy, especially on interactions between Sustainable Development Goals and Aichi Biodiversity Targets, and what they mean at national level* – participants identified that there is a lack of easily digestible analysis of the complex interactions between Sustainable Development Goals and Aichi Biodiversity Targets. There is also inadequate support for policy makers in many developing countries to interpret the Sustainable Development Goals according to their national circumstances.

5. Solutions to identified barriers of biodiversity mainstreaming

Based on their experiences, participants shared solutions to the above barriers:

Barrier	Solution
Monitoring and evaluation of biodiversity mainstreaming	• Develop more robust proxy indicators to assess the outcomes and impacts of biodiversity mainstreaming projects and their real contribution to biodiversity status and condition. • Develop indicators to assess effectiveness of specific mainstreaming approaches. • Some participants suggested a good starting point would be to develop simple indicators which reflect 'real life' practical mainstreaming success (e.g. participation of non-environment ministry officials in relevant meetings).
Insufficient budget for biodiversity mainstreaming	• Make compelling cases for higher budgets for biodiversity mainstreaming and for working with other sectors to promote shared responsibility for delivering biodiversity enhancing policies and reducing biodiversity-harmful policies. • Financial and market innovation (e.g. Seychelles marine trust fund) and incentives for biodiversity (e.g. green

	market labelling, payment for ecosystems services schemes), public private partnerships and budget innovation (e.g. Budget Call Circular by the Ministry of Finance in Uganda which advised and guided sectors to help implement the revised National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plan).
Making an economic case for biodiversity -	• Make a better case for emphasising biodiversity as an asset and not always dwelling on biodiversity problems, aiming the case at sub-national and national development objectives that can be favourable to biodiversity, such as economic diversification and rural job creation. • Use approaches such as natural capital accounting, biodiversity accounting, ecosystem service valuation and national assessments to inform the development of strong business cases for the environment and biodiversity that will get the attention of decision makers/policy makes. • Develop guidance on making specific sector cases for mainstreaming. • Improve economic and financial literacy and credibility of environment/biodiversity staff in national governments.
Silo mentality and institutional fragmentation	• Strong leadership to address fragmentation of institutions (de-fragmentation) and institutional reform to promote flexibility, permeability, interaction, transparency and embracing peer learning. • Build ongoing and long term working relationships with key personnel in sectors targeted for biodiversity mainstreaming, and second biodiversity officials from biodiversity ministries to non-biodiversity ministries (e.g. finance, planning, agriculture, rural development).
Capacity for biodiversity mainstreaming	• Capacity building and training workshops at individual and institutional levels to help with uptake of mainstreaming tools, guidance and approaches. • Develop practical tools for mainstreaming that can be tailored to different country contexts. • Create champions within finance, planning, biodiversity and production sectors to move the mainstreaming agenda forward on a continuous basis. • Where possible provide *in situ* support to users of the tools, usually over an extended period. • Enhance capacity to conduct technical studies, data collection and analysis of the economic value of natural capital, biodiversity and ecosystem services. • Capacity support on effective communication about the concept of biodiversity with policymakers and the media. • Technology transfer through cooperation between private companies and national governments and non-governmental organisations.
International and national policy incongruence	• Support multi-stakeholder national dialogues on national and international policy developments and how they are, or could be, aligned. • Pay close attention to policy and institutional context in a particular country or sector. Such intimate understanding of the policy and institutional context can be developed only through substantial contact, careful listening and coordination.

	• Develop tools to help policy makers identify which interactions between national and international policy processes (e.g. Sustainable Development Goals, Achi Biodiversity Targets, Paris Agreement on Climate Change) are the most important to tackle. • Develop tools to help policymakers identify and test development paths that minimize negative interactions between national and international policy processes, and enhance positive ones.
Lack of science-based biophysical and socio-economic data and knowledge at appropriate spatial scales	• Build institutional capacity to generate science-based biophysical and socio-economic spatial information systems and assessments at relevant scales and to use it in land-use planning.
Community of practice on mainstreaming	• More and better collaboration between national and international organisations working on biodiversity mainstreaming capacity and institution-building is needed to improve scale and impact. For example, the UN Environment World Conservation Monitoring Centre and the International Institute for Environment and Development's NBSAPs 2.0 Initiative formed the African Leadership Group on Biodiversity Mainstreaming, which has the potential to catalyse a wider community. • Convening regular forums for co-ordination and sharing experiences and lessons among those involved in mainstreaming, and strengthening networks of relationships between key individuals. These include South-South and North-South experiences exchange on mainstreaming challenges and solutions. Although the immediate benefits of bringing people together to share, learn, and discuss are often hard to quantify, investing time and resources in such processes can be invaluable for developing shared objectives and understanding across sectors and disciplines, thereby helping to embed mainstreaming outcomes.
National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans often seen as weak policy documents with weak mainstreaming frameworks	• Support development of National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans that demonstrate the contribution of biodiversity conservation and its sustainable use to key national and sectoral development priorities. • Aim for approval and adoption of National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plans as a key policy document at the highest level in government, including Parliament and the Office of the President.
Issue literacy especially on interactions between Sustainable Development Goals and Achi Biodiversity Targets and what they mean at national level	• Provide easily digestible analysis of the complex interactions between Sustainable Development Goals and Achi Biodiversity Targets, and how to implement them holistically. • Support countries to interpret the Sustainable Development Goals according to their national circumstances and levels of development. • Convene a series of dialogues and workshops around Sustainable Development Goals and Aichi Biodiversity Targets interactions, and how to apply them to policymaking.

6. How better collaboration amongst international and national organisations can help to increase the impacts of mainstreaming

Participants noted that there is a lot of biodiversity mainstreaming taking place all over the world; it is important to share experiences and learn from these initiatives and collect intelligence on which biodiversity mainstreaming approaches work and which approaches do not work. All participants agreed that more and better collaboration between governments, national and international organisations, development cooperation agencies and the private sector working on biodiversity mainstreaming can improve scale and impact. Participants also noted that it is encouraging that many organisations and people working on mainstreaming are finally seeing the advantage of linking up with others, and participants agreed that it is time to bring together a community of practice on biodiversity mainstreaming.

There are some mainstreaming success stories already focusing on creating national mainstreaming champions needed to support institutionalisation of biodiversity mainstreaming. Two examples in particular are the successful story of Costa Rica which took years to achieve and involved building institutions to ensure policy coherence in policy and practice, and the NBSAPs 2.0 Initiative's facilitated African Leadership Group for Biodiversity Mainstreaming that worked with eight sub Saharan countries and has huge potential for scaling up and catalysing a wider community practice for better national, regional and global integration of biodiversity and development. Participants also noted that mainstreaming should focus not only on biodiversity mainstreaming in sectors and national development planning processes and Sustainable Development Goals, but also biodiversity plans such as National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plan should integrate development issues and priorities.

7. Next steps

In the final session participants agreed the following next steps.

1) The workshop co-host will write up a report on the workshop and share it with all participants. The report is a valuable addition to the documentation of mainstreaming efforts and successes.
2) Explore options for establishing a community of practice on biodiversity mainstreaming to support national Sustainable Development Goals plans and their implementation, share experiences and good practices among other things. This should start with an e-mail list consisting of people/organisations who participated in the workshop to keep learning from each other.
3) Explore collaborations on capacity development that is tailored to meet country-specific needs.

Author information

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Disclaimer

Appendix: List of Participants

Name	Location/Organisation
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