

Mainstreaming Biodiversity into Development Policy and Planning

Accra statement on mainstreaming biodiversity in practice

November 2016

In November 2016, representatives from the governments of Botswana, Ghana, Malawi, Namibia, Seychelles, Uganda, Zambia and Zimbabwe gathered in Accra, Ghana, for an international workshop of the Mainstreaming Biodiversity in Development Policy and Planning initiative: 'Success in mainstreaming – sharing lessons, co-developing guidance and scaling up'.

Mainstreaming is not complete until biodiversity is at the heart of development in all districts and sectors

The African Leadership Group (ALG)¹ welcomes the good progress already made in our eight countries towards mainstreaming biodiversity into development and sector policies and plans at national and local level. We also note with pleasure the beginnings of mainstreaming biodiversity into government budgets. This progress reflects the African contribution to achieving Sustainable Development Goals 14 and 15 and Goal A of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020.

There is increasing recognition by the many people and organisations involved in mainstreaming that conserving biodiversity and using it sustainably is critically important for society. It has been valuable to have close collaboration among all stakeholders, especially biodiversity, finance and planning authorities.

The ALG believes that now is the time to mainstream biodiversity in practice – going beyond policy, plans and other statements of intention. Mainstreaming is not finished until biodiversity is at the heart of development in all districts and sectors.

To that end, based on our 'real life' experience and the lessons we have learned, we recognise that:

- Successful mainstreaming can take years to achieve. That achievement is as much about seizing opportunities as careful planning.
- The Poverty-Environment Initiative (PEI) and the Biodiversity Finance Initiative (BIOFIN) can both help with biodiversity mainstreaming and would be of greater use if they were extended beyond their current countries.



Previous statements from the African Leadership Group on biodiversity mainstreaming²

Harare 2015: Recommends the elements that need to be in place for successful mainstreaming, including a strong business case, a framework for monitoring and evaluation to measure effectiveness, a network to share spatial planning expertise and a communications strategy.



Windhoek 2014: Asserts that successful mainstreaming achieves a wide range of biodiversity, social and economic outcomes of great interest across sectors.



Entebbe 2013: Concludes that successful mainstreaming is achieved not only by 'pushing' biodiversity into other plans and processes but also by seeking dual, positive biodiversity and development outcomes.

Maun 2012: Defines biodiversity mainstreaming as 'the integration of biodiversity into defined sectors and development aims, through a variety of approaches and mechanisms, so as to achieve combined biodiversity and development outcomes'.

¹ The ALG is a fluid body whose membership changes over time to reflect individuals' changing roles. It includes government representatives (typically government staff who have led the NBSAP revision and technical experts in mainstreaming). It 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 poverty and on mainstreaming biodiversity.

² See www.iied.org/statements-workshop-reports.

To achieve biodiversity mainstreaming success, we recommend that:

1. Biodiversity mainstreaming takes place at all major stages of the 'policy cycle': analysis, debate, planning, budgeting, attracting finance, implementing at all levels, and in monitoring progress. These mainstreaming efforts must be ongoing.
2. The monitoring and evaluation framework for assessing mainstreaming impact must have simple indicators that reflect real life practical success, to complement existing National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans (NBSAP) indicators.
3. Communication about biodiversity should be simple and use language with which all audiences are familiar.
4. There must be consistent and continuous collaboration and engagement with all partners and networks, including people and institutions at community level, to demonstrate mainstreaming in practice. This may mean specific programmes at the district level to build understanding about biodiversity's value to development.
5. It is essential to be aware of what is happening across sectors and choose the right time to engage in order to influence the content of

national development policies and strategies. Mainstreaming is much easier when legislation and policies are harmonised. Engagement must also be continuous between planning and resource allocation departments to reduce the chance of policy commitments not being matched by actual resources.

6. Tools such as natural capital accounts and spatial data can be deployed to strengthen the business case for biodiversity mainstreaming and to accelerate resource mobilisation. Finance solutions used to support activities that demonstrate mainstreaming must be tailored and appropriate.
7. Champions advocating on behalf of biodiversity mainstreaming are sought just as much from the cohort of technical staff as from the top of a ministry, as they may have more practical chances to influence decisions.

Finally, it is important to note the contribution of IIED and UNEP-WCMC over the past five years which has led to great opportunities for the African Leadership Group to learn from each other about all the elements that need to be in place to achieve successful biodiversity mainstreaming. Such efforts to link champions of mainstreaming need to be scaled up to accelerate biodiversity mainstreaming in policy and practice.



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The Mainstreaming Biodiversity in Development Policy and Planning initiative brings together the work of two projects: (i) NBSAPs 2.0: Policy to Practice and (ii) Mainstreaming Biodiversity into Development. The initiative is coordinated by IIED and UNEP-WCMC and draws on a wealth of outputs from the lifetime of the previous NBSAP 2.0 Mainstreaming Biodiversity and Development project.

Visit our website: www.iied.org/nbsaps

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Project coordinators



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