



COMMUNIQUÉ

Regional workshop for East Africa on updating national biodiversity strategies and action plans (NBSAPs) held in Kigali

Montreal, 7 July 2011 – Over four days, biodiversity experts and officials from the East Africa region worked towards implementing the Nagoya biodiversity compact. The Regional Workshop for Eastern Africa on Updating National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans (NBSAPs), co-organized and co-hosted by the Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), the Rwanda Environment Management Authority and the Secretariat of the East African Community, with the financial support of the Government of Japan, was held in Kigali from 27 to 30 June 2011.

In parallel with the workshop, a seminar on business and biodiversity was held on 30 June, with participants from business and non-governmental organizations. The seminar focused on business and private sector's role and responsibility. Participants confirmed their commitments to work together for the achievement of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020, including setting up a national dialogue platform between the Government and business/private sectors.

The aim of the regional workshop was to strengthen national capacities for the development, implementation, review, updating, and communication of NBSAPs and to contribute to national implementation of the Strategic Plan through the translation of the Aichi Biodiversity Targets into national targets and commitments.

Experts and officials from the following nine countries participated in the meeting: Burundi, Comoros, Djibouti, Ethiopia, Kenya, Mauritius, Rwanda, Sudan, and Uganda. Representatives from indigenous and local communities, ICLEI, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the World Agroforestry Centre (ICRAF), the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and IUCN also attended.

Mr. Ahmed Djoghlaif, Executive Secretary of the Convention on Biological Diversity, in a statement delivered by Mr. Atsuhiko Yoshinaka, the Convention's Global Coordinator for the Japan Biodiversity Fund, recognized the commitment of Rwanda as one of the first countries to sign the Nagoya Protocol on Access to Genetic Resources and the Fair and Equitable Sharing of Benefits Arising from their Utilization. He also thanked the Government of Japan for establishing the Japan Biodiversity Fund to assist countries in translating the Aichi Biodiversity Targets into NBSAPs before the eleventh meeting of the Conference of the Parties, to be held in India in 2012.

The Minister of Natural Resources for Rwanda, Mr. Stanislas Kamanzi, in a statement delivered by Ms. Caroline Kayonga, Permanent Secretary within the Ministry, said that the world achieved a milestone when it recognized that biodiversity is the foundation for human well-being. Despite this recognition, many efforts still need to be deployed to constrain damages over the past five decades. She added that Rwanda was honoured to host the workshop and equip experts from the East Africa region with training that would lead to the conservation and protection of its renowned biodiversity.

Opening statements were also delivered by H.E. Kunio Hatanaka, Ambassador of Japan in Kigali, and Mr. Jean Claude Nsengiyumva, Deputy Secretary General of the East African Community.

The workshop reviewed findings of Global Biodiversity Outlook-3 and provided an overview of the Aichi-Nagoya outcomes and discussed the main issues concerning the region's biodiversity management and how these could be addressed through the review and updating of NBSAPs. A major focus was on setting national and regional targets in the framework of the Aichi Targets, including integrating biodiversity into relevant national and local planning processes. As financing the NBSAP is an important issue in most regions the workshop also covered the issue of resource mobilization for NBSAP implementation as well as the Nagoya Protocol, and stakeholder engagement and strategic communication. A significant portion of the workshop was dedicated to discussing the Nagoya Protocol and the modalities for early ratification. Participants in the workshop also discussed national and regional experiences in implementation of access and benefit-sharing measures and the Protocol.

By the end of the workshop, participants gained experience with a number of new techniques that are essential to the NBSAP revision process as well as how to access GEF financial assistance. One of the conclusions emerging from this workshop was a recommendation to establish a Regional Platform for Convention on Biological Diversity and network of regional experts to support countries implement the Convention and to facilitate knowledge and expertise exchange across the countries.

Following workshops held for Southern Africa (Botswana), Europe (Germany), and North Africa and the Middle East (Lebanon), West Africa (Senegal), and Central Africa (Republic of Congo), the East Africa workshop is the latest in a series of regional and subregional capacity-building workshops to strengthen national capacities for the development, implementation, reviewing, updating, and communication of national biodiversity strategies and action plans. The next workshop will be held in Quito, Ecuador, from 13 to 15 July 2011).

For additional information, please see: www.cbd.int/nbsap/workshops2.shtml.
