



COMMUNIQUÉ

Enhanced GEF and CBD efforts to explore funding options for achieving the Aichi Biodiversity Targets in West Africa

Montreal, 28 July 2011 – The Convention Secretariat, in collaboration with the Global Environment Facility (GEF) country support programme and with the financial support of European Commission, organized a West Africa regional workshop on biodiversity and finance in support of the Nagoya biodiversity compact in Monrovia, Liberia, on 22 July 2011. The GEF Expanded Constituency Workshop for the region was held in the same venue from 19 to 21 July 2011.

National focal points of the Convention on Biological Diversity and the Global Environment Facility from Benin, Cote d'Ivoire, Ghana, Guinea, Liberia, Nigeria, and Togo attended the regional workshop on biodiversity and finance. They commented that by merely bringing all focal points together alone was already a tremendous achievement for the Convention and the financial mechanism, and strongly recommended that the GEF further organize regional and subregional financial workshops with full participation of all external donors and all relevant international treaties.

“The GEF is pleased to be in a position to collaborate with the Convention Secretariat for organizing these workshops on biodiversity and finance in the past half year, and will continue to play an instrumental role in catalyzing financial support to the realization of the Convention’s Aichi Targets,” said Mrs. Monique Barbut, Chief Executive Officer of the GEF.

Participants shared information on the progress made in preparing national biodiversity strategies and action plans (NBSAPs) project proposals. Ghana and Benin have already started to implement their NBSAP projects, and other countries indicated that they have sent letters of endorsement to the UNDP/UNEP umbrella project for enabling activities.

Participants heard four presentations from the Secretariat. The presentation on the scope of biodiversity activities and finances proposed a classification of biodiversity activities and finances, on the basis of the provisions of the Convention and its protocols, the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020, and national biodiversity strategies and action plans. Participants noted the ongoing work on resource mobilization indicators, and highlighted the need for uniform cost-estimation methodology and to include cost estimation in revised national biodiversity strategies and action plans.

The presentation on the strategy for resource mobilization discussed the development of country--specific resource mobilization strategies and related indicative guidelines, as well as the appointment of resource mobilization focal points and their functions. Participants stated that the strategy for resource mobilization has provided a framework for elaborating actions by Parties, and efforts should be made to sensitize the donor community on the importance of supporting biodiversity objectives. They asked the Secretariat to organize capacity-building and training for resource mobilization focal points as called for in decision X/3 of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity.

The presentation on market-based innovative financial mechanisms was focused on mobilizing private resources, through payment for ecosystem services, biodiversity offset mechanisms and market for green products, by tapping on ecosystem goods and services as identified in the Millennium Ecosystem Assessment. Participants noted many examples of market-based innovative financial mechanisms, and observed some difficulty in establishing links between beneficiaries and providers. They were concerned with the distribution of benefits on the value chain: those who are closer to biodiversity often receive least benefits from market systems. They suggested that market for green products and offset mechanisms should be examined first under the Convention, and further research should be conducted on payment for ecosystem services in order to clarify net local benefits and global benefits.

The presentation on governance-related innovative financial mechanisms provided an update on environmental fiscal reforms, such as tax revenue reform, user charges, tax exemptions, budgetary reform, green government purchase, ecological intergovernmental transfer, and subsidy reform, as well as on the relevance of innovative financing ideas for development to resource mobilization for biodiversity, such as international aviation solidarity contribution, international financial facility, advance market commitment, debt2health, and remittances. Participants observed that the resources generated from these mechanisms are usually taken into general budgets or other socio-economic purposes, and how biodiversity activities can benefit from these mechanisms is not very clear.

“The series of regional workshops on biodiversity and finance, organized by the Convention Secretariat and the GEF country support programme, have demonstrated how an international legal instrument and its designated financial mechanism can work together to advance the common global causes. I thank Mrs. Barbut and her country support programme team for all the assistance they have provided to make these workshops possible,” said Mr. Ahmed Djoghla, the Executive Secretary of the Convention.

Further information can be found at: www.cbd.int/financial.
