



GEF and CBD in cahoots to explore financing issues for achieving the Aichi Targets in Central Asia

Montreal, 18 October 2011 – The Central Asia Workshop on Biodiversity and Finance took place in Tashkent, Uzbekistan on 14 October 2011, in conjunction with the GEF Expanded Constituency Workshop for the region from 11 to 13 October 2011. The Convention Secretariat organized the meeting, in collaboration with the Global Environment Facility (GEF) country support programme and with the financial support of The Netherlands.

Delegates from Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Kyrgyz Republic, Russian Federation, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan, representing the focal points of the Convention on Biological Diversity and the Global Environment Facility as well as civil society organizations, attended the regional workshop on biodiversity and finance. Participants exchanged their national experiences on implementation of the strategy for resource mobilization and the global biodiversity strategic plan for the period 2011-2020, and heard presentations on draft guide to indicators for resource mobilization, innovative financial mechanisms, and indicative guidelines for developing country-specific resource mobilization strategies.

“The effective GEF-CBD collaboration provides a successful example in evolving international institutional relationship. As the institutional structure operating the financial mechanism of the Convention on Biological Diversity, GEF is committed to playing a catalytic role in mobilizing financial support to the implementation of the 2011-2020 Strategic Plan for biodiversity,” said Mr. Monique Barbut, Chief Executive Officer of the Global Environment Facility.

The presentation on indicators for resource mobilization recalled the requests from the tenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties with respect to methodological guidance, implementation guidelines, baselines and effective reporting framework, and noted initial drafts for consultation and peer review circulated by the Secretariat in order to achieve broad consensus. The presentation on draft methodological guidance pointed out overlapping in coverage between resource indicators, and overlapping in substance within indicator no. 1. It was noted that while the definition of most terms can be taken from existing global processes such as the United Nations Statistics Division, several terms still need to be defined within the context of the Convention, and call for agreement.

The presentation on implementation guidelines provided suggestions on two basic approaches (activities-based reporting versus institutions-based reporting), scoping and boundaries of

biodiversity activities, two options for classifying biodiversity activities, institutional mapping, definition of financing, data collection through survey procedures, estimation procedures, reasoned estimates, subjective estimation, adjustment of data and quality control. Discussions were invited on making choice between the two basic approaches and two options for classifying biodiversity activities.

The presentation on baselines noted the challenges in defining baselines, transaction costs of collecting and compiling relevant data, policy relevance, time sensitiveness and timeliness. It was suggested that global baselines should be set on the basis of national baselines, with an acknowledgement of information and knowledge imperfections.

The presentation on effective reporting framework proposed the requirement for dedicated staff at both national and global levels who are empowered politically and financially to collect and communicate indicator information, free of political consideration, and discussed the need for common reporting principles, governance arrangement and methods for information generation. The inertia of non-reporting and lack of a data service provider was noted. Participants agreed to further study the draft documents from the Secretariat and send their feedback in writing.

The presentation on innovative financial mechanisms was complemented by the presentation on market innovation for resource mobilization, including market for green products, payment for ecosystem services and biodiversity offset mechanisms. It was observed that the global biodiversity strategic plan for the period 2011-2020 has substantial financial implications, both private and public, at national and international levels, and the extent to which the strategic plan will be achieved will largely depend on the extent to which resources will be mobilized from all sources at all levels. The presentation identified several issues requiring better reflection: fear of shifting official funding commitments, fear of market manipulation and crisis, fear of green washing, different world views on relationship between Mother Nature and Child of Nature, poor knowledge about innovative financial mechanisms, and reluctant investment into development of innovative financial mechanisms. Participants called for the leading role of developed countries and international organizations in advancing innovative financial mechanisms, and stressed the need to take all interests into account, for instance, in the case of transboundary issues involved in payment for ecosystem services.

The presentation on indicative guidelines for developing country-specific resource mobilization strategies proposed a broad-based participatory process involving all key stakeholders such as non-governmental organizations, indigenous peoples and local communities, environmental funds, businesses and donors, with the coordinating role of resource mobilization focal points as well as with the supporting role of the Global Environment Facility and the Convention Secretariat. According to the presentation, country-specific resource mobilization strategies, preferably as part of revised national biodiversity strategies and action plans, should establish national baselines, 2011-20 priorities for funding, 2011-14 financing plans and 2015-18 funding estimates, and cover the following funding elements: national budgets, tax measures or surcharges, environmental funds, Global Environment Facility, multilateral financial institutions and development banks and United Nations development system, bilateral donor organizations, business and private sector partnerships, non-governmental organizations, payment for ecosystem services, biodiversity offsets, climate change funding schemes, markets for green products, debt-for-nature swaps, grant-making charities, benefit sharing arrangements, South-South cooperation, regional and subregional collaboration, and innovative sources of development finances.

“Through the efficient workshop on biodiversity and finance, the CBD-GEF relationship is now gaining ground effectively at the regional and subregional level. GEF is of strategic importance to the achievement of the global biodiversity strategic plan for the period 2011-2020. The CBD-GEF relationship should be and must be advanced on all fronts, not only at the global level, but also more importantly at the regional and national levels. The workshop on biodiversity and finance represents a useful step forward towards this end,” said Mr. Ahmed Djoghlaif, the Executive Secretary of the Convention.

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