JUNE 2011 • Issue 5

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CBD NEWSLETTER FOR CIVIL SOCIETY

SPECIAL FOCUS

Implementing the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 & reaching the Aichi Biodiversity Targets

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Biofuels

The struggle between climate, economics and biodiversity

CBD

New focus on customary sustainable use

CBD

Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity

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[square brackets] is a newsletter focusing on the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) and civil society. It aims to draw content and opinion from relevant individuals, organizations and members of civil society and provide information on issues of importance to the CBD, and on views and actions being undertaken by civil society organizations.

This newsletter aims to present a diversity of civil society opinions. The views expressed in the articles are the views of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the views of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity, its Secretariat or the CBD Alliance.

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http://www.cbd.int/ngo/square-brackets/square-brackets-2009-11.html

Cover image from iStockphoto/Thinkstock.

ISBN 92-9225-380-8

Convention on Biological Diversity

UNEP

Printed on Rolland Enviro100, which contains 100% recycled post-consumer fibre, is EcoLogo, Processed Chlorine Free and manufactured using biogas energy.

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MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE SECRETARY

Setting a sustainable path

by **Ahmed Djoghlaf** ● Executive Secretary
of the Convention on Biological Diversity

Last year in Nagoya the world biodiversity community came together in a reaffirmation of the notion that in order for biodiversity to be conserved and preserved for future generations it is essential for all stakeholders –NGOs, cities and local authorities, children and youth, indigenous people and local communities, and business – to work together.

Thanks to the strong leadership of Japan, some 18,500 participants representing our 193 Parties and their partners adopted a package of measures at the tenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties (COP 10) to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) in Aichi-Nagoya, Japan. This package included the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 and its Aichi Biodiversity Targets; the Nagoya Protocol on Access to Genetic Resources and the Fair and Equitable Sharing of Benefits Arising out of their Utilization; the Nagoya-Kuala Lumpur Supplementary Protocol on Liability and Redress to the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety; and the Strategy for Resource Mobilization in support of the three objectives of the Convention.

The Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020, though born from COP 10, for the first time provides a comprehensive strategy for all sectors of the society and the economy, including a common framework for the entire United Nations system, all biodiversity-related conventions and all stakeholders – and not least Civil Society and the NGOs that have always played such an important part in the Convention and its implementation.

As a result of the generous financial support of the people and the Government of Japan, the Secretariat, through the Japan Biodiversity Fund, is assisting Parties to integrate the Aichi Targets into their own relevant strategies and action plans. In 2011 and 2012, national representatives will come together in sub-regional capacity building workshops delivered by the Secretariat and its partners to strengthen national capacities for the development, implementation, reviewing, updating, and communication of national biodiversity strategies and action plans.

The early ratification of the Nagoya Protocol on Access to Genetic Resources and the Fair and Equitable Sharing of Benefits Arising from their Utilization to the Convention on Biological Diversity, a unique and essential legal instrument for sustainable development, is an urgent issue. The Secretariat and the Global Environment Facility are working to ensure that the first meeting of the governing body of this historic instrument will take place in India in October 2012 back-to-back with COP 11. To achieve this, 50 ratifications are required before 19 July 2012.

COURTESY OF THE CBD

Never in history has the international community become so ready to address global biodiversity challenges with a strategic, institutional and financial framework.

Unlike previous global biodiversity strategies with no attention to finance, Governments further elaborated the Convention's strategy for resource mobilization in support of achieving the Convention's three objectives in Nagoya. Never in history has the international community become so ready to address global biodiversity challenges with a strategic, institutional and financial framework for biodiversity at the beginning of a decade. That is why the United Nations General Assembly, following the recommendation of COP 10, declared it as the United Nations Decade for Biodiversity.

NGOs have an important role to play in our efforts to raise public awareness on the values of biodiversity and the steps all of us can take to ensure its conservation and sustainable use, and so realize Target 1 of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020.

The Convention strongly values its collaboration with the CBD Alliance, the IUCN and numerous NGOs that support the objectives of the CBD in countries worldwide. Together we must squarely meet the challenge before us and help set a sustainable path towards a new world order that recognizes the true contribution of biodiversity to human prosperity.

Traditional honey collection in the Sundarbans (Bangladesh)

MESSAGE FROM THE BOARD OF THE CBD ALLIANCE

Renewed determination

Due to the late hour of the final hours of the negotiations in Japan, civil society groups organized around the CBD Alliance did not read their closing statement. In lieu of a message from the CBD Alliance, we reprint it here, as the message is still vital and relevant.

Many civil society groups came to Nagoya at COP 10 seeking biodiversity justice, which the CBD Alliance defines as not only upholding the rights, dignity, and autonomy of all peoples, but also respecting the rights of all living things.

We have one primary message. Despite the frustrations and 'shortcomings', the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) *is* alive and vibrant. And Parties are not off the hook. There are a number of outstanding issues such as the critical question of resources that must be resolved. And every party has a duty to make this Convention work. The CBD retains - and must continue to retain - all its basic and crucial principles.

People may say, 'this could have been the CBD's Copenhagen'. Some of us have said that, although we hoped for the opposite. We must battle such cynicism. *Multilateral agreements are vital*; they can be good for people and the planet. The decision to put a moratorium on geoengineering at this meeting is an excellent example: it will prevent a small group of powerful actors from gambling with the planet's thermostat and ecosystems. We say: more bold decisions like this please!

The multilateral system is not failing us. Quite the contrary, it is up to governments and civil society to uphold, and strengthen the multilateral conventions. The agreements and promises that led to the birth of this Convention in Rio in 1992 were not voluntary, but called for accountability from those responsible for the (massive) erosion of biological diversity. The CBD began with the twin goals of ecological and social justice. These values must continue to underpin any decisions in the Convention. If they do not, Rio + 20 could be another step towards Rachel Carson's 1962 prediction, a Silent Spring *minus* 50.

A lot of attention was paid to *The Economics of Ecosystems and Biodiversity* (TEEB) study at this COP, an ambitious undertaking, as if it might be the 'magic wand'. Biodiversity *is* intensely undervalued. However, large price tags on nature will not stop biodiversity loss. What really matters is breaking patterns of inequity and ending overconsumption by the world's wealthy. We must really change systems that so clearly benefit some more than others, while raiding and destroying biological diversity. The value of the TEEB will be shown when it helps us do that.

So we are going home with renewed determination to hold you, and your capitals accountable. We have high expectations for ourselves and we have similarly high expectations for you. Let this United Nations Decade on Biodiversity be one of building solidarity with community-based struggles and solutions, working alongside small farmers, fisherfolk, indigenous peoples, citizens, and local communities to have exuberant, respectful and continuing relationships with all forms of life.

New focus on customary sustainable use in the CBD

by **The Forest Peoples Programme**
in collaboration with IMPECT (Thailand), OKANI (Cameroon), Unnayan Onneshan (Bangladesh), SCPDA (Guyana), KLIM (Suriname) and FPCI (Panama)

The customary sustainable use of biological resources, which states that Parties shall "Protect and encourage customary use of biological resources in accordance with traditional cultural practices that are compatible with conservation or sustainable use requirements," is not only the focus of Article 10 (c) of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), but played a role in two issues for 'in-depth discussion' at the Nagoya biodiversity summit, namely 'sustainable use of biodiversity' (Article 10) and 'traditional knowledge, innovations, and practices'(Article 8(j) and Related Provisions).

At COP 10, but even more so at preparatory meetings prior to it like the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice and the Working Group on Article 8(j) and Related Provisions where COP decisions were shaped, a strong group of indigenous peoples, local communities and support organisations ("the 10(c) team") joined the discussions and shared information and recommendations on this issue. Customary use of biodiversity based on traditional knowledge, beliefs, rules and laws is inherent in their daily practices and interactions with natural resources. Through written reports, videos, presentations, side-events, and interventions they tried to make Parties and observers better understand what this means and implies. They also pointed out obstacles they experience at national and local levels that prevent effective implementation of 10(c), and presented recommendations to improve implementation.

SECURE LAND AND RESOURCE RIGHTS CRUCIAL

The core of their argument has always been that secure land and resource rights are vital to maintain these customary sustainable practices. Without secure access to, and use of, the resources in their traditional territories, the knowledge and practices in these areas are greatly endangered. Full and effective participation in natural resource management and decision-making is also crucial. Other important issues include the need for education appropriate to the communities' language and culture (rather than imposed mainstream education); recognition of traditional authorities and customary laws, and the application of free, prior and informed consent approaches concerning activities proposed by external sectors in lands and territories of indigenous peoples.

The effort by indigenous peoples and local communities has partly paid off. The Convention increasingly recognizes, appreciates, and prioritizes indigenous peoples and local communities' customary sustainable practices, as demonstrated by the unanimous decision to accept Target 18 on traditional knowledge and customary use drafted by the indigenous participants in the Convention's new Strategic Plan (Decision X/2).

On the other hand, Parties refused to accept an explicit reference to secure land and resource rights in relation to customary sustainable use in their decision dealing with sustainable use of biodiversity (Decision X/32). Paragraph 2 (e) on customary sustainable use addresses obstacles and devising solutions to protect and encourage customary sustainable use of biodiversity by indigenous and local communities. This was a positive step, but Parties did not agree to include any reference to land and resource rights, as proposed by the indigenous caucus, in this paragraph. This would have been a logical place to accept the proposals made by the indigenous and local community participants, who called Parties' reluctance to incorporate their suggestions "very disappointing".

NEW OPPORTUNITIES IN 2011

On a positive note, indigenous peoples will have opportunities in 2011 to reiterate and expand their proposals because under the multi-year programme of work on the implementation of Article 8(j) and Related Provisions, several important matters were decided in relation to enhancing Article 10(c) (Decision X/43, paragraph 8-11). COP 10 decided that a new major component on Article 10 with a focus on Article 10(c) will be included in the revised programme of work on Article 8(j). It was also decided that the Secretariat should convene an international meeting on Article 10 with a focus on Article 10(c) in 2011 where this will be more broadly discussed and shaped. COP 10 also requested Parties, indigenous and local communities and non-governmental organizations to submit information to the Executive Secretary regarding the implementation of Article 10 of the Convention, with a focus on Article 10(c). These decisions will provide indigenous peoples and local communities with exciting new avenues to provide input in the 10(c) process and contribute to new CBD text that responds to experiences, concerns and needs at the local level.

The international expert meeting on 10(c) will take place in Montreal 30 May – 3 June 2011. The next step after the international meeting is the 7th Meeting of the Working Group on Article 8(j) and Related Provisions in October-November 2011. Hopefully 2011 will be the year when secure land and resource rights and other important conditions will make their entry into the Convention's decisions on customary sustainable use.

For further information on 10(c), see www.forestpeoples.org/customary-sustainable-use-studies

> Indigenous peoples will have many opportunities in 2011 to reiterate and expand their proposals, because COP 10 decided that a new major component on Article 10 with a focus on Article 10(c) will be included in the revised programme of work on Article 8(j) and Related Provisions.

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Finance, targets, green economy and innovative financial mechanisms

by **Helena Paul** and **Antje Lorch** ● Econexus

Discussions on funding, financial targets and innovative financial mechanisms were extremely difficult during the tenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties (COP 10) to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) in Nagoya in October 2010. These discussions clearly revealed the divide between North and South, and reflected a wider struggle over the effectiveness and implications of market-oriented approaches to the three Rio Conventions, including biodiversity conservation. This struggle will be central for Rio+20, the 2012 United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development, where the 'green economy' is one of the two main agenda topics.

NO INCREASE IN FINANCIAL RESOURCES

The COP 10 approved 20 new targets for the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020, but failed to agree on targets for increased financial *resources*. This was one of the most critical failures of the COP, especially when there is clear evidence that Parties (in the global South) lack resources to implement CBD decisions. Donor countries opposing targets used a lack of understanding about the amount of resources actually needed to implement CBD decisions, and missing baselines and measurement methodologies as an excuse to not commit to any specific amounts. This closely parallels the failure of developed countries to make meaningful commitments in the climate talks.

The final COP 10 decision comprises various intersessional research and activities with the aim to finally set a target on financial resources at COP 11 in 2012. The decision reads: "Decides to adopt targets at its eleventh meeting, provided that robust baselines have been identified and endorsed and that an effective reporting framework has been adopted. This will allow progress towards the targets set out in this decision and towards Target 20 of the Strategic Plan, including an effective reporting framework, to be used in assessing the information provided by Parties as outlined in this decision for the consideration of the Conference of the Parties at its eleventh meeting."

The COP did adopt indicators, including tracking:

- Aggregated financial flows ... of biodiversity-related funding, per annum, from Official Development Assistance, domestic budgets, private sector, NGOs, etc
- Amount of funding provided through the Global Environment Facility (GEF) and allocated to biodiversity funding area
- Resources mobilized from the removal, reform or phase-out of incentives, including subsidies harmful to biodiversity which could be used for the promotion of positive incentives.

However, it is unclear how 'biodiversity-related funding' will actually be determined. This is something civil society will need to watch carefully, as academic research shows that the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) categorizations of 'biodiversity related' aid tend to ex-

aggerate the biodiversity-related aspects of projects. (See: http://blogs.nature.com/news/thegreatbeyond/2010/07/biodiversity_aid_lags_in_corru.html.)

Due to the shortage of funding at the CBD Secretariat, the prospect exists that much of the work to set "robust baselines" or to make "an effective reporting framework" will not be completed. It is easy to imagine negotiations on targets failing at COP 11 if donor countries again claim to be "lacking information or baselines" to determine their financial commitments.

GLOBAL ENVIRONMENT FACILITY

During COP 10, Parties were also meant to provide guidance to the GEF to set targets for new and additional financial resources for biodiversity. In the negotiations, Parties from the global South forcefully noted that despite the increase in GEF allocations, the amount of real resources flowing has decreased. Since GEF funds are increasingly only given under the condition that funds are matched from other sources, countries have to take up additional credits to receive GEF funding, resulting in debts.

Parties agreed to undertake a needs-assessment for implementation in order to develop an understanding of "the amount of funds that are necessary to assist developing countries and countries with economies in transition, in accordance with the guidance provided by the Conference of the Parties, in fulfilling their commitments under the Convention for the sixth replenishment period of the Global Environment Facility Trust Fund".

However, in an interesting turn of events, it appears that this decision was *excluded* from the core CBD budget. Thus, at the time of writing, this decision is not funded either, which does not bode well for the 'goodwill' that the CBD depends upon to function.

INNOVATIVE FINANCIAL MECHANISMS

The negotiations about Innovative Financial Mechanisms (IFMs) in the Financial Contact Group showed that differences among Parties were not about details, but about the whole concept of IFMs as such.

The proposed decision text soon ended up with brackets around, or in, every single paragraph. Some paragraphs even had two or three contradictory options. In particular, the Bolivarian Alliance for the Peoples of Our America (ALBA) member countries represented by Bolivia made a strong stand about the need to establish safeguards before the development of IFMs. While Parties in general agreed on a need for safeguards they obviously could not reach agreement about what they should include, or even what should be protected from what. Bolivia's proposal "to ensure that IFMs would not lead to a 'commodification of nature'" was certainly the most contested safeguard, but also the one that shows how far countries differ on the issue. Here the split is not only between developing and developed countries, but also among developing countries with different interests (see UNEP/CBD/COP/10/L.46; www.cbd.int/doc/meetings/cop/cop-10/in-session/cop-10-l-46-en.doc).

However, it is important to bear in mind that a lot is going on behind the scenes. An information paper prepared for COP 10 to present the idea of a Green Development Mechanism (GDM) was intended to be somewhat similar to the Clean Development Mechanism (CDM) under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), a mechanism beset with problems. In the end, the whole decision on IFMs, including references to the GDM, was not adopted as no consensus was found. This does not mean that the issue is closed. The GDM is currently re-branding itself as the Green Development Initiative (GDI) (see http://gdi.earthmind.net/). The GDI website has a draft paper on land tenure, in the context of CBD, IFC, GEF, and UNFCCC/REDD, suggesting they are thinking Rio+20.

> Discussions at COP 10 clearly revealed the divide between North and South, and reflected a wider struggle over the effectiveness and implications of market-oriented approaches to the three Rio Conventions, including biodiversity conservation.

While "green" sounds positive, it has radically different meanings in different sectors. The COP 10 Decision 21 on Business Engagement sets the green economy firmly in the context of the Business and Biodiversity Initiative launched at COP 9 in Bonn. It promotes the involvement of organisations including the Business and Biodiversity Offsets Programme, the Biotrade Initiative of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, the World Business Council for Sustainable Development and the OECD.

During the lead up to Rio+20 it is therefore critical to observe how this term is used in order to ensure that discussions are not dominated by an agenda to "save" biodiversity through dealing and trade, including offset mechanisms. Offset mechanisms were established in the CDM and have proven to be very problematic on several levels. In the context of the CBD, offsets could set conservation of high biodiversity areas against access to resources in areas defined as low biodiversity, and could lead to human rights violations of those living on lands required as offsets.

In COP 10 Decision 3, Strategy for resource mobilization in support of the achievement of the Convention's three objectives, Parties and "relevant organisations and initiatives" are invited to submit information concerning IFMs by not later than 30 June 2011. It is vital to ensure there are substantial submissions and that civil society organisations continue to raise awareness about these attempts to replace funding commitments with doubtful market instruments.

The challenge of Aichi Target 13

Restoring agricultural biodiversity to secure future food

by **Patrick Mulvany** ● Practical Action

Aichi Target 13 sets a limited challenge but we are all aware that international progress in realising any constructive action is very slow. Vested interests block progress while biodiversity disappears. The Target, while welcome, nibbles at the edge of the wider challenge to restore agricultural biodiversity; much more is necessary beyond "minimizing genetic erosion and safeguarding their genetic diversity" if agricultural biodiversity is to be protected and developed, future food secured, equity for rural peoples improved, and the agri-environment restored. The biodiversity and variability embodied in agricultural biodiversity and its related ecosystem functions provide for efficient productivity of agroecosystems and the resilience necessary for food production and harvesting to confront threats such as climate change.

AICHI BIODIVERSITY TARGETS

Strategic Goal C: To improve the status of biodiversity by safeguarding ecosystems, species and genetic diversity

Target 13

By 2020, the genetic diversity of cultivated plants and farmed and domesticated animals and of wild relatives, including other socio-economically as well as culturally valuable species, is maintained, and strategies have been developed and implemented for minimizing genetic erosion and safeguarding their genetic diversity.

ISTOCKPHOTO / THINKSTOCK

It is in this context that work beyond the Aichi Targets needs to be focused. Many of the challenges are set forth in CBD/COP 10 Decision 34 on Agricultural Biodiversity. The International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture (ITPGRFA), whose governing body met recently in Bali, has specific commitments on the conservation and sustainable use of and farmers' rights to plant genetic resources for food and agriculture.

The FAO Commission on Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture (CGRFA) meets in June 2011 to advance its multi-year programme of work leading to action on all agricultural biodiversity. Parties and other actors urgently need to implement the agreed changes. It takes enough time to get agreement and seemingly forever to get action. Meanwhile, agricultural biodiversity continues to disappear in the production system.

In Bali, contracting Parties resolved that more needs to be done. However, they did not embrace the willing offers of civil society, including social movements that represent farmers, the custodians of crop diversity, to work with the Treaty's governance processes to promote on-farm conservation and development of PGRFA. They also did not grasp the nettle of the necessary regulation of agribusiness and its use of industrial agricultural technologies at any scale, which poison, modify and simplify agroecosystems, leading to ever-extending erosion of agricultural biodiversity and concomitant losses of PGRFA. Despite the Treaty being an instrument in harmony with the Convention, it risks missing the Aichi Target and doing little beyond this.

Although it is well-known that without a rich agricultural biodiversity, food futures are bleak, all agricultural biodiversity of plants, livestock, and aquatic species (including the critical support species of pollinators, predators, and soil and aquatic microorganisms) are threatened by irreversible and drastic erosion. According to the third edition of the Global Biodiversity Outlook, published in 2010, agricultural biodiversity continues to decline.

The urgency increases as threats and initiatives hasten the appropriation of PGRFA. Since the third Governing Body meeting of the Treaty in 2009, the threats to PGRFA have worsened with further expansion of the use of non-reproducible seeds and esca-

BRAND X/THINKSTOCK

lating agrochemical use. Hundreds of so-called climate ready multi-genome patents are being claimed by the gene giant corporations. Digital DNA libraries will facilitate gene synthesis technologies, potentially circumventing the Treaty. The Governing Body is silent as the gene pool dries up.

As La Vía Campesina, the international peasant movement, said in their Bali Seed Declaration: "Industry has invented many ways of stealing our seeds in order to manipulate them, mark them with property rights, and thereby force us, the farming peoples of the world, to buy new seeds from them every year, instead of saving and selecting them from our harvest to plant the following season. The industry's methods include genetically modified organisms (GMOs) and hybrid seeds, which cannot be reproduced by farmers, as well as claims of industrial property rights over seeds, including patents and plant variety rights, all of which are imposed through international treaties and national laws.

These are but different forms of theft, as all industrial seeds are the product of thousands of years of selection and breeding by our peoples. It is thanks to us, peasants and farmers, that humanity has at hand the great diversity of crops that, together with livestock diversity, feeds the world today."

We wish to contribute to the realisation of the Aichi Target. We can do so through resisting the appropriation of our resources, the contamination of our ecosystems and the modification of our productive genomes, but we want to be assured that the UN system, and especially the CBD and FAO, is backing us all the way.

Civil Society echoed this in their closing statement: "We must not and will not give up – we will resist the onslaught that threatens us and our seeds and food sovereignty."

We wish to contribute to the realisation of this Aichi Target and beyond. We can do so through resisting the appropriation of our resources, the contamination of our ecosystems, and the modification of our productive genomes. And we can increase the agricultural biodiversity on our farms, in our gardens, in forests, on the steppes, and in ponds, lakes, rivers, and coastal waters in order to secure future food. We want to be assured that the United Nations system, especially the CBD and FAO, is backing us all the way.

PERSPECTIVES

To promote an exchange of viewpoints on the Aichi Biodiversity Targets and the challenges involved in achieving it, the [square brackets] editorial board posed three questions to civil society actors.

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Patrick Mulvany

Senior Policy Adviser, Practical Action

What, in your opinion, is the most important target of the 20 Aichi Biodiversity Targets and why?

Realising Target 13 will contribute to sustaining Life on Earth. The genetic diversity it refers to is a component of agricultural biodiversity. This is the most important sub-set of biodiversity that covers most of the managed ecosystems of the world but also because it deals with the basis of sustenance for all the world's peoples. Not only does agricultural biodiversity include crop and vegetable varieties but also livestock breeds and diverse aquatic and marine species and all the pollinators, predators, soil organisms and others in local agroecosystems. All are important components of agricultural biodiversity and the ecosystem functions that it performs, which include provision of important public goods such as clean water. Parties have decided on comprehensive actions to address the conservation and sustainable use of agricultural biodiversity at genetic, species and ecosystem levels. They just need to implement the decisions. The Aichi Target is a step on the way.

What are the main challenges in achieving the Aichi Biodiversity Targets?

As the CBD agreed, "Agricultural biodiversity encompasses the variety and variability of animals, plants and micro-organisms which are necessary to sustain key functions of the agroecosystem, its structure and processes for, and in support of, food production and food security." Parties also recognise the "...special nature of agricultural biodiversity, its distinctive features, and problems needing distinctive solutions". In response there are many agreements, decisions and the International Seed Treaty (ITPGRFA). However, to realise the safeguarding of all agricultural biodiversity there needs to be a significant curtailment of biodiversity-eroding industrial practices and a re-focus on small-scale ecological food provision methods. To achieve this requires: a) strict regulation of industrial, crop, livestock and fisheries production; b) protection of small-scale biodiverse production systems; and c) realisation of the primordial rights of small-scale food providers to access, control and use the natural wealth in their territories that they use to realise food sovereignty.

What role should civil society play in implementing the 2020 strategy at the national level?

Small-scale food providers, supported by civil society organisations, have clear proposals for what is necessary. They have committed to strengthen and promote their ecological model of food provision and their local food webs that are at the heart of food sovereignty, their policy proposal. Their biodiverse model of production is resilient and is able to adapt to and mitigate threats such as climate change. They express this commitment in practice providing food, in their seed swaps, in their campaigns to liberate diversity, and in their purposive approach to international institutions. Their approach defends and develops GM-free and patent-free agricultural biodiversity of all species in the face of corporations which aggressively commodify nature, food and knowledge; pollute ecosystems and modify genomes, capturing and destroying their resources, ecosystems and markets. CSOs call decision makers to account, highlight biodiversity-damaging policies and practices and promote strict regulation of agribusiness.

PERSPECTIVES

GOODSHOOT/THINKSTOCK

Karin Åström

Vice President, Swedish Society for Nature Conservation

What, in your opinion, is the most important target of the 20 Aichi Biodiversity Targets and why?

Target 11 is the most important since it is concrete, possible to measure and very far from reality in the Swedish forest landscape. To protect 17% of the Swedish productive forests by 2020 is a huge challenge. The area goal, in combination with the key statement "ecologically representative and well connected systems of protected areas", adds up to a massive change in the use of the Swedish forests, our nature. There is not 17% of forest left to protect under these specifications today, restoration after intense and massive logging of the Swedish forest land will be a prerequisite to reach Target 11.

What are the main challenges in achieving the Aichi Biodiversity Targets?

The main challenges will most likely be to reach a consensus in society over the Polluter Pays Principle when dealing with land-use such as agriculture and forestry. It is not likely that society in general, via tax-bills and subsequent governmental funding, will be able to fund all the protected areas needed to maintain and restore biodiversity. The users must accept a greater responsibility than today without demanding compensation from society. It has to be part of the business. Also, new sustainable forestry methods will have to be developed to make it possible to reach the goals for biodiversity set in the Aichi Targets. In Sweden, there is an urgent need for immediate protection of the last few remaining areas of old growth forests and forests of high nature value as well as to set aside large areas for restoration.

What role should civil society play in implementing the 2020 strategy at the national level?

NGOs and the public need to take an active part in the process in order to turn political statements and ambitions into real action. There is an urgent need to inform the public about the state in the Swedish forests and the threats to biodiversity nationally and globally. Civil society must back up necessary decisions such as an increase of governmental funds for the protection of valuable areas as well as give support to the best practices in forestry as well as agriculture. Consumers need to make informed and conscious choices and back up decisions to decrease over all consumption of e.g. forest products. Civil society need to mobilise on the core issue on how to achieve a good life for as many as possible on our planet without over-exploiting nature.

Nigel Crawhall

Chair, Theme on Indigenous & Local Communities, Equity and Protected Areas (TILCEPA)

What, in your opinion, is the most important target of the 20 Aichi Biodiversity Targets and why?

The most important decisions for TILCEPA relate to protected areas. Firstly, there was a decision to include 'equity' in the protected areas strategic plan. This should be normal in the CBD, as a foundational principle of the treaty, but the principle had been removed during the Working Group on the Review of Implementation and the Forest Peoples Programme had to lobby to get it back in again.

The refreshed Programme of Work on Protected Areas puts greater emphasis on Element 2, governance, benefit sharing and participation. There is an agreement by the parties to invest in social assessment and governance toolkits, in cooperation with IUCN.

In practice, there is a convergence of will from CBD, IUCN, Conservation NGOs and donors to take the PoWPA more seriously, and ensure an equity of social policy and process. All of this has grown out of the 2003 Durban Accord of the World Parks Congress. With the 2014 World Parks Congress coming up, it puts some pressure on all parties and agencies to ensure implementation and transformation.

What are the main challenges in achieving the Aichi Biodiversity Targets?

There are three interlocking challenges on Protected Areas. Firstly, indigenous peoples and local communities are concerned that the increase in Protected Areas extent could pose more challenges to rights and customary usage, notably in Marine Protected Areas. This is not necessarily the case, but the rights-based approach needs to be properly understood, monitored and assured.

Secondly, there is a shortage of methodological toolkits, particularly in relation to good governance and harmonising national Protected Areas with international rights standards. The most important new instrument is the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Rights (UNDRIP). UNDRIP in many ways offers real solutions to balancing conservation and rights. UNDRIP calls on States to recognise indigenous institutional capacity and cultural norms, and to create negotiating platforms for sharing power and responsibilities. This allows greater attention to customary use and stewardship, while meeting national targets and effectively monitoring biodiversity conservation.

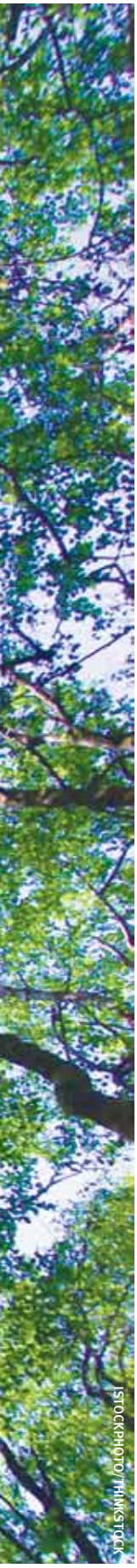
Thirdly, we are faced with the reality that our interventions are inadequate. The idea that National Parks are enough to sustain biodiversity is untenable at this stage. Conservation is moving to larger scales which necessarily include larger and even transboundary landscapes and seascapes. This calls for greater democratisation, good governance and participation of rights holders and stakeholders, including private tenure holders. The tenth meeting of the Parties (COP 10) recognised indigenous and community conserved areas (ICCAs), which may emerge as a key component of 'connectivity corridors', mixing state and non-state institutions, and also values in sustainability.

Karen people (Thailand) clearing firebreaks in the forest at the beginning of the dry season

What role should civil society play in implementing the 2020 strategy at the national level?

In my view, civil society has a key role to play leading to 2020. Though State authority is important in constraining the behaviour of extractive industries, in practice this is not happening to a degree that is conserving our biodiversity and natural resource base. We are rapidly entering into a global crisis which has serious consequences for world peace and the vulnerability of many species, as well as natural resource dependent communities. Civil society must be more strategic about holding governments accountable, going beyond the 'business as usual' approach, and rethinking how human society is functioning in its self-destructive paradigm.

We are likely to see new civil society networks taking up the 2020 challenges, including the faith-based sector, fishing communities, more assertive moves by indigenous peoples to confirm their governance responsibilities. 2012 will be a time for civil society to reflect on the failure to meet Agenda 21 targets, and a State-centrism which has undermined the Rio Conventions, contrary to the spirit and intentions of the original Earth Summit.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Challenges facing forest protection in Sweden

by **Karin Åström** ● Vice President, Swedish Society for Nature Conservation & **Malin Sahlin** ● Forest Campaigner, Swedish Society for Nature Conservation

Forests cover over 50% of Sweden but during the 20th century these forests have increasingly been shaped by industrialised management. Thus the forest landscape in Sweden only consists of minor parts of forests with the characteristics of old growth forest. There have been large scale changes within the natural forest dynamics, with the suppression of natural processes and a short harvesting rotation time. Less than 13% of the forests are 120 years or older, with approximately 60% of forests being under 60 years. In the majority of Swedish industrialized forest stands many forest living species can no longer survive, and they are being pushed back into shrinking and isolated islands of natural forests in a forestry-production landscape. The poor situation for forest living species is also reflected in the Swedish Red List of species, where the amount of red listed, forest living, species in Sweden has increased since 2005.

Due to the acute situation for biodiversity in the productive forests in Sweden, the agreement reached at the tenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties (COP 10) to the Convention on Biological Diversity was highly welcomed by the Swedish Society for Nature Conservation (SSNC) which has, for a long time, strived for the protection of the country's biodiversity. Perhaps the greatest challenge for Sweden regarding the agreement is the protection of productive forest land, the environment upon which the majority of the country's Red Listed species depend.

TWO PROBLEMS

There are two major problems yet to be solved in order to reach the target. First, only a fraction of the agreed 17% has been protected to date. Second, there is a lack of high biodiversity value forests left to protect in order to reach the target. Hence, to achieve the targets in the agreement concerning productive forest, it is not only productive forest with preservation values that is in need of protection; the restoration of forests on a large scale is also necessary. Another alarming factor is the ongoing fragmentation of well connected forest areas in Sweden. Therefore it is of utmost importance that the agreement will be interpreted by the Nagoya targets missions. Target 11 in the agreement clearly states that protected areas have to be ecologically representative and well connected. Thus it is important to differentiate between productive forest and non productive forest in order to achieve the protection of ecologically representative areas. Non productive forest is, in Sweden, defined as forest land that produces less than 1 m^3 of wood per hectare per year and includes wasteland. In other words, it is not included in the Swedish definition of forest and, according to the Swedish Forestry Act, excluded from forestry.

The SSNC also stresses the importance of the interpretation of area-based measures in Target 11. This clearly states that protected areas are to be delimited on a map. Small tree groups and single trees are not to be included in the acreage of protected areas. In Swedish forestry this, together with buffer zones to water and sensitive biotopes, is known as general consideration taken at loggings. In order to reach the target's mission on ecologically representative and well connected protected areas, area-based measures therefore need to consist of large coherent, productive forest areas.

The expanding Red List of Sweden´s forest living species is mainly a result of the intensive forestry measures practiced in the country. It is therefore of great importance, in order to reach Target 5, that forests with documented occurrences of threatened forest living species be excluded from logging and exploitation plans. Also, a significant area of forest must be restored, especially in the southern part of Sweden, where wet deciduous forests historically have been drained and pesticides used to benefit the plantation of conifers.

The interpretation of the COP 10 agreement, concerning productive forests, needs to be based on the condition of the forest landscape of today, where only a fraction of the old growth and natural forest with high biodiversity values remain. The Swedish forestry model has, so far, unfortunately caused an immense biodiversity crisis which must be mitigated – and not in some future target year, but now.

The Swedish Society for Nature Conservation (SSNC) is the largest independent non-profit environmental organization in Sweden. With 190 000 members, the organization is a strong voice in environmental issues.

Implementation requires paradigm shift

by **Klára Hajdu** and **Veronika Kiss**
CEEweb for Biodiversity

Despite all the efforts made to conserve the earth's natural heritage, the 2010 Biodiversity Target was not achieved. The main reason for the failure of delivery was the absence of political will to address the deeply underlying causes (indirect drivers) behind biodiversity loss. Therefore, it is a great step forward that the strategic goals of the new Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 follow a logical framework that derive from the Driver-Pressure-State-Impact/Benefit-Response model and that its Strategic Goal A and associated targets initiate actions to address the underlying causes.

However, understanding the cause-effect relationships among the drivers, pressures, and the state of ecosystems brings us to the conclusion that a fundamental change in policies is needed if we want to achieve the Aichi Biodiversity Targets. Drivers generate the environmental pressures in a complex way. Thus, without applying the holistic approach and reducing all driving forces simultaneously, it will be impossible to reduce environmental pressures and halt biodiversity loss.

> The greatest challenge is that the implementation of Strategic Goal A requires a paradigm change, where NGOs can play an important role.

If we target our efforts at just a few driving forces in a sectoral approach, this will lead to the shifting of environmental pressures in space or time, or among the three attributes of environment (the abundance of natural resources at genetic, species, and ecosystem levels; the spatial structure, reflecting on the coherence and connectivity among ecosystems; and the quality of environment, determined by pollution and the spreading of alien genotypes). The expansion of biofuels is a vivid example of this phenomenon: even though we aim to tackle the driving force of increased fossil fuel consumption, we simply shift environmental pressure from the quality of the environment (in essence, reduced greenhouse gas emissions) to the spatial structure of ecosystems (in essence, increased land use directly and indirectly caused by increased biofuel production).

The holistic approach is thus a basic requirement for effectively tackling the underlying causes of biodiversity loss, for which all four targets under Strategic Goal A are relevant. However, we see a major challenge in achieving them. It is impossible to mainstream biodiversity across government and society without changing the boundary conditions of the economy. This would imply limiting the use of energy resources and land on the global level, which would provide the basis for any further actions and reduce these two types of environmental pressures.

It would be necessary to develop global and national energy resource use limitation targets, but with room for increases for developing countries that lie within the carrying capacity of Earth. Due to limitation, energy resources would become more scarce globally, which would significantly change production and consumption patterns, as addressed in Target 4. As energy resources are needed for almost all human activities that degrade ecosystems, this would greatly limit all types of environmental pressure.

For instance, it would put pressure on, and ultimately reduce, travel and transport, which would curb the spreading of invasive alien species. Reduced transport would also diminish the overexploitation of tropical ecosystems for timber, meat, and biofuels, as well as the overexploitation of fish stocks to satisfy growing demand. With scarce energy resources, intensive agriculture would not be competitive and extensive farming practices benefiting local communities (also through providing more jobs) could spread again. Less energy consumption is also the most effective way to mitigate climate change, which is a major pressure on biodiversity.

An economic measure like this would inevitably result in the "glocalisation" of the economy, where production and consumption is based much more on local resources. Consequently, people would (again) consume locally produced goods, leading also to a greater appreciation of the ecosystem services they directly experience and depend upon, which would contribute to Target 1.

It is of course very important to carefully design the economic tool of global energy resource use limitation in order to prevent negative social consequences. Vulnerable social groups should be provided with access to energy resources (e.g. without the use of money) as a contribution to poverty alleviation.

In order to avoid shifting environmental pressure, the use of land should be regulated as well. A land use system should be introduced, where the sustainable management of land is achieved in the long term, while providing access to the land for local communities.

In summary, the greatest challenge is that the implementation of Strategic Goal A requires a paradigm shift, where NGOs can play an important role through awareness raising and generating public support, providing expertise and proposing alternative solutions, as well as lobbying. Dedicated NGOs should also operate as watchdogs, following up on global and national commitments and thus catalyzing implementation.

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Biofuels

The struggle between climate, economics and biodiversity

by **Helena Paul** ● Econexus

With next year's Rio+20 Earth Summit due to meet in Brazil it is little wonder that fights over agrofuels will intensify in the years ahead. The United Nations Environment Programme's (UNEP) flagship 'Green Economy' study appears to bless a massive expansion of agrofuel as it advocates for 21.6% of all liquid fuels to be bio-based by 2050. Sourcing all that biological feedstock is a feat that UNEP says will gobble up 37% of global agricultural and forest 'residues' – a hefty take from already overstressed ecosystems.

A new report by the ETC Group, *The New Biomassters – Synthetic Biology and the Next Assault on Biodiversity and Livelihoods* unveiled in Nagoya, launches a closely argued critique of the next generation fuels and of the "bioeconomy" concept now driving OECD research and industrial policies. The New Biomassters argues that, far from a "Green Economy," switching to biomass amounts to a red hot resource grab on the lands of the global South that will undermine the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity. 86 percent of global biomass is to be found in the tropics and at least a fifth of global land grabs there are already driven by the need to secure biomass feedstocks for the 'bioeconomy' policies of the North. Not only are these land grabs driving landlessness and hunger, the resulting land use change and associated agricultural practices are already releasing significant quantities of greenhouse gases - putting the lie to the carbon neutral claims made for biomass.

However, even though biofuels have been severely criticized, with good evidence to back up that criticism, support for their development still exists. Governments do not want to address the real issues surrounding the potentially limitless demand for energy versus what a finite planet can yield, instead preferring to avoid difficult debates about the need for major changes in development paradigms to a less energy intense model.

Many do not even want to commit to forms of alternative energy closer to being genuinely renewable, such as solar and wind. It is easier to find short-term "solutions" in the form of mandating the use of a proportion of biofuel and biomass described as sustain-

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We cannot continue to avoid the real issues raised by biofuels. They should be confronted in the context of biodiversity, since biodiversity is essential for stabilizing climate, to genuine adaptation and mitigation, to food and water provision, and in fact to our continued existence.

able to, supposedly, reduce CO_2 emissions without the need for major modifications to existing technologies or policies.

The public in many parts of the world now buys biofuel at the pump, whether people are aware of that or not and regardless of their opinions about it. Basically, they have no choice about what is added to their petrol. Air travel is now being presented as potentially green if it includes biofuel use. The Nuffield report on the ethics of biofuels (www.nuffieldbioethics.org/biofuels-0) attempts to turn the arguments upside down by proposing that there may be an ethical obligation to develop biofuels if the five principles they put forward are fulfilled. Indeed they suggest that these may be more useful than the precautionary approach, which they call restrictive.

Hence agrofuels were a major focus at the tenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties (COP 10) to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) in Nagoya. Even as evidence against them mounts, they remain a priority for several governments. The chairs of the working group on biofuels and biodiversity, Canada and Colombia, tried to introduce a new text with a different title. Their supporters included the US, Brazil, Australia, New Zealand, Japan and Argentina, but the move was strongly resisted by Malawi, speaking for the Africa Group. Parties that insisted on retaining the original title starting with Biofuels and Biodiversity included Bolivia, Norway, Philippines, Ghana, Switzerland, Dominican Republic, Namibia and Tanzania. Parties therefore returned to working on the previous non-paper, resulting in Decision X/37.

BIOMASS AND THE GREEN ECONOMY

The word biomass is now in the preambular paragraph for the decision, and in paragraph 13, with the latter calling for its negative impacts on biodiversity to be minimized or avoided. The third preamble point simply notes the rapid development of new technologies to convert biomass into a wider range of fuels. Although this development is not as rapid as proponents would like, investments and subsidies are going into it. It could potentially impact biodiversity through the development of a biomass economy that seeks to convert biomass into a similar or broader range of products, including fuels, as are currently derived from fossil oil. The Rio+20 emphasis on green economy could become an opportunity to promote the biomass economy, with serious implications for biodiversity. Thus we need to be ready to use this text to oppose irrational biomass developments.

GOOD POINTS

There are good points in this decision, as for example in the phrase "promote the positive and minimize or avoid the negative impacts of biofuels on biodiversity". The important addition of the word "avoid" in addition to minimize is supported by Article 14 of the CBD. Paragraph 7 refers to ecosystem functions and also mentions areas that could be "exempted from" or "deemed inappropriate for biofuels". An important development, as it begins the process of making it clear that some ecosystems and geographical regions should be excluded from development, such as plantations for biofuels.

WHAT TO PUT BACK

Positive text in the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice (SBSTTA) recommendation was lost in Nagoya. Article 17 of the SBSTTA text "reiterates that the precautionary approach should be applied to the production and use of biofuels". It now applies only to living modified organisms for biofuels and "the release of synthetic life, cell, or genome into the environment". Another important aspect relates to invasive alien species. Mentioned only in the decision preamble, it should be returned to the operational text since so many biofuels are invasive. Land tenure is mentioned but the words 'land security' and 'land rights' were both in the SBSTTA recommendation and would be preferable as they are stronger and indicate clearer rights than tenure. But, they are also more contentious. While it is always a struggle to get proper recognition of indigenous rights into any text, here we have references to full and effective participation of indigenous and local communities in paragraphs 3, 4 and 7, and in 9 of the decision, but attempts to introduce references to the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples were opposed, mainly by Canada.

NEXT STEPS

Paragraphs 11 and 12 of the decision request the Executive Secretary to carry out certain tasks and report on progress to the next SBSTTA, but these are very limited in their scope. They relate to standards and methodologies, and list several organisations that are strong advocates of biofuels as collaborators. Civil society must keep emphasising that biofuels are not a sustainable path, using the best available evidence regarding both first generation and next generation biofuels. Struggles over text are crucial but so is assembling and disseminating the evidence to persuade Parties and civil society that the biofuels agenda undermines the Convention and is destructive to biodiversity, indigenous peoples and local communities.

BIODIVERSITY VS ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PRIORITIES

Following COP 10 there are now five strategic goals and 20 targets for Parties to address. Governments are supposed to develop national targets by 2012 and review, update and revise National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans (NBSAPs) by 2014. There are many clashes looming between biodiversity protection and economic development, especially in connection with energy use. Strategic Goal A, which addresses the underlying causes of biodiversity loss, includes goals such as removing harmful subsidies, keeping production and consumption within sustainable limits and keeping resource use within safe ecological limits. However, this will prove extremely difficult to fulfill in the face of demands for economic growth to address economic crises and expectations based on the current energy-dense model of development. A desire to reconcile biodiversity and development clearly underlies Target 2, whereby 2020 biodiversity values are integrated into national and local development and poverty reduction strategies and planning processes and national accounts.

Here we come to the thorny problem of biodiversity values. Expressing them in monetary terms is the only way we seem able to render them visible to the market, to which we increasingly defer as the arbiter of all things. However, this leaves biodiversity highly vulnerable to being traded against economic interests. Thus we see the emergence of biodiversity offsetting as a planning tool. Crudely put this implies that it is acceptable to mine or build in one area, so long as you offset this by protecting and "enhancing" another, and perhaps even shifting species away from areas targeted for development. This is a slippery slope to further fragmentation of ecosystems, as it undermines their resilience and integrity. Ecosystems cannot be generalized and abstracted. They are particular and unique. Market mechanisms are not appropriate to address them. Wetland banking in the US is presented as a model in some quarters, and other governments, for example the UK, are considering a biodiversity offsetting policy, largely one suspects, to address planning deadlocks, rather than to protect biodiversity.

CONFLICTING INTERESTS

However, clashes between the need for biodiversity protection and emission reductions are most clearly expressed in debates over energy and the role of biofuels and biomass in the shift away from fossil sources of energy and raw materials. The Rio+20 meeting in 2012 could highlight and discuss this clash, but is more likely to airbrush it out of the debate or even leave biodiversity subservient to a narrow and flawed definition of climate. Thus biodiversity risks being reduced to biomass. Targets for the use of biofuels and other so-called renewable energy resources in the US, the European Union and an increasing number of other countries, are promoting the development of monoculture plantations of crops, including soya, maize, sugarcane, jatropha, miscanthus, switchgrass and eucalyptus. Many commentators have shown that just the EU and US targets alone would demand huge areas of land that would be in direct competition with biodiversity protection and food provision. Yet, instead of expressing this clearly, Parties continue to discuss and elaborate strategies that are actually in direct conflict with each other.

We cannot continue to avoid the real issues raised by biofuels. They should be confronted in the context of biodiversity, since biodiversity is essential for stabilizing climate, to genuine adaptation and mitigation, to food and water provision, and in fact to our continued existence. We need to grasp the nettle, as the English saying goes – which means tackling rather than avoiding an issue. Then we may really begin to find ways forward, just as the stinging nettle is a source of healing and has many important roles that benefit humanity and biodiversity.

Convention on Biological Diversity

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2011-2020 United Nations Decade on Biodiversity

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