

Mainstreaming biodiversity in development policy and planning:

A review of country experience

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PART I – MAINSTREAMING BIODIVERSITY: CHALLENGES AND LESSONS

1. Introduction

The Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), agreed at the Rio Earth Summit in 1992, has three main objectives: the conservation of biodiversity, its sustainable use and the equitable sharing of benefits from the use of genetic resources. In order to implement the Convention's objectives in the national context, countries are required to develop national biodiversity strategies and action plans (NBSAPs), and to integrate biodiversity concerns into all sectors of the national economy.

Article 6 states that Parties shall:

- a) Develop national strategies, plans or programmes for the conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity; and
- b) Integrate the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity into relevant sectoral or cross-sectoral plans, programmes and policies.

Article 10(a) requires Parties to integrated biodiversity considerations into national decision-making.

Integrating biodiversity objectives into mainstream development is a complex challenge that lies at the heart of the Convention, and a key objective of NBSAPs, which have now been completed in over 80 countries¹. However, in all countries, North and South, there has been little progress with integrating biodiversity objectives in national development policy and planning, including important economic sectors (agriculture, forestry, energy etc). As a result, the objectives of the CBD continue to be undermined by mainstream development activities.²

This report examines the constraints to, and opportunities for, mainstreaming biodiversity in development policies, plans and programmes, and how NBSAPs can more effectively address the challenge of mainstreaming. Part I provides an introduction to the issues, and examines some of the lessons emerging from experience with NBSAPs and sectoral integration based on a review of selected literature. It also presents new thinking on sustainable development strategies, whose main purpose is to integrate environmental, social and economic objectives.

Part II reviews experience with biodiversity planning and mainstreaming in more detail in a number of countries: Pakistan, India, South Africa, Ghana, Burkina Faso, Namibia and Tanzania. It focuses on:

- lessons from earlier conservation strategies and environmental plans;
- how recent NBSAPs have approached the challenge of mainstreaming;
- ways to improve coordination and synergies between different environment-related plans; and
- the role of strategies for sustainable development as mechanisms to facilitate coordination and mainstreaming.

¹ UNDP Biodiversity Planning Support Programme: www.undp.org/bpsp And: www.biodiv.org

² Swiderska, K. (2002). *Implementing the Rio Conventions: Implications for the South*. WSSD Opinion Paper. IIED.

While these are the main areas covered overall, individual country reviews vary in their scope and depth. This reflects differences in the approach used for their preparation, in the experiences that countries have to offer, and in the availability of information. In some cases, limited information was available and it was not possible to do more in-depth research within the scope of this study. Nevertheless, the individual reviews, and analysis across the different countries, has generated some useful insights on the constraints to mainstreaming biodiversity and ways to overcome these, which are presented in Part III.

Some of the country reviews are based largely on inputs prepared specifically for this study by in-country researchers, using a common set of questions - Pakistan: Maheen Zehra; Ghana: Seth Vorgonze; Burkina Faso: Oussouby Toure; and Tanzania: Ruzika Muheto.

The chapters on India, South Africa and Namibia are based on existing published and unpublished materials (research reports, guidance documents prepared as part of NBSAP processes, and NBSAP documents). The report also draws on a recent project of the OECD Development Assistance Committee (OECD/DAC) on Donor-Developing Country Dialogues on Sustainable Development Strategies, which examined experience with such strategies in eight countries (see www.nssd.net). In particular, it draws on the dialogues in Pakistan, Namibia, Burkina Faso and Tanzania and on the overall lessons that emerged.

2. Why mainstream biodiversity?

Biodiversity objectives remain weakly integrated in government, business and community activities. This means that development and land use that takes place on the 85% or so of land that lies outside protected areas (eg. tourism, mining, agriculture, forestry, fisheries) continues to undermine biodiversity, often through habitat conversion and fragmentation. In South Africa, for example, biodiversity is poorer than ten years ago, despite considerable expansion of protected areas, and a decline in cultivation and grazing areas³.

Implementing the CBD will therefore require the integration of biodiversity objectives in national development policy and planning, and routine natural resource use practices. Environmental Impact Assessments increasingly incorporate biodiversity surveys but are not systematically applied and tend to be limited to large donor-funded projects. Furthermore, Environmental assessment and integration tools are seldom used at the policy and plan formulation stage when strategic decisions are made which shape patterns of development and investment. Policy, planning and legal frameworks need to be reviewed to identify significant impacts on biodiversity, promote 'win-win' approaches which support both development and biodiversity objectives, and provide a supportive environment for sustainable natural resource management.

The Strategic Plan for the Convention, adopted at the sixth Conference of the Parties, aims to achieve a significant reduction in the rate of biodiversity loss by 2010, and

³ Wynberg R. (2002). *A decade of biodiversity conservation and use in South Africa: tracking progress from the Rio Earth Summit to the Johannesburg World Summit on Sustainable Development*. South African Journal of Science 98.

identifies the lack of integration of biodiversity issues in development sectors as a key obstacle. Such integration is thus one of its strategic goals (Box 1).

Box 1 - The Strategic Plan for the Convention on Biological Diversity

Goal 3: National biodiversity strategies and action plans and the integration of biodiversity concerns into relevant sectors serve as an effective framework for implementation of the objectives of the Convention..

3.1 Every Party has effective national strategies, plans and programmes in place to provide a national framework for implementing the three objectives of the Convention and to set clear national priorities.

3.3 Biodiversity concerns are being integrated into relevant national sectoral and cross-sectoral plans, programmes and policies.

3.4 The priorities in national biodiversity strategies and action plans are being actively implemented, as a means to achieve national implementation of the Convention, and as a significant contribution towards the global biodiversity agenda.

Mainstreaming biodiversity objectives is not only a commitment under the CBD. The integration of environmental, social and economic objectives lies at the heart of sustainable development, as expressed in Agenda 21. The World Summit on Sustainable Development (2002) reinforced the importance of Biodiversity for achieving sustainable development, identifying it as one of five priority themes, along with Water, Energy, Health and Agriculture (WEHAB).

The main outcome of the WSSD, the consensually agreed Plan of Implementation, brought new political recognition of the critical role that biodiversity plays in sustainable development and poverty eradication. The Plan reaffirms the need to integrate the objectives of the CBD into sectoral and cross-sectoral programmes and policies, particularly those of economic sectors, including those related to sustainable development and poverty eradication. Also significant is the strong emphasis of the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) on biodiversity conservation and the use of biodiversity as an economic strategy for the continent.

3. Balancing biodiversity and development objectives

In some cases, taking biodiversity objectives into account will actually reinforce existing economic and social priorities. In others, integrating biodiversity objectives may imply restricting development options or incurring higher costs at least in the short term.⁴ Seeking to mainstream biodiversity objectives systematically in all development activities may thus be unrealistic in financially poor countries faced with pressing economic and social concerns. The CBD explicitly recognises that “economic and social development and poverty eradication are the first and overriding priorities of developing countries”. Poor countries should not have to bear the costs of global conservation for the benefit of the international community. Where trade-offs have to be made, it is reasonable to suggest that wealthier countries should meet the

⁴ OECD/DAC. (2002). *Integrating the Rio Conventions into Development Cooperation*. The DAC Guidelines.

additional costs of conservation. The Global Environment Facility was established for this purpose.

Development needs will inevitably place limits on conservation, but these limits are far from reached. Win-win options which support both biodiversity and development objectives tend not to be promoted in development policy and planning. This is partly because of a lack of understanding of the many ways in which biodiversity contributes to economic and social objectives. Policy makers and planners rarely have access to meaningful information about the range of biodiversity values. This reinforces the tendency of sectoral strategies to favour short term economic interests, without accounting for longer term impacts on the natural resource base on which national development and poor rural communities depend.⁵

While there has been some progress in protecting globally threatened and commercial species in development activities (eg. through EIA studies), much less progress has been made in protecting biodiversity of value to local livelihoods and its role in provision of ecosystem services (eg. clean water and soil). Tools for assessing the value of ecosystem services and bringing them into the market-place are only just emerging⁶. A much better understanding of the range goods and services that biodiversity provides, and their spatial distribution, is required in order to assess the true costs and benefits of development options. Criteria and principles are needed to weigh up long term biodiversity loss against short term economic gain. Countries also need to establish an understanding of how much biodiversity is desirable. This way, informed decisions can be made.

The tendency to follow the development models of the North reinforces the attitude of 'growth today, environment tomorrow'. In fact, the Northern model was based on exploiting comparative advantage, but biodiversity was never one of these. This may be one reason why biodiversity is not usually regarded as a comparative advantage for economic growth in the South⁷, and does not receive the investment required to fully develop its commercial potential (eg. through bio-prospecting).

There are many economic and social benefits to be gained from sustainable management of biological resources, which are often under-exploited or overlooked. For example:

- New business and trade opportunities from growing markets for organic and sustainable products, including agricultural produce, timber, fish, and 'wild crafted' products (eg. herbs and spices), for which there are international certification or labelling schemes. Demand for such products is largely in distant Northern markets, but is also a growing in many urban centres in the South.
- Safeguarding the long-term viability of natural resource based industries such as forestry and fisheries.

⁵ : Koziell I. and Saunders, J. (eds) (2001) *Living off Biodiversity: Exploring Livelihoods and Biodiversity Issues in Natural Resources Management*. IIED

⁶ See: Carew-Reid, J. (2002). *Biodiversity Planning in Asia*. IUCN Sri Lanka; and: Landell-Mills N, and Porras, I. (2002). *Silver bullet or fools' gold? A global review of markets for forest environmental services and their impacts on the poor*. IIED.

⁷ See Swanson, T., in: Koziell I. and Saunders, J. (eds) (2001) *Living off Biodiversity: Exploring Livelihoods and Biodiversity Issues in Natural Resources Management*. IIED

- Protecting commercially valuable and rare species for trade and tourism.
- Safeguarding the contribution of biodiversity to local livelihoods. Biodiversity provides food, medicines, livestock fodder, building materials and other goods for subsistence and trade amongst poor rural communities. It is estimated that over 80% of the world's population depends on traditional medicines for healthcare⁸. Wild foods can be critical in times of stress, eg. war and famine; and biodiverse areas can have important cultural and spiritual value.
- Using traditional plant-based medicines to provide cheap alternatives to supplement under-resourced healthcare systems.
- Maintaining essential ecosystem services, such as provision of freshwater, soil conservation and climate stability. Loss of diversity can lead to land degradation and reduced resilience to stress eg. drought.

Mainstreaming should not only be about integrating biodiversity and economic objectives in different sectors, but should also address the social dimension of sustainable development, particularly in the South where rural poverty is widespread. Poverty reduction is one of the cross-sectoral priorities of sustainable development, which were developed precisely because environmental objectives are unachievable in their absence. Thus, the possible negative impacts of integrated approaches on the poor need to be identified and addressed, while options which maximise beneficial outcomes should be prioritised. Improved natural resource management in different sectors is likely to benefit rural communities, but mainstreaming could impose costs on the poor if, for example, access to essential resources is restricted.

Although the links between biodiversity and poverty reduction are increasingly recognised, in practice, both the conservation and development communities tend not to pay adequate attention to these links. Much of the literature and guidance on NBSAPs and biodiversity mainstreaming focuses on linking biodiversity with economics, and preserving threatened species, placing much less emphasis on biodiversity of importance to local livelihoods. Furthermore, communities are rarely consulted or able to influence decision-making, and the influence of organisations representing them tends to be relatively weak compared to those concerned with global biodiversity conservation. While the last decade has seen the emergence of integrated conservation and development initiatives at community level, their success and wider adoption has often been restricted by unsupportive policy and institutional frameworks (eg. insecure land and resource tenure, and unfavourable markets).

4. NBSAPs and biodiversity mainstreaming: reviewing the lessons

This section presents some of the lessons arising from experience to date with NBSAPs and mainstreaming biodiversity. It is mainly based on selected literature sources: a review biodiversity planning in 15 Asian countries⁹; a review of the implementation of the Rio Conventions¹⁰; and a Resource Book on Strategies for Sustainable Development¹¹.

⁸ Worldwatch Institute (1999). *State of the World Report*.

⁹ Carew-Reid, J. (ed). (2002). *Biodiversity Planning in Asia*. IUCN Sri Lanka.

¹⁰ Swiderska, K. (2002). *Implementing the Rio Conventions: Implications for the South*. IIED. WSSD Opinion Paper

¹¹ OECD and UNDP (2002). *Sustainable Development Strategies: A Resource Book*. (2002).

NBSAPs have had a number of useful outcomes. They have helped to raise awareness about biodiversity, the threats to biodiversity, and action required to address these threats. New policies and laws on biodiversity have been introduced, protected areas have been expanded and some promising new initiatives have been launched on the ground.

However, a key finding is that NBSAPs are not affecting the main forces degrading biodiversity, essentially because they have not influenced planning in economic sectors and are therefore not connected with the use of resources. NBSAPs have not paid enough attention to linkages with economic policies and plans, and have suffered from a lack of integration with other national institutions and planning mechanisms. A notable exception is Jamaica where the NBSAP has been used to integrate biodiversity concerns into other planning mechanisms (see: www.nrca.org; and www.nepa.gov.jm).

Many biodiversity plans have failed to arouse much political interest and remain on the shelf. They have often been more about identifying national objectives and activities to implement the CBD than about establishing systems and processes for action which engage different government and civil society sectors. Political, budgetary and legislative pressures have tended to emphasise the written product of biodiversity planning, rather than the process. The comprehensive nature of NBSAPs and lack of prioritisation has sometimes been an impediment to action.

Momentum has often been lost after NBSAPs have been prepared and gaps are emerging between preparation/adoption and implementation. The majority of NBSAPs have been largely externally financed. The dependence on external funding makes it difficult to ensure continuity between phases, and comes at a cost to self-reliance, sustained commitment and internalisation in national budgets. Nevertheless, in some countries, biodiversity strategies have led to further action, e.g. Guyana, where the NBSAP evolved from a participatory formulation process and stimulated on-going actions two years after it was completed (www.sdn.org/gy).

Although NBSAPs have generally not had much impact to date, particularly outside the conservation sector, they encompass complex challenges which will take time to address, and many have only recently been approved. Furthermore, the need to adopt new approaches to planning, where NBSAPs become cyclical processes that are regularly reviewed and revised, and are linked to economic development planning, is increasingly recognised.

Integrating Biodiversity and Development Objectives

A number of reasons for the lack of integration of biodiversity objectives in economic policy and planning have been identified:

1. Lack of assessment of the economic value of biodiversity and the cost of its loss. NBSAPs in Asia have seldom made use of economic valuation methods to demonstrate the economic importance of biodiversity to development planners. The local and spatial context, where biodiversity values are most evident, is not given adequate attention in most strategic decisions, although the trend towards greater decentralisation is encouraging the integration of economic and spatial planning, with potential for promoting biodiversity concerns.

2. The sectoral structure of governments, and in particular the separation of units or departments responsible for environment and biodiversity from finance, planning and sectoral departments, which control the bulk of investment, acts as a significant constraint to integration. Responsibility for NBSAP development and implement rests mainly with environment departments which are weak policy.

3. Lack of attention to reviewing, and identifying specific links to, sectoral policies and plans, and to developing mechanisms for biodiversity integration. Many strategies have identified priorities for key natural resource sectors (eg. forestry, fisheries and agriculture), but few have provided guidelines and practical approaches to promote greater coherence. NBSAPs also tend to lack effective mechanisms for integration with existing environment sector policies and plans, which have achieved some integration with development sectors.

4. In general, NBSAP processes have not effectively engaged all major stakeholders, including mainstream government departments, local communities, women, and the private sector, and have not invested enough in communication and awareness raising. The focus on planning at national level has not allowed sufficient involvement of local actors.

5. Many NBSAPs have been developed by biodiversity specialists who lack the capacity to engage economic sectors and forge links with mainstream development planning.

6. Time limitations imposed by governments or donors, and funding constraints, have often restricted consultations. The Philippines was originally given only nine months to complete its NBSAP; few countries receive more than 18 months.

7. Monitoring of NBSAP implementation and the status of biodiversity continues to be neglected. Few NBSAPs in Asia have set out clear arrangements and tools for monitoring implementation and feedback. Governments rarely know the extent to which sectoral agencies are implementing NBSAPs.

Even when sectoral departments have been involved in defining NBSAPs and have been instructed at the highest level to implement them, they haven't done so. This is partly because NBSAPs are too prescriptive and are not finely tuned to the specific needs, capacities and opportunities of sectoral and local agencies. Many NBSAPs are over-ambitious project wish-lists, well beyond the capacity of implementing agencies. Ministries become frozen with indecision on how to proceed; at best they end up implementing individual projects on an ad-hoc basis if international funds become available.

The first round of Asian NBSAPs emphasised the preparation of comprehensive action plans at national level. But prescribing detailed projects can inhibit detailed planning by sectoral departments and local government. Internal reflection and analysis is needed to review and reorient sector policy and practice and to promote the adoption of biodiversity concerns by implementing agencies.

The review of biodiversity planning in Asia proposes that NBSAPs should develop a broad strategic policy at national level, which is agreed amongst all sectors and levels, and provide support for biodiversity planning within sectoral and local agencies. They should use a combination of top-down and bottom-up approaches, beginning at local level and then moving up¹². The national level should define mechanisms for coordination, define the process to ensure that sectoral and local planning happens, and provide the necessary guidance, capacity building and resources. It should also develop the overall monitoring and reporting framework, define clear responsibilities for implementation, and introduce the necessary incentives.

The NBSAP process would thus involve the following steps:

- Establish coordination mechanisms for NBSAP development and implementation which formally engage sectoral and decentralised agencies, including a high level national steering committee, decentralised steering committees; and multi-stakeholder advisory bodies.
- Reach consensus among all sectors on a common set of goals, principles and basic approaches, which is adopted at the highest level of government, as a strategic framework to guide the subsequent process.
- Define procedures and obligations for biodiversity planning at sectoral level, provide detailed guidance to support the process, and establish biodiversity focal points in sectoral departments.
- Conduct the action planning in individual or small groups of linked sectors. This becomes an annual process within each sector in keeping with normal budgetary cycles, so that existing programmes are reoriented to reflect biodiversity strategy principles, and the obstacles to putting them into practice (institutional, administrative or policy) are addressed.
- Introduce an explicit requirement for periodic review and clear monitoring systems, with responsibility for sectoral monitoring assigned to sectoral departments and stakeholders.

The aim of such a process is to establish intensive working links between the biodiversity agency and other sectors, and to institutionalise biodiversity planning and budgeting within each agency. It is proposed that biodiversity performance should be rewarded or penalised through annual budget allocations. An agreed framework for measuring performance within each sector would be established. Legislation could be introduced to ensure that NBSAPs are regularly reviewed and to reinforce the institutional requirements for maintaining biodiversity planning processes.

The question then becomes: how to get sectoral and local departments actively involved and ensure sustained commitment to biodiversity? ‘Defining’ a process and ‘assigning’ obligations will not necessarily be enough, even with legislative backing. And, how to get national planning departments to agree to introduce a system of biodiversity performance related budget allocation? Integration of biodiversity objectives in routine development activities will require far greater awareness and commitment from finance, planning and sectoral departments.

¹² Carew-Reid, J. (ed). (2002). *Biodiversity Planning in Asia*. IUCN Sri Lanka

Inter-departmental committees such as National Councils for Sustainable Development can provide a useful means to engage different sectors in addressing environmental concerns. But such committees do not always work effectively – some only meet when funding becomes available for a particular project, others have been established for some time but have not met at all¹³.

Enhancing inter-departmental collaboration is difficult because of turf battles and tensions between departments. In all administrations, departments have a tendency to jealously guard their interests and avoid coming to agreement with potential ‘competitors’, since they are often vying for scarce resources. Furthermore, compartmentalisation is reinforced by educational systems which rarely encourage cross-sectoral thinking or approaches. There are also conceptual barriers to overcome when economic departments are pursuing market liberalisation and neoliberal development models which tend not to incorporate environmental and social objectives.

Given these constraints, NBSAPs will need to concentrate much more on building a constituency for biodiversity across different sectors and levels of government, and sustaining high level political commitment to support the process and facilitate the necessary changes. Strategies for this more ‘political’ process will need to be finely tuned to the particular country context. However, they might involve some of the following steps:

- building capacity for biodiversity experts to engage sectoral departments and undertake multi-stakeholder planning processes;
- demonstrating that biodiversity is not a marginal green concern, but one which is central to key concerns of poverty, social marginalisation, conflict and instability;
- identifying specific ways in which biodiversity/NBSAPs can reinforce existing strategic and sectoral development goals (eg. decentralization, poverty reduction, agricultural production etc);
- giving presentations on biodiversity-development linkages to politicians, parliamentary committees, senior officials and others in finance, planning and sectoral departments;
- holding discussions with different sectoral departments to identify opportunities for integration in their programmes;
- gaining support from influential figures and civil society movements.

With enhanced political and sectoral agency commitment, it will then be easier to promote the adoption and application of mechanisms to integrate biodiversity in sectoral policy and planning, for example:

- integration of biodiversity objectives into existing planning procedures and tools (eg. guidelines for municipal planning, EIA)
- tools and incentives for integrating economic, social and environmental objectives and managing the trade-offs between them where integration is not possible; and

¹³ Swiderska, K. (2002). *Implementing the Rio Conventions: Implications for the South*. IIED. WSSD Opinion Paper

- structural and operational changes needed to incorporate clear responsibility for environment/biodiversity into different sectoral departments.

Neither the environmental conventions themselves (and responsible authorities) nor the many groups with obligations under them, operate with adequate sustainable development frameworks, which include economic and social as well as environmental objectives. This inhibits integration conceptually, institutionally and operationally. National Sustainable Development Strategies (NSDSs), which are aimed primarily at cross-sectoral integration of environmental and social objectives, offer one process to promote the integration of biodiversity objectives in development policy and planning (see Part I, Section 5). NSDSs are identified in Agenda 21 as a key mechanism for achieving sustainable development, and countries are committed to “integrating the principles of sustainable development into national development policies and programmes” as part of the UN Millenium Development Goals.

At international level, there is also a need for a much more explicit focus on the linkages between the CBD and mainstream development policy in order to make the convention more meaningful to economic actors, and assist the development of practical tools and approaches that can be used to improve integration. Greater participation from mainstream development departments in the delegations sent to CBD meetings would assist this process, and could be a useful way to engage these mainstream sectors in the national implementation process. Donor agencies have examined how to improve integration of the conventions in their sectoral cooperation programmes through the OECD/DAC Working Group on Environment, which has recently produced policy guidance on this issue¹⁴.

Local biodiversity strategies and biodiversity integration

Improving biodiversity integration in the development process will require greater commitment to true decentralisation of power and resources, and to securing the participation of local people. Opportunities for integration become most evident at local levels, as the very nature of ‘livelihoods’ at these levels is cross-sectoral. It is at local level where biodiversity –or biological resources - actually means something to people because it directly affects them. This implies that biodiversity planning will be most successful in promoting sectoral integration at local level, where there is much more demand for integration. Indeed, experience over the last decade has shown that strategies for sustainable development are most effective at local level (eg. local Agenda 21). Thus, there is strong evidence to suggest that best approach would be to focus on biodiversity planning at local level, and, at national level to focus on providing support and facilitation for local processes. At community level, the strategic objectives of NBSAPs could be translated into community resource management strategies and in this way integrated into mainstream development.

NBSAPs have tended to favour global biodiversity objectives (protecting species that are rare and threatened at global level) over local biodiversity objectives (people-centred goals of conserving biodiversity for subsistence agriculture, cultural reasons, or use in times of hardship, etc). Agro-biodiversity hot-spots, which are of both global

¹⁴ OECD/DAC. (2002). *Integrating the Rio Conventions into Development Cooperation*. The DAC Guidelines.

and local importance, have generally been neglected in Asian NBSAPs. This is partly because the institutions that have been developed to address biodiversity issues have been heavily influenced by global institutions concerned with biodiversity. Currently there are few institutions capable of integrating local biodiversity and livelihood concerns, and these tend to be weak in terms of their influence on policy and local action¹⁵.

Guidance on NBSAPs in relation to priority setting tends to emphasise use of biodiversity hot-spots (ie. threatened species) and bio-geographical regions. While the need to address agro-biodiversity hotspots may be highlighted, less emphasis is generally placed on other biodiversity which is important for supporting local livelihoods. Approaches for assessing biodiversity of 'global' value, such as hotspots, and those for assessing local values (eg. ethnobotany) are rarely integrated¹⁶.

Setting priorities by bio-geographic region does, however, enable a more holistic approach, as management strategies can be tailored to the specific biophysical and socio-economic characteristics of each region. Similarly, ecosystem-based approaches for integrated land and natural resource management can be used to formulate development plans based on a clear understanding of physical, ecological, social and economic factors (see Box 2).

NBSAPs have tended to deal inadequately with the reality that people have always used biodiversity to sustain themselves. Whilst these plans flag the issue of unsustainable patterns of biodiversity use, they seldom include analyses of patterns of use (by communities, countries, multi-national companies, etc.), or assess practical applications of indigenous know-how on sustainable resource use, that could provide lessons to shape mechanisms for reversing such trends.

NBSAP processes have often not provided sufficient opportunity for civil society organisations representing local communities to make a meaningful contribution. Yet some of the most exciting developments for implementing the CBD have been where civil society organisations have used the Convention to shape their activities at local level. In India, NGOs and academics have worked closely with local communities to develop People's Registers of Biodiversity and related knowledge (PBRs). Driven by a motives ranging from conservation to democratisation, such registers are emerging as potentially useful tools for addressing all three CBD objectives. Similarly, decentralised gene banks have been developed with the active involvement of local farmers to strengthen local control and conservation of agro-biodiversity. The State of Kerala has identified the development of PBRs as a priority in its next Five Year Plan¹⁷.

Box 2 - Approaches and instruments for integration

The OECD/DAC "Guidelines for Integrating the Rio Conventions into Development Cooperation" (2002) identify the following approaches for integration:

¹⁵ OECD and UNDP (2002). *Sustainable Development Strategies: A Resource Book*. (2002).

¹⁶ Vermuelen, S. and Koziell, I. (2002). *Integrating global and local values: A review of biodiversity assessment*.

¹⁷ Anuradha, RV, Taneja, B, and Kothari, A. (2001). *Experiences with biodiversity policy- making and community registers in India*. IIED Biodiversity and Livelihoods Group. ABS case study no. 3.

Ecosystem-based approaches are an essential tool for integrating local and global environmental concerns into sector-specific development decisions. A key feature of the ecosystem approach, as adopted by the CBD, is to include the conservation of ecosystem structure and functioning. By capturing both environmental and socio-economic factors, an ecosystem-based policy framework can provide a way for policy makers to identify the most promising development options and make decisions based on a sound understanding of their long-term consequences.

Spatial planning and land-use management is one of the critical entry-points for effective integration of global environmental issues into social and economic development plans. An ecosystem –based approach for development sectors constitutes the policy framework. In addition, a system for integrated planning and management is critical for translating synergies into practice. This will mean considering ecosystem and traditional boundaries, and not only administrative boundaries, in land-use planning.

Strategic Environmental Impact Assessment (SEA) involves analyzing the likely environmental and social consequences of development policies at strategic level to ensure they are fully included and appropriately addressed at the earliest stage of decision-making. It captures cumulative, sector-wide and economy-wide impacts and enables different policy options to be assessed.

Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) is tool to predict, estimate and evaluate the environmental and social consequences of proposed development projects. Key requirements include transparency and public participation. Many countries have introduced EIA as an essential part of project planning processes.

Community-Based Natural Resource Management: The livelihood strategies of many rural poor depend on biological resources which they regard as a social and economic resource. CBNRM is based on the recognition that local people must be involved in decision-making over their natural resources in order to encourage local sustainable development. Good governance, an enabling environment and secure resource rights are also essential.

Coordination between biodiversity and other environmental priorities

With the proliferation of environmental agreements, governments are faced with a growing number of commitments and increasingly scarce resources and capacity for implementation. The lack of coordination between the different agreements means that there is often overlap and duplication of effort, as well as a lack of coherence and conflict in some cases. Yet there are many opportunities for coordination and synergies which would enable more efficient and effective use of limited resources. Furthermore, the task of integrating environmental objectives into mainstream development would be made easier if the various environment priorities were considered together by government, civil society and the private sector at national and local levels. This would enable synergies to be identified in relation to each sector, and integration to be considered in a single process. Conversely, without efforts to mainstream environmental objectives into development sectors, there is unlikely to be sufficient discussion between the different conventions to introduce coherent approaches that are mutually supportive.

Where there are existing frameworks and mechanisms for environmental integration, tools for biodiversity management need to be woven into the overall approach for

environment. However, as long as biodiversity is given low priority, it also needs to maintain a clear identity and high political profile.

Responsibility for MEAs is often left to a handful of staff who are faced with a huge workload and have little time for coordination activities. Where there are larger units, there tends to be little interaction between different MEAs often because there are no formal structures or mechanisms for this. However, some countries have begun to seek ways to improve technical synergies and coordination mechanisms.

One way to facilitate coordination and mainstreaming is to develop an agreed set of criteria for sustainable development which incorporate the various environment and social objectives, and which can be applied to all plans, programmes and projects. NSDSs provide a means to do this.

5. Lessons from Sustainable Development Strategies

While NBSAPs are relatively recent, much can be learnt from longer term experience with broader environment-related strategic planning processes, such as strategies for sustainable development, conservation strategies, environment action plans¹⁸.

Early strategic planning efforts for sustainable development tended to be overwhelming in their all encompassing nature, with emphasis on comprehensive sets of objectives. Such massive agendas have tended to be ignored: no one person or group is interested in all the items on the list of 'what should be done'. They were also too vague or remote from day-to-day realities of 'how to do things'. Many approaches were largely environmental and did little to integrate social and economic dimensions. Often the focus was on producing documents, with little effective implementation. Thus, at best, many earlier approaches have been treated as checklists, or encyclopaedias of ideas, to turn to whenever the occasional policy space or financial opportunity emerges to do something 'green'. Nevertheless, there have been some valuable results, in improving awareness amongst a range of stakeholders, developing pilot projects, and in co-ordinating authorities concerned with sustainable development.

New thinking on national sustainable development strategies (NSDSs) recognises that leadership and innovation in sustainable development derives from many sources – existing one-off centralised strategies are not the only way to bring it about. Given the circumstances of continuing change, it is clear that effective strategies require systematic and iterative processes of learning and doing. They do not have discrete beginnings or ends. Establishing a new or stand-alone strategic planning process would rarely be recommended. Instead, strategies should be viewed as a set of locally driven, continuing processes which improve the integration of social and environmental objectives into key economic processes. The OECD/DAC policy guidance on NSDSs offers the first official definition of such a strategy:

“A coordinated set of participatory and continuously improving processes of analysis, debate, capacity-strengthening, planning and investment, which seeks to integrate the

¹⁸ This section is based on: Dalal-Clayton, B., Swiderska, K., and Bass, S. (eds). (2002). *Stakeholder Dialogues on Sustainable Development Strategies: Lessons, Opportunities and Country Case Studies*.

short and long term economic, social and environmental objectives of society – through mutually supportive approaches wherever possible – and manages trade-offs where this is not possible”.

Developing a strategy thus becomes a question of establishing a *process* which identifies promising mechanisms and initiatives that already exist, builds on these and brings them together. There are mechanisms which countries have found effective for identifying and debating sustainable development issues, changing policy towards sustainable development and associated roles, and monitoring in ways that lead to improved action. But there are other sources of innovation too – in the regular planning system, corporate investment, community development and decentralisation initiatives. These initiatives respond to different everyday pressures, but point to desirable characteristics of an NSDS.

Recent OECD and UN work has identified principles and characteristics of effective NSDSs which can be summarised as follows:

- Integration of economic, social and environmental objectives;
- Coordination and balance between sector and thematic strategies and decentralised levels;
- Broad participation, effective partnerships, transparency and accountability;
- Country ownership, shared vision with a clear timeframe on which stakeholders agree, commitment and continuous improvement;
- Developing capacity and an enabling environment, building on existing knowledge and processes;
- Focus on priorities, outcomes and coherent means of implementation;
- Linkage with budget and investment processes;
- Continuous monitoring and evaluation.

The emphasis is on demand-driven processes rather than top-down agendas. ‘Strategy’ is increasingly viewed to imply a continuous (or at least iterative) learning system to develop and achieve a shared vision, rather than a one-off exercise. The challenges associated are more about institutional change – generating awareness, reaching consensus on values, building commitment, creating the right incentives, working on shared tasks – and doing so at a pace which stakeholders can cope with. The means to do this are systems of participation, analysis, debate, experiment, prioritisation, monitoring and review. Putting an NSDS into operation would, in practice, most likely consist of using promising existing processes as entry points, and strengthening them in terms of the key principles and characteristics listed above.

The new thinking on strategies has replaced the notion of a government-led plan with that of a government-facilitated process. A strategy should offer a forum for concerned civil society and business groups to engage with one another and with government, and to debate integration and trade-offs. It should also seek to improve coordination and convergence between existing sectoral and cross-sectoral strategy initiatives. Because of the emphasis on inclusiveness, coordination and regular review, a strategy offers a practical way to keep sustainable development on everybody’s agenda. An NSDS will, however, require bold leadership to get the whole process started.

PART II – COUNTRY REVIEWS

Pakistan

National Conservation Strategy

The Pakistan National Conservation Strategy (NCS), approved in 1992, situated the country's socio-economic development within the context of a national environmental plan. The objectives of the NCS are the conservation of natural resources, sustainable development and improved natural resource management. Although developed before the CBD, the NCS incorporates biodiversity objectives, and its advent provided biodiversity conservation with renewed and important status in the national policy agenda. The strategy proposes the mainstreaming of environmental and social concerns into development programmes and government procedures.

The NCS marked the beginning of a new era of consultative and integrated development planning. The five years of planning that led to the formulation of the NCS made it both a process and a product: a multi-sectoral consultative process of consensus building and constituency mobilisation, which emphasised the increasing role played by civil society.

In order to take stock of the implementation of the NCS recommendations, a major review was mandated mid-way through its ten-year implementation. The Mid-Term Review¹⁹ brought to light a number of important lessons:

- NCS could not influence key socio-economic processes such as poverty reduction and economic development. The macro level issues were not integrated into the NCS implementation strategy, and NCS implementation was largely left to project identification around NCS core areas.
- NCS implementation processes could not characterise formulation processes hence leading to rapidly decreasing commitment for action. Consultative processes were the hallmark of NCS formulation, however, NCS implementation strategies did not emerge in as participatory a manner as was anticipated.
- The need for action on environment has nevertheless been recognised by the public sector. The MTR reports that an intensive effort has been made towards awareness raising and institutional building. This however, with less than adequate political commitment and with prevailing level of capacities, did not translate into adequate action for NCS implementation.

The NCS had a central influence in including environmental and sustainability dimensions in other policies, plans and strategies, including Pakistan's Eighth Five-Year Plan, which borrowed heavily from the NCS in terms of greening its

¹⁹ Hanson, A., Bass, S., Bouzaher, A., and Samdani, G., with the assistance of M. Zehra (2000) *Pakistan's National Conservation Strategy: Renewing Commitment to Action*. Report of the Mid-Term Review, IUCN-Pakistan.

development objectives. However, in practice, sustainability ‘mainstreaming’ remains elusive due to a lack of ownership of the strategy, effective leadership and clear division of responsibility for implementation amongst government departments, despite their involvement in the development of the NCS and in the mechanism established for its implementation²⁰.

A Cabinet Committee for NCS Implementation was established to provide leadership and political support to the NCS, comprising Ministers from several different departments. A strategy owned by everyone may in reality be owned by no one unless there is across-the-board leadership, effectively expressed. This mechanism, dependent upon the leadership of several ministers, and the active involvement of the Prime Minister/Chief Executive as chair of Pakistan Environmental Protection Council (PEPC), was not fully exploited. PEPC was to provide guidance on NCS progress, but has not met regularly enough and seems to have relegated control of the NCS to the NCS Unit within the Ministry of Environment (MoE).

The NCS Unit was to act as a focal point for coordination, catalysing action and monitoring the strategy. It was meant to coordinate implementation with other departments, but the MoE lacks clout over financial matters and economic development linkages. The NCS assumed that those in charge of policy would have incentives to get involved in its implementation. In practice, there was a lack of political will and procedures to develop and mainstream NCS ideas. The Unit was also given responsibility for another project which diluted its focus on the NCS. It suffers from lack of professional staff and frequent internal transfers act against the consistency required for successful NCS implementation.

The Environmental Section in the federal Planning and Development (P&D) Division and its counterparts in the provincial P&D departments have also not contributed much to NCS implementation, mainly due to a lack of clearly defined roles. These Sections also suffer from staff inadequacy and frequent transfers. The National Planning Commission is the sole entity charged with bringing together the three key elements of environment, economy and social matters in an integrated way at policy and planning level. However, this has not happened, again, due to lack of leadership and ownership.

These observations on management cannot be directly extrapolated to NCS implementation at provincial levels, since there is much variability in terms of the different stages of implementation and commitment. Although the general problem of provincial ‘ownership’ of a national strategy exists in all cases, there is more effective leadership and support for the provincial strategies, which were called for by the NCS to express local priorities. A good case is the Sarhad Provincial Conservation Strategy (SPCS). The MTR suggested that the NCS should focus on *national* level concerns and institutional roles, rather than prescribing everything right down to the village level, and should support provincial, district and other *demand-driven* strategic approaches based on local realities consonant with the current devolution plan.

²⁰ Maheen Zerha and Stephen Bass, in Dalal-Clayton D.B., Swiderska, K. and Bass S. (eds) (2002) *Stakeholder Dialogues on Sustainable Development Strategies. Lessons Opportunities and Developing Country Case Studies*. Environmental Planning Issues No. 26. IIED

The NCS focus on implementation through projects resulted in a document and a number of institutional and field projects rather than a mainstreaming approach. This left little room for building a case for investment into NCS implementation beyond projects' lives. As a result, the scope of its on-ground impacts has been limited. Recognising the limitations of the NCS owing to limited government capacity, the MTR recommended an emphasis on systems – of participation, information, investment and coordination – rather than the previous 'shopping list' of desirable projects. It suggested that projectisation of NCS activities *additional to* mainstream activities should be a lower priority.

Essentially, the NCS got the philosophy and principles rights. But it failed to carry them into a continuing process to keep sustainable development on the agenda, mainstream new policies and learn from successes and mistakes. The 'master plan' approach was thought to be adequate, but it considerably underestimated the institutional change challenges. However, one outcome of the NCS is that it has begun to develop the key integrating institutions required for sustainable development.

Provincial conservation strategies

The NCS recognised that many sustainable development integration needs and trade-offs are best addressed at more local levels and recommended detailed participatory planning at provincial and district levels. The Sarhad and Balochistan Provincial Conservation Strategy (PCS) were completed in 1995 and 1999 respectively, while that of the Northern Areas is currently being developed. Following the government's new focus on decentralisation, district conservation strategies have been developed for Chitral and Abbotabad.

All these strategies have placed significant emphasis on the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity, and have managed to influence development and natural resource use processes to some extent. The new phase of the Sarhad PCS includes development of a provincial Biodiversity Action Plan, following the recent adoption of a National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (see below). The Sarhad PCS has established thematic Roundtables and focal points in government departments as a means to organise multi-stakeholder participation, promote integration into other sectors and develop innovation and demand for the strategy.

However, these strategies have yet to produce tangible results on the ground. Since most of the existing provincial laws were enacted well before the advent of either the NCS or the BAP, they do little to help Pakistan meet its obligations under the CBD. The empowerment of local communities for participation in the management of local wildlife has also been limited.

Biodiversity policy and mainstreaming

In 2001, a National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan was approved to implement the CBD. It proposed a set of remedial and developmental strategies that would simultaneously attend to the requirements of biodiversity conservation in Pakistan. One of the main issues identified is the need to integrate biodiversity into sectoral development plans and the strengthening of institutional coordination at policy, enforcement and research levels.

The latest Ten-Year Prospective Development Plan (2001-2011) lists both deforestation and the loss of biodiversity as priority issues in its agenda for action. The majority of existing natural resource related policies and laws (eg. wildlife, fisheries and agriculture) incorporate biodiversity objectives, although they are weak in terms of both content and enforcement, and mainly emphasise the preservation of specific game animal species. In addition, biodiversity is only thinly referenced in the National Forest Policy currently under preparation.

While concern for biodiversity in policy matters has definitely improved over the last decade, challenges persist. The biggest challenge relates to the relative newness and multi-sectoral nature of biodiversity. There is a general lack of awareness of the biodiversity problem within government. The need for an integrated approach and for better coordination amongst government departments dealing with forests, fisheries, agriculture, wildlife etc., has not yet been addressed.

Progress with addressing these issues has been hampered by a lack of both technical and financial resources, and by competing priorities. The responsibility for conservation activities at federal level is assigned to the Land and Water Section of the Ministry of Environment, Local Government and Rural Development (MELGRD), which is also responsible for numerous other environmental concerns. The resulting administrative burden does not allow sufficient resources to be allocated for the implementation of biodiversity conservation strategies.

Pakistan's ability to organise available resources in order to execute knowledgeable decisions regarding conservation initiatives is severely limited. The weak coordination, dissemination and uptake of research findings relates directly to a lack of institutional capacity. The passivity of institutions such as the National Council for Conservation of Wildlife, Forest Department, Ministry of Environment, Agriculture and Fisheries, in actively promoting their agendas is a major impediment to strengthening internal communication networks. This, combined with the fact that roles and responsibilities are rarely understood by the concerned staff, limits their reliability as a source of information for external parties.

The fact that so far most attempts at biodiversity conservation in the country have been small-scale and scattered highlights the need for a coordinating body that can follow-up on the lessons learnt from the implementation of various community-level projects and incorporate them into future conservation agendas. Channels of communication between different research institutions, NGOs and the government need to be developed, and collaborative arrangements strengthened, so that recommendations can be acknowledged and duly adopted. As a first step, wildlife agendas should be carefully imparted to departmental staff so that the ability to make informed decisions can be ensured at the lowest administrative level.

As regards integration in government procedures, guidelines exist for Initial Environmental Assessment (used by the planning commission to appraise government projects) and for EIA, and biodiversity objectives are included in both. But lack of capacity within the concerned departments hampers their real application. For mega infrastructure projects where multilateral institutions are involved, detailed EIAs are conducted mostly through external consultants and they do take into account

biodiversity issues. However, in some cases their validity is questionable such as a primary study for oil and gas exploration in Kirthar National Park, conducted on behalf of Shell, which was rejected by civil society organizations.

A national Biodiversity Policy, which aims to establish biodiversity concerns as a separate issue, and at the same time remedy some of the deficiencies in the existing policy framework, is currently being formulated. Similar to the NBSAP formulation process, inputs from all levels of stakeholders should be actively sought for inclusion in order to ensure that the dissemination of new ideas and the appreciation of all issues takes place.

The delay in the adoption of the national Biodiversity Policy, approval of the new wildlife law, and establishment of the NBSAP's recommended Secretariat and technical working groups reflects the low political priority of all aspects of conservation, including biodiversity, and the prevailing approach of "growth today, environment tomorrow". One reason for this approach is the failure in capturing and demonstrating the economic returns from biodiversity. There is an urgent need to link biodiversity conservation with livelihoods security and then build biodiversity objectives into macro-economic planning and development frameworks such as the PRSP and annual development plans.

The issue of low political priority may also be due to lack of involvement of some key actors in the BAP process. For example, none of the institutional mechanisms proposed include important actors like finance managers. Nor is there any effort to inform them, as the Ministry of Environment and the Environment Section within the Planning Commission are both very weak institutions. Moreover, they tend to focus on brown issues rather than holistic environmental management.

The slow pace of progress with developing the biodiversity policy is a serious concern, and it is important that the completion of this process is given priority so that future conservation initiatives may operate within a supportive policy environment. The starting point for improvement should be the establishment of a Biodiversity Secretariat. The draft Biodiversity Policy supports the BAP's proposal to establish such a Secretariat within MELGRD, as the focal point for implementing the CBD and the BAP. Its responsibilities should include the formulation and implementation of the biodiversity policy and coordination between the relevant players and stakeholders. The Secretariat should promote linkages between different sectors affecting biodiversity, and include a Biodiversity Planning Officer to assist other government agencies, NGOs and the private sector in preparing project proposals suggested by the Plan, as well as scientific officers to provide technical support.

The coordination mechanism proposed in the BAP, and supported by the draft biodiversity policy, also includes a Federal Biodiversity Steering Committee to oversee the implementation process. The Steering Committee is to be chaired by the Minister for Environment, and composed of representatives from several government departments (covering natural resource sectors, planning and finance), provincial biodiversity steering committees, NGOs and the private sector. Most implementation measures will take place at the provincial level. Provincial steering committees will need to be established and, if possible, merged with the committees that have already

been established under the Sarhad Provincial Conservation Strategy, the Balochistan Conservation Strategy and the upcoming Northern Areas Conservation Strategy.

The BAP also proposes a national multi-disciplinary Working Group to act as a technical body to support the national and provincial steering committees, provide guidance for implementation, and review progress at periodic intervals. The Group would include technical experts from provincial departments, natural resource institutes, NGOs and academia.

Coordination between the Rio Conventions

The lack of coordination, and duplication of efforts to implement various Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEAs) is a significant problem in Pakistan. The unit on International Agreements within the Ministry of Environment acts as a clearing house for other technical departments, but coordination is not its role. The UNDP funded National Environmental Action Plan support project is currently attempting to undertake this task. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs also has a specialized unit on MEAs, and largely attends the Conference of Parties meetings, but there is little interaction between the two institutions. There are environmental cells in various sectoral departments, which have little access to information or feedback on International Agreements.

Even within the Ministry of Environment there is one department that deals with wildlife while another deals with biodiversity. Desertification is addressed by the Land and Water Section, while climate change is under the IA unit, but there was little direct communication between them when the national communication on climate change was prepared. While the different Convention implementation processes cannot be replaced with a single umbrella framework or plan, there is a need for much greater coordination between them.

NCS-2: a mechanism for biodiversity mainstreaming and coordination

The mid-term review of the NCS proposed its evolution into NCS-2 to provide an overall strategy for sustainable development which seeks to improve coordination between major sustainable development related programmes and mainstream sustainability into key development sectors, with the involvement of all stakeholders²¹. Biodiversity conservation would be a major component of NCS-2.

The proposed role of NCS-2 with respect to coordination and mainstreaming is to:

- provide umbrella principles and a coordination system for policies, plans and programmes such as the Social Action Plan, PRSP, future environmental action plans and the Biodiversity Action Plan;
- provide continued guidance for "mainstreaming" sustainable development in provincial and sectoral policies, through policies, principles, criteria, indicators and monitoring; and

²¹ Maheen Zerha and Stephen Bass, in Dalal-Clayton D.B., Swiderska, K. and Bass S. (eds) (2002) *Stakeholder Dialogues on Sustainable Development Strategies. Lessons Opportunities and Developing Country Case Studies*. Environmental Planning Issues No. 26. IIED

- promote SD within macro policy concerns, notably structural adjustment loans, poverty reduction, national environment and security issues.

It is envisaged that NCS-2 will be *an integrated system of strategic functions for sustainable development governance*. This system should foster an adaptive approach, incorporating functions that have been limited so far: analysis, planning, experiment, coordination, communication, mainstream activities, monitoring, learning and review. These functions need not be strictly sequential, beginning with a ‘planning phase’ and proceeding to an ‘implementation phase’, as with the NCS. Nor should they be entirely ‘top-down’, starting in the national capital and gradually moving into the provinces. Instead, many of the functions will be continuous, or happen regularly, e.g. yearly debate and monitoring. They will provide better communication between federal and provincial bodies, and between sectors and initiatives. As such, NCS-2 would not ‘plan’ everything, but would largely be a system to *guide* change—identifying, bringing together, and supporting the most promising ways forward²².

The transition to NCS-2 presents an excellent opportunity for the switch to a demand-driven approach, linked to the national focus on devolution. However, the NCS-2 process has not got off the ground yet due to the change in the leadership at the Ministry of Environment. The present Minister has in principle agreed to initiate the process, but this is unlikely to happen before the new government is in place.

2. South Africa²³

The Biodiversity White Paper

In response to the CBD, South Africa adopted a comprehensive and widely accepted national policy on biodiversity, the Biodiversity White Paper in 1997. The policy was developed through a broad based consultative process which sought to ensure that it reflected the interests of all South Africans. A Reference Group established to guide the drafting process enabled a range of actors to participate directly in decision-making. It comprised representatives from parliament, national and provincial government departments, parastatals and civil society (including socially-oriented NGOs).²⁴

The Biodiversity White Paper strongly endorses the need for biodiversity to be considered at all levels of planning and decision-making. It identifies eight priority actions requiring urgent attention, including:

- to develop “an action plan through which detailed implementation strategies can be developed”; and
- to “obtain a political commitment from all relevant ministers and senior provincial representatives towards achieving the objectives of the policy (such as through approved sectoral plans and budgets)”.

²² OECD and UNDP.(2002). *Sustainable Development Strategies: A Resource Book*.

²³ Much of this section is based on: Wynberg R. (2002). *A decade of biodiversity conservation and use in South Africa: tracking progress from the Rio Earth Summit to the Johannesburg World Summit on Sustainable Development*. South African Journal of Science 98.

²⁴ Wynberg R. and Swiderska K (2001): *South Africa’s Experience in Developing a Policy on Biodiversity and Access to Genetic Resources*. Participation in ABS Policy. Case Study No 1. IIED.

The consultative process, and in particular, active stakeholder involvement through the reference group, generated a sense of ownership and commitment to put the strategy into action amongst many participants. However, overall, progress with implementing the biodiversity policy has been very slow. Although some improvements have been made, few of the priorities for implementation, including the development of an action plan with specific activities, timeframes and budgets, have received adequate attention. This is mainly due to a lack of political commitment, leadership, institutional capacity and funding. Continued meetings of the reference group and its evolution into a more formal structure could have enabled the transition to implementation to happen in a more concerted manner. Instead, no further meetings took place, and the momentum for implementation generated by the process dwindled. According to one provincial official, “DEAT [Department of Environmental Affairs and Tourism] went into a different mode with different priorities immediately after the policy was produced”.

A recent review shows that biodiversity in South Africa is poorer than ten years ago, despite the expansion of protected areas, and a decline in cultivation and grazing areas. Serious constraints preclude more effective management of the country's biodiversity. These include the inadequate integration of biodiversity considerations into sectoral and land-use plans, insufficient expertise and funding, legal fragmentation, and weak political commitment. The intention is, however, to develop a biodiversity action plan and adopt a Biodiversity Act in the near future.

Integrating biodiversity in development policy and planning

Mainstreaming biodiversity concerns in policy and planning will require clear principles and criteria to balance biodiversity loss in the long term against socio-economic gains in the short and medium term, including a system whereby ‘limits of acceptable change’ are adopted and rigidly implemented. Targets for representation of biodiversity need to be set and applied, on both state and privately-held land. Strong collaboration between all spheres of government will also be required.

The management of biodiversity requires planning at strategic level, through integration into sectoral policies and programmes; at the physical or spatial planning level; and at the species or habitat-specific level. At the strategic level, the requirement of Natural Environment Management Act (NEMA) for national departments and provinces to prepare Environmental Implementation Plans (EIPs) and Environmental Management Plans (EMPs), is an important tool to assist in integrating environmental objectives in government activities. Although the intention is to include biodiversity in such plans, and so enable its mainstreaming into decision-making, this has not yet occurred in practice. As a result, biodiversity considerations remain marginalized and narrow at strategic planning level, and are neglected within existing plans (eg. the Environment Management and Implementation Plan of the Department of Land Affairs, and Department of Water Affairs and Forestry).

Some success has been achieved at the physical planning level, most notably through the adoption of a bioregional approach, such as the Cape Action Plan for the Environment. However, in general, environmental assessment is hampered by the lack of plans containing clear biodiversity priorities that are mapped and accessible. The spatial development initiatives (SDIs) and integrated development plans (IDPs)

required of municipalities offer important opportunities to rectify this situation. Incorporating a conservation plan within IDPs and SDIs would provide a valuable tool for planning at local level, and making trade-offs between environment and development objectives.

While there has been significant progress in incorporating sustainable development principles in policies and laws relevant to spatial and development planning at local level, there is still little practical evidence of their integration in IDPs. Environment is still being treated as a separate issue, and the structuring of government departments along sectoral lines, with planning, economic development and environment handled separately, reinforces this sectoral approach. Local authorities are still struggling with the concept of integration and sustainability, and will need time, experience and evidence of benefits before they are willing to adopt sustainability principles in development planning²⁵.

Integral to South Africa's spatial planning system has been the concept of zoning land for a particular use. The current system of land use zoning is a major threat to safeguarding environmental heritage as it confers rights to property owners, but many historical zonings were granted without consideration of environmental or biodiversity concerns. Removal of these zoning rights can only be achieved through compensation and negotiation. Legal mechanisms such as EIA may be effective in shaping the nature of development in the case of a rezoning application, but there are currently limited mechanisms available to prevent unsustainable development.

Planning at the species or habitat specific level is most advanced, with several achievements on record, eg. for specific threatened species. Such plans are essential, but need to be developed more proactively and holistically, and complemented by broader strategic and spatial plans. Biodiversity studies in EIAs, for example, often focus on Red Data Book, charismatic or commercially important species. The functional component of biodiversity is largely neglected.

Biodiversity objectives also need strengthening at community development level. Millions of rural South Africans depend on biological resources for daily survival (eg. wild foods and medicinal plants) and for income generation. About 19 500 tons of medicinal plants are traded each year, with a trade value of R270 million. The sustainable use of biodiversity has been affected by the extent to which the government undervalues wild resources and their role in subsidising basic services such as healthcare, and the lack of action to stem over-harvesting and the decline in availability of resources. There is a need to provide support for the sustainable use of wild resources, including cultivation of harvested resources, and to enhance recognition of the value of wild resources in land reform and rural development.

South Africa is also at the hub of illegal and legal wildlife trade in the region, yet lacks capacity, budget and muscle for effective management, and is constrained by an inefficient laws. Community based conservation has so far been viewed mainly in the context of protected areas. The extension of co-management throughout rural areas is urgently needed, for which land rights must be secure. Unless rural people can control

²⁵ Sowman M. and Wynberg R. (May 2002). *Safeguarding South Africa's Environmental Wealth*. Draft report prepared for UNDP's Third Human Development Report for South Africa.

access to an area, they cannot conserve its biodiversity or raise money from entry fees.

3. India

Existing integration of biodiversity in policy and planning

Development in India has undervalued biodiversity and the benefits it provides to the country's economy, society and culture. The role of biodiversity in the lives and livelihoods of a large section of the population has been neglected. While the 1980s saw some improvement, the 1990s brought enhanced pressures on biodiversity as a result of new economic policies promoting globalisation, export-driven growth, elite consumerism and easing of licensing restriction on industrial production²⁶.

Development plans and programmes at both national and state levels have not paid adequate attention to the critical functions of biodiversity in a range of sectors (eg. forestry, fisheries, agriculture, industry, infrastructure, welfare, health and education). Though increasingly sensitive to environmental concerns, India's planning process has still not fully integrated concerns relating to biodiversity and ecological security.

There has been some progress in integrating environment and biodiversity objectives in key sectors of the 9th Five-Year Development Plan, but integration remains weak. The recent draft Agricultural Policy, for example, begins to recognise the need for sustainability, but still emphasises contradictory approaches²⁷. The 10th Five Year Plan (2002-2007), which is currently being developed, also has inadequate integration of environmental concerns, including biodiversity and biodiversity-based livelihoods, across all sectors (eg. infrastructure and agriculture). The overall thrust towards economic growth, in particular references to liberalising the economy, is not critically examined from the point of view of environment, or the livelihoods of people dependent on natural resources²⁸.

While there are several examples of the impacts of neglecting biodiversity in national planning processes, further research is needed to systematically quantify the values of biodiversity to the economy and society, and the impacts of various sectors on biodiversity. Where information exists, it often lacks consolidation and does not reach decision-makers.

In all key sectors, the impact of macro-economic policies on biodiversity is the least understood. Many current measures, such as subsidies for chemicals in agriculture, tax incentives for industries in "marginal" areas (which are usually biodiversity rich), and rapid clearances for certain industries, are insensitive to biodiversity concerns. They also have an acutely negative impact on the livelihood security of small farmers, fisherfolk, and forest-dwellers, transferring enormous, but unaccounted costs on them.

²⁶ Bansuri Taneja and Ashish Kothari in *Biodiversity Planning in Asia*. (2002). Edited by Jeremy Carew-Reid, IUCN.

²⁷ Ministry of Environment and Forests and Kalpavriksh (2001). *Integrating Biodiversity into Sectoral Planning: A Note for Executing Agencies*. Prepared for the NBSAP, India.

²⁸ Ashish Kothari (2001). *The 10th Five-Year Plan: Are Environment, Food Security and People's Livelihood Security Adequately Integrated?*. Technical and Policy Core Group, NBSAP India.

Even wildlife and conservation policies are generating acute conflicts with communities traditionally dependent on protected areas, as there is no accounting of the costs they bear for the benefit of distant interest groups. On the other hand, incentives for non-conventional or renewable energy sources are probably helping to conserve biodiversity.

The National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan

The cross-sectoral integration of biodiversity objectives in development strategies and plans is a key objective of the process to develop India's NBSAP, which began in early 2000 and is nearing completion. The national Steering Committee, which provides overall guidance to the process, consists of representatives from a number of ministerial departments (Health, Agriculture, Science and Technology, Social Justice and Empowerment, Ocean Development), the Planning Commission, and NGOs. The technical execution of the NBSAP has been given out to the NGO Kalpavriksh.

National policy processes in the past have usually been top-down and limited to a few experts and consultants. As a result, they have often remained on paper. For the NBSAP, the process of preparing the plan is considered to be as important as the product. It has been highly participatory and decentralised, involving the formulation of state, sub-state, thematic and inter-regional plans. The various action plans will be synthesised to form the NBSAP.

Each action plan has been formulated by a nodal agency or working group, together with multi-stakeholder committees. State agencies were advised to involve all sectors, provided with clear guidelines on who should be represented on the committees and working groups, and advised to work with state Planning Boards as a means to meaningfully involve non-environment departments.

Soliciting inputs through public meetings, workshops and the media, and capacity building to facilitate participation, are key steps in the guidelines for plan preparation. To maximise the engagement of local people that are dependent on biodiversity, nodal agencies have been advised to use local languages as far as possible, to carry out a widespread process to identify key local actors, and engage grassroots groups. Recognising the likelihood of divergent interests emerging, the NBSAP process is designed to maximise dialogue, and requires differences which cannot be resolved in the process to be clearly stated in the action plans.²⁹

In some cases, the process has secured strong support from departments other than environment, but it has often been weighted towards government and scientific experts. Public hearings and meetings held at sub-state sites have involved a wide range of local actors. However, engaging all sections of society is a new concept for many of the executing agencies, and in some cases, 'participation' may take the form of information gathering rather than engagement in developing options. While public hearings might achieve some sympathy for the idea of consultation, the mechanisms to achieve it may not be well understood.

²⁹ Bansuri Taneja and Ashish Kothari in *Biodiversity Planning in Asia*. (2002). Edited by Jeremy Carew-Reid, IUCN Sri Lanka.

Lessons from past experience with biodiversity planning *processes*, notably the Macro-level biodiversity strategy, have provided useful insights for the NBSAP process, and it is envisaged that the NBSAP process will also be documented.

Integrating biodiversity in national and state planning

Members of the Technical and Policy Core Group (TPCG) of the NBSAP have conducted initial reviews of biodiversity integration in sectoral policies and programmes, while the Thematic Working Group on Laws, Policies, Institutions and Planning is also mandated to examine this issue. In addition, national environment policy has been reviewed to assess coverage of biodiversity and identify gaps.

However, it is important that the NBSAP process is able to link into the official process of preparing the new 10th 5-Year Plan at both central and state levels. The NBSAP has initiated coordination with the Planning Commission, and has suggested the establishment of a Working Group on Integrating Biodiversity into the 10th 5-Year Plan, which could also monitor progress towards an integrated approach in the implementation of the Plan. Although this suggestion was not accepted in relation to the formulation of the 10th 5-year plan, it is being considered as part of NBSAP's implementation.

The Joint Secretary in the Ministry of Environment and Forests, who is National Director of the NBSAP, has stressed to state level agencies that sectoral integration of biodiversity is important. Guidelines for executing agencies identify 'assessment of all relevant sectoral plans and policies' as a key activity in the preparation of action plans. Executing agencies have been advised to set up a working group or some other systematic process for this purpose.

A guidance Note for Executing Agencies has been prepared on Integrating Biodiversity into Sectoral Planning³⁰, which stresses the need to assess sectoral plans and programmes systematically to make them more sensitive to biodiversity and livelihoods concerns. The Note explains the critical role of biodiversity in maintaining ecological functions (eg. water, soil, crop pollination, food production), sustaining the livelihoods of several hundred million people (eg. farmers, forest-dwellers, fisher-folk), providing healthcare and providing genetic resources for improving agriculture and fishery production. It stresses the particular importance of biodiversity for under-privileged people, who are highly dependent on biodiversity.

The Note also provides some estimates of the economic value of biodiversity: "Though no consolidated figures exist, conservative estimates put the global loss of forest, fisheries, and agricultural productivity caused by biodiversity destruction to tens of billions of dollars. This does not even take into account the loss of critical ecosystem values (especially hydrological), and the social, cultural and non-quantifiable economic losses, which could be even greater than the quantified ones. For India, only piecemeal estimates are available: for instance, that forest degradation causes the loss of about Rs. 57 billion worth of loss in wood produce alone (Tata Energy Research Institute, 1998)."

³⁰ Ministry of Environment and Forests and Kalpavriksh (2001). *Integrating Biodiversity into Sectoral Planning: A Note for Executing Agencies*. Prepared for the NBSAP, India.

Examples of biodiversity integration in key sectors are provided, which can be built on to integrate biodiversity in national and state level planning processes (see Box 4).

Box 4. Examples of Integrated Biodiversity, Livelihoods and Development Initiatives

There are a growing number of initiatives which successfully incorporate biodiversity concerns in key development sectors:

In **agriculture**, many farmers are enhancing biodiversity while increasing productivity and employment potential, through organic farming systems that also enhance the availability of 'wild' foods. In Andhra Pradesh, dalit women have demonstrated that biologically diverse farming, linked to a people-centred Public Distribution System, can considerably enhance the livelihoods, employment and nutrition of the poorest people.

In **health**, a number of projects are combining conservation of medicinal species with enhanced livelihood security of families using such species. The Foundation for Revitalisation of Local Health Traditions, for example, has established Medicinal Plant Conservation Areas in various parts of India, linked to the knowledge, traditions and livelihoods of village health practitioners. Several official agencies are also focusing on medicinal plant based livelihoods and value-addition in the herbal drug sector.

In **water** development, experiments over a couple of decades in diverse agro-climatic conditions are showing that water harvesting with catchment protection can enhance the welfare of rural communities while regenerating biological diversity. In Alwar district of Rajasthan, for instance, hundreds of villages have revived their water sources through decentralised structures, regenerated catchment forests, and formed joint bodies for planning and implementation of land, water, forests and agriculture programmes.

In **forestry**, community and Joint Forest Management initiatives are combining livelihood development with forest conservation. Studies in the JFM network show that where the objectives shift from single species plantation timber production to non-timber forest produce (NTFP) from diverse forest, the livelihood benefits to local communities are greater. For this reason, a recent circular of the central government to states urges a shift away from timber to NTFP and biodiversity based JFM strategies.

In **tourism**, some projects are showing that healthy tourism can enhance biodiversity conservation and the livelihood security of local people. For instance in Sikkim, tourism managed by the residents of the Rathong Chu and Khangchendzonga regions has moved towards ecological sensitivity and providing sustained benefits to local people.

In **industry**, several experiments with small-scale units using natural dyes, medicinal plants and NTFPs are demonstrating that sustainable use is possible and desirable. In Karnataka, the Vivekananda Girijan Kalyana Kendra has worked with tribal cooperatives to sustainably harvest forest products and process them on site to make saleable products. Ecological monitoring has ensured some degree of sustainability, and is leading to sensitivity to biodiversity conservation objectives.

In **energy and infrastructure**, greater stress on environmental impact assessment, siting procedures, and public hearing processes, can lead the development of roads, railways, power stations etc. towards greater ecological sensitivity.

Source: Ministry of Environment and Forests and Kalpavriksh (2001). *Integrating Biodiversity into Sectoral Planning: A Note for Executing Agencies*. Prepared for the NBSAP, India

The Guidance Note proposes that measures for inter-sectoral integration should be identified using the following steps:

1. Assessment of the current weaknesses in integrating biodiversity and related livelihoods concerns into each economic and social sector.
2. Identification of the major impacts of such weaknesses on biodiversity (and related livelihoods).
3. Identification of existing measures being taken to address these weaknesses.
4. Identification of actions required, including strengthening of existing measures, and integration in sectoral budgets.

The Note also provides the checklist which is being used by the national NBSAP working group for preliminary assessment of biodiversity integration in sectoral policies and programmes. The checklist addresses three key questions:

- What major changes in the *content* and the *process* of the sectoral policy and programmes are needed to make them more conducive to biodiversity concerns?
- What is needed to make the policy facilitate the two core objectives of the NBSAP: ecological security of the country, and livelihood security of those most dependent on biological resources?
- What major institutional structures and policy/legal changes would be needed to make this happen?

The *process* analysis aims to establish whether the process of formulating sectoral policies and programmes is consultative and inclusive of all relevant sectors of society, whether there are gaps that the NBSAP process can address, and whether policies and programmes have become more or less conducive to biodiversity issues over time.

The MoEF has requested the Planning Commission, which oversees budget allocations from central to state government, to ensure that NBSAP elements form part of the budgets presented by states for the next five-year plan. Making this a condition of future funding could go a long way in ensuring that 10th five year plans of states integrate biodiversity concerns. Similarly, the State Planning Boards could require integration of biodiversity concerns in district development plans as a condition for approval. At the project level, EIA procedures could be changed to incorporate biodiversity issues more comprehensively and used more stringently as a tool to integrate biodiversity in key sectors.

Integrating Biodiversity into District Planning³¹

Following amendment of the Constitution, the district has become the first level of decentralization, ultimately leading to village Panchayats as the prime agents for decentralized planning. The state of Madhya Pradesh has enacted legislation to formalise district level planning and has decided to fully operationalise the process. District Planning Committees are required to develop inter-sectoral district plans, for which 30% of the state budget has been ear-marked in the next financial year. Early experience in Madhya Pradesh provides an indication of how biodiversity concerns could be mainstreamed at district level in this and other States.

³¹ This section is based on a. Concept Note prepared for the NBSAP, India: Ministry of Environment and Forests and Kalpavriksh . (2001). *Integrating Biodiversity Concerns into District Planning*.

District Planning Committees are to have inter-sectoral representation, and one of their key roles is to ensure that environmental concerns are addressed. The DPC would need to set up a Working Group to develop a District Biodiversity Resource Book which articulates collective biodiversity concerns. The composition of the working group should be such that it generates ownership amongst different sectors. The working group would need to clearly convey to all concerned that a focus on biodiversity is linked to the livelihood security of thousands of rural and tribal people and the ecological security of the area they inhabit, and raise awareness of the importance of biodiversity as part of the resource book process.

The resource book should aim to map the biodiversity in the district, assess its value, including the range of services and benefits it provides, and identify priority areas/species. The programmes of various sectors in the draft district development plan and their impact on biodiversity should be critically assessed. The strategies and actions required to plug the gaps will have to be identified and an action plan suggested. For instance, the emphasis of the Agriculture Department on high input intensive farming and high yielding cash crops could seriously undermine crop diversity in areas that still support rich agro-biodiversity. In such areas, organic farming could be promoted, using the most promising cultivars of traditional crops. Sectoral plans and programmes of Municipalities, NGOs and companies should also be reviewed against the priorities of the district biodiversity resource book.

In order to ensure that the suggested actions are taken up by the DPC, capacity building will be required for DPCs and village institutions (eg. Panchayats and Gram Sabhas), so that they are able to make decisions relating to biodiversity. The necessary skills could be integrated into existing capacity building programmes.

Implementation of the NBSAP

Nodal agencies have been advised to think about implementation issues from the start of the process, and to develop action plans that are as concrete as possible, with activities and responsibilities defined, budgeted and prioritised so that implementation can start immediately. The plans are meant to incorporate activities by civil society and the private sector, as well as government agencies, so that implementation does not rely only on government agencies.

For the biodiversity action plans to be implemented, it will be critical to ensure that they are accepted in state and national plans and budgets. The overall institutional mechanism for NBSAP implementation could focus on Biodiversity Boards at local, state and national level, as proposed in the Biodiversity Bill. The NBSAP could specify the need for cross-sectoral representation on such boards. Efforts will be made to maintain the network of people who participated in the exercise, so that advocacy for implementation can take place.³²

³² This section is largely based on: Bansuri Taneja and Ashish Kothari in *Biodiversity Planning in Asia*. (2002). Edited by Jeremy Carew-Reid, IUCN

4. Ghana

National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan

Ghana's National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan was prepared in fulfillment of requirements under both the Ghana Vision-2020³³ Programme of Action for the First Medium-Term Development Plan (1997-2000) and the Biodiversity Convention. The objectives of Ghana's NBS with respect to mainstreaming biodiversity into national development and sectoral policy are:

- to ensure integrated development; and
- to ensure consistency between the NBS and the outputs of other environmental development frameworks, such as the National Environmental Action Plan.

Given the immense value of biodiversity resources to local people, a key objective of the NBS is "to optimize utilization of the components of biological diversity for sustainable socio-economic benefits to ensure long-term food, shelter and health security."

Ghana-Vision 2020 included some consideration of biodiversity concerns under the broad rubric of improving environmental management. Biodiversity was covered twice in the Programme of Action (1997-2000):

- (i) as an objective under the rural development thematic area: "pursue a policy of conservation of the natural environment and its biodiversity"; and
- (ii) as an activity under the natural resource management objective of the infrastructure development programme: "prepare a national biodiversity strategy and action plan for the conservation and sustainable management of the country".

In practice, the impact of integrating biodiversity in Ghana's Vision-2020 has been limited, largely because the NBSAP has only been weakly operationalized, and because the preparation of the Second Medium-Term Development Plan (2001-2005) was terminated upon a change of government last year.

The NBSAP is to be implemented through the National Biodiversity Committee, comprising several institutions whose mandates relate to biodiversity management. These include the Ministry for Food and Agriculture, Ministry of Lands and Forestry, the Environmental Protection Agency, Department of Parks, the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research, relevant Commissions (on Forestry, Fisheries, Water, and Mining), and representatives of NGOs and Community-Based Organizations (CBOs).

The Committee is hosted by the Ministry of Environment and Science (MES) which serves as the focal point for the CBD. The various sectoral ministries are responsible for mainstreaming NBS into their plans and programmes and implementing them in conjunction with District Assemblies. The National Development Planning Commission (NDPC) is responsible for coordinating all plans and strategies into national development strategy frameworks and processes. The existence of various environmental strategic frameworks, such as the National Environmental Action Plan

³³ The National Development Policy Framework was renamed Ghana Vision-2020 in 1995

(NEAP) and the Natural Resource Management Plan also creates opportunities for integrating the NBS in national planning.

However, the overall institutional arrangement is not working effectively due to, among other factors, ineffective coordination among public agencies, and weak operationalization of the NBS. The integration of biodiversity objectives is constrained by staggered development of individual strategy documents; weak integrative institutional arrangements and ineffective coordination and integration of sectoral/thematic strategy processes.

NBS concerns were taken into account to some extent in sectoral plans and initiatives in the primary sectors of agriculture, forestry, and the extractive industries, often with respect to sectoral policy and strategy objectives related to sustainable management. The general difficulty has been in implementing the strategies and enforcing the regulations to achieve strategic objectives. Integration in practice has not been effective as sectoral plan formulation and implementation continues.

Nonetheless, the concept and practice of biodiversity conservation as an integral part of sustainable natural resource management is becoming more popular within the general population, particularly in rural areas, albeit slowly. For example, the trend in wetland biodiversity degradation in locations participating in the Coastal Wetlands Management Project is being progressively reversed.

In the mining sector, increasing compliance with provisions for land regeneration and the prohibition of surface mining in forest reserves hold potential for gradually reducing biodiversity loss. The Ministry of Food and Agriculture is promoting sustainable agriculture through various land management projects and the Agriculture Services Investment Project. In forestry, some degree of conservation is being practiced through emphasis on logging of lesser known tree species to lessen the thinning of more conventional species.

Biodiversity objectives have also been incorporated into government procedures. For example, the District Assembly Five-Year Development Planning Guidelines issued by the NDPC explicitly include objectives and requests for activities in land conservation and environmental protection. Biodiversity has, however, only been weakly integrated in district-level planning, and programme activities of District Assemblies have not focused on the specifics of biodiversity management per se. Nevertheless, the decentralization process provides an opportunity to integrate biodiversity planning at the local level.

Regarding the built environment, zoning and building control regulations prohibit development in designated areas such as water-courses, wetlands, hillsides, forest reserves and other protected areas. The 1999 Environmental Assessment Regulations of the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), mandate that where EIA is required, the environmental statement should include: direct ecological changes resulting from pollutants, alteration in ecological processes and destruction of existing habitats.

The EPA now has more authority to enforce compliance with its regulations. To the extent that it does so, the incorporation of biodiversity objectives in government procedures has been a useful tool. However, since the majority of human activities,

particularly in the informal sector and rural areas do not require EPA permits, the impact of government regulations on biodiversity management is low.

Under the umbrella project of the NEAP, the practice of involving local people in all aspects of project design and implementation has come to the fore. Similarly, traditional resource management practices have been integrated in some projects. For example, based on the principle of fair and equitable sharing of benefits from the use and conservation of biological diversity among all stakeholders, royalties are paid to traditional leaders and land-owners for the use of the biodiversity resources of their lands.

The collaboration of public agencies, civil society and the private sector in implementing the NBS occurs on ad-hoc basis. NGOs and CBOs working on biodiversity management carry out their programmes with little coordination or support from public agencies at central level. At local level, collaboration is more pronounced – for example some mining companies contract biodiversity rehabilitation works to qualified NGOs. Overall, however, government-civil society-private sector partnerships in NBS implementation are only now emerging. Under the Coastal Wetlands Management Project, for example, the Panbros Salt Company has reserved sites for use by birds, while Standard Chartered Bank and the Coca-Cola Company are supporting various aspects of the project.

The NBS to date looks like a one-off document, rather than a living process, although there are provisions for monitoring, reviewing and updating the strategy. The National Biodiversity Committee reviews the status of biodiversity development in Ghana for reporting to the Conference of Parties to the CBD while the NBS is to be reviewed after five years.

Improving coordination and mainstreaming

The effectiveness of the institutional mechanism for integrating biodiversity in sectoral policy and planning can be improved by:

- providing adequate human and financial resources to the relevant public agencies to implement the NBS;
- establishing effective collaboration and networking among biodiversity policy institutions and implementors;
- developing the overall planning and coordinating capacity of the NDPC;
- enhancing the planning and implementation capabilities of decentralized structures, particularly the District Assemblies.

Securing the necessary political commitment in Ghana for mainstreaming biodiversity objectives would involve, among others:

- increasing environmental education for government agencies, including parliament and the judiciary;
- increasing awareness of the economic and livelihoods value of national biodiversity resources through information and education programmes;
- increasing data and information availability on environmental degradation and biodiversity loss to the general public;
- strong grassroots and civil society advocacy and involvement in formulating, implementing, monitoring and reviewing biodiversity initiatives;

- integrating biodiversity in development programmes that require national and local leadership commitment; and
- entrenching biodiversity conservation principles in the national constitution.

Given the relationship between the environment and other pillars of sustainable development, it would be more effective and efficient to mainstream biodiversity concerns under a wider environmental management umbrella in a National Sustainable Development Strategy process. However, the unique characteristics of biodiversity management should not be lost in this mainstreaming exercise. Indeed, the NBS can be a major process by itself and constitute a module of the overall NSDS process.

In the case of Ghana, establishing a functioning institutional system for sustainable development which achieves biodiversity coordination and mainstreaming will require effective:

- NDPC performance of coordination and planning functions;
- decentralization processes;
- sectoral agency performance in implementing the NBS;
- public-private-civil society partnerships;
- integration of NBS and other biodiversity-related protocols and frameworks;
- integration of biodiversity with broader environmental management issues;
- institutionalization of the NSSD process.

5. Burkina Faso

The National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan

In 2000, Burkina Faso adopted a National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan, which identifies strategic objectives in relation to the CBD's objectives. A technical committee to drive and coordinate implementation has been established under the aegis of the Permanent Secretariat of the National Council for Environmental Management (SP/CONGESE), which is linked to the Ministry for Environment and Water.

One of the greatest concerns of the planning process initiated under the CBD is achieving coherence between the global objectives of the strategy and the specific objectives of sectoral strategies and plans. The strategy establishes the current status of different sectors (agriculture, forestry, wildlife management, water, industry etc) and their impact on biodiversity, and identifies specific or sectoral options. It seeks to provide a reference framework for sustainable development, which will only be possible if certain principles are respected: the integration of conservation with the needs of the people; and the integration of sustainable natural resource management in development plans, programmes and projects³⁴.

Although the strategy does not explicitly propose mechanisms to link it with other development and environment related processes, it identifies certain issues which affect all the institutions involved in the development of policies for the rural sector.

³⁴ Burkina Faso's NBSAP can be found on: www.biodiv.org

In this regard, the analysis of the main challenges for the future emphasises the need to improve inter-sectoral coordination and the functioning of planning frameworks, and to promote the development of land use plans in order to provide a reference framework for sectoral interventions.

The biodiversity strategy is, however, weakly integrated with the overall framework of national economic policy, which gives it very relative importance in national planning. Compared with the process to develop the National Action Plan to Combat Desertification, the strategy for biodiversity management lacks visibility, and its trans-sectoral character is not recognized in practice by other ministerial departments. Similarly, the biodiversity strategy is not taken into account in the Poverty Reduction Strategy (PRSP), the cornerstone of all current development policies in Burkina Faso. The Poverty Reduction Strategy, which aims to cover all sectors, has so far shown limited results in the area of coordination and strengthening inter-sectoral coherence.

Analysis of the general principles of the biodiversity strategy and other planning frameworks (eg. the National Desertification Action Plan, National Environment Action Plan, strategy for the sanitation sub-sector, agriculture adjustment programme, land use planning etc.) does not reveal major inconsistencies. This is because the studies and reflections relating to other planning frameworks were used to develop the biodiversity strategy. The biodiversity strategy sought to take into account certain lessons of the Desertification Action Plan (DAP), notably the evaluations of natural resource management projects and recommendations for decentralized interventions. However, the different planning frameworks generally only mention the need for inter-sectoral coherence, without providing any clear indication of the means to achieve it. Nor do they identify areas where their objectives are mutually supportive, along which inter-sectoral coherence could be built.

The biodiversity strategy recognizes that, given its multi-sectoral character, its application relies on all parties involved in economic and social development, and requires a close and permanent collaboration between:

- the State, its sectoral ministries, central and decentralized structures;
- civil society (peasant associations, producers, NGOs, customary authorities);
- funding agencies.

The biodiversity strategy proposes institutional structures for implementation at regional, provincial, departmental and village levels. At each level, it recommends maximum use of existing structures (eg. regional committees for the DAP, departmental committees for land management, village committees for 'gestion des terroirs'). These structures are essentially coherent with the institutional arrangements advocated in the framework of decentralization.

The NBSAP development process had a decentralized component, which made use of committees established for implementing the DAP at regional, provincial, departmental and village level. Without doubting their importance, one can question the functioning of these coordination structures into which the process did not succeed in infusing a real dynamism.

In the different regions, planning groups consisting of 3-4 experts from decentralized technical services (environment, water and forests, animal resources, and economics

and planning) collected data and organized workshops. Civil society organizations active at local level participated in meetings to present the results of research and define regional plans.

This approach to stakeholder engagement was not entirely satisfactory. It has therefore been recommended that SP/CONAGESE should improve the communication mechanisms between the implementation committee and public institutions which remain weakly informed about the process. Similarly, SP/CONAGESE has been invited to establish effective mechanisms to engage different civil society actors in the implementation of the strategy. This would enable the transition from periodic consultations when seminars are held to permanent collaboration.

The biodiversity strategy highlights the need to take into account local knowledge and practices for the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity, and to reinforce and extend traditional conservation practices such as customary rules concerning sacred woods, seas and animals. Local knowledge touches on ecological, socio-economic and cultural conditions at the same time. Taking local knowledge into account conforms with the necessity of peoples' participation. Conversely, the recognition of local people as full participants implies that knowledge developed to adapt to their environment and sustain their socio-economic systems is taken into account. This knowledge can be an important source of innovation. However, traditional techniques and strategies alone will not be enough to address problems of biodiversity use, and needs to be reinforced with contemporary science and techniques.

Without reliable data, it is difficult to know the extent to which concerns relating to biodiversity management have been taken into account in current interventions. Many natural resource management activities have been undertaken during the last 25 years, variously labeled as land management, protected area management, poverty reduction, rural development etc. While in theory mechanisms exist for learning from these experiences, assessment is constrained by various difficulties (lack of reliable data etc) and the information generated does not allow an assessment of the coherence of programmes and projects underway with the orientations of the biodiversity strategy.

The biodiversity strategy's system for monitoring and evaluation includes continuous evaluation which allow intervention priorities and approaches to be readjusted to ensure coherence; external evaluation; and self-evaluation at the different levels by those involved in the management of activities. The emphasis on maximizing use of existing structures at different levels opens some interesting perspectives concerning the operationalisation of the system.

However, there is a lack of in-depth reflection on the specific objectives of the M & E system, the kinds of indicators needed, the geographic levels to be taken into account, and cost effective ways to collect information. Another important issue which has not been carefully examined concerns the modalities to allow local communities to use the results of monitoring and evaluation – and the extent to which this information will enable them to engage with decision-makers in a dialogue about the impacts of biodiversity policies and programmes. It is too early to assess the monitoring and evaluation system as the NBSAP has not yet been executed.

Improving institutional coordination mechanisms

Implementation of the biodiversity strategy will require above all the creation of harmonized approaches and synergistic activities which ensure that the strategy is adopted by the target groups and highlight methodological contradictions. This includes the harmonization of policies, plans and programmes for environmental management, as well as those for environment and development.

Analysis of experience in Burkina Faso shows a weak effectiveness of mechanisms for inter-sectoral coordination established under each planning process. These mechanisms do not have the necessary political authority to negotiate with different public institutions and ensure that planning frameworks are translated into their sectoral policies. In general, the capacity of coordination structures to promote an intersectoral dynamic is hampered by:

- institutional positioning and status;
- the tendency to assume responsibility for both the development and implementation of planning processes; and
- weak institutional and technical capacity.

The lack of effective leadership of the state means that the Ministry of Economy and Finance, which is responsible for aid coordination and development planning, does not manage to assume these tasks satisfactorily. The department does not have sufficient political authority and weight to effectively promote coordination of aid and interventions of other ministerial departments. Even internally, coordination and synergy between different services is sometimes problematic.

The processes initiated in different sectors, particularly agriculture, environment and decentralization, offer an opportunity to enhance coherence between intervention strategies at local level by promoting dialogue on the guiding principles which orient the interventions (financing systems, modalities etc).

The Policy on Decentralised Rural Development (Working Document by the inter-ministerial technical committee, August 2000), aims, amongst other things, to put in place mechanisms to improve inter-sectoral coordination and concerted action at all levels. The Policy seeks to provide a framework which brings together different development programmes and projects to improve the use of resources and the effectiveness of interventions for poverty reduction. It has four basic objectives:

- to clarify the orientations of rural development policy and strategies;
- to establish a reference framework for the conception, implementation, coordination, monitoring and evaluation of rural projects and programmes;
- to harmonise intervention approaches at national and local levels by promoting convergence around guiding principles;
- to establish institutional mechanisms to improve inter-sectoral coordination, and ensure monitoring and evaluation of decentralized rural activities.

The proposed institutional coordination mechanisms for rural development are:

1. Village (or inter-village) land use committees, responsible for developing local development plans.
2. Provincial Technical Coordination Committees composed of state, NGO, civil society and village representatives, responsible for ensuring coherence and

complementarity of interventions, identifying investment priorities, and project monitoring and evaluation.

3. A National Committee of Rural Development Partners, to enable periodic meetings of the state, financial and technical partners, representatives of local communities and civil society. The Committee will address problems associated with harmonizing approaches, and programme/project evaluation and impacts, and will make recommendations to competent authorities.

To maximize the effectiveness of the innovations proposed by the Policy sustained attention should be given to certain issues, which represent important challenges for the process:

- the technical capacity and level of autonomy of the technical cell charged with preparing documents for submission to different institutions;
- the level of representation and weight given to civil society organizations; and
- the political authority conferred to the framework for coordination.

The development of the Decentralised Rural Development Policy is a significant step forward for improving coordination in the rural sector, in terms of objectives, development of guiding principles and institutional structures.

Coordination between environmental planning frameworks

Burkina Faso has, since 1994, initiated planning processes to develop strategies and action plans for biodiversity, desertification and climate change. The fact that these processes are linked to external commitments affects the way they are perceived. Indeed, it would appear that the national authorities, concerned to maximise financial support to address the strong social demand owing to deteriorating living conditions, have decided to develop a multitude of plans and programmes, without always seeking to bring overall coherence or develop essential synergies.

Thus, while SP/CONAGESE provides the focal point for all three conventions, the approach adopted leads to the implementation of separate environmental planning processes (in terms of structuring, management and financing), each seen as a potential channel for new financial resources. As a result, the NBSAP was developed with insufficient synergy with the processes initiated under the climate change and desertification conventions. This situation owes itself not only SP/CONAGESE but also to funding agencies.

The tendency towards parallel planning processes is partly encouraged by the individualistic approach adopted by different cooperation agencies. Rather than seeking to agree on a common approach, each agency prefers to prioritise its own concerns, without taking account of initiatives already underway or encouraging synergies between policies and programmes. The priority that each partner gives to its own objectives, financing procedures and evaluation criteria tends to enclose planning processes in separate operational frameworks.

The proliferation of separate environmental plans and programmes stems from constraints at different levels:

- the absence of flexible donor funding mechanisms, linked to the fact that each donor imposes its own procedures and pace of disbursement;

- the lack of coordination between planning agendas whose timeframes are determined by cooperation agencies; and
- the diversity of methodological approaches adopted by national institutions for planning, strategic analysis and evaluation.

The weak links between national strategies does not allow a coordinated implementation of the three Rio conventions. To strengthen synergies between them, SP/CONAGESE conducted an analysis and held discussions with a view to:

- identifying areas and types of activity that promote convergence;
- identifying ways to strengthen synergies between structures intervening in sectors affecting natural resource management; and
- defining mechanisms and practical arrangements for financing activities linked to the three conventions.

The process involved an in-depth evaluation of existing action plans and resulted in the production of convergence guidelines for the different areas of intervention³⁵. This led to the prioritization of, for example, activities to combat desertification which are beneficial for biodiversity conservation and climate change mitigation at the same or different levels. This way, local or national problems can be addressed by mobilising international support around concerns which are endogenous, but recognized as having global utility.

The approach to local programming has been retained as it appears entirely appropriate for the development of programmes with an important potential. The idea is not to create new dynamics on the ground, but to improve the most promising initiatives by integrating innovative dimensions proposed by the Rio conventions. This does not preclude the launching of new initiatives, as long as they are conceived in the logic of complementarity and bring added value to existing initiatives.

Current activities in Burkina Faso usually lie within sectoral planning frameworks operating in a restricted and well defined domain (water, sanitation, forest management, protected area management etc). This entails planning which is more operational than strategic and which translates into a series of short term activities. The new dynamics brought by the synergistic implementation of the three conventions will entail the evolution of this sectoral planning towards integrated planning which clarifies and consolidates the links between major environmental challenges and the different intervention sectors. Such a planning model can contribute effectively to improving inter-sectoral coherence.

As well as having different levels of action, an important characteristic of this approach is that it prioritises agro-ecological zones as the level of intervention. Thus, focusing local programmes around strategic axes of intervention can contribute to improving ecosystems in the concerned zone while producing beneficial environmental effects at other levels.

³⁵ 'Definition d'Orientation et de Propositions pour une Mise en Oeuvre Concertee des Conventions sure les Changements Climatiques, la Diversite Biologique et la Lutte contre la Desertification au Burkina Faso'. (December 2000)

By linking up with the ongoing decentralization process, the approach can reinforce endogenous initiatives and promote the management of activities by local communities. Rather than focusing on approaches for bringing synergy promoted from the center with a view to subsequent appropriation by local communities, it seems more sensible to focus from the start on a system of local programming which can guarantee the involvement of the population and the sustainability of the interventions.

Based on these orientations, the discussions and reflections promoted by SP/CONAGESE have led to the identification of elements of an action plan for the coordinated implementation of the three conventions. Conceived as a guiding framework, the plan indicates the objectives pursued by the country through joint implementation of the three conventions, defines the priority areas with high potential for synergy and describes the process for formulating local programmes.

Developing an NSDS to improve policy coordination and integration

Sectoral policies are most often developed and implemented without real coordination between them. The development of new policies and strategies as a result of ratification of international conventions or strong suggestions from cooperation agencies tends to reinforce the incoherences engendered by the lack of effective mechanisms for inter-sectoral coordination. This weak coherence between policies, plans and programmes, combined with the reduction in the State's financial resources, has not enabled the process of increasing poverty to be abated. The problem is accentuated on the ground by the reduction in development assistance. This situation requires strategies and policies which seek a stronger rationalization of development options and greater synergy between activities underway.

Burkina Faso, in partnership with the OECD, has conducted a review of the different planning frameworks which together would constitute a national sustainable development strategy. The exercise sought to clarify the overall picture of national planning frameworks, which are normally viewed separately, in order to define ways to improve coherence and reinforce synergies.

The NSDS would not be a new plan, but would aim to bring coherence to existing policies and programmes, and activities on the ground. The NSDS process has so far enabled a deeper evaluation of planning frameworks by different actors and brought a consensus on possible ways forward which will promote, amongst other things:

- integration between sectoral and trans-sectoral policies;
- harmonization of local intervention strategies;
- real national leadership of planning processes; and
- improved donor cooperation systems.

The dialogue between different actors (the State, civil society and cooperation agencies) has given rise to guidelines in the form of codes of conduct and concrete activities to undertake. The main recommendations for Burkina Faso's external partners stress the need to build cooperation programmes based on the reference framework of the PRSP. The idea is to promote real national ownership and improve coordination by focusing on a single planning framework.

As well as taking into account biodiversity, new strategic directions defined through an NSDS process should contribute to improving current practices in economic and social development in terms of paradigms, approaches, modalities for engaging actors, ways to integrate and link policies, mechanisms for coordinating interventions and means for real appropriation of processes by national actors.

6. Namibia

Namibia National Biodiversity Programme

Namibia established a National Biodiversity Programme (NBP) to implement the CBD in 1994, comprising a National Coordinating Office within the Directorate of Environmental Affairs (DEA), and a National Biodiversity Task Force with 18 interdisciplinary technical Working Groups covering a number of sectors and themes. Several government departments are represented across the Groups, which also include representatives from NGOs, the private sector and research institutions, and facilitate grassroots and civil society participation. Some of the Groups are led by sectoral department eg. the agricultural biodiversity group is led by the Ministry of Agriculture, Water and Rural Development, while the marine biodiversity group is led by the Ministry of Fisheries.

The NBP prioritises issues of importance to national development programmes, and its work programme is being implemented as part of the national development process, including the second National Development Plan (NDP2) and Vision 2030³⁶. One its major aims is to 'improve development planning and policy integration to sustain biological diversity and ecological functioning'. The NBP seeks to:

- promote permanent and effective mechanisms for inter-sectoral planning and policy formulation;
- promote awareness among national planners that the prudent management of biological diversity is the foundation upon which national economic development is being built;
- improve the quality, quantity, focus and accessibility of biodiversity information.

Although Namibia has a relatively strong biodiversity information base, much of this information was poorly accessible, little was computerized and even less was analysed for policy-makers.³⁷

Namibia's NBSAP

Namibia's NBSAP, finalised in June 2002, is explicitly linked to development objectives. It is formally known as "Biodiversity and Development in Namibia: Namibia's ten year strategic plan of action for sustainable development through biodiversity conservation, 2001-2010". Its goal is to 'protect ecosystems, biological diversity and ecological processes..., thereby supporting the livelihoods, self-reliance and quality of life of Namibians'³⁸.

³⁶ Vision 2030 aims to transform Namibia into a high-income country by the year 2030.

³⁷ For more information on the Namibia National Biodiversity Program, see: www.dea.met.gov.na

³⁸ See www.dea.met.gov.na

The Plan is linked to the implementation of Namibia's Constitution, which requires the government to take measures aimed at: "the maintenance of ecosystems, essential ecological processes and biological diversity of Namibia and utilization of living natural resources on a sustainable basis for the benefit of all Namibians". It is also presented as a key strategic planning document for ensuring that the development process, set out in Vision 2030 and five-year development plans, works with, and not against, the natural resource base. The document is intended for use by policy-makers, and national and sectoral planners.

The NBSAP is the result of a participatory process over nearly three years, involving several hundred people and many months of inter-sectoral dialogue, debate and prioritisation through national working groups and public workshops. A broad section of society took part in the process: various government agencies, NGOs, rural development organisations, farmers' unions, agricultural marketing boards, parastatals and interested individuals. Most of the formal technical input was provided through the working groups of the National Biodiversity Task Force.

Political guidance was sought through direct contact with senior representatives of government ministries, NGOs, specialist societies and boards with important political perspectives on environment and society. A series of inter-ministerial roundtable meetings at permanent secretary level were held to help build the political support. The NBSAP will be sent to the Cabinet for approval and then to the national parliament for adoption as part of the national development strategy linked to NDP2. As a result of this process, it is hoped that the necessary political support will be generated to ensure that budgetary commitments are made annually to support NBSAP implementation.

The NBSAP has intersected its planning process extensively with the NDP 2 process, and as much as possible with the early stages of the Vision 2030 process. It emphasizes and elaborates many of the core issues identified in NDP 2 and Vision 2030 as fundamental to sustainable development. Precise streamlining of timeframes and budgets in the NBSAP with those of NDP 2 and Vision 2030 was not possible as the two documents were still being revised when the NBSAP was finalised. However, the NBSAP proposes that this streamlining should happen at its monitoring and evaluation stages.

The recently finalized National Development Plan, NDP 2 (2001-2006) includes a specific section on natural resources, while environment and sustainable resource management, including biodiversity, are also dealt with as a cross-sectoral issue. This integration was also facilitated by a project for environmental integration in NDP 2 (see the final section in this chapter).

NBSAP provisions for sectoral integration

The NBSAP explains the role of biodiversity in supporting livelihoods, economy and survival. Biodiversity loss tends to lead to the loss of ecological processes such as recharging aquifers or pollination of fruit trees. Such degraded environments may become less able to support people and their livelihoods. During times of ecological stress (eg. drought), environmental degradation can turn normal 'hardship spells' into a destructive cycle of poverty.

The Strategy is structured around ten priority themes, which contain strategic objectives, activities and targets. Across the themes, there is a strong focus on land use systems and planning, and resource management in relation to various sectors, including agriculture, health, water, trade, energy and mining and education. Perhaps most significant of all is the dedicated theme on integrated planning. The Action Plan presents each of the activities identified in the Strategy with details of lead agencies and key actors, timeframes, financial needs, relevant Working Group required to contribute, and level of priority (1-3). In some cases, lead responsibility rests with sectoral departments, such as Agriculture, Fisheries and Health. With around 140 activities, it is an ambitious work programme, although the timeframes and prioritisation should make its achievement more realistic.

The Strategy's cross-sectoral approach centres on the following priorities:

Integrated land-use planning, including analysis of conservation impacts of different land management categories (eg. protected areas, mining areas, different grazing and cropping systems, communal and freehold conservancies) in order to guide land reform and development processes; and support for new conservancies which bring direct benefits to local people and are essential for both conservation and rural development.

Sustainable natural resource management: enhancing capacity for sustainable resource use in different sectors (water, fisheries, wildlife and veld products, forestry, agriculture, tourism), through detailed dialogue with sectors, practical guidance, training, and development of markets for sustainably harvested products. Priorities also include the use of indigenous knowledge for sustainable resource management and land use planning, and mainstreaming sustainable traditional medicine in the national health system.

Strengthening capacity for integrated decision-making: integrating national information systems related to NRM and development planning, strengthening mechanisms for political-technical dialogue on environmental change, and improving monitoring and information systems.

Sustainable resource management in land, wetland, coastal and marine ecosystems: For all ecosystems, the common threads are: integrated management and planning, sustainable use, and protection of priority areas. Harmonised policy and legislation are needed to provide the right framework for sustainable resource practices.

Integrated planning for biodiversity conservation and sustainable development. "Like many countries Namibia has suffered in the past from poorly integrated sectoral planning and management, which wastes precious funds and human resources through duplication, contrary activities and little or no communication.."

The strategy aims to improve integrated planning by:

1. Promoting permanent, effective mechanisms for inter-sectoral planning and policy formulation by strengthening existing communication mechanisms in key sectors so that joint planning, policy formulation and implementation do not depend on individual projects or personalities, but continue indefinitely. Such mechanisms will

prevent the enactment of policies or laws which inadvertently undermine conservation and long-term sustainable development.

2. Promoting awareness among national planners of biodiversity as a capital resource base on which economic development and livelihoods depend, rather than a narrow sectoral activity hindering economic development, through regular seminars, awareness days and written materials targeted at government planners, farmers and other resource users.

3. Promoting dialogue on experience and best practice among ministries, NGOs, conservancies, farmers and others, by broadening the Working Groups of the Biodiversity Task Force, strengthening related organizations and organizing bi-annual public fora on biodiversity.

4. Developing a coherent national policy framework to support sustainable development, as national policies and laws arising from sectoral planning can undermine efforts towards sustainable development. The target is for national policies and related legislation to be reviewed and revised by 2005 to ensure they conform to the requirements of the CBD.

5. Developing a framework for addressing biodiversity in the decentralization process. Conservation efforts will only succeed where resources are managed by those most concerned about them, in particular those whose livelihoods depend on them. Targets include strengthening the capacity of MET regional offices, as they provide crucial links to grassroots resource managers; and devolving biodiversity management to resource managers, to work with local, district and regional actors to establish management plans, zoning schemes etc.

6. Foster partnerships between the government, NGOs and the private and public sectors. Public-private partnerships and joint ventures are likely to be cost effective ways of implementing many of the priorities of the strategy.

The biodiversity strategy also focuses on the important issue of political will, including the need to sustain commitment to implementing the Rio conventions, and to invest wisely in sustainable development as development aid decreases and Namibia strives to become a developing higher-income country.

NBSAP implementation mechanisms

Effective implementation of the NBSAP will require a willingness on the part of the Government and its partners to build on the momentum of NDPs, Vision 2030 and the NBSAP document in order to achieve good integration and truly sustainable development. Both technical and political input will continue to be essential. The NBSAP gives high priority to establishing structures and mechanisms for implementation and integration, including:

1. *Establishing a strong NBSAP Implementation Unit:* which is well resourced and strategically housed within the MET, with formal links to partners within and outside the MET. Communication mechanisms within the MET should also be strengthened to support full integration of NBSAP activities in internal planning.

2. *Strengthening the capacity of the National Biodiversity Task Force* and Coordination Unit, and identifying implementation partners to outsource certain NBSAP activities.

3. *Developing effective mechanisms for integration of biodiversity* into national development planning and budgeting processes:

- Establish a Sustainable Development Commission and strengthen the existing Biodiversity Task Force.
- Raise awareness at senior management and political level to build support for implementation, including through Permanent Secretaries' Roundtables and parliamentary briefings. Demonstrate concrete benefits of the NBSAP as efficient development investments.

NBSAP activities are to be integrated in national planning processes by 2003-2004; and, by 2005, selected components are to be reflected in the national budget and budgetary provisions for implementation are to be supported by the Ministry of Finance and Members of Parliament.

The NBSAP stresses that responsibility for implementation lies not only with MET, but also with a range of decision makers, whether they are farmers, politicians, economists, industrialists or other resource users. It highlights Namibia's commitment to the principle that resource users, when fully enabled, are the best managers and custodians of resources.

The NBSAP also identifies sources of financial support for implementation. Of particular importance for the long-term financing of biodiversity conservation is the recently established Environmental Investment Fund (EIF) of Namibia. It is envisaged that the EIF will be the primary financing mechanism for environment and natural resource protection, including biodiversity.

Other Tools and Approaches for Mainstreaming Biodiversity

Namibia has a comprehensive environmental assessment policy, guided by the need to protect and use biological diversity sustainably. Legislation to support the policy is being considered by the Cabinet, and an environmental assessment unit is being developed within the MET. Although the Act is not yet in place, government agencies, developers and investors have been complying with the provisions on a voluntary basis, particularly the mining industry, and the Ministry of Mines and Energy³⁹.

The MET's Conservancy program has been encouraging the participation of indigenous and local communities and the private sector in the protection and sustainable use of biodiversity. This initiative is part of the national community-based natural resource management programme. The conservancy programme, via the 1996 Amendment to the Nature Conservation Ordinance, gave the rights to communal area residents who are members of a conservancy to use and exploit wildlife. Further attempts are being made to delegate rights to the other resources to the conservancy in

³⁹ Ministry of Environment and Tourism, Namibia. (April 2002). *Second National Report to the CBD*

the future. Under the conservancy programme, co-operation with the private sector is also being encouraged in the development of joint ventures that utilise wildlife and other resources within the community.

Coordination between the Rio Conventions

Namibia has taken an integrated and co-operative approach to the implementation of various conventions and treaties related to biological diversity. The Directorate of Environmental Affairs of the MET is the Focal Point for the CBD, CCD and UNFCCC. The steering committees and working groups of the national programmes serving the three conventions have extensive overlap of key specialists⁴⁰.

The NBSAP places strong emphasis on the links between biodiversity, climate change, desertification and land degradation. It explains how loss of diversity in ecosystems can reduce resilience to drought induced by climate change, and thus create threats to livelihoods, economy and survival. Namibia is one of the most vulnerable countries to the impacts of climate change, which is expected to have serious impacts on biodiversity and development. The NBSAP includes provisions for monitoring climate change impacts and adaptation, and management and mitigation of desertification, degradation and land conversion.

Strengthening synergies between convention implementation programmes is one of the means identified in the NBSAP to strengthen capacity for implementation. Natural synergies and shared interests have been identified between programmes on biodiversity, desertification and climate change but need further operational development in the areas of joint financing, planning and monitoring to support state of the environment reports. The Conventions Division of DEA and the national programmes are to develop common timeframes for joint activities by October 2002.

Mainstreaming Environment Policy in the National Development Plan⁴¹

In 1991, a process was launched to develop a Green Plan for Namibia. The Green Plan, which included strategies for protecting biodiversity and ecosystems, set out a cross-sectoral and multi-disciplinary approach designed to link environment and development objectives. It focused strongly on the promotion of environmentally responsible decision-making, and addressed development issues such as poverty and its links to environmental problems as a major threat to sustainable development. About the same time, the government launched the First Five-Year National Development Plan (NDP1) setting out the country's development objectives and strategies. But NDP1 did not address environment and sustainable development issues. The two strategic frameworks were not linked and were developed in parallel.

Although the Green Plan has served as a guide for analysis of environment issues and has led to a number of programmes for biodiversity conservation, community-based natural resource management etc, it has not been implemented in a structured and

⁴⁰ Ministry of Environment and Tourism, Namibia. (April 2002). *Second National Report to the CBD*

⁴¹ This section is based on the Namibia review by Brian Jones, in: Dalal-Clayton D.B., Swiderska, K. and Bass S. (eds) (2002) *Stakeholder Dialogues on Sustainable Development Strategies. Lessons Opportunities and Developing Country Case Studies*. Environmental Planning Issues No. 26. IIED

coherent way. Responsibility for implementation lay with line ministries that were not necessarily committed to the Green Plan agenda, even though they had participated in its formulation. This lack of commitment was probably due to the fact that the lead agency in developing the Green Plan - the then Ministry of Wildlife, Conservation and Tourism - was a line ministry itself. This ministry had no mandate to enforce compliance with strategies and action plans contained in the Green Plan. No process of monitoring was developed whereby implementation of the plan could be checked.

In developing the Second National Development Plan (NDP2), the government decided to integrate environment and sustainable development issues into the planning process – thereby bringing the issues, concerns and recommendations contained in the Green Plan into mainstream economic and development thinking. The NDP2 process was coordinated by the National Planning Commission Secretariat, with working groups established in line ministries to develop sectoral chapters. They were issued guidelines which included a requirement to pay particular attention to poverty reduction, environment and sustainable development issues, but in practice there was insufficient time to follow this approach adequately. However, useful comments were made and links between sectors were identified.

To strengthen the integration of sustainable development concerns in NDP2, the Ministry of Environment and Tourism (MET) and the National Planning Commission Secretariat (NPCS) initiated a joint project in 2000, which interacted at key stages of the NDP2 process. The project promoted multi-stakeholder processes and generated strategic contributions to the NDP2 out of these consultative exercises. The aim was to ensure that sustainable development priorities and targets, with respect to their cross-cutting aspects as well as their sector-specific aspects, would be fully incorporated into the NDP2.

Issues papers were prepared to identify key sustainable development issues for different sectors, which fed into four cluster workshops addressing related sectors:

- *Natural resources* (agriculture, water, land, wildlife, tourism, fisheries, forestry);
- *Social* (health, education, labour and social services);
- *Trade and industry* (energy, industry, financial services, mining and trade);
- *Infrastructure* (communications, housing, regional administration and transport).

The workshops were attended by representatives from a broad range of government agencies (including focal persons for drafting NDP2 from line ministries and NDP2 planners), the private sector and NGOs. An inter-cluster workshop was organised to consolidate the cross-cutting issues identified by the individual workshops and agree on a national vision for sustainable development. Loss of biodiversity was one of the cross-cutting issues prioritized by the inter-cluster workshop.

Consultants then screened the draft chapters of NDP2 against sustainable development priorities and targets, including:

- Consistent and coherent coverage of relevant cross-cutting issues;
- Inconsistencies or areas where sectoral approaches conflicted, failed to address major threats to sustainable development, or ran counter to the agreed vision.

A number of positive aspects of the support project can be identified. The alliance between the Ministry of Environment and Tourism (MET) and the NPCS proved a

useful mechanism for including environment and sustainable development issues in NDP2. The MET had a strong agenda reflected in the original Green Plan, but was unable to implement this agenda effectively (apart from activities within its own remit) because of its relatively low status in the government hierarchy. The project ensured continuous liaison between the DEA and NPCS, which enabled MET to directly influence mainstream development planning.

The sector issues and options papers provided useful background papers for use by the sectors to identify major cross-cutting issues affecting sustainable development and to provide initial discussion points in the cluster workshops. The cluster workshops proved to be effective mechanisms for a) exposing a broad range of stakeholders to the concept of sustainable development and integration; b) helping the different sectors to recognise the inter-relatedness of their activities and c) stimulating ideas about how better co-operation and integration can be achieved. Some line ministries were receptive to review comments on their chapters; others were defensive and less willing to make suggested changes to incorporate sustainable development concerns.

Nevertheless, the project appears to have made some impacts on the sustainability thinking within the National Planning Commission Secretariat (NPCS). An increased awareness of sustainable development issues and of cross-sectoral issues has been noticeable among the NPCS planners that attended the various cluster and inter-cluster workshops. Some of these planners were enthusiastic participants in the workshop processes. They now appear to have a better understanding of the broad complexity of sustainable development and are able better to incorporate sustainable development issues in the overall national planning processes. The NPCS has indicated it is keen to use the sector cluster approach and emphasis on cross-cutting issues as a foundation for future planning and monitoring activities, and will extend it to the preparation of the national budget.

As a result of the process, the need to address development issues in an integrated way has begun to be accepted by officials in line ministries and other stakeholders. Sustainable development has been adopted as a key national development objective, and the NDP2 can be viewed as containing many elements of a national sustainable development strategy. Certainly an important foundation has been laid which can be built upon in further national planning processes. However, there still remains much to be debated on the implications of “sustainable” development. A widely held view among government officials is that a developing country such as Namibia, with highly skewed income and resource allocation will inevitably have to make some environmental sacrifices if it is to aim at the development levels of the First World.

7. Tanzania

The NBSAP and biodiversity integration⁴²

Tanzania initiated a process to develop a National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan in 1998. The process is coordinated by the Environment Division of the Vice

⁴² This section is largely based on inputs from Dr Ruzika Muheto of Tanzania’s National Environment Management Council.

president's Office, and steered by a National Steering Committee of Permanent Secretaries. Consultations were held with government ministries and agencies, farmers, financing institutions, NGOs, CBOs and the private sector.

The NBSAP seeks to address the challenge of mainstreaming through the following cross-sectoral goals:

1. Ensure sustainability, security and equitable use of biological diversity for meeting the basic needs of present and future generations.
2. Coordinate the planning and implementation of biodiversity conservation programmes with those of other government agencies, NGOs, the private sector, religious groups, communities and other civic organisations.
3. Institutionalise the practice of biological conservation and the sustainable use of resources through legal, administrative and fiscal measures.
4. Promote public education and understanding of the values and benefits of biodiversity conservation and the merits of sustainable development.
5. Enhance capacity building through formal and informal education, training, research, and institutional facilitation and financing.
6. Facilitate collaboration between the national and international community for the sustainable use and conservation of biological resources.

Biodiversity objectives have, to some extent, been integrated in national and sectoral development policies and planning processes, decentralized planning procedures, and local plans, but it is too early to know the impact of this integration on the ground. It is clear, however, that a number of important constraints remain to the conservation and sustainable use of aquatic, agricultural and terrestrial biodiversity. These include:

- weak environmental institutions and legislation;
- lack of harmonisation and coordination of decisions/activities among sectors, local government and NGOs, and inadequate institutional collaboration;
- inadequate development planning (eg. for tourism and recreation projects);
- lack of institutionalised national long-term planning vision;
- lack of institutionalised and operationalised EIA guidelines, which means that existing drafts cannot be confidently incorporated in the development planning process;
- insufficient data about biodiversity, inadequate capacity for research and dissemination, and insufficient collaboration between institutions which manage data;
- lack of capacity and awareness for sustainable resource management;
- inadequate community involvement and empowerment, including marginalisation of women, youth and minority communities in the use of biological resources;
- insufficient allocation of resources for biodiversity research, management, capacity and institution building;
- lack of adequate incentives for sustainable use of biological resources.

Two additional constraints relate more specifically to agro-biodiversity:

- Inappropriate land tenure system leading to uncertain security, delays in providing land for investors in natural resources, and limited information with regards to land ownership, value and use.

- Political interference in technical issues relating to sustainable use and management of biodiversity.

Lessons from other planning processes⁴³

A number of different environment and development strategies and plans have been developed in Tanzania, but many such documents have not been backed by a plan or process for implementation. A recent review identified 23 strategic planning frameworks, many of which set out numerous objectives which cannot be achieved due to the enormous level of resources and expertise that would be required.

One of the objectives of the 1999 National Environment Action Plan, which seeks to promote sustainable development, is to raise awareness about the links between environment and development. It builds on the earlier National Conservation Strategy for Sustainable Development (1995) which aimed to achieve development with conservation and integrate environment and development plans.

The PRSP incorporates the environment as a cross-sectoral issue. However, harmonisation and synergy between policy processes is generally very weak, even between those that are closely related. For example, it is not clear how Tanzania's Vision 2025, the National Poverty Eradication Strategy and the Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper relate to each other and which provides the overarching framework.

There is often poor coordination between ministries, government agencies, the private sector and communities in development planning. For example, a tourism project can affect agencies responsible for tourism, land, wildlife and national parks, but communication between the different agencies is often poor. Coordination can be improved when different sector agencies participate in the Boards or Committees of the lead ministry concerned.

There is also a low capacity for planning (human, financial and institutional) at local and district levels. Leaders and communities tend to be poorly educated, giving room for political interference and lack of accountability. Stakeholder participation in planning and decision making is often poor. However, in some districts there is experimentation with more participatory local planning processes.

⁴³ See: Dalal-Clayton D.B., Swiderska, K. and Bass S. (eds) (2002) *Stakeholder Dialogues on Sustainable Development Strategies. Lessons Opportunities and Developing Country Case Studies*.

PART III – CONCLUSIONS

This section pulls together the conclusions arising from both the literature review in Part I and the country reviews in Part II. It presents key achievements and shortcomings of biodiversity planning processes, constraints to integration in development policy and planning, and opportunities to improve integration. While the focus is on NBSAPs, the conclusions also draw on experience with older conservation strategies, environment plans etc. The final section provides recommendations for improving the effectiveness of NBSAPs in mainstreaming biodiversity objectives.

Where NBSAPs have been completed, the country reviews tend to reaffirm the findings of the literature review, notably that they have not been adopted by mainstream development sectors, and that, once approved, the transition towards implementation has been slow. However, some recent NBSAPs (eg. India and Namibia) provide useful examples of ways to promote cross-sectoral integration, while older conservation strategies, which have encountered similar problems, provide many useful lessons for NBSAPs.

Key issues, achievements and shortcomings

NBSAPs have had a number of useful outcomes. They have helped to raise awareness about biodiversity issues, the threats to biodiversity, and action required to address these threats. New policies and laws on biodiversity have been introduced, protected areas have been expanded and some promising new initiatives have been launched on the ground.

But NBSAPs have not influenced mainstream development and are therefore not affecting the main forces degrading biodiversity. NBSAPs have a low profile across government and their implementation has largely been within the remit of biodiversity/environment agencies. Although there has been some integration of biodiversity objectives in sectoral policy and planning, this has only been partial (eg. as a ‘sectoral’ objective, or with contradictory approaches), and, crucially, it has not led to integration in practice due to a lack of understanding and acceptance of the need to integrate biodiversity objectives by sectoral and local authorities and other actors.

Implementation in general has often been weak. Many NBSAPs have aroused little political interest, and have remained on the shelf. Even where fairly comprehensive consultation processes have been held, involving a range of sectors and actors, once approved, there has been a loss of momentum, and little involvement of mainstream sectors. NBSAPs have focused on producing a document rather than establishing an ongoing process. However, the need for NBSAPs to become cyclical processes that are regularly reviewed is increasingly recognised.

Lack of integration of local and ecosystem biodiversity values: Efforts to integrate biodiversity objectives into sectoral policy and planning (eg. natural resource related policies and EIA studies) have mainly focused on threatened, charismatic or commercially important species. The functional component of biodiversity – ie. its role in supporting livelihoods and ecosystem services - has been largely neglected.

Limited community based conservation: In many cases, limited progress has been made in empowering local communities to participate in local management of biological resources (eg. wildlife), including through the provision of secure land and resource tenure rights. Community based conservation has been viewed mainly in the context of protected areas, and needs to be extended throughout rural areas.

Nevertheless, some recent NBSAPs have placed significant emphasis on the strategy *process*, strategy ownership, sectoral integration and biodiversity-livelihoods links. For example, India's NBSAP process has been highly decentralised and participatory and seeks to integrate biodiversity into sectoral policy and plans as part of the planning process. The process has sought to maximize grassroots participation and to integrate biodiversity *and* related livelihoods in sectoral policy and planning. Namibia's NBSAP has taken steps to build political support and establish formal links with national development planning. It emphasizes the need to strengthen community based management and community resource tenure.

Constraints to cross-sectoral integration

Frequently cited reasons for the weak implementation and sectoral integration are lack of political commitment, lack of strategy ownership and leadership, and lack of clearly assigned responsibility, coupled with limited capacity of biodiversity units and environment departments.

Lack of political commitment. This is probably the most significant constraint which underlies many of the problems of implementation and integration. NBSAPs and previous conservation strategies have not adequately addressed the difficult challenge of building and sustaining political commitment. In Pakistan, for example, an inter-ministerial Cabinet Committee established to provide political support for the NCS was not fully exploited and responsibility was relegated to a small unit within the environment department.

Lack of awareness and commitment in sectoral and local departments. Biodiversity is a new concept which is not well understood. It is often perceived as a marginal green concern which has no relevance for, or runs counter to, development. In South Africa, for example, sustainable development principles have been incorporated in planning policies and laws, but local authorities are still struggling with the concept of integration and sustainability, and will need time, experience and evidence of benefits before they are willing to adopt these principles.

The value of biodiversity to livelihoods and economic development is not appreciated. The role of biological resources in subsidizing basic services such as healthcare, and in generating income (eg. through trade in medicinal plants) is undervalued. Similarly, there is a lack of appreciation of the role of biodiversity in sustaining forest, fisheries and agricultural productivity, as well as essential ecosystem services such as water and soil. Information about the value of biodiversity is not readily available and accessible to policy makers and planners.

Lead implementing agencies have limited capacity, low status and little influence over sectoral, planning and financial departments. In Namibia, for example, responsibility

for implementation of the Green Plan lay with line ministries, but they lacked commitment because the lead agency had no mandate to enforce compliance.

Mechanisms for cross-sectoral integration have not been effective. In many cases, inter-departmental committees on biodiversity or environment have not worked effectively because of a lack of commitment to environmental issues, strongly established sectoral thinking and approaches, and a reluctance of government departments to work together due to turf battles and competition for scarce resources.

NBSAPs have been too centralized and prescriptive. NBSAPs have tended to focus on developing a comprehensive ‘master plan’ at national level. Although different sectors are increasingly involved in NBSAP preparation, it seems that much of the analysis and detailed planning is undertaken by environment sector specialists. As a result, NBSAPs have not been finely tuned to address the specific priorities and constraints of sectoral and decentralized agencies, and have not enabled appropriation through the planning process. NBSAPs have also tended to be over-ambitious, with a lack of prioritization, leading to inaction by agencies faced with an impossible agenda.

Strategies have focused too much on implementation through projects, rather than establishing a mainstreaming approach and a process which continues beyond the life of projects. They have underestimated the institutional changes required – notably enhanced awareness, consensus and commitment, and systems for regular participation, review and learning.

Weak private sector involvement. Although the importance of involving the private sector as a source of finance and as a target for integration in economic sectors is recognised, it appears this sector has not been effectively engaged in NBSAP development and implementation.

Weak development planning systems. In some countries, national planning systems are weakly linked to sectoral and decentralized planning and subject to political interference. The institutions and units responsible for planning have low political status and little influence over other departments. Unless the planning system is strengthened, integration of biodiversity objectives in development plans and procedures is unlikely to lead to effective integration in practice.

There is often poor coordination between different environmental conventions and priorities, which leads to duplication of effort, lack of coherence, inefficient use of scarce resources, and an increased capacity burden. Even when responsibility for the three Rio conventions resides within the same institution, effective coordination is often hampered by staggered strategy cycles, diverse planning approaches, different donor procedures and timeframes, lack of formal coordination structures or mechanisms, and limited capacity (ie. no time for coordination).

Lack of coordinated and coherent sectoral planning is a problem in general, which, as explained in Namibia’s NBSAP, “wastes precious funds and human resources through duplication, contrary activities and little or no communication”. Similarly, in Burkina Faso, weak coherence between policies, plans and programmes, coupled with a decline in state and donor funding, has not enabled rising poverty to be abated.

Opportunities for enhancing biodiversity integration

Local biodiversity planning and the decentralization process. Biodiversity strategies need to be developed at provincial, district and local level, consonant with the decentralization process, so that they are based on local realities and priorities, and are appropriated by implementing agencies, including mainstream sectors. Experience in Pakistan shows that there is more effective leadership and support for provincial level strategies. In India, the decentralized governance structure enabled the development of state and sub-state biodiversity plans, which will be synthesized to form the national biodiversity plan.

Decentralized planning is a key opportunity for sectoral integration. District and local development plans, and land use planning, provide important entry points for biodiversity integration. Spatial mapping of biodiversity, including related livelihoods and ecosystem functions, is needed to facilitate integration through the planning process. In India, recent decentralization to the District level provides an opportunity for biodiversity resource maps to be used to integrate biodiversity in district planning. In South Africa, spatial development initiatives and integrated development plans required at municipal level represent important opportunities for mapping biodiversity priorities. The need for integration of biodiversity objectives, and opportunities for integration, are more apparent at local level, particularly for local communities which depend on biological resources for survival.

Promoting sectoral integration as part of the NBSAP process. In India, guidelines for state and sub-state biodiversity planning identify the need to integrate biodiversity objectives into development plans, and the Secretary for Environment has stressed the need for such integration. Guidelines for sectoral integration have also been prepared, which explain the rationale, provide examples of integrated initiatives, and provide a methodology for screening and revising development policies, plans and budgets. The NBSAP process has also reviewed national policies and plans to identify gaps in biodiversity integration, including the proposed five-year development plan. A key priority in Namibia's NBSAP is for all national policies and plans to be reviewed and revised, and for NBSAP activities to be incorporated in national budgets, by 2005.

Establishing links with the national planning process. Namibia's NBSAP is clearly linked to the Constitution (which aims to maintain ecosystems and biodiversity), and adopts many of the development priorities identified in the National Development Plan (NDP). The NBSAP process intersected extensively with the process to develop the second NDP, and as much as possible with the early stages of Vision 2030. Precise streamlining of timeframes and budgets in the NBSAP with those of NDP 2 and Vision 2030 was not possible as these documents were still being revised when the NBSAP was finalised. However, the NBSAP proposes that this streamlining should happen at its monitoring and evaluation stages.

In India, the NBSAP process has initiated coordination with the National Planning Commission, and has proposed the establishment of a biodiversity working group within the Commission (this has apparently been turned down). The Environment Ministry has also suggested that the integration of biodiversity in state plans should be a condition for annual budget allocations from the Planning Commission.

Processes of stakeholder engagement are needed to promote integration. In Namibia, an initiative to integrate sustainability into NDP2 led jointly by the Environment Ministry and the National Planning Commission enabled the environment department to directly influence development planning, and to begin to generate acceptance of the need to address development issues in an integrated way amongst sectoral officials and development planners. Issues papers were prepared identifying priorities for different sectors, and a series of multi-stakeholder workshops were held involving line ministries and development planners to agree priorities for cross-sectoral integration (including biodiversity). Each chapter of the draft NDP2 was then screened against the agreed sustainable development priorities. As a result of the process, the NPC has indicated that it is keen to use the approach as a foundation for future planning and monitoring activities and will extend it to the preparation of the national budget.

Linking biodiversity to existing integration and coordination mechanisms. Most countries have established mechanisms and tools for integration of environmental objectives in development planning, which have achieved some integration in practice. Most countries also have mechanisms for coordination of sectoral policy and plans. These provide an opportunity to improve the integration of biodiversity objectives. In Burkina Faso, for example, the decentralization process is establishing mechanisms to improve inter-sectoral coordination and coherence of rural development activities at national, provincial and local levels.

Building political support. This should form a key part of the NBSAP planning and implementation process. In Namibia, the NBSAP formulation process sought to build political support by obtaining political guidance from senior officials, NGOs and others; holding a series of inter-ministerial roundtable meetings at permanent secretary level; and sending the NBSAP to Cabinet for adoption as part of the national development strategy linked to NDP2. Mechanisms for implementation focus not only on strengthening cross-sectoral coordination structures, but also on raising awareness at senior management and political level, eg. through Permanent Secretaries' Roundtables and parliamentary briefings.

Improving coordination and synergies between environmental conventions. Improved coordination and synergies between different environment-sector plans will enable more effective and efficient use of resources and reduce the capacity burden. Considering the different environment objectives together and identifying synergies will also facilitate the task of sectoral integration.

In Burkina Faso, a process of analysis and discussion was initiated to strengthen coordination and synergies between the Rio conventions. Existing action plans were examined to identify activities that support all three conventions, ways to strengthen synergies between intervening structures, and mechanisms for financing synergistic activities. The process has resulted in convergence guidelines which prioritize, for example, activities to combat desertification which are beneficial for biodiversity conservation and climate change mitigation, and hence address international priorities as well as local/national concerns.

Rather than promoting synergistic approaches from the center, the aim is to reinforce locally driven initiatives and community management, in accordance with the decentralization process. The idea is not to create new dynamics on the ground, but to

improve the most promising initiatives, and only to launch new initiatives where they bring added value to existing ones. Synergistic implementation of the conventions will entail the evolution of sectoral planning towards integrated planning, which clarifies and consolidates the links between environmental objectives and sectoral interventions.

Establishing systems for mainstreaming and review. The review of Pakistan's NCS recommended that establishing a mainstreaming approach should take priority over implementation through projects. The NCS should become a system of regular participation, communication, monitoring and review which builds awareness, consensus and commitment to integration, facilitates learning from experience and improves coordination. This vision of a strategy as an ongoing process reflects new thinking on strategies for sustainable development, based on experience with a variety of environment-related strategies over the last 10-20 years

Strategies for sustainable development as mechanisms for biodiversity integration and coordination. The primary aim of National Sustainable Development Strategies (NSDSs) is to integrate environment, social and economic objectives. NSDSs seek to integrate sustainable development principles into existing plans, rather than developing a new plan, and to provide a forum for different sectors and actors to examine integration options and negotiate trade-offs. By bringing biodiversity into a sustainable development framework, NSDSs can help to integrate biodiversity and development objectives conceptually, institutionally and operationally. They can provide a vehicle for integrating biodiversity and keeping it on the agenda as part of a process which has a higher political profile because it also addresses 'mainstream' development concerns. NSDSs also provide a means to enhance coordination between different environment and development related planning frameworks. However, biodiversity should maintain its own process and identity within the broader NSDS.

In Namibia, the participatory project to integrate sustainable development priorities into the National Development Plan provided a means to incorporate biodiversity issues into the plan, and to raise awareness about biodiversity issues. In Pakistan, the in-depth review of the National Conservation Strategy recommended its transition to a broader *integrated system of strategic functions for sustainable development governance*. In Burkina Faso, a recent review of strategy experience identified the need to bring convergence to the many uncoordinated planning frameworks under the framework of a NSDS process.

Recommendations for NBSAPs

The approach used to develop and implement NBSAPs has not been sufficiently geared towards tackling the prevailing constraints to mainstreaming biodiversity, in particular:

1. Lack of commitment to biodiversity objectives amongst political leaders and sectoral departments.
2. Entrenched sectoral thinking, structures and approaches, and lack of incentives for different departments to work together.
3. Weak influence and capacity of environment departments.

To address these constraints, NBSAPs will need to focus much more on building a constituency for biodiversity across different sectors and levels of government, through *processes* of stakeholder engagement, awareness raising, consensus building etc, and less on developing a comprehensive ‘master plan’. This will require strong communication, facilitation and political skills, in addition to the technical/scientific skills normally associated with biodiversity planning.

In order to effectively mainstream biodiversity in development activities, NBSAPs will need to:

Focus on establishing an ongoing institutional system for mainstreaming, and not just producing a document. The system should involve regular participation of different sectors and actors to build awareness, consensus and commitment to biodiversity integration; provide a forum for analysis and debate on biodiversity integration; and review progress, learn from experience and build on what works. This should take priority over implementation through projects.

Develop a broad vision at national level, focusing on national level concerns and institutional roles, and avoid prescribing activities for local and sectoral agencies. NBSAPs should provide support for sectoral and local agencies to undertake detailed planning (eg. incentives, guidance, funding), in order to promote ownership and adoption of biodiversity objectives in development programmes and budgets. Clear responsibility and incentives for implementation should be established in sectoral and local agencies.

Develop biodiversity strategies at local level and focus the national effort on providing support for local strategies. Local strategies generate more effective leadership and support, and opportunities for integration are most evident at local level.

Invest significantly in building and sustaining political commitment throughout the process, by demonstrating the importance of biodiversity for meeting key national development goals to senior officials, members of parliament etc. Political support is critical to keep the biodiversity process alive after an NBSAP is adopted and to provide the mandate to enable the institutional changes needed to promote mainstreaming.

Invest significantly in building commitment in line agencies, planning authorities and decentralized agencies to integrate biodiversity. Multi-stakeholder processes for

cross-sectoral integration which actively engage officials and planners in analysis and discussions (eg. through a series of workshops), can be valuable tools to promote acceptance of the need for integration.

Seek formal links with key development planning processes, which receive the bulk of financial investment (eg. national development plans and PRSPs), and institutionalise biodiversity integration through planning procedures and systems, including decentralized and land use planning. Information about biodiversity and its spatial distribution needs to be made available to policy makers and development planners.

Incorporate biodiversity objectives into existing environmental integration tools, structures and processes, eg. environmental management committees, EIA, NSDSs. Strategies for sustainable development, whose primary aim is to integrate environment, social and economic objectives, provide a vehicle for mainstreaming biodiversity, raising awareness, keeping biodiversity on the agenda and improving coordination with other environment plans. To be effective, NSDSs need to become regular systems of participation, debate, analysis, planning and investment – NBSAP processes can be a component of such a system.

Integrate biodiversity's livelihood and ecosystem functions, and not only threatened and commercial species, and prioritise integrated approaches which bring beneficial outcomes for poor rural communities which depend on biodiversity for survival.

Actively engage local communities and the private sector, and their representative organisations, in NBSAP development and implementation, since they are key users and managers of biological resources.

Adequate human and financial capacity will be critical for NBSAPs to work effectively. A number of steps can be taken to compensate for the often weak capacity of biodiversity/environment agencies, many of which reaffirm the priorities identified above:

1. Engage non-governmental actors as much as possible (eg. NGOs, research institutes) to provide essential capacity for NBSAP development and implementation, through working groups etc.
2. Focus on improving coordination between existing biodiversity related initiatives, and improving the sharing of information, experience and lessons amongst different government and non-governmental actors.
3. Consolidate existing biodiversity information and make it available in forms which are meaningful and accessible.
4. Seek integration of biodiversity objectives in development programmes and budgets, and develop partnerships with the private sector, so that the CBD can be implemented despite limited financial resources.
5. Enhance coherence, and avoid duplication, between biodiversity and other environment plans and focus on areas where there are synergies between them.