



WHAT DOES SUCCESS  
LOOK LIKE?

# MAINSTREAMING BIODIVERSITY

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*Biodiversity forms the foundation of life on Earth but it is disappearing in the face of human activity. Conserving and using natural resources sustainably is the responsibility of all sectors of society. In an effort to document successful cases where biodiversity values and considerations have been integrated into these different sectors' policies, plans and practices, IUCN and BirdLife have put together the enclosed factsheets.*

## THE IMPORTANCE OF MAINSTREAMING

Over the last decades human beings have changed their surrounding environment to meet increasing demands for food, water, timber, textiles and fuel through unsustainable practices. This has compromised the long term resources and services that these ecosystems provide, like clean air, water, or shelter from adverse weather (so called 'ecosystem services').

As a result many people, especially in the developing world, have difficulties meeting their basic subsistence needs. At the same time, humans are becoming increasingly aware of the impacts that environmental deterioration can have on their daily life and well-being.

If sustainable development is to be achieved and the services that biodiversity and healthy ecosystems provide to humans maintained, it is clear that biodiversity at all levels (species, ecosystems and genes) needs to be conserved and used sustainably. But this cannot be achieved through the isolated work of the environmental community: it

needs to be the collective endeavour of all parts of society, governmental agencies, non-governmental organisations and the private sector alike.

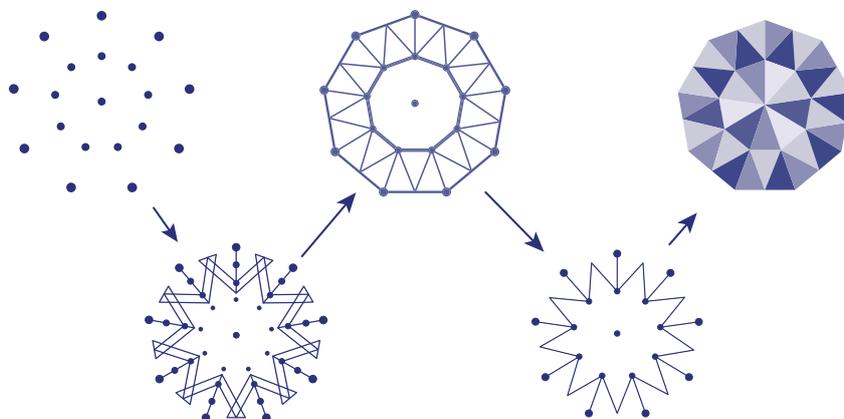
This joint IUCN / BirdLife International initiative is set out to present, through a series of short and simple factsheets, a compilation of case studies where challenges to mainstreaming biodiversity have been overcome and increased sectoral integration has materialized in one way or another. These articles are to complement (mostly theoretical) existing guidance on mainstreaming biodiversity.

## WHAT IS MAINSTREAMING?

'Mainstreaming' means the integration of the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity in both cross-sectoral and sectoral plans such as sustainable development, poverty reduction, climate change adaptation/mitigation, as well as trade and international cooperation. It also applies to sector-specific plans such as agriculture, fisheries, forestry, mining, energy, tourism and transport (among others). In all cases it implies changes in development models, strategies and paradigms.

Mainstreaming is about integrating biodiversity into all these existing or new structures; it is not about creating parallel and artificial processes in those same systems<sup>1</sup>.

Effective mainstreaming should be about actively seeking dual, positive biodiversity and development outcomes, making informed inclusion of relevant environmental concerns into



<sup>1</sup> Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity (2011) NBSAP training modules version 2.1 – Module 3. Mainstreaming biodiversity into national sectoral and cross-sectoral strategies, policies, plans and programs. Montreal, June 2011.

<sup>2</sup> Biodiversity and Development Mainstreaming. A State of Knowledge Review: DISCUSSION PAPER. IIED <http://pubs.iied.org/pdfs/G03673.pdf?>



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the other sector's decisions possible<sup>2</sup>. It should not be about simply pushing biodiversity into these sectors.

Mainstreaming forms an integral part of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), which requests Parties to develop national strategies, plans or programmes for the conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity, and to integrate the latter into relevant sectoral or cross-sectoral plans, programmes and policies.

## WHAT DOES MAINSTREAMING ENTAIL?

Integrating biodiversity objectives into current development models is a complex challenge and does not happen by itself. The various case studies presented through these factsheets discreetly identify some of the characteristics required to achieve these outcomes. One such attribute is the existence of certain triggers or motivations to make mainstreaming efforts possible. Another is the presence of a leader/champion who initiates the mainstreaming efforts. The presence of reciprocal collaboration or cooperation between two or more sectors is also important and another vital significant characteristic is an indication of replication and long-term engagement, impact and sustainability.

## HOW DO WE CHARACTERIZE SUCCESS?

Effective mainstreaming can be observed in the short, medium and long term through a myriad of positive outcomes. These contain the inclusion and uptake of biodiversity considerations in a policy, plan or budget of another (non-biodiversity) sector.

Success can also be measured if a change in a particular behaviour, attitude or position to embrace biodiversity information and knowledge takes place (for instance, this might be a result from efforts towards increasing capacity, knowledge and awareness about biodiversity and its benefits to human well-being).

Finally, long term impacts associated with improved status of biodiversity and human well-being<sup>3</sup> denote successful mainstreaming.

## FACTSHEETS TO INSPIRE

These case studies aim to inspire further efforts to integrate biodiversity into a wide set of policies and practices, contributing to the achievement of the [Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 and its Aichi Targets](#).

The adoption of the Plan and Targets is an important achievement by Parties to the CBD. This momentum must be maintained throughout the implementation phase to ensure that the Strategic Plan acts as the backbone of national planning processes for biodiversity conservation and sustainable development and is also taken into consideration by other policy processes such as the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Many Aichi Targets have mainstreaming implications (e.g. targets 6 on sustainable fisheries or 7 on sustainable agriculture and forestry). However two targets specifically provide the policy framework for mainstreaming action: [Target 2](#), calls for the integration of biodiversity values into national development policies and planning processes, while [Target 17](#) deals with the preparation, revision and updating of national biodiversity strategies and action plans (NBSAPs) and their adoption as policy instruments.

Parties initiating their NBSAP processes, however, have faced many challenges and obstacles, including lack of capacity to generate new and use existing data on the status of biodiversity, inadequate (or even in some cases absence of) institutional structures to reduce barriers between departments, and insufficient communication mechanisms to support mainstreaming of biodiversity across sectors and national plans.

*The joint IUCN/BirdLife case studies aim to demonstrate that such challenges can be overcome. More factsheets will be made available and be published online at:*

[www.iucn.org/nbsaps](http://www.iucn.org/nbsaps)

[www.birdlife.org/datazone/info/CBDsupport](http://www.birdlife.org/datazone/info/CBDsupport)

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<sup>3</sup> The long term impacts on biodiversity and human well-being are expected as the ultimate outcome of mainstreaming efforts and should be aimed at and pursued after policies and plans are adopted.