



PLANTLIFE

Mr. Ahmed Djoghlaif
The Executive Secretary
Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity
413, Saint Jacques Street, suite 800
Montreal QC H2Y 1N9
Canada

30th March 2009

Dear Mr Djoghlaif,

Recommendations for the revision of the CBD Strategic plan from Plantlife International and Botanic Gardens Conservation International

On behalf of Plantlife International and Botanic Gardens Conservation International (BGCI), I attach a response to the consultation on the revision of the CBD strategic plan.

As you are aware the work of both Plantlife and BGCI focuses on the conservation of the world's plant diversity. Both organisations are closely involved with the implementation of the CBD Global Strategy for Plant Conservation (GSPC) - UNEP/CBD/COP/DEC/V/9, and are facilitating organisations for a number of targets therein. We believe our experiences in the development and implementation of the GSPC, a programme of the CBD strongly supported by both the Parties and by non government organisations, contain useful lessons for the next phase of the CBD Strategic Plan.

Please feel free to contact me if you need further information.

Yours sincerely,

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RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE REVISION OF THE CBD STRATEGIC PLAN

A joint submission by the non government organisations Plantlife International and Botanic Gardens Conservation International (BGCI).*

The work of both Plantlife International and Botanic Gardens Conservation International (BGCI) focuses on the conservation of the world's plant diversity, therefore the views expressed in this submission are made primarily in relation to their experiences of the development and implementation of the CBD programme the Global Strategy for Plant Conservation (UNEP/CBD/COP/DEC/V/9), referred to throughout this paper as the GSPC. In particular how the lessons learnt from GSPC implementation should influence the next phase of the CBD Strategic Plan. The ideas within this submission will also be taken to the meeting of the Liaison Group of the GSPC (May 2009), which was asked by the Executive Secretary at COP 9 to consider the further development and implementation of the GSPC in the broader context of the Strategic Plan.

a) Strengths and weaknesses of the current CBD strategic plan

The strength of the CBD strategic plan is its recognition that biodiversity is the foundation for sustainable development, that it is underpinned by the ecosystem approach to biodiversity conservation and the flexibility of the approach to its implementation.

The main weakness is the lack of specific and measurable targets within the main strategic plan to which Parties are held to account, as well as a failure to widely communicate the importance of the CBD and its 2010 target.

b) Lessons learned

i) Specific measurable targets facilitate good reporting, chart progress and map future direction

Within the CBD, the Global Strategy for Plant Conservation (COP/DEC/V/9) was the first programme to include specific measurable targets to drive its implementation. The existence of targets required the establishment of a baseline for each one, so that progress could be measured. The first global progress report, the Plant Conservation report (UNEP/CBD/COP/9/INF/25) was presented to the CBD at COP9, along with a regional report, the European Strategy for Plant Conservation UNEP/CBD/COP/9/INF/31. As a result of the focus brought about by targets,

* **Botanic Gardens Conservation International (BGCI)** hosts the secretariat for the Global Partnership for Plant Conservation (GPPC), which brings together international regional and national organisations in order to contribute to the implementation of the CBD Global Strategy for Plant Conservation (GSPC). BGCI is joint facilitating partner for target 8 (with Bioversity International) and facilitating partner for target 14. of the CBD GSPC.

Plantlife International is an active member of the GPPC and joint facilitating partner with IUCN on the target 5 of the GSPC. Plantlife is leading efforts to implement the European contribution to the GSPC known as the European Strategy for Plant Conservation developed by the Planta Europa Network and the Council of Europe

success can be easily measured and areas of weakness in implementation and those in need of future investment have been clearly defined.

ii) Specific measurable targets stimulate action at global regional and local levels across different sectors

The GSPC targets have galvanised and focused plant conservation action. Stakeholders from across sectors (agriculture, forestry, sustainable use etc) have come together to work on the implementation of particular targets many of which will not be achieved by the actions of the traditional plant conservation community (government or non government players) alone. These stakeholder gatherings have encouraged and facilitated national and regional 'bottom up' engagement in and commitment to the delivery of the GSPC.

Numerous regional and national bodies have been encouraged to develop their own strategies containing targets modelled around those of the CBD GSPC, involving both government and non government stakeholders.

iii) Specific measurable targets, give clear messages that increase public awareness

The targets within the GSPC have allowed key messages to be distilled and used for public awareness campaigns that raise the profile of both the GSPC and the CBD. For example the European Wake up Call for Wild Plants and GSPC 'trails' that have been developed in a number of botanic gardens.

iv) Programme specific national focal points, lead partners and stakeholder networks sustain and drive implementation

The appointment of national focal points for the GSPC has also been significant for promoting action on this work programme. Where these focal points exist, the knowledge of and activity around GSPC targets is higher than in countries where they have not yet been appointed.

Each target of the GSPC also has a facilitating partner who acts as an informal focal point, helps with reporting, engages stakeholders and promotes the importance of both the GSPC and the CBD in achieving biodiversity conservation. This results in delivery being encouraged and reflected concurrently from government (top down) and civil society (bottom up). Both BGCI and Plantlife are facilitating partners for targets in the GSPC.

The *Global Partnership for Plant Conservation* - a network of organisations that contribute to the implementation of the GSPC, has been instrumental in bringing stakeholders together and keeping them informed of progress and developments at global level. The Partnership's Secretariat is hosted by BGCI. The Partnership provides a central, global focal point for the GSPC, coordinating delivery and development and providing support to organisations, both government and non government, who wish to become more engaged in the GSPC. BGCI will continue to provide regional platforms for the Partnership members up to 2010 as the GSPC is refined in the light of the new Strategic Plan.

c) Key issues to address in the new strategic plan

In addition to the inclusion of measurable time bound targets, the consequences of climate change on biodiversity are potentially so severe that Plantlife and BGCI

believe measures to alleviate these effects should be embedded across all targets of the CBD Strategic plan, not in one separate target. This promotes a shared responsibility of delivering solutions to the problems. Climate change will be discussed as a cross cutting imperative for delivery of the GSPC post 2010 (May 2009), already each target of the current European Strategy for Plant Conservation includes recommended actions to mitigate the effects of climate change. This model could usefully be applied to the new CBD strategic plan.

d) The short and long term aims of the CBD and the post 2010 biodiversity target

The post 2010 biodiversity target must encompass a long term vision (2050) and a shorter term high level target (2020). The targets in the CBD strategic plan should address the existing focal areas link and feed directly into the 2020 target and ultimately the 2050 vision.

It is crucially important that the existing targets within functioning work programmes, such as the GSPC and the Work programme on Protected Areas are not lost in this process, as considerable energy has been used to develop them and a momentum has built up around their implementation. They should remain the *key delivery mechanisms* but be linked directly into the focal area targets of the CBD strategic plan, which may assist reporting and monitoring.

The 2020 target should:

- Be a global target that integrate with any (sub) targets associated with the CBD strategic plan focal areas and the existing targeted work programmes;
- Go beyond stopping loss, to include recovery of species, habitats, and ecosystems;
- Recognise the value of biodiversity for human wellbeing (biodiversity benefits) as well as the intrinsic value;
- State the critical role of biodiversity in mitigating and adapting to climate change;
- Be urgent;
- Stress the importance of equitable sharing of benefits from biodiversity;
- Aim to mainstream biodiversity into all land and sea use activities;
- Be measurable (i.e. have a baseline and robust set of indicators)
- Be clear and speak to the whole of civil society.

e) Baselines and monitoring

Many of the tools to establish baselines and allow monitoring of a post 2010 target and targets within the CBD strategic plan are already available, or have been developed and refined within targeted work programmes such as within the GSPC.

The IUCN Red List methodology (including the sampled Red List Index and the RapidList); the Living Planet Index; Key Biodiversity Areas, Important Bird Areas and Important Plant Areas methodologies; and the World Database on Protected

Areas; all enable monitoring of loss and recovery of species, habitats, and ecosystems.

The TEEB report (The Economics of Ecosystems and Biodiversity by P. Sukdev *et al* presented at COP9) has begun the process of measuring the value of biodiversity for human wellbeing (biodiversity benefits). Climate change effects are monitored through processes associated with the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC). For monitoring the equitable sharing of benefits from biodiversity, reference should be made to the Millennium Development Goals.

It is our opinion that more work is needed to enable the measurement of the degree of success in mainstreaming biodiversity into all land and sea use activities. Assigning appropriate lead partners for CBD targets as for the implementation of the GSPC (see b) iv above) may facilitate the monitoring process.

f) Resource mobilisation and capacity-development

Renewed commitment to the CBD as being central to sustaining economic prosperity is vital. The cost of not conserving biodiversity must be understood by all Governments and throughout all sectors (agriculture, forestry, fisheries, transport, energy etc). This will be assisted by further efforts to demonstrate the global economic benefit of biodiversity, such as The TEEB report presented at COP9, at national and local levels.

In summary Plantlife International and Botanic Gardens Conservation International recommend that the new CBD strategic plan should:

1. Be framed within a long term vision (2050) and a high level shorter term target (2020);
2. Contain broad based specific measurable time-bound targets linked to existing focal areas, to which targets within existing work programmes can also be linked;
3. Ensure actions to alleviate the effects of climate change cross cut all focal areas of the new strategic plan;
4. Maintain the flexibility to allow delivery of the Strategic Plan through existing work programmes;
5. Ensure biodiversity conservation is recognised as the imperative for delivering sustained economic benefits to societies across the globe.