



World Business Council for
Sustainable Development

WBCSD comments on Revision of CBD Strategic Plan 11 January 2010

General comments

1. The progress made and reflected in the revised and updated Strategic Plan is very encouraging. We commend the CBD Secretariat for developing a document which shows a willingness to be inclusive, action driven, calling for SMART targets and having a long term vision (2050) with an interim milestone (2015-2020). From a business perspective, this is very much appreciated and ensures that business can operate within a known environment.
2. As suggested, developing a joint workplan with the UNCCD and the UNFCCC for the Rio+20 conference would be extremely beneficial.
3. Defining and agreeing on the final set of indicators remains a challenge and adequate resources need to be put into getting this right.
4. Rather than using the term *Private Sector* we propose using the term *Business* as this also includes state- and part state- owned companies.
5. Throughout the strategic plan, the terms “ecosystem” and “ecosystem services” should be incorporated alongside “biodiversity” as much as possible. In the business community, the CBD definition of the term biodiversity is sometimes unknown or misunderstood, therefore the term can sometimes be misused. Adding “ecosystems” would allow for companies to better understand and help achieve the targets. For example,
 - Page 5, we suggest the Vision should read: “Living in harmony with nature - Biodiversity **and ecosystem services are** ~~is~~ conserved, restored and wisely used, sustaining a healthy planet and delivering benefits essential for all people.”
 - Pages 8 and 19: “Strategic Goal A. Initiate strategic actions to address the indirect drivers of biodiversity loss **and ecosystem degradation** through communication, education and public awareness, the realignment of economic incentives and the mainstreaming of biodiversity across government and society.”
 - Pages 8 and 19: “1. By 2020, everyone is aware of the value of biodiversity **and ecosystems** and what steps they can take to protect it.”



Specific comments on proposed support mechanisms:

Capacity Building for effective national actions:

Payment for ecosystem services is mentioned and the need for finance is highlighted but it is not clear where the financing will come from, who will pay and how payments would be channeled to the right places. Business should be identified not only as a potential source of funding but also as an active provider of ecosystem services. In many cases, markets for ecosystem services will need to be created through regulation, including the vesting of ownership title or tenure as the basis of creating buyer-seller interactions.

Clearing House Mechanism:

Business should be included and highlighted as a source of knowhow and technology that can be leveraged to support achieving the CBD objectives. Business invests massively in research and development. The business opportunity of investing in clean technology and ecosystem solutions should be stressed.

Financial Resources:

Funding, brokering and effective management of "financial resources" should be further developed and refer to REDD+, PES, biodiversity banking, offsets etc. Incentives structures need to be in place to encourage business participation and reward innovation and resource efficiency.

Specific comments on proposed targets:

***Target 2:** By 2020, the value of biodiversity, and the opportunities derived from its conservation and sustainable use, and the fair and equitable sharing of benefits from the use of genetic resources, are recognized and reflected in all countries, in national development policies and strategies, national accounts, economic sectors and spatial planning processes at all levels of government, and by the **business community** ~~private sector~~, applying the ecosystem approach"*

- "Business community" is more appropriate than the "private sector", as this also includes for-profit state- and part state-owned enterprises as well.
- Under the "Means and examples of activities": "Develop **business** ~~private sector~~ guidelines and practices". A key question is whether it is the role of the CBD to develop such guidelines. If so, a possible partner in doing so could be the WBCSD.
- Under "Possible Indicators": "(#companies / market share with biodiversity friendly practices)". The term "biodiversity friendly practices" would need to be clearly defined, as well as who decides if the practices are biodiversity friendly or not. E.g. many companies are reducing energy and water consumption, which has an indirect positive effect on biodiversity; many companies have sites where efforts are carried out to conserve or restore biodiversity, but – particularly for multinational companies – not on every one of their sites around the world; companies have partnerships with conservation NGOs to help them, but might not yet have changed anything on the ground, etc. It might be worth finding a more "neutral" indicator, with the risk of choosing the lowest common denominator, e.g. "the terms biodiversity and/or ecosystems are clearly presented in



the company's annual report", which would respond to the target of these issues being "**recognized and reflected**".

Target 4: *By 2020, governments and stakeholders at all levels and businesses and civil society have formulated and begun to implement sustainability plans to increase efficiency, reduce waste and limit the consumption of resources within ecological limits*

- We suggest this target should come straight after target 2, as a more logical sequence – first to recognize and reflect the importance of biodiversity and ecosystems, then to implement a sustainability plan.
- Under "Possible Indicators": "Ecological footprint and related concepts". The Ecological Footprint is a very valuable tool, particularly when it comes to communication and awareness raising, but we do not understand the link to the target – how can it be an indicator for whether sustainability plans have been implemented or not?. We would caution CBD not to draw too much attention to one methodology, whichever one it is, and show the range of tools that could be used such as Life-Cycle Analysis and the Ecosystem Services Review methodology.
- Under "Possible Indicators": "(# sectors, by country and company, with management plans incorporating biodiversity **and / or ecosystems**)". This indicator is not clear to us. For a company, an alternative could be: "number of companies / market share that integrate biodiversity and / or ecosystems in their management plans".

Targets 5 and 9 are not only of interest to the forestry sector, but all large footprint sectors including the extractive industry.

Targets 11, 15, 16 and 19 would benefit from business engagement working towards a common goal.

Target 13: *By 2020, the status of crop, **and** livestock **and other** genetic diversity in agricultural ecosystems and of wild relatives has been improved*

- We suggest including the option of increased biodiversity due to agricultural practices that provide habitats for species, such as hedgerows, wildlife corridors, etc. as well as the genetic diversity in crops and livestock.

Target 19: *By 2020, knowledge and technologies relating to biodiversity, its value and functioning, its status and trends, and the consequences of its loss, are improved and widely shared, and uncertainties concerning biodiversity change, ecosystem services and impacts on human well-being are reduced*

- There seems to be some overlap in terms of content and possible indicators with target 1: *By 2020, everyone is aware of the value of biodiversity and what steps they can take to protect it*" which also includes "number of education programs" as a possible indicator.



Selected aspiration targets based on WBCSD's work program:

By 2020:

- New measures of progress that are more reflective of true progress than traditional GDP
- True-value pricing, subsidy removals, and tax shifts to encourage sustainable business and behavior
- Innovative financing mechanisms that enable long-term investments in sustainable projects
- Effective ways for dissemination of technologies
- A deeper global understanding of the role of forests in climate change
- Commitments to deep carbon reductions by industrialized countries, creating demand for REDD+ carbon credits
- A start to implement REDD+ actions:
 - Provide financial incentives to local people for conservation and expansion of ecosystem services from primary and modified natural forests
 - Procedures for setting emissions levels
 - Methodologies for monitoring, reporting and verification
 - Processes to promote the participation of indigenous peoples and local communities
- A shift in production from modified natural forest to planted forests by improving yields of the latter
- Global outreach effort to train farmers for knowledge-driven, 21st century Green Revolution
- More government involvement in agricultural research
- Future rate of yield gains at or above recent historic levels
- New crop varieties and enhancement solutions developed for extreme climate conditions
- Better access to water, sanitation, energy, education, jobs, healthcare and mobility
- Wastewater is considered a resource
- Companies are using ecosystem, water and carbon footprint and impact assessment methods as measurement, management and mitigation strategies, and reporting on their results.