



BINU project submission to the CBD Working Group on Review of Implementation (WGRI) of the Convention

1. Biodiversity indicators and the CBD at national level

The aim of this submission to the WGRI is to provide some insights and recommendations on the benefits of biodiversity indicators in supporting the implementation of the CBD at the national level, including making progress towards the 2010 target. This is based on experience from the GEF project Biodiversity Indicators for National Use (BINU), which was designed to produce biodiversity indicators to support decision-making at the national-level in Ecuador, Kenya, Philippines and Ukraine, and to make recommendations to the CBD from the results.

This document presents the views of UNEP-WCMC and MNP-RIVM from their experience in supporting the implementation of the project. A more elaborate report entitled “Biodiversity Indicators for National Use – Experience and Guidance” was launched at the CBD SBSTTA 10 meeting, and is available along with other project results from: <http://www.unep-wcmc.org/collaborations/BINU/>

The BINU project is in its final stages and whilst some conclusions concerning the production and use of indicators can be made, their full implementation and impact will develop further over the next few years.

2. National biodiversity indicators are feasible and have multiple roles

The BINU project has shown that, even from a basic starting point and with limited resources, *it is possible to make great strides in the development of national biodiversity indicators in a relatively short space of time.* There are significant users of the indicators, and, despite many limitations, data already exist to enable at least some useful indicators to be developed.

In the development of biodiversity indicators it is important to be aware of their different roles for different audiences. For policy makers indicators help inform them about biodiversity issues and in the setting of feasible and measurable targets. Indicators also assist in making the public, commercial sectors, and people directly dependent on natural resources, more aware of biodiversity loss and its impact on them. Furthermore, they guide scientists in conducting monitoring and research and provide a vehicle of communication: a common language.

3. The 2010 of indicators are feasible and useful for national reporting

Many of the indicators identified by the BINU partners correspond closely with the framework of 2010 indicators (Table 1). This demonstrates that the 2010 indicators are policy relevant and generally fit well in the national context and with existing data and expertise. The use of these indicators at the national level may also contribute to regional and global reviews, promoting efficient use of data and capacity.

4. Indicator development requires time and capacity

The BINU project found that the development of indicators in consultation with stakeholders takes two to three years, including establishing a team for this work. However, this time this will be reduced as international experience and guidance on indicator development grows.

The expertise and data to produce biodiversity indicators within a country is likely to be scattered over many governmental and non-governmental organisations and research institutes. Identifying these sources and building co-operative work are indispensable to produce representative and sound indicators. The BINU project demonstrated that such partnerships are possible.

5. Building support for biodiversity and the CBD

Consultations with national stakeholders in the BINU project often found a lack of common understanding about biodiversity and why it may be important. However, discussions on the selection and utility of the indicators built new support for biodiversity issues amongst diverse groups, including agriculture, fisheries and national statistical agencies. The definition and dissemination of national indicators of the 2010 target can build new collaborations and capacities and introduce biodiversity to groups who previously had little understanding of the concept.

6. Technical and financial support are indispensable

The BINU project has demonstrated that with some technical and financial support it is possible to bring together a range of stakeholders, build experience and common understanding, and produce national biodiversity indicators. It is unlikely that this would have happened in the absence of external input. Subsequently these countries in their turn can provide technical support to neighbouring countries in establishing indicators.

The implementation of the CBD at the national level would be enhanced if more guidance, examples and support were available on producing biodiversity indicators for policy making, monitoring and awareness raising.

Table 1: Indicators proposed by the CBD for monitoring progress towards 2010 target and which are applied in Ecuador, Kenya, Philippines and Ukraine at the national level.

	Ecuador	Kenya	Philippines	Ukraine
Change in extent of selected biomes, ecosystems & habitats	√√	√√	√	√
Change in species abundance and distribution		√√	√√	√√
Coverage of protected areas	√√	√	√	√
Change in status of threatened species			√	√
Marine trophic index			√	
Trends in genetic diversity of domesticated plants & animals				√
Water quality in inland waters		√		
Nitrogen deposition; Numbers and costs of alien invasions	*	*	*	*
Connectivity and fragmentation of ecosystems	√			√
Health and well-being of people in biodiversity-dependent communities	√	√		

* Other pressure indicators were developed by the BINU countries. √ - one or few indicators developed, √√ - several indicators developed.

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