



Plan of Action on Customary Sustainable Use of Biological Diversity



Convention on
Biological Diversity

Plan of Action on Customary Sustainable Use of Biological Diversity

I. OBJECTIVE

1. The objective of this plan of action is to promote, within the framework of the Convention, a just implementation of Article 10(c) at local, national, regional and international levels and to ensure the full and effective participation of indigenous and local communities at all stages and levels of implementation.

II. GENERAL PRINCIPLES

2. The development and implementation of all activities under the plan of action on customary sustainable use of biological diversity should be undertaken with the full and effective participation of indigenous and local communities, particularly women and youth.
3. Traditional knowledge should be valued, respected and considered as useful and necessary for biodiversity conservation and sustainable use as other forms of knowledge.
4. The ecosystem approach, a strategy for the integrated management of land, water and living resources that promotes conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity in an equitable way, is consistent with the spiritual and cultural values as well as customary practices of many indigenous and local communities and their traditional knowledge, innovations and practices.
5. Recognizing that indigenous and local communities are the holders of their traditional knowledge, innovations and practices, access to their traditional knowledge, innovations and practices should be subject to their prior informed consent or approval and involvement.

III. CONSIDERATIONS OF SPECIAL RELEVANCE

6. Special considerations for this action plan include the following:
 - (a) Biodiversity, customary sustainable use and traditional knowledge are intrinsically linked. Indigenous and local communities, through customary sustainable use of biological diversity, constantly shape and reshape social and ecological systems, landscapes, seascapes, plants and animal populations, genetic resources and related management practices, and are therefore well placed to adapt to changing conditions such as climate change, and to contribute to the maintenance of biodiversity and ecosystem services, and the strengthening of the resilience of the social and ecological systems. Indigenous and local communities and holders of traditional knowledge related to customary sustainable use of biological diversity also contribute to the generation of new knowledge for the benefit not only of indigenous and local communities but of human well being at large;
 - (b) Indigenous and local communities depend directly on biodiversity and its customary sustainable use and management for their livelihoods, resilience and cultures and are therefore well placed, through their collective actions, to efficiently and economically manage ecosystems using the ecosystem approach;



(c) Cultural and spiritual values and practices of indigenous and local communities play an important role in the conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity and transmitting its importance to the next generation;

(d) The full and effective participation of indigenous and local communities, in particular women, is of primary importance for the successful development and implementation of policies and programmes for customary sustainable use of biological diversity;

(e) The a and implementation of policies and programmes for customary sustainable use of biological diversity should take fully into account Aichi Biodiversity Targets 14 (ecosystem services) and 18 (traditional knowledge and customary sustainable use), the Nagoya Protocol on Access to Genetic Resources and the Fair and Equitable Sharing of Benefits Arising from their Utilization and the programme of work on Article 8(j) and related provisions, with a view to avoiding duplication and ensuring complementarities;

(f) Cultural, social, economic and ecological elements associated with the traditional management systems of lands, waters and territories of indigenous and local communities and their involvement in the management of these areas should be recognized, secured and protected, as they contribute to customary sustainable use of biological diversity;

(g) Traditional knowledge and customary sustainable use of biological diversity are central to the full implementation of the ecosystem approach, which provides an important tool to strengthen the capacity of indigenous and local communities to fully practice customary sustainable use of biological diversity, as appropriate;

(h) Customary sustainable use of biological diversity is useful in facilitating learning of socio-ecological systems and possible innovations for productive ecosystems and continued human well being;

(i) Measures should be taken to address unsustainable use of biological diversity and revitalize and restore degraded ecosystems.



IV. RATIONALE

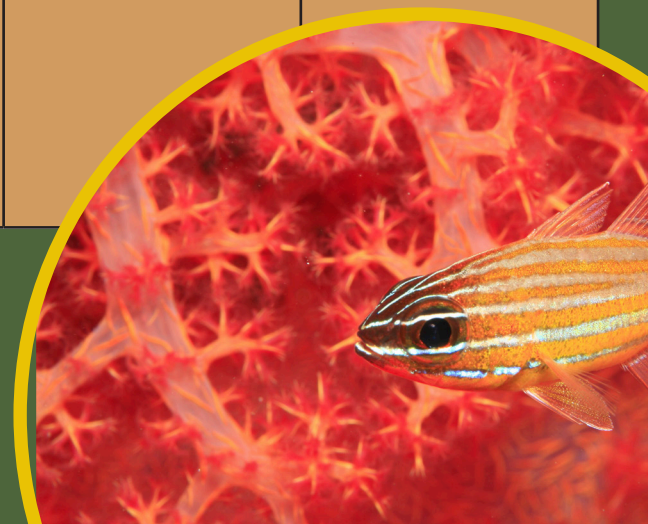
7. Incorporating customary sustainable use of biological diversity with the effective participation of indigenous and local communities into national biodiversity strategies and action plans is an important and strategic way to integrate Article 10(c) and its implementation as a cross-cutting issue in the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 and efforts to achieve the Aichi Biodiversity Targets, the importance of which was reiterated in decision XI/14.¹

8. Many indigenous and local communities are engaged in community-based initiatives to enhance implementation of Article 10(c) at the national and local levels. Such initiatives include research and documentation of traditional knowledge and customary practices, education projects to revitalize indigenous languages and traditional knowledge associated with customary sustainable use of biological diversity, community mapping, community based sustainable resource management plans, and biodiversity and climate change monitoring and research. An overview of such initiatives was presented at the meeting on Article 10, with a focus on Article 10(c) as a major component of the

V. ELEMENTS OF THE FIRST PHASE OF THE DRAFT PLAN OF ACTION

Task 1	Main actors	Possible actions ²	Timeframes for phased implementation	Possible indicators and means of verification
<p>To incorporate customary sustainable use practices or policies, as appropriate, with the full and effective participation of indigenous and local communities, into national biodiversity strategies and action plans (NBSAPs), as a strategic way to maintain biocultural values and achieve human well-being, and to report on this in national reports</p>	Parties with the full and effective participation of indigenous and local communities	Revision of the NBSAPs to incorporate customary sustainable use of biological diversity	Through the revision and implementation of NBSAPs 2014-2015 and reported through future national reports, commencing with the fifth national reports, where feasible and to the Working Group on Article 8(j) and Related Provisions, in time for the mid-decade review	<p><i>Indicator:</i> Customary sustainable use of biological diversity incorporated by Parties, with the full and effective participation of indigenous and local communities, into NBSAPs</p> <p><i>Means of verification:</i> Future national reports, commencing with the fifth national report, where feasible</p>

Task 2	Main actors	Possible actions	Timeframes for phased implementation	Possible indicators and means of verification
<p>To promote and strengthen community-based initiatives that support and contribute to the implementation of Article 10(c) and enhance customary sustainable use of biological diversity; and to collaborate with indigenous and local communities in joint activities to achieve enhanced implementation of Article 10(c)</p>	Parties, other Governments, the Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity, relevant international organizations, donors, funders, academic and research institutions and indigenous and local communities	<p>Mobilization of funds and other forms of support to promote and strengthen community-based initiatives that support and contribute to the implementation of Article 10(c) and promote good practices</p> <p>Collation of case studies, experiences and approaches and making them available through the Traditional Knowledge Information Portal and the information portal of the International Indigenous Forum on Biodiversity (IIFB)</p> <p>Strengthening collaboration with other international agreements relevant to customary sustainable use of biological diversity, including with the International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture, for reinforcing mechanisms for community-based initiatives</p>	Reported through future national reports, commencing with the fifth national reports, where feasible	<p><i>Indicator:</i> Inclusion of diverse examples of community-based initiatives that support and contribute to the implementation of Article 10(c) in the national reports and the Traditional Knowledge Information Portal</p> <p><i>Means of verification:</i> Progress report for the Working Group on Article 8(j) and related provisions, from ninth meeting onwards</p>



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Task 3	Main actors	Possible actions	Timeframes for phased implementation	Possible indicators and means of verification
<p>To identify best practices (e.g. case studies, mechanisms, legislation and other appropriate initiatives) to:</p>	<p>Parties, other Governments, indigenous and local communities and the Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity and other relevant organizations, programmes and funds</p>	<p>Reporting on best practices (case studies, mechanisms, legislation and other appropriate initiatives) that support customary sustainable use of biological diversity as an input to a compilation to be published as a CBD Technical Series</p>	<p>Reported through future national reports, commencing with the fifth national reports, where feasible</p>	<p><i>Indicator:</i> Publication and dissemination of a CBD Technical Series on best practices, case studies, mechanisms, legislation and other appropriate initiatives that support customary sustainable use of biological diversity</p>
<p>(i) Promote, in accordance with national legislation and applicable international obligations, the full and effective participation of indigenous and local communities, and also their prior and informed consent to or approval of, and involvement in, the establishment, expansion, governance and management of protected areas, including marine protected areas, that may affect indigenous and local communities;</p>	<p>(i) The Working Group on Article 8(j), Parties and other Governments, with the full and effective participation of indigenous and local communities</p>	<p>Compilation of best practices and existing guidelines on prior informed consent or approval and involvement of indigenous and local communities in the establishment, expansion, governance and management of protected areas and operationalize them by making them available through e-learning modules and tools for protected areas.</p> <p>Fostering the full and effective participation of indigenous and local communities through consultations and advisory relations</p>	<p>Compilation of best practices and existing guidelines on prior informed consent or approval and involvement of indigenous and local communities could be considered by the ninth meeting of the Working Group on Article 8(j) and Related Provisions</p>	<p><i>Indicator:</i> Actions that support the tasks of the plan of action for the customary sustainable use of biological diversity</p> <p>Best practices and guidelines are available</p> <p><i>Means of verification:</i> Future national reports commencing with the fifth national reports, where feasible</p> <p>A compilation of best practices and existing guidelines</p>
<p>(ii) Encourage the application of traditional knowledge and customary sustainable use of biological diversity in protected areas, including marine protected areas, as appropriate and in accordance with national legislation;</p>	<p>(ii) Parties and other Governments, with the effective participation of indigenous and local communities</p>	<p>Revision of the NBSAPs to incorporate customary sustainable use of biological diversity and traditional knowledge</p> <p>Active involvement and effective participation of relevant indigenous and local communities in the planning, establishment and management of protected areas and the wider landscapes and seascapes</p>	<p>Revision of NBSAPs 2014-15</p> <p>Reported in future national reports, commencing with the fifth national reports, where feasible</p>	<p><i>Indicator:</i> Revised NBSAPs include promotion of traditional knowledge and customary sustainable use of biological diversity</p> <p><i>Means of verification:</i> Future national reports, commencing with the fifth national reports, where feasible</p>
<p>(iii) Promote the use of community protocols in assisting indigenous and local communities to affirm and promote customary sustainable use of biological diversity in protected areas, including marine protected areas, in accordance with traditional cultural practices and national legislation.</p>	<p>(iii) Parties, other Governments, Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity, other relevant organizations, programmes and funds, ILC organizations and NGOs</p>	<p>Development of community protocols by indigenous and local communities</p> <p>Active promotion by Parties of the development and use of, and respect for, community protocols and other mechanisms that affirm customary sustainable use of biological diversity and traditional knowledge</p>	<p>Ongoing and reported through future national reports, commencing with the fifth national reports, where feasible</p>	<p><i>Indicator:</i> Parties recognize and support, and indigenous and local communities develop community protocols and other mechanisms, as appropriate, that affirm traditional knowledge and customary sustainable use of biological diversity</p> <p><i>Means of verification:</i> Future national reports, commencing with the fifth national reports, where feasible</p>

programme of work on Article 8(j) and related provisions³ and more detailed cases were presented at a Workshop on Community-based Monitoring and Information Systems held in the Philippines in February 2013⁴. By supporting such initiatives, or by getting involved in collaborative on-the-ground projects and monitoring of relevant indicators under the Convention on Biological Diversity, Parties and conservation organizations gain better insights into customary sustainable use of biological diversity issues in their countries. They can also more appropriately respond to existing needs or challenges, and become more effective in implementing Article 10(c) and in contributing to the achievement of Target 18 and other relevant targets of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020.



9. Protected areas established without the prior informed consent or approval and involvement of indigenous and local communities can restrict access to and use of traditional areas and therefore undermine customary practices and knowledge associated with certain areas or biological resources. At the same time, conservation of biodiversity is vital for the protection and maintenance of customary sustainable use of biological diversity and associated traditional knowledge. Customary sustainable use of biological diversity and traditional knowledge can contribute to the effective conservation of important biodiversity sites, either through shared governance or joint management of official protected areas or through indigenous and community conserved territories and areas. Community protocols and other community procedures can be used by indigenous and local communities to articulate their values, procedures and priorities and engage in dialogue and collaboration with external actors (such as government agencies and conservation organizations) towards shared aims, for example, appropriate ways to respect, recognize and support customary sustainable use of biological diversity and traditional cultural practices in protected areas.



VI. GUIDANCE FOR POSSIBLE ACTIONS

Task 1: To incorporate customary sustainable use practices or policies, as appropriate, with the full and effective participation of indigenous and local communities, into national biodiversity strategies and action plans, as a strategic way to maintain biocultural values and achieve human well-being, and to report on this in national reports.

Guidance

- Consider the establishment of and potential role for the national focal point for Article 8(j) (or the CBD national focal point) in promoting dialogue and creating bridges with indigenous and local communities to promote the incorporation of customary sustainable use practices and traditional knowledge into national biodiversity strategies and action plans.
- Promote the effective participation of representatives of indigenous and local communities in the revision of the national biodiversity strategies and action plans and in drafting the relevant sections of national reports.

³ See UNEP/CBD/WG8J/7/5/Add.1, para. 33. This presentation was based on a synthesis paper on examples, challenges, community initiatives and recommendations relating to CBD Article 10(c) by the Forest Peoples Programme and partners (October 2011): www.forestpeoples.org/customary-sustainable-use-studies.

⁴ The report of the Global Workshop on Community-based Monitoring and Information Systems, which was held in Bonn, Germany, from 26 to 28 April 2013 is made available as UNEP/CBD/WG8J/8/INF/11.

Task 2: To promote and strengthen community-based initiatives that support and contribute to the implementation of Article 10(c) and enhance customary sustainable use of biological diversity; and to collaborate with indigenous and local communities in joint activities to achieve enhanced implementation of Article 10(c).

Guidance

- Parties, through the national focal point for Article 8(j), may wish to facilitate discussions with the relevant indigenous and local communities and compile an inventory of relevant existing or planned community based initiatives at the local and subnational levels, in order to assist in the revision of national biodiversity strategies and action plans and for inclusion in the national reports.
- Parties, through the national focal point for Article 8(j), may wish to facilitate discussions with the relevant indigenous and local communities regarding the value and contributions of these initiatives to customary sustainable use of biological diversity, as well as on existing and perceived obstacles and possible actions to overcome them.
- Parties, through the national focal point for Article 8(j) may wish to facilitate discussions with the relevant indigenous and local communities to support community initiatives and potential collaboration.

Task 3: To identify best practices (e.g. case studies, mechanisms, legislation and other appropriate initiatives).

Guidance

- Parties, through the national focal points for Article 8(j) and for protected areas (or CBD focal points where national focal points for Article 8(j) and for protected areas have yet to be established), with the effective participation of indigenous and local communities, may wish to scope and compile existing guidelines, and develop an inventory of best practices for promotion and operationalization.
- In identifying best practices, Parties and other relevant stakeholders may wish to draw on existing international initiatives, reference materials and tools for best practices in relation to protected areas and customary use of biological diversity, such as the CBD Technical Series No. 64: *Recognizing and Supporting Territories and Areas Conserved by Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities - Global Overview and National Case Studies* on indigenous peoples and community conserved territories and areas, the Whakatane Mechanism⁵, and community protocols⁶.



⁵ This mechanism, which is an outcome of the 4th World Conservation Congress, aims to support conflict resolution and best practices in protected areas by ensuring that conservation practices respect the rights of indigenous and local communities. See <http://whakatane-mechanism.org>

⁶ See www.community-protocols.org

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