

Report on outcomes of COP 11 of CBD in October 2012

The Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) held its 11th Conference of the Parties (COP 11) in Hyderabad, India, from Oct. 8th -19th 2012. Members of the Institute for Biodiversity Network (ibn) as responsible partner in GLUES followed COP 11 throughout and herewith report on the outcomes.

Resource Mobilization

Next to content related topics (see below) the mayor political issue of COP 11 was the Strategy for Resource Mobilization, i.e. the financing of measures to reach the 2020-Targets. Already in Nagoya (2010) developing countries had only agreed to the Strategic Plan of the CBD, including the targets for 2020, under the condition that COP 11 will result in major increases in financial resources for the implementation of the ambitious targets. A high level commission had prepared an estimate how much money would be needed to reach all targets until 2020 and resulted in needs of 100-400 billion US-Dollar per year until 2020. Developing countries negotiated for concrete financial targets. i.e. fixed sums and timelines whereas developed countries insisted on baselines (i.e. how much is needed and how much do we already spend?). The compromise text of the relevant decision (XI/4) now sets the target as follows (para 7a):

'Double total biodiversity-related international financial resource flows to developing countries,[...] by 2015 and at least maintain this level until 2020'. The doubling refers to the average of resources spend between 2006 and 2010 as a baseline. In order to somehow get informed on what is really done with the financial resources it was also agreed that (para 7d): 'Endeavour for 100% but at least 75% of Parties provided with adequate financial resources, have prepared national financial plans for biodiversity by 2015, and 30% of those Parties have assessed and/or evaluated the intrinsic, ecological, genetic, social economic, scientific, educational, cultural, recreational and aesthetic values of biological diversity and its components'

Projects of the LAMA funding measure can surely provide data for the valuation of biological diversity in the respective national contexts.

Cooperation with IPBES

In decision XI/13 another political issue was dealt with: the relationship between CBD, including its scientific body SBSTTA, and the Intergovernmental Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES), which was founded in April 2012. The main debate was whether the SBSTTA itself should be mandated to forward thematic requests to IPBES or if such requests would have to be acknowledged by a COP before sending them to IPBES. The latter would bear the risk that other conventions (like e.g. the Ramsar Convention on wetlands or the UN Convention to Combat Desertification) would hand in their requests much quicker and thereby 'block' the IPBES agenda for CBD requests. The interim solution in decision XI/13 now mandates the next SBSTTA (17, probably autumn 2013) to directly forward requests to IPBES but leaves the final decision on future regulations for COP 12 in 2014. With that compromise the CBD can influence the IPBES agenda which will probably be set end of 2013 in an IPBES plenary, but can still wait how IPBES sets its own rules of procedure before finding a long term solution.

The next IPBES plenary will be held in January 2013 and is expected to finalize the rules of procedure.

In-depth review of the programme of work on Island Biodiversity

The work programmes of the CBD undergo a so called in depth review in regular intervals and this time the programme on Island Biodiversity was revisited. Decision XI/15 highlights the importance of efforts to save the biodiversity on islands by *'acknowledging that 80 per cent of known species extinctions have occurred on islands and that more than 40 per cent of vertebrates currently threatened with extinction are island species'*.

Para 2b calls upon Parties to *'mainstream ecosystem-based adaptation to climate change, ecosystem restoration and invasive species management for human health and well-being*

into all island development and conservation plans and projects and build capacity in their application'.

The results of projects in the LAMA programme which deal with sustainable use of biodiversity on islands can surely contribute to such development and conservation planning.

Restoration of degraded ecosystems

The restoration of degraded ecosystems appeared for the first time as a self standing agenda item in a CBD meeting. COP 11 was the first to note that *'ecosystem restoration will play a critical role in achieving the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011–2020, including the conservation of habitats and species'*. It was further recognized that *'ecosystem restoration can contribute to climate change mitigation and adaptation, socio-economic development and food security'*.

In order to prepare for the 2020 target to restore 15% of degraded ecosystems, Parties are urged to *'identify degraded ecosystems that have the potential for ecosystem restoration'* (para 1c).

In para 2b Parties are invited to *'compile and disseminate case studies, best practices, lessons learned, and information on socio-economic aspects, and methods for assessing the success of restoration projects'*, to *'support the development and implementation of regional, subregional or national plans, programmes or projects for restoring ecosystems'* and to *'support the large-scale replication of successful projects and programmes that implement the recommendations of research on ecosystem restoration, including their monitoring'*.

As several of the projects under the LAMA funding scheme explicitly deal with the restoration of degraded ecosystems the results and findings of these projects are of major importance for the requested compilation of case studies and can serve as basis for future large scale replication. Coming CBD meetings, including SBSTTA meetings, will deal with that issue and offer good opportunities to present respective project results.

Biodiversity and climate change

Decision XI/21 deals with the linkages between biodiversity conservation and climate change and is of the view that there are still gaps in scientifically understanding this relationship. It therefore *'encourages Parties, other Governments and relevant organizations to further mobilize resources, [...] in order to fill biodiversity and ecosystem services data gaps in the context of climate change, and to undertake research studies at spatial scales from local scales to larger landscapes'* (para 5). Para 6b points into the same direction and encourages Parties to *'strengthen knowledge and information, including comparable data sets, and related research and monitoring activities on the linkages between biodiversity, climate change and human well-being in educational programmes at all levels'*.

The LAMA projects can help to fill these gaps as they per definition deal with the relationship of biodiversity and climate change processes and operate on different spatial scales. By integrating students from the respective partner countries the projects also already contribute to educational programmes. Project results should therefore be made available in a CBD context.

Biodiversity for poverty eradication and development

As most LAMA projects also deal with the consequences of unsustainable use for the wellbeing of the local population the link to poverty eradication and sustainable development is given throughout. In this context it is important to note that COP 11 in Decision XI/22 (para 10) decided *'that issues relating to the links between biodiversity and human well-being, livelihoods, poverty eradication and sustainable development shall be discussed as appropriate at future meetings of the Conference of the Parties for the purpose of recommending specific actions to implement the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020.'* In other words future COPs will be a good opportunity to present respective project results.

Biodiversity of inland waters

In Decision XI/23 COP *'recognizes the importance of the water cycle, including its groundwater component, and the influence of climate change upon it, to most areas of work*

of the Convention and to achieving most of the Aichi Biodiversity Targets' (para 3). In para 6 the COP 'invites Parties, other Governments and relevant organizations to take note that the year 2013 will be the United Nations International Year of Water Cooperation and that this, together with the current "International Decade for Action 'Water for Life' 2005-2015", provides opportunities to bring water and biodiversity issues to broad public attention'.

LAMA projects that include investigations of the water cycle could use the opportunity of these special UN periods to present their results in the respective fora.

Venue of next COP

It was decided that COP 12 will take place in the South Korea in 2014. Until 2020 there will be COP meetings every two years.

As always in the CBD this COP meeting was open for observers and offered the possibility to present projects and scientific results in so called side events. The ibn took the initiative to request a time slot for such a side event. The event first gave a short overview over the LAMA funding measure as such and the coordination activities of GLUES (presented by ibn). The main part was used for the presentation of the regional project SUMARIO. Dr. Christian Rumbaur and Dr. Niels Thevs presented first project results and related their research work packages to the implementation of the 2020 targets. As SUMARIO is performed in China we did hand over special invitations in Chinese language to the Chinese delegation who then was well represented in the audience of our event. The lively discussion revealed a great interest of the Chinese participants in the project results and the comparability to other arid regions in China. The representative of the secretariat of the UN Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD), Ms. **Wagaki Mwangi**, who was also present was so impressed by the presentation that she spontaneously offered to give us a time slot in her agenda of the land degradation day to take place also at COP 11. Of course we responded to that offer by shortly presenting the funding programme again in that context. Additionally, the UNCCD representative urged us to take part in the UNCCD 2nd Scientific Conference to be held in February 2013 in Fortaleza, Brazil. In the meantime, abstracts of three regional projects and of GLUES were handed in for that conference and were accepted for oral presentations or poster contributions.

Dr. Cornelia Paulsch

Institute for Biodiversity – Network e.V.
Drei-Kronen-Gasse 2
D – 93047 Regensburg
Email: cornelia.paulsch@biodiv.de
Tel.: ++49-941/2977760
www.biodiv.de