

## Report on outcomes of CBD COP 12 in October 2014

The Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) held its 12th Conference of the Parties (COP 12) in Pyeongchang (Republic of Korea), from October 6<sup>th</sup> - 17<sup>th</sup> 2014. As members of the Institute for Biodiversity Network (ibn) as accredited observer organization, Dr. Cornelia Paulsch and Dr. Axel Paulsch followed IPBES 2 throughout as NGO observer. The project scientist were also accredited under ibn as observers, which allowed them access to all negotiations in plenary and in working groups.

The opportunity of COP 12 was used to perform two side events in cooperation with several regional projects. In both events ibn introduced the funding programme Sustainable Land Management, before the regional projects related their research results to different targets of the Strategic Plan of the CBD and its 2020-Aichi-Targets.

In the event on Monday, October 13th, the projects LEGATO and SURUMER, as well as the FONA project JAGUAR presented their results under the title: "Sustainable use of cultural landscapes in Asia - Implementing Aichi targets in Viet Nam, the Philippines, China and Japan". In the joint presentation special emphasis was given to sustainable management of agricultural ecosystems (target 7), reducing pollution (target 8), conserving genetic diversity of cultural plants (target 13) and conserving ecosystem services (target 14).

For the event on Tuesday, October 14th, under the title "Implementing Aichi-Targets 5, 7, 14 and 15 – Research results from projects in Brazil and Germany" the CBD Secretariat had asked if the event could be integrated into the restoration day of the programme of the Rio Pavillion. This is a joint effort of the three Rio Conventions CBD, UNCCD and UNFCCC. The projects COMTESS and INNOVATE related their results to reducing the loss of biodiversity (target 5), sustainable management (target 7), conservation of ecosystem services (target 14) and ecosystem restoration (target 15).

The approach to not only introduce the projects but relate them directly to the CBD targets was appreciated and the audience showed a high interest in the transferability of methods and approaches into other regions.

Some remarks on the outcomes of CBD COP 12:

### Global Biodiversity Outlook 4

The fourth edition of the Global Biodiversity Outlook (GBO 4) is a midterm review on the implementation of the Strategic Plan of the CBD and its targets until 2020. Based on a broad set of indicators, GBO 4 comes to the conclusion that nearly every of the 20 targets will be missed if efforts to conserve biodiversity are not significantly strengthened in all sectors of society. The GBO 4 also names unsustainable land use and management as one of the main drivers of biodiversity loss.

### *Importance for Sustainable Land Management Programme:*

The findings of GBO 4 imply that solutions for sustainable land management are needed ever more urgently and that therefore joint research projects on this topic play an important role. Implementation of research findings and support for decision making as provided by the regional projects is an important means to conserve biodiversity.

### Ecosystem restoration

GBO 4 also comes to the conclusion that the progress to reach the restoration related targets 14 and 15 is regrettably slow. The COP 12 decision under this agenda item encourages to undertake appropriate large scale restoration in degraded ecosystems. The decision "invites Parties to provide appropriate incentives to promote, in line with national circumstances, sustainable management and best practices in the conservation and restoration of ecosystems at the national and subnational levels".

*Importance for Sustainable Land Management Programme:*

As restoration is a component in several regional projects they can help to deliver results for planning large scale restoration in the respective ecosystems and thus help to implement Aichi targets.

Biodiversity and Health

Under the impression of the recent Ebola crisis the Parties to the Convention discussed even more deeply the relationship between biodiversity loss and the growing danger from infectious diseases and the common underlying causes. They concluded that loss of healthy ecosystems is a risk to human health as well. COP 12 therefore encouraged Parties to strengthen the cooperation of the health sector and agencies with those responsible for the environment. COP also encouraged to promote research on the relationship between biodiversity loss and disease outbreaks.

*Importance for Sustainable Land Management Programme:*

The decision underlines the importance of managing land under use in a sustainable way in order to keep up the health of both, the ecosystems and the human population depending on these systems. The call for research in that respect may be a basis for future research projects.

Resource mobilization

Under this heading the developed states renewed their commitment to double the amount of money given into international funding for implementation of the CBD from 2015 and keeping this level until 2020 (doubling is calculated on the basis of the average between 2006 and 2010 as baseline). It was also agreed to increase domestic resources in all states, including the developing states. Financing of more capacity building was also agreed upon.

*Importance for Sustainable Land Management Programme:*

As research programmes like the sustainable land management programme also help to implement the CBD, the commitment of Germany to double the resources and of partner countries to increase the domestic share may include the possibility of further joint research projects. The capacity building component of such projects could also be strengthened.

Nagoya Protocol on Access and Benefit Sharing

The Nagoya Protocol entered into force on October 12th of 2014, that is during COP 12. With that, more and more states put in place legal regulations on access to genetic resources including for scientific purposes.

*Importance for Sustainable Land Management Programme:*

Although Germany has not ratified the Nagoya Protocol yet this step will follow soon. In any case scientists from Germany as well as partner countries have to follow national rules of access and benefit sharing as provided by national authorities in the respective partner countries when dealing with genetic resources or traditional and local knowledge on such resources or obtaining research permits.

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28.10.2014



Abb. 1: COP 12 participants in Pyeongchang (Korea)

Left to right : Dr. Martin Maier (Comtess); Drs. Axel and Cornelia Paulsch (ibn); Prof. Dr. Arne Cierjacks (Innovate); Dr. Mark Cotter (Surumer); Dr. Stefan Hotes (Legato/Jaguar).

Abb.2: Prof. Dr. Arne Cierjacks after the Side Event with representatives of the German delegation and the WBGU (Wissenschaftlicher Beirat für Globale Umweltfragen).



Abb.3: Dr. Stefan Hotes (Legato) talking to the Vietnamese delegation after the Side Event.

Fig. 4: Dr. Axel Paulsch talking to the head of the Austrian delegation, Gabriele Obermayr.

