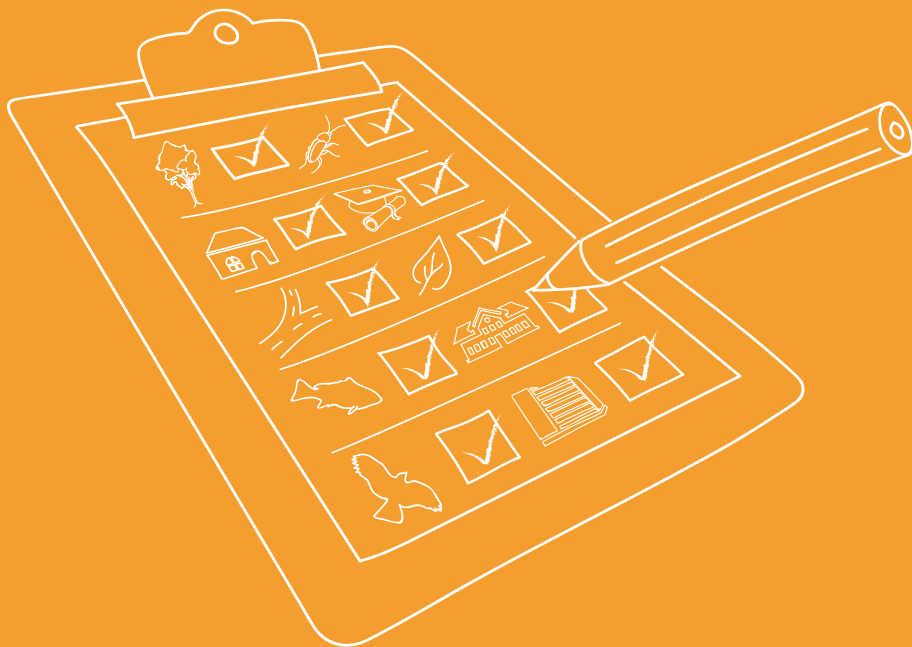


# Putting biodiversity at the centre of development

A checklist for reviewing the mainstreaming potential of a country's NBSAP



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The Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) recommends that the second generation of National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plans (NBSAPs) should be used as instruments for mainstreaming biodiversity into key development policies, plans and processes. But how do you know that your NBSAP will be fit for this purpose? Does it address key development issues – those that create potential for biodiversity as well as those that may present problems? Does the NBSAP make sense to development actors and reflect their concerns? Were the right people involved in its creation? Does it directly link to development plans, programmes, and funding?

This checklist provides a simple structure for reviewing a country's NBSAP and the process by which it is being developed to make sure it contains the essential ingredients for biodiversity mainstreaming. The essence of the checklist has been tested against revised NBSAPs in several African countries and while the questions are suggested to help with the review process, they are not exhaustive – you may want to ask other questions too.

This tool is an output of the NBSAPs 2.0 Mainstreaming Biodiversity and Development project funded by the Darwin Initiative. For more information on the project and more mainstreaming tools, go to: **[www.iied.org/nbsaps](http://www.iied.org/nbsaps)**

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The NBSAPs Forum (<http://nbsapforum.net>) has produced a framework for peer reviewing NBSAPs across all relevant themes and processes, and touches on mainstreaming. This tool complements the framework and focuses on the mainstreaming components of NBSAPs, giving more detailed insights into the level of biodiversity/development integration that has been achieved.

Peer review framework: <http://nbsapforum.net/#read-resource/725>

## Why do a mainstreaming review?

A mainstreaming review of the NBSAP and the process by which it is developed, checks that it addresses biodiversity in the context of a country's development aspirations and is thus a useful instrument for mainstreaming biodiversity into development and vice versa. The review can be undertaken at any stage but should preferably be considered at the beginning, middle and end of the process to allow time for adaptation along the way. It has two main objectives:

1. To examine the extent to which the NBSAP addresses development concerns
2. To examine the quality of the NBSAP as a means for integrating biodiversity into national development policy and plans.

The review might be undertaken by the NBSAP team as part of the overall process of planning, revising, finalising and quality-checking the NBSAP, or it might be commissioned from others – for example, the Ministry of Planning or Ministry of Environment. Depending on the overall purpose of the review – as well as the context, the budget and the time available – it might take a number of different forms:

- **Internal review** – the lead organisation undertakes the review without engaging others
- **Domestic peer review** – commissioned by the lead organisation and asking other ministries, nongovernmental organisations and independent national experts to be involved
- **International peer review** – commissioned by the lead organisation but involving equivalent ministries and nongovernmental organisations, institutes or individuals from one or more other countries.

Conducting a peer review rather than an internal review has added advantages in that it can support mutual learning between colleagues, ministries or countries and a feeling of cross-government ownership. Since it is also a more objective process, it may enable governments to win domestic support for what might be difficult policy choices or resource allocation decisions.

## Issues to consider

The review needs to assess how relevant and effective the revised NBSAP has been in integrating biodiversity concerns with development priorities both in the revision process and in the content.

It must look at whether and how development actors were involved in the revision process, because the NBSAP is less likely to be relevant and effective if it has been prepared in isolation and focuses solely on biodiversity. The NBSAP must make a convincing case for biodiversity as a development opportunity. And it must consider how biodiversity is being affected by development policies and activities.

You will need to review and ask questions about:

- How the NBSAP revision process was carried out
- Who participated in the process and how different views were taken into account in the drafting
- Whether there is evidence of attention to development priorities in the NBSAP
- The relationship to key development policies, strategies and plans, or government-led programmes
- The relationship to particular sectors
- The proposed monitoring framework for the NBSAP activities
- The developmental value of finance and resource mobilisation plans to support NBSAPs implementation
- The effectiveness of the communication strategy in engaging development interests.

In the following pages these questions are considered in more detail. We suggest the kinds of issues you might want to probe and the questions you might want to ask. We do not suggest what the ideal answers are to these questions – there is no ‘right’ and ‘wrong’ and every country will be different.

## Participation in the NBSAP revision process

The NBSAP is more likely to be effective if it integrates biodiversity concerns with development priorities and is owned as much by key development interests across government as the Ministry of Environment. It is worth assessing, therefore, how other ministries (finance, planning, energy, mining, agriculture and so on) have been involved in the NBSAP revision process, as well as nongovernmental actors, including civil society and the private sector.

- Who has led the revision process and set the terms of reference?
- What kind of meetings have taken place?
- Which development sectors have been involved in the revision process nationally or locally?
- How have they been involved and what has been the quality of their involvement throughout?

For example, has the revision process been:

- Informative – providing all parties with balanced and objective information to assist them in understanding the issues, alternatives, opportunities, and/or solutions?
- Consultative – asking people to provide comments, which may or may not have been considered and taken on board where relevant when developing alternative solutions and making key decisions?
- Genuinely participative and engaging – that is, where participants have been directly involved in determining and influencing the process itself and making inputs to the development or implementation of the NBSAP, and where all participants' aspirations have been consistently understood and considered?

# Evidence of attention to development concerns

Does the NBSAP:

- Recognise the poverty status of the country and of particular localities and social groups?
- Discuss the value of biodiversity and its current and potential role in contributing to poverty prevention and reduction, and what this means for local/regional/national development?
- Point to important distributional issues in relation to biodiversity/development assets and outcomes, particularly in relation to identified localities or social groups or within specific development sectors?
- Provide recommendations, measures or clear strategies for maximising the potential of biodiversity for poverty prevention, poverty reduction and equitable economic growth?
- Show awareness of development processes that contribute to the loss of biodiversity, and provide recommendations, measures or clear strategies for how to limit these losses?

# Relationship to other development and finance policies, strategies and plans

Does the NBSAP include:

- Clear links with the National Development Plan (NDP) or equivalent? Does it recognise and respond to the objectives of the NDP? Does it take into account the timing of the NDP as it is usually based on a five-year cycle?
- Relevant responses to broader influences ‘upstream’ of the NDP such as macro-economic and fiscal policies, and national responses to the likely SDGs?
- Clear links with other national, sub-national and local strategic planning processes such as a sustainable development plan, environmental strategies/ action plans or community-based natural resource management programmes, and decision-making systems?
- Clear links with national and/or sub-national public sector budgeting and expenditure review processes, with a view to mobilising funds to support NBSAP implementation?

In July 2014, participants at an NBSAPs 2.0 project workshop reviewed the draft revised NBSAP prepared by Botswana. Felix Monggae from the NBSAP revision team spelt out what he had been looking for: “We wanted them to consider whether we were encompassing enough; did we have the relevant monitoring and evaluation mechanisms at each stage; did we speak to mainstreaming and in terms of other sectors, were they able to find themselves in the document we had just put together?”

The comments were constructive and welcome, he said, with a useful focus on making the executive summary “punchy, relevant and succinct”.

See the full interview with Felix Monggae about the NBSAP review process at: [www.iied.org/talking-about-mainstreaming-biodiversity](http://www.iied.org/talking-about-mainstreaming-biodiversity)



## Relationship to particular sectors or programmes

Does the NBSAP indicate:

- Clear links with particular sector development strategies – notably forestry, agriculture, land use, tourism, manufacturing and water?
- Clear links with other multilateral environmental agreements, particularly relating to climate change and land degradation?
- Clear links with human development and wellbeing strategies such as food security, health, disaster risk reduction and gender equality?
- Whether/how biodiversity loss or conservation might threaten, undermine or reverse the outputs or outcomes of a particular sector or strategy's programmes, or the wellbeing of particular societal groups, including the most vulnerable?
- How particular sector programmes or strategies result in biodiversity loss or contribute to conservation?
- How far particular sectors can and do use their core mandates and mechanisms (eg land use planning) to help reduce biodiversity loss or to mitigate the impact of ecosystem degradation or even make a positive win-win contribution?

### **Biodiversity and environment considerations now key part of construction**

In Uganda, the Ministry of Lands, Housing and Urban Development is rolling out a project - Uganda Support to Municipal Infrastructure Development (USMID), funded by the World Bank. Fourteen municipalities are covered by the plan which mainly involves construction and rehabilitation of municipal roads to bitumen. In one of the construction projects in Soroti municipality, environmental consultants employed by the ministry as part of complying with a new institutional requirement to consider environmental concerns in all key decisions, advised that the new road be narrowed at a certain point, to avoid cutting down rare 75-year-old Mivule trees.

The contractor had already started to cut the trees but was obliged to stop.

## The monitoring framework

To assess whether the NBSAP monitoring framework allows for the monitoring of biodiversity mainstreaming efforts, consider whether:

- The NBSAP lays out development outcomes as well as biodiversity outcomes
- The NBSAP includes clear indicators and targets to monitor the progress of biodiversity mainstreaming in development policy and plans, and vice versa
- The National Bureau of Statistics, Ministry of Finance, Ministry of Industry etc are using biodiversity information and relating it to relevant socio-economic data
- The NBSAP contains national biodiversity targets and actions that are particularly relevant to development mainstreaming, and which contribute to the mainstreaming elements of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 and its Aichi Targets.
- The NDP and sector policies include reporting frameworks that reflect relevant NBSAP indicators and targets.

### **What would successful biodiversity mainstreaming look like?**

At the NBSAPs 2.0 Mainstreaming Biodiversity and Development workshop held in July 2014 in Namibia, participants concluded that successful biodiversity mainstreaming achieves a wide range of biodiversity, social and economic outcomes, including:

#### **From a biodiversity perspective**

- Government policy and the general public demonstrate support for improving biodiversity conservation and sustainable management and use of ecosystem services
- Government authorities ensure that [scenario-based] spatial plans for ecological resilience are developed and implemented successfully at all levels
- Other sectors actively and routinely consult biodiversity-related sectors in national and subnational/local development
- Public and private sectors increasingly integrate biodiversity and ecosystem services into their own activities.

#### **From a social perspective**

- Development and conservation planners invite and enable indigenous and local communities to participate fully in relevant development and conservation plans and reviews.
- Biodiversity and ecosystem services are tangibly contributing to livelihood security and wealth creation at the individual/household, community and other levels.
- The benefits, costs and risks of sustainably managing biodiversity and ecosystem services are shared equitably.

#### **From a finance/economic perspective**

- Regular trend analysis shows that biodiversity and ecosystem service-related investments are increasing in their scope and diversity
- Governments provide funding in order to meet their commitments under the CBD
- There is reduced reliance proportionally on ministry of environment budgets for biodiversity-related activities
- Investments in biodiversity and ecosystem services generate a good rate of return
- Biodiversity and ecosystem services' contributions to the economy are tracked with robust tools and metrics within national finance systems
- Investments in biodiversity and ecosystem management lead to reduced costs for crisis management during natural disasters.

**Source:** Windhoek Statement, July 2014: Achieving success in biodiversity mainstreaming

# Financing and resource mobilisation for NBSAP implementation

Does the NBSAP show how financial support will be provided or indicate plans for mobilising public and private sector financial resources to implement mainstreaming recommendations and actions it sets out?

## **In Uganda, closer cross-government working contributes to greater understanding of biodiversity**

The National Environment Management Authority (NEMA) in Uganda has made a point of involving key ministries and agencies such as the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development (MFPED) and the National Planning Authority in the NBSAP revision process. NEMA worked closely with a designated economist, who attended NBSAP committee meetings and reported back to her colleagues. This helped staff from the MFPED understand and appreciate biodiversity issues and their importance to the development process.

The improved understanding contributed to the Ugandan NBSAP being integrated into the 2014 National Development Plan. This will provide the basis of around US\$ 6.2 billion (approximately US\$ 2,500,000) funding for NBSAP activities over the five-year period.

In addition, understanding the importance of biodiversity led to MFPED increasing NEMA's budget by US\$ 3 billion (US\$ 1,200,000) per year to cater for managing the environmental impacts of oil and gas development in a biodiversity rich area (the Albertine Graben). Oil and gas are key emerging issues in the Uganda NBSAP.

## A communication strategy to support successful implementation

To what extent does the NBSAP include a communication strategy that ensures engagement with both biodiversity and development audiences? Are there:

- Identified audiences?
- Tailored messages that may change over time?
- Ideas for ways to reach the audiences and to help them exchange information and plans with each other, including both channels and outputs?

Is there a realistic budget to implement the communication strategy?

Has the NBSAP revision process received any local/national press coverage?

In terms of timing, does the communications strategy show plans for more than one year, recognising that this is an ongoing process which needs to be reviewed regularly, with necessary changes made to the strategy as a result?

## Ownership and the potential for successful implementation

The effectiveness of the NBSAP as an instrument for integrating biodiversity in development planning, budgeting and monitoring will be greater if all relevant policymakers, practitioners and civil society organisations feel some ownership over the revised strategy and action plan.

To what extent is there broad agreement about the process and content of the NBSAP:

- Within mainstream national government bodies, and in particular the ministries of planning and finance?
- Among key sectors relevant to biodiversity potentials and problems, such as agriculture, fisheries, forestry, mining and industry?
- Within local government, and local level administrations and community groups?
- Among private sector institutions (eg ecotourism operators or associations) and civil society organisations?
- Among the public – given that biodiversity mainstreaming into individuals' behaviour is a long-term challenge, with ever-changing targets?

Was there, or will there be, a parliamentary committee or debate on the NBSAP and the issues it raises?

During the NBSAP revision process in Namibia, the revision committee, which included a representative from the Office of the President, organised a successful high level workshop with politicians to inform them about, and encourage ownership of, the process and implementation of the NBSAP. Once finalised, the revised NBSAP was sent to Cabinet for endorsement and was approved in late 2014.



How do you know that your NBSAP will be fit to serve as an instrument for mainstreaming biodiversity into key development policies, plans and processes? Does it address development issues – those that create potential for biodiversity as well as those that may present problems? Does the NBSAP make sense to development actors and reflect their concerns? Were the right people involved in its creation? Does it directly link to development plans, programmes, and funding?

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