

9th Ecosystem-based Adaptation Knowledge Day Brief

Discussion Track: National Implementation

21st September 2023

Session Leads:

Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) and
International Institute for Sustainable Development (IISD)

Brief overview:

This Brief is a consolidated documentation of knowledge shared during the National Implementation Discussion Track at the 9th EbA Knowledge Day (KD). It serves as a knowledge product for practitioners and policymakers engaged in this topic at the global, national, and local levels. The Brief summarises discussions and insights that emerged during the session - highlighting the views and ideas shared by participants representing various stakeholder groups (national governments, civil society, academia, etc.) - and offers several suggestions and recommendations for activities that would contribute to the advancement of this topic.

Disclaimer:

This brief is submitted as a contribution from the EbA Knowledge Day to the ongoing discourse and initiatives surrounding National Implementation within the context of ecosystem-based adaptation. It is important to note that the perspectives expressed in this document do not necessarily reflect the official stance of the organisations mentioned.

Introduction

Biodiversity and climate change are two interconnected crises, from which the increasingly devastating impacts to human well-being and livelihoods are being demonstrated on an almost daily basis around the world.

Ecosystem-based adaptation (EbA) is a fundamental tool to help address these issues, but effective implementation needs political and social willingness, appropriate understanding of the concept and its use, and the planning and financial resources to see it deliver its potential at scale.

Under the national implementation track of the ninth Ecosystem-based Adaptation Knowledge Day, the Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) and International Institute for Sustainable Development (IISD) co-led a session titled “Synergizing Ecosystem-based Adaptation in Policy”. The session was attended by approximately 49 participants, split into two sessions.

The session examined the policy requirements to leverage the use of EbA, and in particular as countries are revising their National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans (NBSAPs) in light of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework for 2024 and their Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) for 2025, and National Adaptation Plans (NAPs).

To provide some background information and help frame the session, Mr. Jeffrey Qi of IISD presented an overview of a technical brief on how to promote synergies between climate change adaptation and biodiversity. The brief was prepared by IISD and Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit [GIZ] Peru, under the guidance of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) Nairobi work programme and the Least Developed Countries Expert Group (LEG). The presentation provided a review of the interlinkages between climate change adaptation and biodiversity, explored the potential to foster synergies between processes to formulate and implement NAPs and NBSAPs, and highlighted some practical entry points and lessons learned from case studies (Peru, Fiji, Eswatini and Rwanda).

In order to better understand what is needed in order to enhance synergies in national implementation, the participants were asked to share their thoughts on what are the opportunities and constraints in integrating biodiversity and climate change policy through an EbA lens at the national level. Additionally, participants were invited to share some lessons and practices emerging from NBSAP, NDC and NAP processes to scale-up and integrate the implementation of EbA.

With a view to looking forward, the session discussed how the current and incoming Presidencies of the Conference of the Parties to the CBD and to UNFCCC (CBD COP15 & 16 and UNFCCC COP27 & 28) can encourage these synergies and promote policy coherence.

Participants in the session also exchanged views on what the EbA community can do to support enhancing these synergies.

Approach & Key Messages

Design of the Session

The session used the Mentimeter presentation tool to foster interactive engagement and discussion. Utilizing real-time input and visualization, participants actively contributed to the discussion, with ice-breaker questions highlighting global representation and diverse stakeholder involvement. The tool ensured anonymity, promoting equal and open dialogue.

Summary of Interventions & Key Findings

Before raising the questions to the audience, Mr. Jeffrey Qi of IISD set the scene by providing a presentation on promoting synergies between climate change adaptation and biodiversity. The information was taken from a joint technical brief¹ prepared by IISD and GIZ under the guidance of the UNFCCC Nairobi work programme and the Least Developed Countries Expert Group.

The presentation provided an overview of the links between climate change adaptation and biodiversity and key aspects of the NAP and NBSAP processes, highlighting opportunities to enhance coherence through the various common elements across these processes. It was shown that close coordination enhances both instruments. For example, NAPs can be updated according to NBSAP priorities, and can help ensure that climate change adaptation measures are not detrimental to biodiversity. Similarly, it allows for biodiversity plans that are more holistic and climate proof. Other advantages include reducing duplication of efforts, a more efficient use of limited resources, and the potential to leverage additional resources. This coordination can also create linkages between sectoral and subnational sectors.

Mr. Qi present case studies from Peru, Fiji, Eswatini and Rwanda. These case studies helped illustrate opportunities for synergies, such as through stakeholder engagement (Peru), integrated approaches when updating climate and biodiversity strategies (Eswatini), the identification of EbA measures to protect livelihoods, socio-economic development, and biodiversity (Fiji) and integrated financing for both climate and biodiversity portfolios (Rwanda).

After the presentation, the discussion was organized around the following four key questions. Below each question is a summary of key findings and observations.

1. From your perspective, what have been constraints in integrating biodiversity and climate change policies at the national level?

Participants noted that biodiversity and climate change are often seen as separate issues and are therefore sometimes addressed by different programmes and policies. Similarly, the lack of coordination and communication between departments and ministries, as well as between stakeholders, was also mentioned as a constraint.

Other participants noted the lack of capacity, adequate resources, and political will as the main challenges.

One participant noted the difficulty in providing evidence for EbA benefits as one of the reasons for lack of integration of EbA in plans and policies.

The different planning cycles for both issues was also cited as being a constraint.

¹ UNFCCC, CBD, IISD, GIZ, UNEP and SwedBio (2022) [Promoting synergies between climate change adaptation and biodiversity through the National Adaptation Plan \(NAP\) and National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plan \(NBSAP\) processes](#). Terton, A., Qi, J. and Zúñiga, G. (authors). United Nations Climate Change Secretariat. Bonn.

Others noted the false dichotomy between addressing climate change/biodiversity and continuing economic development in policy making, and lack of recognition of the economic potential of EbA and the contribution to the Sustainable Development Goals.

2. From your perspective, how does the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework help promote integrated biodiversity and climate change policies at the national level?

Targets 8 and 11 of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework, which respectively aim to minimize the impact of climate change and ocean acidification on biodiversity and increase its resilience through mitigation, adaptation, and disaster risk reduction actions, including through nature-based solutions and/or ecosystem-based approaches, was listed as a key point of entry to support greater integration of biodiversity and climate change policies at the national level.

Target 19 was also mentioned as a relevant. Target 19 aims to substantially and progressively increase the level of financial resources from all sources, including by optimizing co-benefits and synergies of finance targeting the biodiversity and climate crises. Similarly, other participants noted opportunities for the use of innovative financing systems, as well as private sector investment

One participant noted that the Framework provides a useful reference for national action and puts biodiversity onto a more central policy radar from which policy formulation can happen.

3. What is needed to improve the recognition and use of EbA in these policies and their implementation?

The needs identified by participants were:

- Systematic evidence reviews, monitoring and evaluation of EbA;
- Development of baselines and targets;
- Integration of EbA into NBSAPs/long-term strategies/NAPs and assigning national funding;
- Mainstreaming into development plans;
- Greater understanding of what EbA is and how it fits into the cultural and ideology concepts of differing nations;
- Case studies with best practices on EbA implementation and involvement of stakeholders;
- Social transformation;
- Participation and involvement of civil society and academia;
- Technical support to governments; and
- Knowledge management.

4. How can the CBD COP16 and UNFCCC COP28 encourage these synergies and promote policy coherence?

The session discussed the opportunities provided by the upcoming meetings of the Conferences of the Parties. It was noted that the respective Presidencies can play a key role in raising awareness and showcasing successful examples of EbA. On this topic, Mr. Calder Tsuyuki-Tomlinson, a representative of the UNFCCC COP28 Presidency, was invited to make a brief intervention. Mr. Tsuyuki-Tomlinson informed participants about plans for the COP28 Presidency to work with partners to highlight the opportunities provided by the revision of NBSAPs, NAPs and NDCs, to encourage Parties to align their plans with the

Kunming-Montreal Biodiversity Framework and leverage this moment to increase coordination between climate change and biodiversity. COP28 will also be an opportunity for the [NDC Partnership](#) to link with the [NBSAP Accelerator Partnership](#).

Recommendations & Follow-up Activities

The session highlighted a number of potential next steps and recommendations for different actors, including:

- Promoting coordination across government agencies;
- Mapping synergies between existing national policies;
- Prioritizing nature-based solutions and/or ecosystem-based approaches that offer multiple co-benefits; and
- Development of joint analyses of financing requirements to address both biodiversity and climate change crises in coherence.

Additional Literature Resources

UNFCCC, CBD, IISD, GIZ, UNEP and SwedBio (2022) [Promoting synergies between climate change adaptation and biodiversity through the National Adaptation Plan \(NAP\) and National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plan \(NBSAP\) processes](#). Terton, A., Qi, J. and Zúñiga, G. (authors). United Nations Climate Change Secretariat. Bonn.

Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity (2019). [Voluntary guidelines for the design and effective implementation of ecosystem-based approaches to climate change adaptation and disaster risk reduction and supplementary information](#). Technical Series No. 93. Montreal, 156 pages.

Upcoming Events & Participation Opportunities

A working group to support the implementation of Targets 8 and 11 of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework is being set up under the [Friends of Ecosystem-based Adaptation \(FEBA\)](#) network, with the objective to serve as a community of practice to promote synergies between biodiversity and climate change. Members of FEBA who are interested in joining this working group are invited to contact the FEBA Secretariat.