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Item 12 of the provisional agenda\*

**REPORT OF THE TESTING OF THE PROVISIONAL METHODOLOGY FOR THE  
VOLUNTARY PEER REVIEW OF THE REVIEW AND IMPLEMENTATION OF NATIONAL  
BIODIVERSITY STRATEGY AND ACTION PLANS IN ETHIOPIA**

*Note by the Executive Secretary*

1. The Executive Secretary is circulating herewith, for the information of participants in the first meeting of the Subsidiary Body on Implementation, a case study undertaken in Ethiopia to test the provisional methodology for the voluntary peer review of the review and implementation of national biodiversity strategy and action plans (NBSAPs). This, along with one undertaken in India (see UNEP/CBD/SBI/1/INF/48) represent part of the work of the informal working group for the development of a methodology for voluntary peer review of the revision and implementation of NBSAPs (see UNEP/CBD/SBI/1/INF/30). Subsequently, the informal working group has revised the provisional methodology to reflect the experience gained from the case studies, and the revised methodology is posted as document UNEP/CBD/SBI/1/10/Add.1.

2. The document is being circulated in the form and language in which it was received by the Secretariat.

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\* UNEP/CBD/SBI/1/1/Rev.1.

# **Voluntary-peer review under the Convention on Biological Diversity**

## **Test Case Study 1: Ethiopia**

Date of finalization of the report 20.3.2016

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## Acronyms

ABS	Access and Benefit-Sharing
ABS-CH	Access and Benefit-Sharing Clearing-House
ASL	Above Sea Level
ATA	Agricultural Transformation Agency
BIOFIN	Biodiversity Finance Initiative
CAN	Competent National Authority
CBD	Convention on Biological Diversity
CHM	Clearing House Mechanism
CITES	Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora
CMS	Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals
CRGE	Climate Resilient Green Economy Strategy
EBI	Ethiopian Biodiversity Institute
EBSAP	Ethiopian Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan
EIA	Environmental Impact Assessment
EWCA	Ethiopian Wildlife Conservation Authority
GBIF	Global Biodiversity Information Facility
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GEF	Global Environment Facility
GMOs	Genetically Modified Organisms
GTP	Growth and Transformation Plan
HDI	Human Development Index
HoPRs	House of Peoples' Representatives
IPBES	Intergovernmental Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services
IPPC	International Plant Protection Convention
ITPGRFA	International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture
IUCN	International Union for Conservation of Nature
LMOs	Living Modified Organisms
MAT	Mutually Agreed Terms
MEP	Multi-disciplinary Expert Panel
MoA	Ministry of Agriculture
MoANR	Ministry of Agriculture and Natural Resources
MoCT	Ministry of Culture and Tourism
MoE	Ministry of Education
MoEF	Ministry of Environment and Forestry
MoEFCC	Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change
MoFED	Ministry of Finance and Economic Development
MoH	Ministry of Health
MoLF	Ministry of Livestock and Fisheries
MoST	Ministry of Science and Technology
MoWCA	Ministry of Women, Children, and Youth Affairs
NBC	National Biodiversity Council
NBSAPs	National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans
NBTC	National Biodiversity Technical Committee
NGOs	Non-Governmental Organizations
NPC	National Planning Commission
NPSC	National Project Steering Committee
ODA	Official Development Assistance

PGRC	Plant Genetic Resources Center
PIC	Prior Informed Consent
PoWPA	Programme of Work for Protected Areas
Ramsar	Convention on Wetlands of International Importance
RCMRD	Regional Centre for Mapping of Resources for Development
SANBI	South African National Biodiversity Institute
SBI	Subsidiary Body on Implementation
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
UNGA	United Nations General Assembly
VPR	Voluntary Peer Review
WHC	World Heritage Convention
WII	Wildlife Institute of India

## 1. Background and methodology

The Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 and its twenty global Aichi Targets were adopted by the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) at its tenth meeting, held in Nagoya, Japan in October 2010. Parties to the Convention have been translating these targets into national targets as part of their updated and revised National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans (NBSAPs). In 2011, the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA), at its 65th meeting, passed Resolution 65/161, which declared the period 2011 – 2020 to be “*the United Nations Decade on Biodiversity, with a view to contributing to the implementation of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity for the period 2011-2020*”.

At its 12th meeting, the Conference of the Parties, in its decision XII/29, para 3: “*Takes note of the documents<sup>1</sup> prepared by the Executive Secretary on a proposed pilot voluntary peer-review process for the NBSAP, and requests the Executive Secretary, subject to the availability of resources, to develop a methodology for a voluntary peer-review process and to report to the May 2016 meeting of the CBD Subsidiary Body on Implementation (SBI), for its consideration;*”.

The specific objectives of the Voluntary Peer Review (VPR) process according to the draft methodology are: i) to assess national progress toward the current CBD Strategic Plan and produce specific recommendations for the Parties under review; 2) to provide opportunities for peer learning; and 3) to create greater transparency and accountability to the public and other Parties.

Ethiopia is one of the 17 Parties who joined the Inception Meeting of the Working Group for the further development of a methodology for VPR of implementation of the Convention on Biological Diversity, held in Tbilisi, Georgia from 11 to 13 February 2015. At the meeting, it was agreed that the revised methodology should be tested in 2 countries. Seven of the expert group Parties offered to be reviewed and India and Ethiopia were selected as providing a good geographical and socio-economic range. A new or recently revised NBSAP was one eligibility requirement for selection as a pilot, and both Ethiopia and India fulfill this requirement also.

The peer review team comprised the following expert group members: Mr. Rabikumar Thangapandian, (Secretary, India National Biodiversity Authority and NBSAP revision process leader from India), Ms. Tone Solhaug, (CBD National Focal Point of Norway), and Mr. Andreas Obrecht (CBD National Focal Point of Switzerland). Mr. Obrecht was the review team leader. CBD Secretariat support was provided by Mr. David Duthie, Mr. Nicolaas Van Der Werf and Mr. Maroun Abi-Chahine.

A desk study was implemented through studying the final draft revised Ethiopian Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (EBSAP), the Ethiopia 5<sup>th</sup> National Report to the Convention, and a significant number of other documents identified and listed by the Secretariat. This desk study, combined with the scoping document prepared by Ethiopia, provided the basis for an in-country visit. The agenda of the visit was prepared by the CBD Secretariat in close cooperation with the Ethiopian Biodiversity Institute (EBI), and the visit took place in Addis Ababa from 28-30th July 2015. Originally, one team member was to have been from Africa also, but due to other commitments, he had to withdraw at short notice and was replaced by India.

The aim of the country visit was to allow the review team to build on the desk study with additional direct information from other officials and stakeholders. During the in-country mission 15 interview meetings were held. The list of meetings is given in the annex to the present document.

Based on findings from both the desk study and the in-country visit, the Review Team formulated this report (Sections 3-7). Chapter 2 contains some key background information compiled from the literature by the CBD Secretariat.

This report is primarily intended to gain experiences to improve the methodology of the proposed Voluntary Peer-Review Process under the CBD. Comments on questions related to the methodology can be sent to the CBD Secretariat at <[secretariat@cbd.int](mailto:secretariat@cbd.int)>.

## 2. Key facts

### 2.1. Country Profile

With a total area of over 1.127 million km<sup>2</sup>, Ethiopia is the 10th largest country in Africa. It is bordered to the north by Eritrea, to the east by Djibouti and Somalia, to the south by Kenya and to the west by Sudan and South Sudan. Ethiopia is characterized by a rugged and mountainous topography with altitudes ranging from 4,620m. above sea level at Mount Ras Dejen in North Gondar in the Amhara National Regional State to 126m below sea level at the Dallol Depression in the Afar National Regional State. Because of this variation in altitude, the temperature varies from one of the world's highest annual average of 39° C at the Dallol Depression to the very cool Afro-montane climate at high altitudes. Because of its latitude and altitudinal contrasts, the climate system is very complex. ([Main Source: GEF PIF](#))

### 2.2. Economic overview

Ethiopia is the second-most populous country in Sub-Saharan Africa with a population of 85.8 million, and a population growth rate of 2.6% in 2013. Ethiopia is also a least developed country.

The economy has experienced strong and broad-based growth over the past decade, averaging 10.8% per year in the period 2003/04-2012/13, compared to the regional average of 5.3%. Expansion of the services and agricultural sectors account for most of this growth, while manufacturing sector performance was relatively modest. In 2011/12 fiscal year, a total of USD 3.2 billion revenue has been obtained from export of goods.

In the past five years, 40% yield increase in agriculture was achieved. Ethiopia is the world's tenth-largest producer of livestock, and its other major exports are coffee, sesame seed, leather, flowers, and gold. From 2005 to 2010, it improved its infrastructure, more than doubling electric power generation capacity, expanding the telecommunication network from 0.5 million users to 25 million and adding over 11,000 kilometers to the existing road network. ([Main source: Ethiopia's Climate-Resilient Green Economy Strategy](#))

In 2011/12, small farmers and commercial farms have produced a total of 232.44 million quintals of major food crops (Cereals, pulses and oil seeds). ([Main source: Annual Progress Report for F.Y. 2011/12 Growth and Transformation Plan](#))

Economic growth, especially in the agriculture sector, has brought with it positive trends in reducing poverty, in both urban and rural areas. While 38.7% of Ethiopians lived in extreme poverty in 2004-2005, five years later this was reduced to 29.6%, which is a decrease of 9.1 percentage points as measured by the national poverty line of less than \$0.6 per day. According to the Growth and Transformation Plan (GTP), the government's goal is to reduce this further to 22.2% by 2014-2015. ([Main source: Ethiopia, Country overview, the World Bank](#))

Ethiopia at a Glance	
Population:	85.8 million (2013)
GDP:	US\$46.6 billion (2013)
GDP per capita:	US\$550 (2013)
Annual Average Br/US\$ exchange rate:	18.3 (2012/13)
Life expectancy at birth (years):	62.2 (2013)
Primary school gross enrolment rate (%):	95.3 (2012/13)
Births attended by skilled health professional (%):	23.1 (2012//13)
Contraceptive prevalence rate (%):	28.6 (2011)

Literacy rate (% of both sexes aged 15 and above):	46.7 (2011)
Unemployment rate (urban) (%):	16.5 (2012/13)
Unemployment rate among urban youth (15-29) (%):	23.3 (2011/12)
Areas further than 5 km from all-weather roads (%):	45.8 (2012/13)
Mobile phone subscribers (million):	23.8 (2012/13)
Poverty incidence (%):	26.0 (GTP/APR 2012/13)
HD Index:	0.435 (2013)
HDI rank:	173/187 (2013)
<i>Main sources: MoFED, 2013; MoE, 2013; MoH, 2012; UNDP, 2013; UNDP, 2014</i>	

### 2.3. Overview of species and ecosystem data of Ethiopia

The biogeography of Ethiopia is characterized by two dominant features - first, the ancient arid region of the Horn of Africa, with its three centers of endemism one of which, the Ogaden, falls within Ethiopia. The more recent mesic highland plateaux are the second biogeographical feature. Although relatively young in evolutionary terms and having experienced relative climatic instability over the past 1.5 million years (both in contrast to the arid Horn), highland isolation has resulted in significant endemism. Overall, therefore, while the arid Horn and young highlands are relatively impoverished in species number, the levels of endemism are high. Ethiopia has over 6500 species of higher plants (with 625 endemic species and 669 near-endemic species, and one endemic plant genus). About 887 plant species are used for medicinal purposes, constituting over 10% of the vascular species existing in Ethiopia. Currently, 861 avian species (18 endemic species and two endemic genera), 284 species of mammal (29 endemic species and six endemic genera), 201 species of reptile (10 endemic species), 63 species of amphibians (25 endemic species), 200 freshwater fish (40 are endemic) have been recorded. Seven mammal and two bird species have been listed by the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) as critically endangered. According to the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) list, 1 reptile, 4 birds and 8 mammals are threatened by international trade.

The vegetation of the country falls into five recognized biomes: Sudanian, Congo-Guinean, Sahel arid zone, Somali-Maasai, and Afro-tropical montane. These can be further sub-divided into ten broad ecosystems:

- i. Afroalpine and Subafroalpine Ecosystem
- ii. Montane Grassland Ecosystem
- iii. Dry Evergreen Montane Forest and Evergreen Scrub Ecosystem
- iv. Moist Montane Forest Ecosystem
- v. Acacia-Commiphora Woodland Ecosystem
- vi. Combretum-Terminalia Woodland Ecosystem
- vii. Lowland Tropical Forest Ecosystem
- viii. Desert and Semi-desert Scrubland Ecosystem
- ix. Wetland Ecosystem
- x. Aquatic Ecosystem

There are a number of charismatic flagship species, most notably the Gelada (an endemic genus, *Theropithecus*, and the world's only grazing primate), the mountain nyala, the Ethiopian wolf, the Walia Ibex and the Giant Lobelia. The global significance of Ethiopia's biodiversity has been recognized through Conservation International's Biodiversity Hotspots. The country spans two Hotspots: (i) the Horn of Africa; and (ii) the Ethiopian Highlands (included in the Eastern Afro-montane Hotspot). The areas included in the Hotspots cover the majority of the country, including



the entire eastern area of Ethiopia below 1,100m Above Sea Level (ASL) and all highland areas above 1,100m ASL.

There are five major river basins in Ethiopia that provide water for the people, livestock, wildlife and riparian vegetation (Webe Shebelle, Awash, Omo, Juba, and Blue Nile - the latter comprised of the Takeze, Baro-Akobo and Abbai watersheds). The people, livestock, wildlife and riparian vegetation in the lowlands are dependent on the good management and protection of the watersheds in the highlands. ([Main source: Young, J. \(2012\) Ethiopian Protected Areas A 'Snapshot'](#)).

#### 2.4. National legislation related to biodiversity

The Environmental Policy of Ethiopia was approved on April 2, 1997 by the Council of Ministers and remains the overarching policy document for the environment. The most recent environmental objectives in Ethiopia are described, among others, in the (GTP) 2010-2015, and the Climate Resilient Green Economy Strategy (CRGE) adopted in 2011. In this last document, Ethiopia committed to achieve carbon-neutral middle-income status by 2025 and to ensure a swift yet equitable and truly sustainable response to economic development and climate change.

The Ethiopian Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (EBSAP) itself is the most important policy document relating to biodiversity, but many laws have been enacted and treaties adopted for the protection of different segments of the Ethiopian environment which are relevant to biodiversity. Below is a selection, and the laws are in order of issuance, from the earliest to the most recent.

- Awash National Park Establishment Order No. 54/1969, Simien National Park Establishment Order No. 59/1970, and similar other establishment documents;
- Constitution of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia (December 1994)
- Institute of Biodiversity Conservation and Research Establishment Proclamation No. 120/1998 (later renamed the Institute of Biodiversity Conservation by Proclamation No 381/2004);
- Proclamation on the Establishment of Environmental Protection Organs No. 295/2002;
- Environmental Impact Assessment Proclamation No. 299/2002, Directive Issued to Determine Projects Subject to Environmental Impact Assessment ("EIA") No. 2/ 2008, EIA Guideline Document (May 2000), EIA Procedural Guideline Series 1 (2003), Guideline Series Documents for Reviewing EIA Reports (2003), EIA Guidelines on Irrigation (2004) and on Pesticides (2004);
- Environmental Pollution Control Proclamation No. 300/2002, Regulation and Directives for Emission Standards of Selected 2012] Ethiopian Environmental Regime 61 Industries (2008);
- Access to Genetic Resources and Community Knowledge, and Community Rights Proclamation No. 482/2006;
- Development Conservation and Utilization of Wildlife Proclamation No. 541/2007;
- Forest Conservation, Development and Utilization Proclamation No. 542/2007;
- Ethiopian Wildlife Development and Conservation Authority Establishment Proclamation No. 575/2008; and
- Biosafety Proclamation No. 655/2009.

[\(Main Source: Getu, Mulugeta \(2012\) The Ethiopian environmental regime versus international standards: policy, legal, and institutional frameworks. Haramaya Law Review 1\(1\): 43-72\).](#)

## 2.5. Membership of biodiversity-related multilateral environmental agreements

Ethiopia ratified the CBD in 1994, Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety, in 2004, and the Nagoya Protocol on Access to Genetic Resources and the Fair and Equitable Sharing of Benefits Arising from their Utilization to the CBD in 2012, but has yet to ratify the Nagoya–Kuala Lumpur Supplementary Protocol to the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety which has yet to enter into force. Ethiopia has ratified a number of other multilateral environmental agreements such as The United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change; the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification, and others (see Table below).

<b>Convention / selected process</b>	<b>Competent Authority (Focal Point)</b>
Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD)	Ethiopian Biodiversity Institute (EBI)
Nagoya Protocol	Ethiopian Biodiversity Institute (EBI)
Cartagena Protocol	Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEFCC)
The Global Environment Facility (GEF)	Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEFCC)
Intergovernmental Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES)	Ethiopian Biodiversity Institute (EBI)
The Global Environment Facility (GEF)	Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEFCC)
Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES)	Ethiopian Wildlife Conservation Authority (MoCT)
Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals (CMS)	Ethiopian Wildlife Conservation Authority (EWCA)
World Heritage Convention (WHC)	Ethiopian National Office for UNESCO (MoE)
International Plant Protection Convention (IPPC)	Plant Health & Regulatory Department, Ministry of Agriculture (MoA)
Convention on Wetlands of International Importance (Ramsar)	NOT Party
International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture (ITPGRFA)	Ethiopian Biodiversity Institute (EBI)

## 3. Observations and recommendations to Ethiopia

### 3.1. Institutional arrangements

#### 3.1.1. Observations

The main unit leading and coordinating the EBSAP revision and implementation process is the Ethiopian Biodiversity Institute (EBI) as the national focal institution for the Convention on Biological Diversity. The EBI is an autonomous federal government institution and, since October 2015, is

accountable to the MoEFCC.<sup>2</sup> The Director of EBI maintains direct links to main decision-makers, such as the Chairs of the Committees of the House of Representatives and the National Planning Commission, and is, therefore, in a strong position to implement the Convention.

The Minister of Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change will chair the National Biodiversity Council (NBC) charged with overseeing EBSAP implementation, and its vice chair will be a person from the appropriate standing committee of the House of the Peoples' Representatives. A direct link to Parliament will thus be ensured throughout the implementation process. The Chairman of the Agricultural Committee of the House of Peoples Representatives chaired the EBSAP revision process and was initially foreseen to chair the NBC. This has been changed with the change of government structure in October 2015 when EBI was moved to Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEFCC). However, it is important that strong links between EBI and the Ministry of Agriculture (now the Ministry of Agriculture and Natural Resources (MoANR) are maintained to address the pressures on biodiversity from an expanding agricultural sector.

Several institutions/ministries are designated focal points and competent authorities for related biodiversity conventions (see Chapter 2). The revised draft EBSAP does not directly address these other global biodiversity-relevant conventions in spite of the fact that all biodiversity-related convention Secretariats have recognized the relevance of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 to their respective conventions, and that CITES and CMS have produced specific guidance on integrating their conventions into NBSAPs<sup>3</sup>.

The conversion of the Ethiopian Environmental Protection Authority to the Ministry of Environment and Forestry (MoEF) in 2013, and recently, in October 2015, to the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEFCC), incorporating the EBI, could lead to changes in competencies between EBI and MoEFCC, but also open doors for close collaboration on many issues. The extent of this is not clear to the review team, but there may be a need for further clarification of responsibilities for biodiversity planning and management at both federal and regional levels.

The EBI is learning lessons from the development and implementation of the previous EBSAP, as is indicated in Chapter 6 of the revised EBSAP. The EBI has created regional nodes in 7 major agro-ecological zones to effectively implement its objectives on the ground, including the implementation of the EBSAP, which is a very positive development. Within the EBI, five year budgets are developed as part of Draft Growth and Transformation Plan II (GTP II) and activities are prioritized according to importance. According to information received after the in-country visit, all of the actions put under each of the Targets of the Revised Ethiopian EBSAP 2015-2020 to which EBI has been designated as a "lead" have been included in this five year plan.

Ethiopia's regional States have some degree of autonomy granted by the Federal Constitution. While the specificities have not been looked at by the review team, there is a need to clarify roles between federal institutions, such as EBI, its regional nodes of Regional Biodiversity Units (RBUs), and regional bureaus<sup>4</sup>. The RBUs plan their activities together with EBI for each given fiscal year. The quarterly, biannual and annual achievements of the plans are evaluated at a regular basis between EBI and the RBUs.

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<sup>2</sup> At the time of the country visit and drafting of this report, the EBI was still under the Ministry of Agriculture; however, in October 2015, it was moved to the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEFCC) in a reorganization of the government after election.

<sup>3</sup> see <https://cites.org/eng/notif/2011/E026A.pdf> and <http://www.cms.int/en/document/draft-guidance-integration-conservation-migratory-species-nbsaps>

<sup>4</sup> Clarification received from NBSAP Coordinator: Regional Bureaus do not have any direct responsibility to report to EBI nor do they take any plan from EBI. But, RBUs are responsible both for EBI and bureaus of their respective regions. RBUs take their annual plans from EBI, they plan together with EBI and they report to the EBI. They also report to their bureaus, their plan however is taken from the national five year plan of the EBI.

### 3.1.2. Recommendations

- A good discussion is encouraged by the NBC on work-sharing responsibilities among the institutions represented in it, and also the National Biodiversity Technical Committee (NBTC), in order to achieve comprehensive implementation of the EBSAP. This will be ensured through a binding agreement between the lead and collaborating institutions. Tasks need to be clearly assigned and competencies shared. One way would be to integrate other government units than EBI, such as EWCA, more in CBD-processes. For instance, EWCA might be well-suited to act as the focal point for the CBD Programme of Work for Protected Areas (PoWPA) instead of EBI. Important managerial issues should be brought to NBC for final decision. When five -year budgets are developed and activities are prioritized according to importance, this prioritization should be made very transparent and discussed by the NBC.
- As part of EBSAP implementation, EBI should seek cooperation and clarification on the issue of changes in competencies between EBI and its lead ministry, the MoEFCC. The good relationship of EBI and the NBC with the Agricultural Committee of the Parliament as well as between EBI and the Ministry of Agriculture and Natural Resources (MoANR) must be maintained.
- The EBI should also ensure that duplication of structures and the distribution of competencies with the regional state bureaus are clarified.
- A clear strategy for EBI and other federal institutions to cooperate with regional institutions is recommended. Regular contact with regional bureau representatives as well as the heads of the RBU is very desirable. It will be necessary for EBI to ensure that the regional offices are allocated the resources necessary for them to implement the EBSAP.

## 3.2. National planning processes

### 3.2.1. Observations

Ethiopia has a long record of establishing and implementing national plans and policies. The integration of biodiversity issues in key national planning documents is important to enable active follow-up. Ethiopia is one of the countries which have almost completed the revision of its EBSAP, taking into consideration the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020. The final step in the EBSAP revision process has been the completion of the table of national actions in early 2016

Ethiopia has several national development strategies and plans of relevance to the objectives of the CBD. Ethiopia is currently finalizing its main overarching strategic/political development document, the second Growth and Transformation Plan (GTP2). The first Plan (GTP1) which ran from 2011-2015, contained little of direct relevance for CBD implementation in Ethiopia. The GTP2 is a 5-year plan (2016-2020) which includes all sectors and provides the path for Ethiopia towards realizing its vision to become a middle income country by 2025. The GTP2 is supposed to integrate other policy documents, including the CRGE, and it is expected that the second Growth and Transformation Plan will contain more references to the actions contained in the revised EBSAP. The National Planning Commission (NPC) has the lead in developing the GTP and is an important institution also for biodiversity. The NPC has a strong political support from Prime Minister and the ruling party.

Although there is a general conviction that the main priorities of the revised EBSAP will be reflected in the GTP-2, the latter document is still not easily accessible, even in Amharic. It would have been preferable for the GTP2 to have been examined through a formal Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) process, but this does not yet exist in Ethiopia.

In spite of the strong interest and effort to achieve the MDGs in Ethiopia, there was no mention of the new Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) by interviewees. Several Aichi Targets are referred to in the SDG framework and the CBD Secretariat has outlined relevant links to a number of the SDGs<sup>5</sup>.

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<sup>5</sup> see <https://www.cbd.int/doc/meetings/sbstta/sbstta-19/information/sbstta-19-inf-09-en.pdf>

Ethiopia will, in the coming years, take up the mammoth task of developing a land use map<sup>6</sup>. If biodiversity considerations are integrated in this process, the benefits for national biodiversity planning would be substantial.

### 3.2.2 Recommendations

- It will be important for the overall success of biodiversity mainstreaming that the EBSAP is adequately represented in the GTP-2 and its implementation, and EBI should work with the House of People's Representatives (since these are, among others, the people that are communicating at grass root levels at their constituencies), MoFECC and NPC to ensure that this is the case.
- There should be a strong link between the EBSAP implementation and the SDGs. The EBI should work with the NPC in domestic discussions related to the SDG process to ensure that issues relevant for biodiversity are taken into consideration in measures taken to achieve the SDGs in Ethiopia.
- The fact that gender-related targets were added in the NBSAP process is considered very positive and active implementation of these targets is encouraged.
- In order to use the land optimally not only to increase agricultural productivity but also to conserve natural vegetation, a science-based land use policy and planning would be essential. The implementation and monitoring of such policy would also be vital for sustainable land use.

## 3.3. NBSAP revision

### 3.3.1 Observations

Ethiopia developed its first EBSAP in 2005, has drafted the revised 2015 -2020 EBSAP, and has also submitted its 5th National Report to the Convention, plus a national report to the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety.

The EBSAP revision was undertaken as part of the GEF Enabling Activity project with the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) as the GEF agency supporting the project. The project was approved on 7-Feb-2012 with \$220,000 of GEF finance and was executed by EBI as the lead agency. A final draft was completed by April 2015 and was made available to the review team in late May 2015. The revision process appears to have been implemented in a transparent and inclusive manner - with a 14 National Project Steering Committee (NPSC) members from 11 stakeholder institutions and 24 Technical Team (TT) members from 7 stakeholder institutions (see EBSAP page iv). To remain transparent and inclusive when it comes to the implementation stage is a challenge for many countries and the role of both the NBTC and the NBC7 will be crucial to implementation success. The EBSAP was drafted in a realistic, but still in ambitious way, which may be useful during implementation. This balance was intended by EBI. The reference to the importance of biodiversity to the "security of the nation" in the Goal of the EBSAP is an indication of strong governmental commitment.

Historically, the EBI, in its original structure, had a strong role to play in the conservation of plant genetic resources in Ethiopia, having been established as the Plant Genetic Resources Center, Ethiopia (PGRC/E) in 1976. Although the mandate of the Institute has broadened considerably with it becoming after becoming a party to the CBD and as the national competent authority for biodiversity, the origins of the Institute are still, to some extent, reflected in its organizational structure, consisting of five key Directorates, namely: (1) Crop and Horticulture Biodiversity Directorate, (2) Animal Biodiversity Directorate (3) Microbial Biodiversity Directorate (4) Forest and

<sup>6</sup> State Minister for Agriculture interview comment

<sup>7</sup> Members of the NBC will be representatives from HoPRs, EBI, MoA, MoFECC, EWCA, MoE, MoWCYA, MoFED and MoST plus others (see NBSAP page 101)

Rangeland Biodiversity Directorate and (5) Genetic Resources Access and Benefit Sharing Directorate, which clearly have a species and gene level focus.

The EBSAP has a separate chapter on implementation arrangements. There are many lead and collaborating implementing agencies, from different ministries and institutions. However, there are actions in the EBSAP which are relevant to the implementation of other relevant conventions, such as the biodiversity-related Conventions (see table in Section 2), thus it would have been useful for the further implementation to also clearly address these conventions in the EBSAP in order to build a common policy-platform for biodiversity in Ethiopia.

Given the broad scope of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020, and the way this has been incorporated into the revised EBSAP, the limited functional scope of the EBI Directorates could be a potential obstacle for mainstreaming biodiversity into other sectors, unless very strong working relationships exist with other stakeholder institutions. The Action Plan of the EBSAP clearly indicates this broad range in the allocation of responsibilities laid out in Table 9 on “Strategic goals, targets, actions, implementing agencies, and the time schedule for implementation”. According to information received after the in-country visit, most of the EBSAP actions have been incorporated into the budgets of the stakeholder institutions but there is still the need for external resources for some crosscutting actions.

While the revision of the EBSAP was conducted in an inclusive and transparent manner, it currently lacks a budget for implementation as well as a detailed analysis of the legal situation. It should be noted, however, that Ethiopia has developed a National Target 2 stating that “By 2020, the existing biodiversity related laws, regulations and strategies, including those associated with incentives are reviewed and gaps are addressed”. Whilst this target is probably needed for EBSAP implementation, the timeline of 2020 will mean that some of the legislation necessary for full implementation may not be in place before the end of the NBSAP cycle.

### 3.3.2 Recommendations

- The close involvement of MoEFCC, MoANR, ATA8, NPC and EWCA9 in the NBC and NBTC needs to be ensured, since EBI, MoEFCC and EWCA are the key government organisations for EBSAP implementation.
- The EBI intends to develop a binding agreement among government stakeholders to ensure/create sense of ownership/responsibility for the implementation of the EBSAP between lead and collaborating agencies. Depending how it is done, it could be a rather cumbersome and resource-intensive endeavor. Such agreement should complement efforts of EBI to obtain broad ownership of the EBSAP.
- EBSAP Target 18 states that a resource mobilization strategy will be developed and put in place by 2016 which, if it is effectively implemented, should make a strong contribution to the generation of finance for the other priority activities of the EBSAP. It is quite likely that generating funds to cover all activities will be challenging, as it is for most CBD Parties. Therefore, it is recommended that the NBTC, at its first meetings, ensures that development of the resource mobilization strategy is initiated, and that a prioritization process is developed and applied to the action plan. (see also potential additional options in 3.7)

## 3.4. Implementation of the Nagoya Protocol

### 3.4.1. Observations

Ethiopia acceded to the Nagoya Protocol on 16th November 2012 and became a Party to the Protocol on 12th October 2014, as the Protocol entered into force 90 days after its 50th ratification.

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<sup>8</sup> Agricultural Transformation Agency

<sup>9</sup> Ethiopian Wildlife Conservation Authority



There is already a well-functioning regulatory system for Access and Benefit-sharing (ABS) in the country.<sup>10</sup>

Currently, there is a regulation on how benefits arising from access permissions are being distributed. Fifty per cent is allocated by the federal government for local biodiversity conservation and 50% is at the disposal of local communities. In case traditional knowledge has been accessed, 100% of the benefits will go to the local government. The EBI, as the Competent National Authority (CNA), screens all applications in consultation with experts and serves as the negotiator of both Prior Informed Consent (PIC) with local communities and Mutually Agreed Terms (MAT) between provider and user. The EBI will ensure that all relevant legislative, administrative or policy measures and other information will be uploaded to the Access and Benefit-sharing Clearing-house (ABS-CH).

#### 3.4.2. Recommendations

- Information about ongoing ABS regulation should be shared through the international ABS-Clearing House as soon as possible, so that potential users can easily access this information.

### 3.5. Cartagena Protocol

#### 3.5.1. Observations

The MoFECC is the Competent National Authority (CNA) for the Cartagena Protocol, and the national biosafety regulation has recently been revised to a less strict regime that may be more in line with the agricultural intensification objectives of the GTP. Living Modified Organisms (LMOs) risk-assessment procedures will need to be developed, in line with Cartagena Protocol. According to Gazette 6/19, the EBI has a mandate to control and follow up on any potential negative impacts of Genetically Modified Organisms (GMOs). The national report for the Cartagena Protocol is due to be submitted to the CBD Secretariat later this year.

#### 3.5.2. Recommendations

- It is recommended that the issue of Cartagena Protocol implementation is discussed at one of the first meetings of the NBTC, and also brought to the attention of the NBC.
- Ways should be found to increase public awareness about the Cartagena Protocol and to discuss the national biosafety regulations.

### 3.6 Biodiversity status and knowledge systems

#### 3.6.1. Observations

Threats to biodiversity include under-valuation of environmental resources, deforestation (due to agricultural expansion and settlement, habitat fragmentation and subsequent decline in regeneration, and forest fire), lack of adequate knowledge of biological resources, and overexploitation. The protected areas of Ethiopia constitute 14% of the total land area, but the montane forest ecosystems are not well represented. Ethiopian forest cover had declined to 3.56% (Woody Biomass Inventory Report of 2004). The official figure for forest cover reported in "The State of Forest Genetic Resources of Ethiopia" in 2012 to FAO is 11% and the figure released by MoEFCC recently in a press release is 15%.

Eight new protected areas were demarcated and new proclamation and regulations designed to ensure the sustainable utilization and protection of wildlife resources. Recently, the management of 12 protected areas was enhanced through the rollout of training for staff, wardens and scouts, provisions of material, rehabilitation of roads as well as development and fencing of water-points.

The Ethiopian Clearing House Mechanism (CHM) website (<http://et.chm-cbd.net/>) appears to have been mostly inactive. The UNEP project document for the Revision of NBSAPs has, as Component 5,

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<sup>10</sup>See [http://www.abs-initiative.info/fileadmin//media/Events/2015/28-29\\_January\\_2015\\_Copenhagen\\_Denmark/Ethiopia.pdf](http://www.abs-initiative.info/fileadmin//media/Events/2015/28-29_January_2015_Copenhagen_Denmark/Ethiopia.pdf)

activities related to Strengthening of the CHM with a benchmark allocation of \$15,000 for CHM activities, yet there appears not to have been any recent development of CHM and the revised EBSAP contains a specific Target 15 on biodiversity information which states that the national CHM will be “updated”.

Ethiopia is making a strong contribution to the new Intergovernmental Platform for Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES) with a representative on the Multi-disciplinary Expert Panel (MEP), the Director of EBI as the national focal point, and several scientists engaged in regional assessments. This should lead to an increased capacity to undertake national and sub-national biodiversity and ecosystem service assessments underpinning EBSAP Target 8, for example.

One of the conclusions from the 5th National report (2014) says: "Ethiopia has shown substantial progress in the implementation of the Strategic Plan 2011-2020. Out of the 20 Aichi Biodiversity Targets, Ethiopia has registered very well (Aichi Targets 1, 2, 7, 10, 11, 13, 14, 15 and 18), good (Aichi Targets 3, 4, 12, 16, 17 and 19) and fair (Aichi Targets 5, 6, 8 and 9) achievements in the first half of the 2011-2020, the implementation period of the Strategic Plan". However, implementation of Aichi Target 20 is reported to have been poor. These performances were, among others, attributed to “improved communications between the focal institute and stakeholders, increased commitment of the government in the areas of conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity, and access and benefit sharing issues, and improved awareness of the public and decision makers on the importance of biodiversity for human well-being and the country’s development. These achievements have contributed towards improving livelihoods of the people and overall national development." The tendency of Parties to self-assess the situation of biodiversity too positively in their national reports seems to be the case here as well.

### 3.6.2. Recommendations

- It is recommended to continue to strengthen biodiversity knowledge systems in Ethiopia which may need the development of some information/work sharing arrangements between EBI, its new “parent” Ministry (MoEFCC), and EWCA, as well as others. A meeting of the NBTC could specifically address this and explore options.
- Under the GTP and CRGE initiatives, there is a very large amount of infrastructural development being undertaken. This provides opportunities to gather data useful for mitigating impacts on biodiversity and ecosystems and for potential biodiversity offsetting through the legally-required Environmental Impact Assessments (EIAs). A systematic involvement of EBI and/or other relevant government units in EIA processes should be put in place.
- Ethiopia has quite strong Environmental Impact Assessment legislation (Proclamation 299/2002), and environmental impact assessments are compulsory. They could generate a significant amount of new biodiversity and ecosystem service data that could be centralized and added to the national biodiversity information systems, such as the CHM. During the EBSAP implementation process, the NBC/NBTC may consider how data of these processes could be gathered by a clearly assigned unit and then used for biodiversity monitoring. This information should be widely available, especially to EBI. Experience with such data repositories has been gained in India (WII)<sup>11</sup> and South Africa (SANBI)<sup>12</sup>, and the EBI could actively promote the use of the Environmental Impact Assessment Biodiversity Data Publishing Portal<sup>13</sup>. Government units, especially MoEFCC and the EBI should strengthen their cooperation when it comes to data collection and publishing. Strong and effective implementation of EIA can also provide for an effective mechanism for mainstreaming of biodiversity into other sectors.

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<sup>11</sup> Wildlife Institute of India

<sup>12</sup> South African National Biodiversity Institute

<sup>13</sup> See [http://links.gbif.org/eia\\_biodiversity\\_data\\_publishing\\_guide\\_en\\_v1](http://links.gbif.org/eia_biodiversity_data_publishing_guide_en_v1) and <http://www.sanbi.org/sites/default/files/documents/documents/5-including-biodiversity-eias.pdf>



- Biodiversity information systems, such as the CHM, are an important part of both biodiversity information management and general awareness-raising for biodiversity and the EBSAP itself, it is strongly recommended that the national CHM be maintained and updated on a regular basis. It should be used as a tool to accompany EBSAP implementation. EBI could also consider collaborating with institutions such as the Regional Centre for Mapping of Resources for Development (RCMRD)<sup>14</sup> to build capacity for incorporating spatial data into the monitoring of EBSAP implementation.
- The NBTC should take into account the upcoming deliverables of IPBES when leading the EBSAP implementation process. Both knowledge and methodological advice provided by use of IPBES could be helpful for this process. NBC/NBTC should also consider the benefits for Ethiopia of membership of the Global Biodiversity Information Facility (GBIF).

### 3.7 Cooperation with international and multilateral partners

#### 3.7.1. Observations

Many international organizations and development cooperation agencies have activities or even an office in Addis Ababa, which could provide opportunities for getting support in implementing the EBSAP. During national implementation of the SDGs, organizations which are traditionally not closely working on biodiversity conservation could become more aware of the importance of biodiversity issues when addressing human development, security, sustainable land management, disaster risk reduction, etc..

Regarding Official Development Assistance (ODA), the government of Ethiopia takes a cautious approach to international development in order not to lose its independence and often prefers to fund projects itself rather than accepting strict conditionalities from outside donors. However, Ethiopia is still a major recipient of ODA and other sources of international funding. There is no systematic analysis of biodiversity-relevance of ODA funding received and the national report, including resource mobilization reporting submitted to the CBD, does not contain any details. However, a number of biodiversity projects have been set up with GEF-funding. Since joining the GEF, Ethiopia received GEF grants totaling US\$51,786,925 that leveraged US\$343,464,220. During the GEF-5 replenishment period (July 2010 – June 2014), Ethiopia received an indicative allocation to formulate and execute projects for US\$8,130,000 in biodiversity, US\$6,590,000 in climate change, and US\$4,290,000 in land degradation.

Most of Ethiopia's biodiversity allocation for GEF-6 has been allocated to a protected areas project implemented through UNDP<sup>15</sup>. In 2011, a GEF project selection committee was set-up, albeit with no EBI representative, and a GEF Portfolio Identification Document<sup>16</sup> was produced.

#### 3.7.2. Recommendations

- The NBC should use national implementation measures towards achieving the SDGs to mainstream biodiversity and promote awareness of biodiversity in domestic and international organizations active in many areas of development in Ethiopia.
- The EBI, MoEFCC and others should engage more with international and multilateral partner institutions to strengthen the integration of biodiversity elements in the programs of these institutions.

<sup>14</sup> See [http://servircatalogue.net/Product?product\\_id=1](http://servircatalogue.net/Product?product_id=1)

<sup>15</sup> See pages 142-156 of project document at [http://www.thegef.org/gef/sites/thegef.org/files/gef\\_prj\\_docs/GEFProjectDocuments/Multi%20Focal%20Area/Global%20-%20289071%29%20-%20Global%20Partnership%20on%20Wildlife%20Conservation%20and%20Cr/04-29-15\\_PDF\\_Final\\_Version.pdf](http://www.thegef.org/gef/sites/thegef.org/files/gef_prj_docs/GEFProjectDocuments/Multi%20Focal%20Area/Global%20-%20289071%29%20-%20Global%20Partnership%20on%20Wildlife%20Conservation%20and%20Cr/04-29-15_PDF_Final_Version.pdf)

<sup>16</sup> <http://www.thegef.org/gef/sites/thegef.org/files/documents/document/Ethiopia%20NPDF.pdf>

- The responsibility to implement the EBSAP should be shared with more international/multilateral partners.
- For the next GEF replenishment period, a GEF project development and selection committee should be set up, similar to the one in 2011, with a close link to the NBC. This selection committee should start working as soon as possible, also in cooperation with GEF agencies. Ways should be sought to access the Green Climate Fund for ecosystem-based adaptation projects and relevant Green Economy projects that could benefit biodiversity. The EBI should work closely with the MoANR, MoFECC and the Cabinet to get formal approval for this. Further points to be addressed by EBI/NBC in order to benefit from international cooperation would be to consider applying to become a Biodiversity Finance Initiative (BIOFIN) country and/or to consider making use of the BIOFIN methodology during the EBSAP implementation phase. Cooperation with other partners should also be sought regarding the application of remote sensing methods.
- Ratification of the Ramsar Convention should be reconsidered.

### 3.8 Working with Non-Governmental Organizations(NGOs)

#### 3.8.1 Observations

NGOs, both international and domestic, are important and good partners of EBI. Although NGOs were consulted throughout the EBSAP revision process, it remains unclear whether the revision process covered the whole range of relevant NGOs. The NGOs which the review team visited were closely involved with the process, closely linked with EBI, and focused on nature conservation.

As mentioned above, the SDGs provide an excellent opportunity to raise the awareness of biodiversity and the importance of sustainable use in the activities of NGOs which have not traditionally be active in this field.

#### 3.8.2 Recommendations

- During the EBSAP implementation process, the EBI should also engage with NGOs which are not or only indirectly linked to conservation issues. The SDGs could be used as a basis and argument for that.
- NGOs working in the biodiversity area should be encouraged to cooperate more intensively with each other in a strategic manner and also at the regional level.

### 3.9 Agriculture

#### 3.9.1. Observations

Issues related to agricultural intensification, biosafety, and increasing productivity using high-tech crops or non-native crops are very important to Ethiopia. Ethiopia is the country of origin for many important crops and the country maintains a number of seed banks. Intensification of agriculture, reforestation, and other developments could challenge agricultural biodiversity and lead to genetic erosion. There is a threat to lose these when agriculture is intensified. Both crop and animal diversity may be of use in climate adaptation.

The Agricultural Transformation Agency ([ATA](#)) is an important actor in Ethiopia's GTP, but the review team was unable to meet with them. The ATA used to be focused on the implementation of high-tech agricultural techniques and high-performance seeds, but most recently ATA has become more aware of the importance of other practices, including traditional practices and sustainable land management. Given that, according to the 5th national report, agriculture transformation and intensification is the main threat to biodiversity, there is a high potential for increased inclusion of the ATA in the EBSAP implementation process.

### 3.9.2. Recommendations

- While a lot of attention is given to agricultural biodiversity, further specific attention should be given to awareness raising and education related to the importance of the Cartagena and Nagoya Protocols and other biodiversity-related issues such as the broad range of benefits from ecosystem services to agriculture.
- It is recommended that the genetic diversity of local varieties of plants and local breeds of animals should be mapped and efforts made to conserve them. It is recommended that ATA is made very well aware of the CBD and the EBSAP, in particular both the Cartagena and the Nagoya Protocols. The Agriculture Transformation Agency may also be invited to join the NBC and/or the NBTC.

## 4. Conclusions

The following points are considered especially important:

- Cooperation among members of the NBC between the main institutions for biodiversity in Ethiopia should be strengthened (inter alia HoPRs, EBI, MoANR, MoLF, MoEFCC, EWCA, MoE, MoWCA, MoLF, MoST, MoWCA, MoFED, and MoST) and they should join forces for improved implementation. NBC as well as NBTC should start meeting regularly soon. This reports highlights points which should be taken up by those committees.
- The NBTC should enhance collaboration on biodiversity data, monitoring and knowledge systems. The progress of implementation should be monitored by using indicators.
- EBSAP implementation should also be linked to national implementation of the SDGs.
- The VPR will be a very helpful tool to enhance cooperation among parties to the CBD, enhance mutual capacity-building and understanding for both developing and developed countries.
- One important element of the VPR process, including the desk-study and the in-country visit, is the peer-learning element. By closely studying the EBSAP, the national report, legal and other documents of the country under review, the review team has reflected on its own experiences in their respective countries which has led to fruitful exchanges and insights within the review team. The members of the review team learned how the CBD and other conventions and organizations are perceived by Ethiopia and have broadened their own understanding of multilateral cooperation and implementation of the CBD and the protocols.

## 5. General lessons for the Parties to biodiversity-related Conventions

### 5.1. Learning for present and future strategic plans or other instruments

Based on the experience in Ethiopia, it can be recommended to all Parties to the Convention to integrate measures to implement other biodiversity-related Conventions in their NBSAP. The [UNEP Sourcebook of Opportunities for Enhancing Cooperation among the Biodiversity-related Conventions at National and Regional Levels](#) provides good options on how to achieve this. Learning from former versions of NBSAPs should be a formal part of all NBSAP revision processes. This is a point which could be taken up when developing a next strategic plan for biodiversity. The EBI is learning lessons from the development and implementation of the previous EBSAP (see EBSAP Chapter 6) and it is recommended that this should be a formal part of all NBSAP revision processes, and also be one part

of the guidance for the next version of national reports to the CBD. Similarly, all parties should take into account the guidelines/tools that are prepared for the revision processes., which, the team thinks, is not the case during during the revision of their NBSAPs by Parties.

This among others, is complicating the compilation of the global report of the given plan period. Moreover, SCBD and/or whoever responsible should plan beforehand to avoid consuming of time for the long planning process than implementation, as the result of which at present planning and implementation periods are overlapping. Although the present SP says 2011-2020, we, at the end of 2015, are still talking about the revision. This should not be the case for the next revision process and SCBD and others concerned should start thinking for the third revision from now. Parties should, in future NBSAP revision processes, follow as closely as possible the requirements and guidance from the CBD. The same applies to national reporting.

Ethiopia has politicians, including parliamentarians and the Prime Minister's office, involved in the EBSAP revision and implementation process. The EBSAP has been anchored in the main strategic planning processes of Ethiopia and the link of biodiversity conservation and sustainable use to national security has been made. Such important links could be made by other Parties as well.

The establishment of formal sub-national units for biodiversity should be looked at by SCBD and could potentially serve as a best practice for Parties with a regional structure. If successful, such set-ups could be recommended by a next strategic plan for biodiversity.

Ethiopia has a target on institutional and legal aspects, which is only to a certain extent present in the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020. This could be more strongly emphasized by the Convention in future Strategic Plans. The gender-related target (Target 12) in Ethiopia's strategic plan is very positive and it is encouraged that all parties include gender-related considerations at an early stage in the development or revision of NBSAPs.

On capacity-building workshops organized by SCBD and others: As more and more Parties are revising their NBSAP, the scope and content of capacity-building workshop should evolve as well. Capacity building should be conducted with those whose capacity has proven to have been built to give equal footing to the trainees and the capacity building process should be clearly planned and time-bound from the outset.

Resource mobilization under the CBD, including national reports on resources, are performed as a separate workstream, for example, resource mobilization reports are not available from the main country profile page, which they should be.

## 5.2. Learning for future CBD national reporting guidelines

The review team has analyzed the fifth national report in Ethiopia, including the self-assessment, and came to the conclusion that the self-assessment is difficult to put into context and to really understand how some conclusions have been reached. Taking Aichi Target 11 as an example, where the target will be achieved in terms of area protected, the analysis to which extent other components of the target have been reached will be much more difficult. It is clear that the traffic light system and self-analysis does not provide a clear enough picture on the situation and should not be aggregated, but rather seen as an indicator on critical points.

We should think in the convention about how to better provide a framework for self-analysis and to make sure that critical points become more visible in the national reports. In general, it should be clearer how Parties make their assessments of progress.

One of the general challenges in the National Reports is that Parties might choose to give too positive an assessment of the situation. The VPR has a potential to recalibrate this.

## 6. Lessons learned for the methodology

**Process:** The whole process (initiation of the desk study and the organization of the visit itself) should start at least two months prior to the in-country visit, keeping in mind that flexibility regarding schedule should be maintained. Regarding meetings with non-governmental organizations or experts, the Secretariat together with the review team should try to get more information in advance of the meeting (e.g. through their respective embassies).

**Desk study:** The scoping questionnaire could be expanded by a few questions and some questions could be revised to become more targeted. It would be useful for the VPR process to have a set of standardised questions to be applied to all countries as a reference template, and then to develop specific further questions from this during the desk-study. The scoping exercise should include more information on the institutional set-up in the country, for instance the structure of the government, the legal basis as well as information on how the budgeting is done. Also regional, sub regional and community level information on the institutional set-up should be provided.

**Reporting:** The structure and method of drafting the report should be clearly defined early in the review process in order to allow for a more structured desk-study and in-country visit, whilst retaining flexibility to adapt to specific condition of each review. The desk study should, whilst not taking more time, be more targeted. Responsibilities for different sections could be assigned to different review team members early on in order to ensure early drafting and share workload.

**In-country visit:** The in-country visit is very intense and only limited writing time can be expected. If possible, an additional day for initial drafting should be allocated. The review team should indicate to the organizers who they need to meet and be clear what information they expect to gain from the interviews. The meetings itself should be less a Q&A on factual information but a discussion, allowing the review team to understand the issues. In general, the review team should be able to meet with all the focal points of biodiversity-related multilateral environmental agreements as well as representatives from other key sectors.

**Annex – Meetings of Ethiopia VPR Country Visit (28-30 July 2015)**

Day 1 (28/07/15)
Director, EBI, CBD NFP and IPBES NFP <i>Dr Gemedo Dalle Tussie</i>
Core EBI NBSAP Team (Misikire Tessema , plus others, including RBUs Coordinator). The core Technical Team members included: <i>Dr.Misikire Tessema (National Coordinator), Dr Eleni Shiferaw, d Mr. Abraham Assefa; Mr. Kebu Balemie and Mr. Motuma Didita. Dr. Genene Tefera is an RBUs Coordinator</i>
ABS Protocol NFP Director, ABS Directorate, EBI <i>Mr Ashenafi Ayenew</i>
Cartegena Protocol NFP <i>Mr Belete Geda Torbi, MoEFCC</i>
Advisor of the Minister, Ministry of Forests and Environment and representatives of the Climate Resilient Green Economy Programme <i>Dr. Tewolde Berhan G/Egziabher, MoEFCC</i>
Director Climate Change Forum-Ethiopia (NGO) <i>Dr. Girma Balcha</i>
Day 2 (29/07/15)
NBTC member representing NPC (lead for 3 actions) <i>Mr. Getachew Adem</i> With the Rank of the Minister, National Planning Deputy Commissioner
UNDP Representatives <i>Ms Phemo Karen Kgomotso (Programme Officer) and Mr Zeleke Tesfaye (GEF Small Grants Programme - Ethiopia)</i>
Deputy FAO Representative in Ethiopia <i>Mr. Mohamed Salih,</i>
Ethio-organic Seed Action Director, Ethio-organic Seed Action Chairman, Ethiopian Biodiversity Forum <i>Mr Regassa Feyissa</i>
Director Ethio-wetlands <i>Mr. Afework Hailu</i> Deputy Director Ethio-wetlands <i>Mr. Shewaye Deribe</i>
<i>HE Mr. Mohammed Abdosh</i> Chairman, Standing Committee of the Agricultural Affairs of the House of the Representatives of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia Chairman, National Project Steering Committee (for the NBSAP revision process)
Day 3 30/07/15)
Oromia RBU / Expert <i>Adugna shego</i>
Director, Plan and Programme Directorate, EBI <i>Mr. Mequanent Eyayu</i>
Meeting with team members respective embassies (Norway and Switzerland)
Day 4 (31/07/15)
State Minister, Ministry of Agriculture (at the time of the in-country visit) <i>HE Mr. Sileshi Getahun</i>
Team coordination meeting