



PRESS RELEASE

Supporting gender-responsive biodiversity conservation in Uganda

Montreal, 4 July 2016 – Uganda, a country renowned for its rich biodiversity, is taking strides to integrate gender considerations into its national policies, plans and programmes to implement its obligations under the Convention and the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020. The efforts by Uganda are contributing to the ongoing global effort to achieve gender equity and equality, as reflected in the 2015-2020 Gender Plan of Action under the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD).

At a workshop held in Kampala from 13-14 June 2016, participants underscored the important role of women and issues of gender in the conservation and sustainable use of Uganda's biodiversity. The workshop brought together women and men working in the fields of gender and environmental conservation from civil society and government organizations, to learn about international and national policy frameworks that support biodiversity conservation and sustainable use. Most significantly, they reviewed the country's revised National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (NBSAP) to identify relevant gender considerations. These discussions were followed by a day-long national workshop on 15 June, involving representatives from the National Environment Management Authority (NEMA), the Uganda Wildlife Authority, the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development, the Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development and the United Nations Development Programme, as well as representatives from academia and civil society. Recommendations on the integration of gender issues will be considered by government for inclusion in the final revised NBSAP.

The workshops were part of a project being implemented by the Secretariat of the CBD in collaboration with the Global Gender Office of the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN), with funding from the Government of Japan through the Japan Biodiversity Fund. Uganda is one of three pilot countries in this project, aimed at building capacity of developing countries to integrate gender considerations into their biodiversity policy, planning and programming. The workshop was jointly organized by NEMA and IUCN. NEMA coordinates the implementation of the CBD and NBSAP on behalf of Government of Uganda, and has coordinated the process to review and update the NBSAP.

Uganda's rich biodiversity offers a significant opportunity to support the country's poverty reduction efforts through sustainable tourism, sustainable agriculture and other natural resource-based sectors. The conservation and sustainable use of these rich biological resources are also essential to maintain clean water, fertile soil, and the provision of ecosystem services, upon which the rural and urban poor depend. Sustainable use and conservation of biodiversity requires effective engagement of all of the users of



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biological resources – indigenous peoples and local communities, women, men, boys and girls – in decision-making, planning and implementation, and ensuring the fair and equitable sharing of benefits. A revised NBSAP that clearly incorporates gender issues will set the stage for Uganda to take an effective, inclusive approach to implementing its obligations under the Convention and the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011- 2020.

The lessons and outputs from this and the other two pilot projects will be shared with delegates at the thirteenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties (COP13) to the Convention on Biological Diversity, to be held in Cancun, Mexico, from 4 to 17 December 2016.

The Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD)

Opened for signature at the Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro in 1992, and entering into force in December 1993, the Convention on Biological Diversity is an international treaty for the conservation of biodiversity, the sustainable use of the components of biodiversity and the equitable sharing of the benefits derived from the use of genetic resources. With 196 Parties up to now, the Convention has near universal participation among countries. The Convention seeks to address all threats to biodiversity and ecosystem services, including threats from climate change, through scientific assessments, the development of tools, incentives and processes, the transfer of technologies and good practices and the full and active involvement of relevant stakeholders including indigenous and local communities, youth, NGOs, women and the business community. The Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety and the Nagoya Protocol on Access and Benefit Sharing are supplementary agreements to the Convention. The Cartagena Protocol, which entered into force on 11 September 2003, seeks to protect biological diversity from the potential risks posed by living modified organisms resulting from modern biotechnology. To date, 170 Parties have ratified the Cartagena Protocol. The Nagoya Protocol aims at sharing the benefits arising from the utilization of genetic resources in a fair and equitable way, including by appropriate access to genetic resources and by appropriate transfer of relevant technologies. It entered into force on 12 October 2014 and to date has been ratified by 78 Parties. For more information visit: www.cbd.int. For additional information, please contact: David Ainsworth on +1 514 287 7025 or at david.ainsworth@cbd.int; or Johan Hedlund on +1 514 287 6670 or at johan.hedlund@cbd.int.
