



## Rio Conventions Pavilion Monday, 26 November 2018

The 10th day of the Rio Conventions Pavilion addressed the theme, 'Nature-based Solutions for Climate Change.'

The day was organized in two segments. In the morning, participants took part in panel and break-out sessions to highlight a range of experiences with ecosystem-based adaptation (EbA) policy making, as well as lessons learned from implementing EbA projects and related nature-based approaches.

In the afternoon, EbA Knowledge Day convened, under the overall theme of 'Biodiversity conservation and infrastructure development.' The segment included a market place showcasing practical examples of nature-based solutions and how to better align them to engineering-based solutions for disaster and climate resilience.

The Day was co-organized by SwedBio, Friends of Ecosystem-based Adaptation (FEBA), Die Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ), International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN) and The Partnership for Environment and Disaster Risk Reduction (PEDRR).

### Nature-based solutions for climate change

**Integrating climate change and biodiversity in national level policy:** Moderator Tristan Tyrrell, SwedBio, opened the morning segment with a recap of a recently concluded series of regional dialogues on the integration of EbA approaches in national climate policies and programmes and the Post-2020

Global Biodiversity Framework (Post-2020 Framework).

He said the consultations had highlighted that: most policies are currently focused on forest landscape restoration and other mitigation strategies, as opposed to more integrated approaches such as EbA and ecosystem-based Disaster Risk Reduction (Eco-DRR); there is need to significantly scale up implementation; and the regional platforms can help facilitate information exchange and joint learning.

Tyrrell invited the panel to discuss their country experiences.

Ashley Dias, Ministry of Environment, Energy and Climate Change, Seychelles, described the impact of extreme climate events over the past two decades and highlighted the country's vision of minimizing such impacts in future through concerted and proactive action at all levels of society. Drawing on several ongoing project examples, she explained how the country utilizes EbA approaches to, *inter alia*, enhance freshwater security and flood control, and restore ecosystem functions of wetlands to boost resilience.

Kotchikpa Okoumassou, Togo, discussed the contribution of a community-level EbA project to national climate and biodiversity action plans and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Noting that the aim is to demonstrate the principle of living in harmony with nature, he said that the project seeks to link forest conservation with restoration of diverse tree species on agricultural land to enhance local livelihoods, especially for women. Okoumassou also highlighted a joint initiative with university researchers aimed at linking local and scientific knowledge.



Kotchikpa Okoumassou, Togo



**Oscar Guevara**, World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF), Colombia

Isaya Naini Ole Saibulu, Pastoralists Indigenous NGOs Forum, Tanzania, presented some perspectives on how to empower pastoralist communities to contribute meaningfully to national policy frameworks. Lamenting that Indigenous Peoples have been largely excluded from climate processes, he stressed that the environmental conservation values as well as customary institutions developed by pastoralist communities over centuries – such as dry season grazing timetables to allow for natural regeneration – offer viable models for EbA and resilience.

Oscar Guevara, World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF) Colombia, presented the nature-based solutions for climate mitigation and adaptation that Colombia is undertaking to meet the targets for the Paris Agreement. He explained that Colombia is achieving its climate-related goals through the Nationally Determined Contributions and have furthermore recognized that the most effective way to reduce emissions is to reduce deforestation. Guevara added that Colombia had committed to increasing protected areas to 2.5 million hectares of land but have since tripled their initial target by increasing protected areas to 7.5 million hectares of land.

In the ensuing discussion, Guevara encouraged people to be persistent in their advocacy to policymakers and continually stress the importance of meeting global environmental targets. Okoumassou added that there is need for the general public to be familiar with national development plans and hold policymakers accountable to meet national goals.

#### **Implementation of ecosystem-based approaches for climate change adaptation disaster risk reduction across sectors:**

Opening the session, Lisa Janishevski, CBD Secretariat, welcomed the inclusion of the Voluntary Guidelines for the design and effective implementation of EbA and Eco-DRR in the Annex of COP 14 Decision 21. She explained the two concepts, and outlined some of the main objectives, principles and safeguards contained in the Guidelines, among which: the provision of policy guidance for decision makers;



**Arno Sckeyde**, GIZ

a flexible framework for planning and implementing EbA and Eco-DRR; and the integration of these approaches into sectoral policies and plans.

Panelist presentations highlighted opportunities for EbA and Eco-DRR within different sectors.

Verónica Ruiz, IUCN, explained the opportunities to integrate environment into the humanitarian sector and emphasized that cross-sectoral approaches are crucial in scaling up EbA. She added that the inclusion of EbA and Eco-DRR, including their associated capacity building and training programmes, in humanitarian assistance, can lead to longer-term resilience. She further noted that data sharing across sectors underpins a strengthened humanitarian-environmental approach.

Oscar Guevara, WWF Colombia, noted that the implementation of EbA and Eco-DRR in the forestry sector requires understanding the context of the sector, identification of opportunities for ecosystem-based approaches and mobilization of action. He said it is necessary to: ramp up ambition towards forests as a key component of the ‘New Deal for Nature and People’; adopt good governance including land use planning to address trade-offs between food, biodiversity, climate; and include forest-targets in the Post-2020 Framework..

Arno Sckeyde, GIZ, presented opportunities for spatial planning in land- and seascapes. He discussed: how land and marine spatial planning is affected by climate and disaster risks; and why ecosystem-based approaches should be strengthened. He also gave examples of EbA measures and highlighted required actions for better governance and engagement of civil society, state and private sector.

**Break out groups:** Participants then held group discussions on sector-based advocacy strategies to enhance EbA approaches in the forestry, spatial planning and humanitarian sectors. The three groups were asked to develop specific messages that





**Tom Wilms**, Witteven+Bos/EcoShape

could attract the attention of decision makers and practitioners and convince them to consider, integrate and make use of EbA and Eco-DRR.

The forestry group noted that forest and climate are not being fully integrated into policymaking and proposed one way to more effectively disseminate this linkage would be to work more closely with the media. They also put emphasis on scaling up local knowledge.

The spatial planning group said that considering the cross-cutting nature of biodiversity and climate change, more effort is needed to work across ministries. The group asserted that this can be done effectively if targeted messages are developed communicating both the short- and long-term benefits of EbA.

The humanitarian group drew attention to local community engagement, and thinking beyond the traditional approach of EbA as a response mechanism. They suggested that working more closely with development agencies can help minimize the vulnerabilities of communities and enable a greater focus on prevention.

***EbA Knowledge Day: Biodiversity conservation and infrastructure development - aligning nature-based with engineering-based solutions for disaster and climate resilience***

**Opening session:** Mathias Bertram, GIZ, opened the afternoon segment by sharing selected key messages from the Rio Pavilion Sustainable Infrastructure Day on 17 November 2018, and explaining the different “system layers” of grey and green infrastructure.

Veronica Lo, CBD Secretariat, drew attention to opportunities for aligning EbA and Eco-DRR into infrastructure developments, including: the Voluntary Guidelines on EbA and Eco-DRR as a flexible framework for planning and implementing ecosystem-based approaches to infrastructure developments; synergies with Rio Conventions objectives, capitalizing on momentum from other emerging policies; and capacity building support to governments and other project proponents by sharing data, knowledge, tools, approaches, and other mechanisms. Lo also underscored the need for



**Veronica Lo**, CBD Secretariat

more strategic, proactive and systems-level approaches to infrastructure planning that ensure nature-based solutions are carefully considered and integrated across different sectors, in close connection to the SDGs.

**Panel discussion:** Sandra Müller-Volk, German Ministry for Environment, Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety (BMU) shared information on the increase of Germany’s International Climate Initiative (IKI) EbA projects in the period between 2008-2017. She gave examples of three projects that are integrating: natural infrastructure into public investment programmes in Peru; climate services for climate resilient bridge construction in Costa Rica; and EbA into river basin planning in Thailand.

Oscar Guevara, WWF Colombia, highlighted some challenges and opportunities to address interactions and avoid or minimize trade-offs between biodiversity and infrastructure. He noted the importance of the ‘New Deal for Nature,’ discussed the differences between “green” and “greening” infrastructure and said that sustainable infrastructure are assets that provide, among others the stewardship of natural ecosystems, trigger green innovation, and increase employment. He cited Colombia’s ‘Green Road Infrastructure Guidelines,’ the ‘Flood Green Guide’ and the ‘Green Recovery and Reconstruction: Training Toolkit for Humanitarian Aid’ as examples.

Mahlodi Tau, South African National Biodiversity Institute (SANBI), emphasized that investing in built and ecological infrastructure contributes to a more water-secure South Africa. He presented South Africa’s 2030 Development Agenda, 2012 National infrastructure Plan and the Water and Sanitation Master Plan. He said ecological infrastructure consists of naturally functioning ecosystems that generate and deliver valuable services to people and highlighted that opportunities exist to integrate EbA approaches into water resource management.

Tom Wilms, Witteven+Bos/EcoShape, the Netherlands explained the different phases involved in the transition from “building in nature to building with nature.” Examples he



provided were, *inter alia*: working in close collaboration with stakeholders and local communities; developing hydraulic infrastructure in harmony with the behaviors of the natural system; and bringing together knowledge institutes, engineers, government contractors, and NGOs. Among his key messages, Wilms highlighted that a thorough system understanding and early stakeholder involvement are essential for higher environmental benefits, cost reductions and faster institutional processes.

Thora Amend, Conservation & Development, Germany, presented on holistic green-grey infrastructure planning. She advised that a good policy entry point and effective governance structure requires mainstreaming of nature-based solutions into local, municipal, national processes. Amend also said sector strategies are essential to increase the resilience of people and ecosystems in view of changing climate conditions and risk exposure.

In discussion, one audience member extolled the value of engaging local populations to share their challenges and also provide their input into large planned projects by government. Wilms reiterated that engineering solutions, which look beyond the benefits of infrastructure needs and which consider environmental advantages offer a better approach.

In discussion, the moderator asked panelists what would be their key messages for the upcoming UN Climate Change Conference in Katowice, Poland, to which one speaker suggested reminding negotiators that without investing in biodiversity, climate goals cannot be achieved.

Quoting Nelson Mandela, Tau emphasized that “sometimes it falls upon a generation to be great and you can be this generation. The UNFCCC must know that if a generation is going to bring a change, it is us and we need to acknowledge this.”

**Market Place:** In this interactive session, GIZ, The Nature Conservancy, OroVerde, Witteven+Bos / EcoShape and Conservation & Development held a poster session. Organization representatives gave elevator pitches for nature-based and engineering-based solutions for disaster and climate resilience.

In takeaways following the session, some participants noted that the ideas discussed were a good starting point and illustrate the value of knowledge transfer and knowledge providers. They also highlighted how useful it was to learn during the poster session case studies of how things have worked in some countries and the conditions under which some solutions thrived.

**Interactive expert dialogue with participants:** In a final interactive session, participants met in smaller groups to discuss a series of provocative statements about how to integrate nature-based solutions into infrastructure planning.

Regarding the role of government, participants noted that multi-stakeholder approaches work best, and that sometimes NGOs and communities play a greater role in driving nature-based solutions. However, the discussions noted that government remains a key player in larger infrastructural and grey projects such as railways and ports, as well as creating an enabling environment for EbA through legal and policy frameworks.

Reacting to the statement, “nature-based solutions take too much time to show impact compared to grey infrastructure,” participants pointed to many examples to the contrary. They highlighted that: green infrastructure offers more benefits as they as they provide multiple benefits and often address both short- and long-term perspectives; are more financially sustainable as they often require less investment than grey infrastructure both in the start-up phase and for maintenance over time; and involve people as part of the solution.

In concluding remarks, Bertram said that EbA Knowledge Day had provided a rich source of technical information and stakeholder perspectives as well as inspiring exchanges. Noting that the Day also incorporated discussions from Sustainable Infrastructure Day at the Pavilion, he urged participants to pass the torch on to colleagues travelling to UNFCCC COP 24 in order to build bridges between the Rio Conventions.

Lo thanked all participants for their contributions, and expressed appreciation to the governments of Germany and Sweden, the European Commission and all partners involved in the developing the Voluntary Guidelines on EbA and Eco-DRR.