

This brief clarifies how to use the biodiversity policy marker, and how to advance further mainstreaming, for contributions related to Fisheries.

1. BACKGROUND

In October 2020, Sida received an assignment from the government regarding biological diversity and ecosystems for the years 2020-2023. The assignment instructs Sida to strengthen and deepen the work on biodiversity and ecosystems throughout the Agency's total operations.

As part of the implementation of the assignment, Sida has identified an internal need to clarify the use of the policy marker for biodiversity and the connection to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) on which the marker is based. This is to facilitate for program officers to come up with suggestions and ideas in the dialogue with partners during an intervention planning phase on how consideration of, and benefits from, integrating biodiversity in a program/project can be optimized.

Six sectors were identified as extra important for integration: Water and sanitation, Agriculture, Forestry, Fisheries, Health and Energy.

2. A BRIEF INTRODUCTION TO THE CONVENTION ON BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY (CBD)¹

The Earth's biological resources are vital to humanity's economic and social development. As a result, there is a growing recognition that biodiversity is a global asset of tremendous value to present and future generations. At the same time, the threat to species and ecosystems has never been as great as it is today. Species extinction caused by human activities continues at an alarming rate.

In May 1992, an "Agreed Text of the Convention on Biological Diversity" was decided upon and the Convention was opened for signature on 5 June 1992 at the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (the "Rio Earth Summit").

The Convention entered into force on 29 December 1993. The first session of the Conference of the Parties was held in 1994 in the Bahamas.

The establishment of CBD was inspired by the world community's growing commitment to sustainable development and has three main objectives:

1. The conservation of biological diversity
2. The sustainable use of the components of biological diversity
3. The fair and equitable sharing of the benefits arising out of the utilization of genetic resources.

3. THE POLICY MARKER FOR BIODIVERSITY PROMOTES MAINSTREAMING OF THE CBD'S OBJECTIVES

Since 1998, the OECD Development Assistance Committee (DAC) has monitored development finance flows targeting the objectives of the Rio Conventions² on biodiversity, climate change and desertification using the so-called "Rio markers". DAC members are requested to indicate for each development finance activity if the activity targets environmental objectives.

3.1 Sida's contributions are screened against criteria of the Rio markers

Sida's contributions are screened (for altogether eleven policy markers) against the criteria of each policy marker. A contribution can be marked with the code 0, 1 or 2 depending on to what extent it fulfils the criteria for that specific marker. As regards the criteria for the Rio marker on *biodiversity*, it has been formulated as follows:

*The project/programme promotes at least one of the three objectives of the Convention on Biological Diversity and the following criteria apply:*³



1 [Introduction \(cbd.int\)](#)

2 The CBD, the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and the UN Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) were initiated at the Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro in 1992, hence the name.

3 Source: Sida Statistical Handbook

The project/programme contributes to one or more of the following:

- Protection or enhancing ecosystems (i.e. a forest or a river), species or genetic resources through in-situ or ex-situ conservation, or remedying existing environmental damage.

This means that the programme/project contributes to this purpose through:

- Protection against degradation of ecosystems or biodiversity, often place bound.
 - Enhancement of ecosystems, species or genetic resources through conservation action at a specific place (in-situ) or outside the natural environment (ex-situ).
 - To correct or improve (remedy) an existing environmental problem that effects biodiversity.
- Integration of biodiversity and ecosystem services concerns with recipient countries' development objectives and economic decision making, through institution building, capacity development, strengthening the regulatory and policy framework, or research.

This means that the programme/project contributes to this purpose through:

- Integration of biodiversity concerns into sectoral policy, planning and programmes; e.g. in water resources management.
 - Development of legislation and regulations to protect threatened species; development of incentives, impact assessments, and policy and legislation on equitable access to the benefits of genetic resources⁴.
 - Capacity building in taxonomy⁵, biodiversity assessment and information management of biodiversity data; education, training and awareness raising on biodiversity.
- Developing countries' efforts to meet their obligations under the Convention on Biological Diversity.

This means that the programme/project contributes to this purpose through:

- Preparation of national biodiversity plans, strategies and programmes; biodiversity inventories and assessments.

⁴ I.e. that the physical access to genetic resources is facilitated and that the benefits obtained from their use are shared equitably with the providers. E.g. if a plant contains material that can be used to produce drugs that cures dangerous diseases medical companies shall be able to use it but at the same time local communities that have managed the area where the plant grows shall be fairly compensated for their efforts.

⁵ Classification, especially of living organisms e.g. identifying species of bees that are important pollinators in agriculture.

- Establishment of protected areas and protecting endangered or vulnerable species and their habitats⁶.
- Research on ecological, socio-economic and policy issues related to biodiversity.

The Classification for the biodiversity – 0, 1 or 2 – depends on the extent of fulfilling the criteria.

According to the Sida Statistical Handbook, this is how the marker shall be classified:

2 – Principal objective

The main objective of the project/programme according to its documentation is to achieve one or more of the criteria; it would not have been implemented without that intention.

1 – Significant objective

At least one objective to achieve a criterion above is explicit in the project/programme documentation; however, it would have been implemented even without that intention.

0 – Not targeted

The project/programme has been screened against the criteria above but has been found not to fulfil them.

4. EXAMPLES OF ACTIVITIES TO FACILITATE BIODIVERSITY MAINSTREAMING IN FISHERIES (SECTOR CODE 313)

This section provides suggestions on how biodiversity can be mainstreamed and thus help promoting the objectives of the CBD in contributions related to Fisheries. The activities could, if implemented into a project/programme, qualify the contribution to be classified as "1" – significant objective – for the Rio biodiversity marker.

Marine and inland fisheries, i.e. the extraction of one of the many ecosystem services provided by aquatic biodiversity, are important for both livelihoods and food security. As an example, inland fish provide food for billions and livelihoods for millions of people worldwide. At the same time overfishing is continuous challenge⁷. Subsidies in the fisheries sector, especially relating to fuel use, continue to encourage overcapacity, and if not reformed, phased out or eliminated, will lead to continued declines in marine fish populations and ecosystems. Fisheries subsidies also create trade distortions, harming livelihoods in regions, such as Africa, where subsidies are relatively low.

⁶ The natural home or environment of an animal, plant, or other organism.

⁷ Lynch, A.J., Elliott, V., Phang, S.C.et al. Inland fish and fisheries integral to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals. Nat Sustain 3, 579–587. 2020.

4.4 Importance for Biodiversity⁸

Fishing is the most widespread human exploitative activity in the marine environment. Pauly and Christensen⁹ estimated that over 20 percent of the marine primary production is required to sustain fisheries in many intensively fished coastal ecosystems. Furthermore, inland fisheries are highly important for food and nutrition and over 90 percent of global inland capture fisheries production is used for human consumption¹⁰.

Fishing has a number of direct effects on both marine and freshwater ecosystems because it is responsible for increasing mortality of target and by-catch species; an important physical impact on the habitat of benthic¹¹ organisms is caused by bottom trawling. The direct effects of fishing have indirect implications for other species as well. Fisheries remove prey that piscivorous¹² fishes, birds and mammals would otherwise consume, or may remove predators that would otherwise control prey populations.

Reductions in the density of some species may affect competitive interactions and result in the proliferation of non-target species.

4.2 Examples of activities

- *Support ecosystem based approaches to fisheries management*, see FAO's Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries.¹³
- *Encourage practices that reduce bycatch*. Bycatch occurs because modern fishing gear is very efficient, often covers an extensive area, and can be highly unselective. It catches not only the targeted fish species but also many other marine animals as well including juvenile fish that is caught before it has been able to spawn. Poor fisheries management in certain countries further contributes to the problem. Widespread "pirate fishing" ignores regulations on net mesh sizes, quotas, permitted fishing areas and other bycatch mitigation measures. Bycatch mortalities can often be reduced by modifying fishing gear so that fewer non-target species are caught or so that non-target species can escape. In many cases, these modifications are simple and inexpensive.

- *Reduce illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing*. IUU fishing remains one of the greatest threats to marine ecosystems, undermining efforts to manage fisheries sustainably and to conserve marine biodiversity.

Fisheries resources are frequently "poached", often leading to the collapse of local fisheries, with fisheries in developing countries proving particularly vulnerable. FAO works hard on capacity development efforts to assist developing countries in their implementation of the PSMA¹⁴ and complementary international instruments and regional mechanisms to combat IUU fishing. The partner could therefore interact with the national representative of FAO in order to learn how they can join the efforts to combat IUU.

- *Address and promote tenure rights for local communities in marine and inland fisheries*. The connection between sustainable resource use and secure tenure, user and access rights are widely recognized¹⁵.

There is also increasing acknowledgement that sustaining biodiversity is intrinsically linked to and dependent on the social and economic sustainability of coastal and inland fisheries communities in the long term. Promoting the use of the Voluntary Guidelines for Securing Sustainable Small-Scale Fisheries can help address linkages between poverty, biodiversity and sustainable resource management.¹⁶

The livelihoods of many, particularly among the rural poor, are based on having secure and equitable access to and management of fisheries, both inland and marine. Ineffective governance of tenure and user rights often results in extreme poverty and hunger for communities that depend on these natural resources and could lead to overfishing by commercial actors that can roam fishing grounds used by local communities with impunity. Appropriate tenure systems, including clear access and user rights, are thus fundamental elements of securing biodiversity in fisheries.

8 FAO Undated. *Biodiversity mainstreaming in fisheries*. <http://www.fao.org/3/ca1437en/CA1437EN.pdf> (Accessed 2021-06-11)

9 Pauly, D. and Christensen, V. 1995

10 Welcomme R.L., Cowx I.G., Coates D., Béné C., Funge-Smith S., Halls A., and Lorenzen K. 2010. Inland capture fisheries. *Phil. Trans. R. Soc. Lond. Ser. B, Biol. Sci.* 365(1554): 2881–2896.

11 I.e. organisms living in or on the bottom of a stream, lake or ocean

12 I.e. fish that feeds on fish

13 <https://www.fao.org/fishery/code/en>

14 The Agreement on Port State Measures to Prevent, Deter and Eliminate Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated Fishing (PSMA) was adopted by the FAO Conference in 2009 and entered into force in 2016.

15 FAO 2020. *The State of World Fisheries and Aquaculture 2020. Sustainability in action*. Rome. <https://doi.org/10.4060/ca9229en>

16 <https://www.fao.org/voluntary-guidelines-small-scale-fisheries/background/en/>

4.3 Justification for applying the Rio marker for biodiversity

Including any of the proposed activities into a fishery project/programme the contribution could be considered as delivering on the first criteria of the biodiversity marker and the contribution could thus be classified as 1 – significant objective. Should all the activities be considered in the project document perhaps the classification could even be 2 – principal objective.

4.4 Case studies to draw inspiration from

*Senegal – Casamance river*¹⁷

*Cambodia – Community fishery in Tonle Sap lake*¹⁸

*Latin America and the Caribbean- Managing Bycatch More Sustainably*¹⁹

17 <https://news.mongabay.com/2018/10/watching-the-wildlife-return-qa-with-a-rural-senegalese-river-monitor/>

18 <https://fishbio.com/field-notes/the-fish-report/fishers-feel-shift-community-fisheries-tonle-sap-lake>

19 <http://www.fao.org/3/ca9229en/ca9229en.pdf> page 123

GLOSSARY*

“Biological diversity” – means the variability among living organisms from all sources including, inter alia, terrestrial, marine and other aquatic ecosystems and the ecological complexes of which they are part; this includes diversity within species, between species and of ecosystems.

“Ecosystem” – means a dynamic complex of plant, animal and micro-organism communities and their non-living environment interacting as a functional unit.

* Convention on Biological Diversity, Article 2. Use of Terms.