A SUMMARY REPORT OF THE NATIONAL CONSULTATION WORKSHOP ON POST-2020 BIODIVERSITY FRAMEWORK:
Setting a National Stage for Engagement

Mbankomo, 23rd - 24th May 2019
INTRODUCTION

The Ministry of Environment, Nature Protection and Sustainable Development organized the national consultation for the Post 2020 Biodiversity Framework from the 23 – 24 of May 2019 on the theme “Setting a National Stage for Engagement”. The workshop brought together stakeholders working on biodiversity related questions in Cameroon. This included the key sectoral ministries, civil society organizations, lawmakers, traditional rulers, faith-based organizations, and Government’s technical and development partners.

Workshop key objectives:

- Create national awareness on the status and trend of loss and value of nature for people development and climate change;
- Create national awareness and build understanding on the process towards the development of a global post 2020 biodiversity framework and the need for national engagement in the process;
- Develop and formally initiate a national consultative and participatory process including a roadmap for Cameroon’s engagement towards COP15 in China; define strategic approaches for upscaling national priorities into the regional and global processes; and identifying opportunities for national and international partnerships in this process.
- Secure nature-based commitments from state and non-state actors to taking actions contributing to halting and reversing biodiversity loss.

These objectives will provide Cameroon’s inputs towards achieving the ambition of a strengthened Convention on Biological Diversity with the following three outcomes:

- Elevated Convention
- Strengthened Ambition
- Strengthened Implementation.

Workshop Methodology:

The workshop content included presentations in four sessions:

Setting the scene, building understanding on the mandate and process for the post 2020 biodiversity framework, designing a national engagement framework and a roadmap for next steps. The sessions were interspersed with insightful discussions from participants and working groups facilitated by national experts drawn from the National Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (BES) team.
The opening session included two key presentations: Dr. Forboseh Philip representing the WWF CCPO Country Director. Key highlights from Dr. Forboseh’s address:

- Recognized the deteriorating stage of nature and urgency to act,
- Called on stakeholders to work together in bending the curve on climate change and nature loss and to rally behind the vision for a New Deal for Nature and People
- Urged the Government to take a role in the design of this new framework as it with the 1999 Yaounde Declaration. This he said requires leveraging high-level political actors and creating a critical mass of champions.
- Reiterated WWF support to the process

Justice Galega Prudence, Secretary General of the Ministry of Environment, Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) National Focal Point and representative of the Minister

Key highlights from the SG’s address:

- Recalled that the national consultation for the post 2020 Biodiversity Framework was organized as part of activities celebrating the International Day of Biodiversity
- Gave a historical overview of Cameroon’s engagement with the CBD including the NBSAP.
- Highlighted the need for discussions during the workshop to seek answers to the following questions:
  - How to build understanding on the outcomes of key assessment findings and post 2020 process into the global and national frameworks to strengthen ongoing implementation efforts
  - How to integrate diverse national perspectives during the national dialogue process to collectively and effectively engage in the ongoing discussions at regional and global levels
  - What are the possible elements for an agenda of dialogue that should secure the engagement of key national stakeholders in the process and identify opportunities that exist for effective national dialogue process?

The presentations that followed the official opening aimed at setting the scene included:

- The Valuation of biodiversity (value and importance of nature to people)
- The status and trends of biodiversity loss globally and in Africa.

From discussions from these two presentations, the two emerging issues included:

- What is the threshold for urgency that requires a concerted effort to respond to biodiversity loss? Should it be at extinction or it is important that actions are taken now?
- How to ensure an effective alignment of all ongoing initiatives i.e. the 6th National Biodiversity Report, the BES Report and the post 2020 biodiversity framework?

On responding to the emerging issues participants agreed on the following:

- The 6th National Biodiversity Report need to reflect the state of biodiversity in Cameroon providing a pathway for an engaged post 2020 biodiversity process.
On building understanding on the mandate and process for the post 2020 biodiversity framework process, the following presentations shaped ensuing discussions:

- Reflections on the Implementation of Cameroon’s NBSAP II
- The New Deal for Nature and People by Laurent Some
- On the Cameroon’s sixth national report, key issues articulated included providing an overview, challenges and salient findings of the report.
- On the New Deal for Nature and People, there is a need to have a “Paris Moment” for Nature. This included:
  - A strengthened CBD
  - Building momentum with events like the UNGA in September, political ownership, public engagement and strengthened implementation
  - A call to action for participants including advocating for setting ambitious targets, expressing strong commitment to national implementation backed with financial resources and being champions
  - How to ensure COP15 in China is like Paris for climate change
  - How to engage stakeholders like youth, women and faith-based organizations to articulate these messages to their constituencies?
- Mobilizing resources for action.

On designing a national engagement framework, presentations focused on the global biodiversity framework, the Cameroon 2035 Development Vision and perspectives from sector ministries and technical and development partners.

Key emerging issues from these presentations were:

- A call to Cameroon based on its technical and political capacities to take a lead in defining the African position in the global process
- What were the challenges that impeded Cameroon from meeting all its NBSAP targets as having a good understanding of overcoming these challenges will help in NBSAP review process.
- Building an integrated approach to the revision of the Growth and Employment Strategy Paper taking into consideration the contribution of biodiversity and ecosystem services and this will include:
  - Mapping impacts – SDGs accelerators and Nationally Determined Contributions (NDC) investment pillars
  - Return to investments – growth and jobs
  - Integration of environmental, social and climate safeguards.
- How to ensure an effective participation and that ongoing process at the level of the different sector ministries like the Land-use planning process are taken into account in defining how to align the development strategy and the post 2020 biodiversity framework.
- The following were identified as perspectives to be integrated in the process:
  - From the Ministry of Forestry and Wildlife (MINFOF):
    - Valorization of fauna and forest resources
    - Restoration of forest landscapes
  - Using landscape approach in the management of natural resources
  - From the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development (MINADER)
    - Curbing the use of pesticides in agricultural production
    - Valorization of Non-timber forest products (NTFPs)
  - Ministry of Women Empowerment and the Family (MINPROFF)
    - Capacity building for women
    - Revise the National Policy on Gender to take into consideration biodiversity aspects
- From technical and development partners:
  - Leverage IUCN forthcoming world congress.

Some salient issues raised included:

- The need for Government to put in place a specialized agency for the management of its protected areas
- Forest restoration through reforestation especially with domestication of NTFPs to enhance contribution to the attainment of SDGs.
Based on Africa’s priorities that were at the African Biodiversity Summit at COP14 in Egypt, participants agreed on the following as priorities for Cameroon:

- Economic valuation of Natural Capital.
- Biosecurity and biosafety.
- Food security.
- Communication and knowledge management.
- Reinforcement of participatory approach to protected area management including sustainable financing.
- Ecosystem restoration.
- Access and equitable benefit sharing of genetic resources.
- Climate change and biodiversity.
- Capacity building including gender mainstreaming in biodiversity conservation.
- Reinforcing policy implementation at sectoral levels and building advocacy for Cameroon’s adherence to the Nagoya Protocol.

**Key outcomes on actions and strategies for a roadmap:**

I. **Political Engagement:**

**a. Defining messages for enhancing political engagement based on the following:**

- Nature as a solution to climate change, anchoring it to a major presidential initiative, the National Climate Change Observatory.
- Nature as the foundation for wealth creation (growth of the economy), Job creation & youth employment.
- A concertation framework to regularly update actors on progress with the advocacy should be set up.

**b. Approach:**

- The Ministry of Environment, Nature Protection and Sustainable Development (MINEPDED) at the centre of the advocacy work, in leading the crafting of the key message(s), and in promoting this message in all its official events and communications.
- MINEPDED to use the monthly Cabinet Council Meetings at the level of the Prime Ministry’s Office to promote the messages.
- MINEPDED to organise outreach events to promote the messages (Press Conferences, Press Points, media releases, etc...)
- Secure the participation of the Head of State in 75th UN General Assembly in September 2020.
- Secure the inclusion of a nature related messages in Head of State addresses (Address to Youth on 10th February, 2020).
- Secure the inclusion of nature related message in the End of year address by the Diplomatic Corps.
- Identify and Use relays to channel the messages to the Head of State.

**c. Relays**

- Prime Minister.
- Presidents – Senate & National Assembly and their Secretaries General.
- Secretary General Presidency.
- Traditional and Religious authorities.
- Minister of Youth and Civic Education (to reach to Youth Groups and influence the HoS address to Youth on 10th February 2020).
- Cameroon Representatives at the UN (to arrange for an invitation of Head of State to UN Assembly September 2020).
- Diplomatic missions in Cameroon.
- Political parties Celebrities, particularly the ruling party.
d. Events

Head of State’s end of year in 2019;
• Celebration of the national Youth day on 11th February
• The newsletter of the ruling political party (20 March, 2020);
• Opening sessions of Parliament and Senate. The one of June 2019 is set to examine the Law on ABS;
• Anniversary of Head of State in at helm on nation on the 6th November 2019;
• Ramadan & other religious feasts;
• International Day of Biodiversity of 2020;
• World Environment Day in 2020;
• Women’s day celebration in 2020;
• Signing of a biodiversity/environment law (plastics – e.g., “waste exchange market”) on an international day
  – to demonstrate political engagements;
• Meeting of Indigenous People with MINFOF/MINAS.

e. Commitments:

• Adoption of the Law on ABS
• Support to a global binding instrument on plastics

II. Public Engagement

Actions
• Establishment and animation of a biodiversity platform for non-state actors;
• Development of awareness campaigns on biodiversity adapted to each type of actors (schools, indigeneous and local communities, local councils, faith-based organizations etc.).
Strategies

• Develop a virtual platform (social networks);
• Develop a catchy message (spot, slogan, door to door).

Next Steps:

• Putting in place a national working group on facilitating the post 2020 biodiversity framework process in Cameroon
• Organize bilateral consultations with the different stakeholders to enhance actions and commitments
• Seek opportunities to have Cameroon support the regional consultations in defining Africa’s position
• Organize a second national consultation to check-in on progress and refine actions before 2020
• Seek opportunities to bring in the private sector into the process.

Conclusion and Perspectives:

In her conclusive remarks, Justice Galega Prudence congratulated participants to the fact that Cameroon has taken a giant step in initiating the post 2020 consultation in Africa and identifying priorities from the Africa Framework. She highlighted the need for check-in on progress sometime in 2020 and appreciated the commitments from the different stakeholders including the sector-based ministries in supporting this process indicating the relevance of biodiversity. She thanked WWF for its support to the process. Africa is preparing to speak with one regional voice, with a common African position and Cameroon is called to play an important role in this preparation.