

SUSTAINABLE USE OF WILD PLANTS: *CBD CoP11 global framework to national implementation*

An online toolkit designed to support national and regional implementation of the Global Strategy for Plant Conservation (GSPC), technical rationales and draft indicators for 16 GSPC Targets were among decisions approved at the 11th meeting of the Conference of the Parties (CoP11) of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), held in October 2012 in Hyderabad, India.

While sustainable use of biodiversity is critical to the implementation of the CBD and delivery of its Strategic Plan 2011–2020, it is also difficult to achieve, often involving the commitment of stakeholders from various sectors. In the context of GSPC, Target 12 (see box) has been found during a review of progress towards the 2010 GSPC Targets to be among those targets to have made limited progress. Further, in the informal preliminary analysis of available capacity-building tools carried out by the CBD Secretariat prior to CBD CoP11, Objective 3 of GSPC (which includes Targets 11, 12 and 13 [see box]) demonstrates a smaller number of tools being used to support the delivery of the sustainable use objective of GSPC, compared to other objectives. This clearly influences both the capacity of CBD Parties to deliver on their commitment, and to report effectively on progress.

Support to the development and implementation of effective tools for sustainable use of wild plants is at the core of TRAFFIC's Medicinal and Aromatic Plants (MAPs) Programme. The FairWild Standard, developed by TRAFFIC, IUCN, WWF, and other partners for sustainable harvesting and fair trade in wild plants, is included as best practice guidelines in the new GSPC implementation toolkit to support the delivery of GSPC's Target 12, as well as Targets 11 and 13, contributing foremost to the delivery of Aichi Biodiversity Targets. TRAFFIC is also contributing to the implementation of GSPC as a member of the Global Partnership for Plant Conservation (GPPC).

During the meeting, TRAFFIC engaged in the discussion of CoP agenda items and contributed to several side-events related to sustainable use of wild MAPs, which brought together the perspectives of business (producers and buyers), NGOs, governments, and academia in promoting discussion on how tools like the FairWild Standard can help shape trade relations between producers and the wider market, and support the delivery of Parties on their CBD commitments. The involvement of multiple stakeholders—including the private sector—in plant conservation and sustainable use is critical. An estimated 50 000 species are used globally for their medicinal properties, providing an important source of income for rural communities and national economies (Schippmann *et al.*, 2006). At the same time, an estimated one-fifth of plants are threatened due to various issues, including over-harvesting and land conversion (Anon., 2010). TRAFFIC events at the meeting included one co-organized with Botanical Gardens Conservation International (BGCI), IUCN Medicinal Plants Specialist Group (MPSG), the Mexican Commission for the Knowledge and Use of Biodiversity (CONABIO), and the Foundation for Revitalisation of Local Health Traditions (FRLHT/I-AIM), India, which discussed the progress and challenges of achieving the sustainable use targets of GSPC. TRAFFIC was also one of the partners responsible for the launch of the Biodiversity and Community Health Initiative, with the United Nations University



TARGETS AND

THE GSPC HAS FIVE OBJECTIVES:

1. Plant diversity is well understood, documented and recognized.
2. Plant diversity is urgently and effectively conserved.
3. Plant diversity is used in a sustainable and equitable manner.
4. Education and awareness about plant diversity, its role in sustainable livelihoods and importance to all life on Earth is promoted.
5. The capacities and public engagement necessary to implement the strategy have been developed.

TARGETS OF OBJECTIVE 3 OF GSPC:

11. No species of wild flora endangered by trade.
12. All wild harvested plant-based products sourced sustainably.
13. Indigenous and local knowledge innovation and practices associated with plant resources maintained or increased, as appropriate, to support customary use, sustainable livelihoods, local food security and health care.

Above: Some of the participants at the 11th meeting of the Conference of the Parties of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), held in October 2012 in Hyderabad, India.



TRAFFIC

OBJECTIVES

TARGET(S) FROM THE STRATEGIC PLAN FOR BIODIVERSITY 2011–2020 RELEVANT TO SUSTAINABLE USE OF WILD PLANTS:

TARGET 4. By 2020, at the latest, Governments, business and stakeholders at all levels have taken steps to achieve or have implemented plans for sustainable production and consumption and have kept the impacts of use of natural resources well within safe ecological limits.

TARGET 6. By 2020 all fish and invertebrate stocks and aquatic plants are managed and harvested sustainably, legally and applying ecosystem based approaches, so that overfishing is avoided, recovery plans and measures are in place for all depleted species, fisheries have no significant adverse impacts on threatened species and vulnerable ecosystems and the impacts of fisheries on stocks, species and ecosystems are within safe ecological limits.

TARGET 13. By 2020, the genetic diversity of cultivated plants and farmed and domesticated animals and of wild relatives, including other socio-economically as well as culturally valuable species, is maintained, and strategies have been developed and implemented for minimizing genetic erosion and safeguarding their genetic diversity.

TARGET 18. By 2020, the traditional knowledge, innovations and practices of indigenous and local communities relevant for the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity, and their customary use of biological resources, are respected, subject to national legislation and relevant international obligations, and fully integrated and reflected in the implementation of the Convention with the full and effective participation of indigenous and local communities, at all relevant levels.

(UNU), the Government of India, FRLHT/I-AIM, UNDP, UNEP and others, drawing attention to the importance of conservation and sustainable use of medicinal plants to ensure their stable supply for health needs, as well as livelihoods, and highlighting the FairWild Standard. Finally, TRAFFIC and the FairWild Foundation organized a discussion on creating effective linkages between the private sector and policy-makers for the sustainable use of wild plants. Speakers included TRAFFIC, UK company Pukka Herbs Ltd., the government of Madhya Pradesh, India, and the Savandurga Village Forest Committee, Karnataka, India.

While the agreed international GSPC Targets, as well as their technical rationales and implementation toolkit provide the global framework for national implementation, there is a clear need for articulation of the GSPC national commitments in the National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans (NBSAPs). The CBD Secretariat and BGCI support regional capacity-building efforts, having carried out two regional workshops (in East and South Africa and the Caribbean), with plans for more workshops for GSPC focal points. TRAFFIC promotes the use of the FairWild Standard principles as the reference and tool for the delivery on Target 12 of GSPC, specifically for non-timber products. In 2012, two important policy results were achieved, which are exemplary for other countries. In South Africa, the government approved the Biodiversity Management Plan for *Pelargonium sidoides* (based on FairWild Standard principles), which provides a regulatory framework for the sustainable harvesting and trade in this species. Japan's National Biodiversity Policy includes direct reference to the FairWild Standard as one of the preferred certification frameworks to which the private sector should adhere. The FairWild Standard is also included in the Japan Plant Conservation Strategy as a tool for achieving the sustainable sourcing target.

The next CBD CoP in 2014 will take Parties close to the mid-term reporting on the targets of the Strategic Plan. One of the challenges for understanding the GSPC progress will be to disaggregate information from the National Reports for plants. Increasing Parties' understanding of ways to report against GSPC Targets will enable this process. For sustainable use targets of GSPC—specifically Target 12—the uptake of the FairWild Standard by companies, e.g. those engaged in certification schemes, could provide a useful indicator on changes in the number of species/locations that are sourced sustainably (similar to how the increase in Marine Stewardship Council certified fisheries signifies progress in sustainable use of marine resources), in addition to the number of government policies regulating wild harvesting and trade in a sustainable and equitable manner.

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