

**The Swedish International Biodiversity Programme,
SwedBio**

**Rationale, priorities and
criteria for the Collaborative
Programme**

December, 2005

1. Introduction

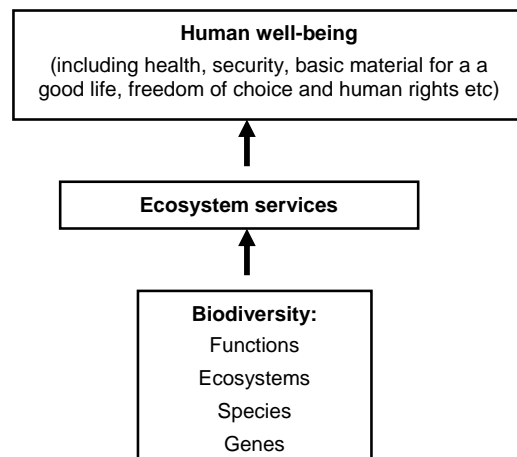
Biodiversity is a crucial resource for the worlds' poorest, and a fundamental Global Public Good. Rights to and sustainable management of biodiversity are often critical for local livelihoods, and are intimately linked to fundamental development aspects such as poverty, food security, equity, economic growth, health, and trade. Sustainable management of biodiversity and ecosystem services are thus a prerequisite for sustainable development and poverty alleviation in both local and global perspectives. The range of ecosystem services provided, and the links between biodiversity, ecosystem services and human well-being, are illustrated in Figures 1 and 2. However, overwhelming evidence, including the recently finalised Millenium Ecosystem Assessment (MA), clearly demonstrates that humans have changed ecosystems more rapidly and extensively in the last 50 years than in any other period. This has contributed to substantial net gains in human well-being and economic development, but at the cost of large and increasing degradation of the majority of ecosystem services. This degradation of ecosystem services is increasingly jeopardizing human well-being, including possibilities of achieving the Millenium Development Goals (MDGs). The degradation both must and can be reversed. However, this *"requires significant changes in policies, institutions, and practices that are not currently under way"* (MA), including recognising the importance of involving the people most directly affected and ensuring their rights and responsibilities.

SwedBio was initiated early 2003, by the Swedish Biodiversity Centre (CBM) and the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida), to meet these kind of challenges. The development objective of SwedBio is to *"contribute to poverty alleviation and improved livelihoods through equitable, sustainable and productive management, of biodiversity resources at all levels - genes, species and ecosystems"*.

Figure 1. The range of ecosystem services
(from MA Synthesis Report, 2005)

ECOSYSTEM SERVICES	
Supporting <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nutrient cycling • Soil formation • Primary production • ... 	Provisioning: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Food • Fresh water • Wood and fiber • Fuel • Medicines • ...
	Regulating: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Climate regulation • Flood regulation • Disease regulation • Water purification • ...
	Cultural: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aesthetic • Spiritual • Educational • Recreational •

Figure 2. The links between biodiversity, ecosystem services and human well-being



2. Objectives of the Collaborative Programme

The SwedBio Collaborative Programme constitutes the most important avenue for SwedBio to support capacity building in the South and is a key opportunity to directly contribute to development of ideas, methods and policies regarding biodiversity and local livelihood. SwedBio will collaborate with a diversity of strategic initiatives that address three interlinked dimensions:

- The need to sustainably manage biodiversity and maintain ecosystem services to ensure human well-being and health and contribute to poverty alleviation.
- The need to ensure equity and human rights in management and use of biodiversity and ecosystem services.
- The need to support development of appropriate incentive frameworks and good governance in order to address root causes of biodiversity loss.

Each of these is further outlined below (2.1-2.3). The different dimensions reflect the critical aspects that SwedBio wish to see addressed, and should not be regarded as “programme areas”.

SwedBio will support capacity building focussing on development of on one hand enabling institutional frameworks (policies and strategies, values and attitudes), and on the other biodiversity-based production and marketing practices. This will be done through supporting policy development and advocacy; development of tools and methods; and net-working, exchange, learning, and communication, in these areas.

SwedBio has a strategic role to contribute to increased capacity and commitment of Swedish international development cooperation related to biodiversity and livelihood. In this respect, the Collaborative Programme is a major opportunity for SwedBio to remain up-dated and continuously learn and capture new experiences and knowledge, and bring these back to feed into our work with integration of biodiversity-livelihood aspects at Sida, SwedBio will therefore strive to maintain an active and on-going dialogue with organisations and initiatives supported by the programme. Field visits as well as the reports and experiences from the supported organisations will be important sources of information.

SwedBio will during the coming years actively seek to expand and broaden the programme portfolio. High priority will therefore be given to identifying and initiating additional collaborations that address the following issues:

- Biodiversity and health linkages
- Marine issues, coastal development and fisheries
- Assessments, indicators and valuation (focussing on biodiversity-livelihood linkages)

2.1 To promote sustainable management of biodiversity and maintenance of ecosystem services in order to ensure and improve human well-being and contribute to poverty alleviation

Actively promoting sustainable management of biodiversity and maintenance of ecosystem services – including sustainable extraction levels and biodiversity-friendly land use methods - is

critical to human well-being and poverty alleviation. It must in this context be emphasized that “poverty” is multi-dimensional. Economic means (or lack of them) is one important part, but food security/sovereignty¹, health, vulnerability and access to power (see 2.2) are equally critical dimensions, as is understanding and addressing the different roles and responsibilities of women and men.

2.1.1 Food and income

Genetic resources for food and agriculture are the biological basis of world food. They are the raw materials used in the production of new cultivars and breeds and are a reservoir of genetic adaptability that also acts as a buffer against potentially harmful environmental and economic change. Aquatic/marine resources (particularly fish) as well as bush meat further play an important role as the only protein intake for millions of people. Ecosystem services also underpins all food production, and essential functions such as nutrient cycling, decomposition of organic matter, soil rehabilitation, pest and disease regulation, water quality, and pollination are maintained by a wide range of biologically diverse populations in natural ecosystems and in and near agricultural ecosystems.

Improving the productive performance and marketing opportunities of small-scale and low-income producers based on sustainable “pro-biodiversity” land use practices in agriculture, forestry, fisheries etc is therefore critical. Examples include encouraging biodiversity-based agriculture (e.g. integrated pest management, ecologically-friendly farming, local seed supply systems, participatory varietal selection etc), biodiversity-based forest management and sustainable harvest of non-timber forests products, and sustainable fishing practices. It also includes supporting marketing of sustainably managed and produced biodiversity goods and ecosystem services.

2.1.2 Biodiversity and vulnerability

Functioning eco-systems provide insurance against natural disasters, stress and shocks. Ecosystem resilience - i.e. the ability of the ecosystem to adapt and respond to change without losing its fundamental characteristics - is strongly dependent on the number of alternative species that can take over a special function when an ecosystem is disrupted.

Maintaining ecosystem resilience is a safe-guard against shocks and natural disasters that is particularly important for poor and vulnerable groups. Examples include encouraging production systems with a diversity of crops as they provide greater security in times of changing production conditions such as droughts and pests; ensuring access and availability of wild and semi-domesticated biodiversity as safety foods, and maintaining forest ecosystems to reduce soil erosion and regulate water flows and floods. The Tsunami in Asia (December, 2004) and the hurricanes in US during 2005 have clearly shown how – where still existing - mangrove forests, wetlands and coral reefs at least partially can buffer terrestrial land areas against storm waves. Biological diversity also has a critical role in both the mitigation of and adjustment to climate change.

¹ Sometimes defined as “The individuals’, peoples’ and communities right to determine their food and agricultural policies that affect their lives and livelihood, the right to access and control of means of production to ensure that their sovereignty over food is protected, and the right to safe, culturally appropriate foods and sustainable food production”

2.1.3 Biodiversity and health

Maintaining biodiversity and ecosystem services is fundamental to ensure human health.

Examples include:

- Medicinal uses, including on one hand the dependency of poor people on traditional plant based medicines, and on the other the potentials for new commercial drugs derived from plant-derived commercial drugs.
- Nutrition, e.g. the importance of wild and semi-domesticated aquatic and terrestrial plants and animals in providing proteins, minerals and vitamin. A varied and nutritious diet can for example contribute substantially to manage living with HIV/AIDS.
- Ecological services, including e.g. ecological sanitation, and the role and importance of wetlands in purifying water.

2.2 To promote equity and human rights in management and use of ecosystem services

Access and rights to biodiversity and ecosystem services is also a critical human rights issue that ranges from rights to seeds and genetic resources to rights and control over biodiversity-rich areas, and associated traditional knowledge and cultural identity. SwedBio therefore gives particular attention to increasing civil society participation in international processes and meetings regarding biodiversity management, ensuring and delineating the rights and responsibilities of local communities and indigenous peoples directly dependant on biodiversity (e.g. through collaborative and community-based management), and understanding the roles and rights of women and men respectively.

2.2.1 Giving voice to local actors in international processes regarding management of biodiversity

It is critical to provide increased opportunities for NGOs, community-based organisations and indigenous peoples to engage in and influence the major “policy arenas” where international (and regional) decisions are taken. Examples include supporting civil society participation to processes under the Convention on Biological Diversity, and other international meetings and processes of relevance, e.g. United National Forum on Forestry (UNFF), World Intellectual Property Organisation (WIPO), Consultative Group on International Agriculture Research (CGIAR) etc.

2.2.2 Collaborative and community-based management

A pro-poor strategy to biodiversity management needs to involve local communities and poor people themselves - and build on their views and local and traditional knowledge. This may also in many cases provide the best opportunities both for mitigation against corruption and for ensuring a sustainable utilisation of all levels of biodiversity. SwedBio therefore supports collaborative and community-based management of biodiversity.

2.2.3 Biodiversity and gender

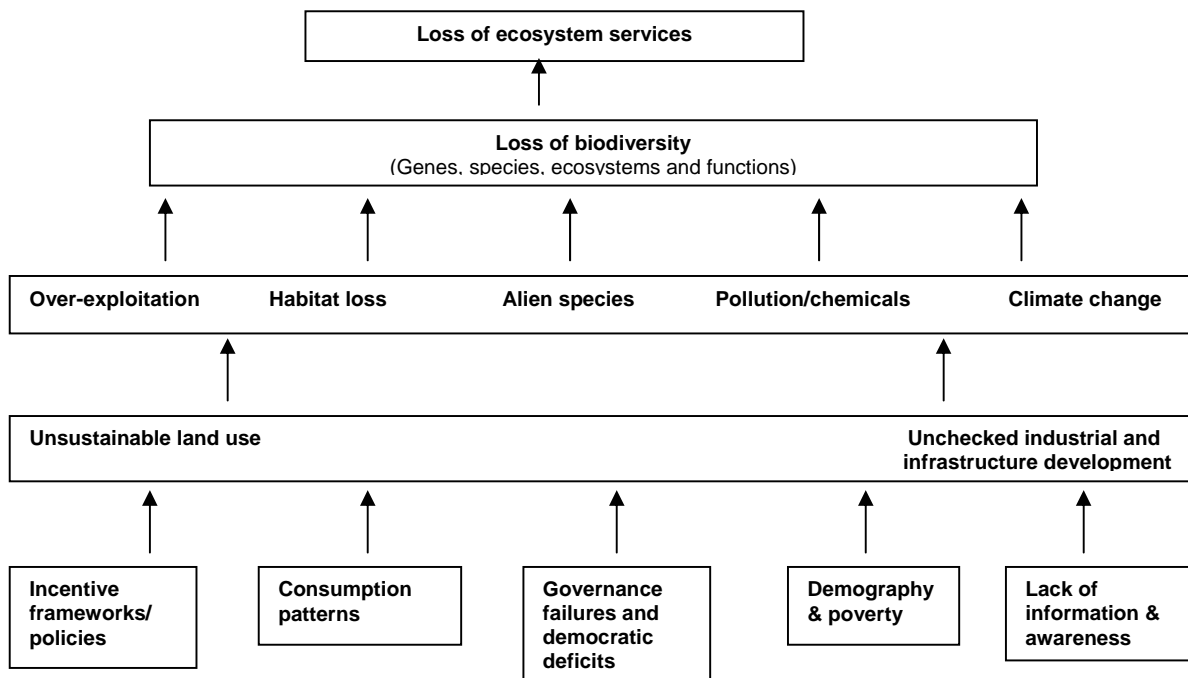
It is important to pay attention to gender issues related to biodiversity. Men and women often have different roles, with women in many cases playing a key role in e.g. selection of seeds, management of small livestock and for the conservation and sustainable use of plant and animal diversity. Women may hence in many cases have a more specialized knowledge of wild plants used for food, fodder and medicine than men. At the same time, women often have less influence and decision-making power, while being particularly vulnerable and loss of biodiversity.

2.3 To support development of appropriate institutional frameworks and good governance for maintaining and enhancing ecosystem services, in order to address root causes of biodiversity loss.

Whereas the intermediary and direct causes behind biodiversity loss often is linked to unsustainable land use practices, the underlying root causes (see Figure 3) are often more structural, such as inappropriate incentive systems, policy framework, governance failures and lack of knowledge and awareness. In practice this means to say that macro-polices and trade regulations², national development planning, natural resources sector policies, as well as extractive and infrastructure sector polices, in most cases provide little incentive to manage ecosystems sustainably. More often provide substantive incentives to do just the opposite, e.g. through subsidising excessive use of ecosystem services. One key explanation is how ecosystem services are valued, or in most cases not valued. The (often large actual) costs of degradation seldom appear in the calculations, with consumption patterns and market demand providing additional incentives for unsustainable use. A second explanation is the lack of functional integration of ecosystem management goals in development and sector planning. A third is a lack of transparency and accountability of both government and private-sector performance and decision-making, including corruption. A fourth is lack of knowledge, awareness and understanding e.g. among decision-makers.

SwedBio therefore gives priority to the international “macro-policy” framework, integration of ecosystem management goals in planning and policy frameworks, promoting stakeholder involvement and democratic development (see 2.2), and communication and awareness-raising.

Figure 3. Direct, intermediary and root causes behind loss of biodiversity and ecosystem services



² E.g bilateral free-trade agreements, WTO, Structural Adjustment Programmes.

2.3.1 The international framework and context: Macro-policies, trade and international conventions

SwedBio gives strong attention to the development and implementation of adequate international frameworks and regimes for sustainable and equitable management of biodiversity resources. This includes processes under the Convention on Biological Diversity (e.g. the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety, negotiations for an international regime on Access- and Benefit Sharing), but also negotiations under other international agreements, such as World Trade Organisation (WTO), WIPO etc.

2.3.2 Integrating ecosystem management goals in development and sector planning

Integration of ecosystem management goals in e.g. national development planning such as Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (PRSPs) is important as well as within the sectors guiding land and natural resources use (agricultural, forestry and fisheries policies and strategies) and extractive and infrastructure sectors such as mining, roads, hydropower etc. SwedBio therefore wish to promote development and dissemination of tools and methods for sector integration such as valuation of ecosystem services, biodiversity within Environmental Impact Assessment (EIAs) and Strategic Environmental Assessments (SEAs), and biodiversity-livelihood indicators for different sectors etc.

2.3.3 Promote good governance, stakeholder involvement, and democratic development in decision-making and management of ecosystem services

This is strongly connected to human rights and important areas of interventions are outlined above (see 2.2).

2.3.4 Communication and awareness-raising

Sustainable and equitable management of ecosystems is constrained both by lack of adequate knowledge and by the failure to adequately use available information in decision-making. SwedBio therefore gives strong emphasis to learning, communication of results as well as to advocacy and policy development.

3. Types of support

Two main types of support are available through the collaborative programme.

3.1. Programme support

Programme support to strategic longer (2 years at least, often longer) initiatives will constitute the bulk of the collaborative programme. The direct partners will mainly consist of “intermediary organisations” (e.g. regional/global NGOs, networks, independent policy/research institutes) who in turn work both with capacity-building among local communities, indigenous peoples and national NGOs and with linking this work with development of tools, methods and policies, and methods development and advocacy.

3.2 Short-term support

SwedBio can also provide more limited and short-term support, e.g. for:

- Participation of NGOs, Community-Based Organisations and Indigenous Peoples in international meetings of relevance for biodiversity management, e.g. the Convention on Biological Diversity and other fora.

- Shorter studies and/or workshops of particular relevance, awareness-raising initiatives, and to some extent provide seed money for starting new initiatives (which will not be funded long-term by SwedBio).

4. Criteria

Supported initiatives should:

- Contribute to the development objective of SwedBio, the objectives of the Collaborative Programme, and be in line with SwedBio's points of departure.
- Be relevant to poor people in local communities in the South and at the same time contribute to learning, communication of results, and policy development of regional and/or global relevance.
- Seek and promote dialogue between different types of stakeholders, disciplines and knowledge systems.
- Strengthen capacity and contribute to organisational development of southern national and regional organisations and NGOs; and
- Be managed by recipients with adequate organisational structure and management capacity (transparent, accountable, democratic, with a balanced representation of relevant parties, including gender).

To ensure complementarity - as well as compatibility - with other biodiversity-related Swedish support, priority will be given to supporting NGOs, networks, independent action-oriented research institutes, and civil society organisations (not Governments) with activities in the South that do not receive substantial support from other Swedish sources.

Regarding support to civil society participation in international meetings of relevance to biodiversity management, SwedBio will only provide grants to organisations coordinating participation from several southern-based groups and countries. SwedBio does not sponsor individuals with either e.g. research grants or to participate in meetings/workshops.

Detailed requirements and routines for development of proposals are attached in Annex 1.

Annex 1

Routines for application, reporting etc

The routines for preparation and management of the collaborative programme are adapted from Sida's project cycle, and include a) assessment and development of the proposal (including discussions with the applying organisation, b) preparation of internal SwedBio decision documents (decision memo, decision), c) preparation and finalising agreement with the organisation, d) reporting and follow-up, and e) (for long-term collaborations) agreeing on annual work plans and budgets.

- *Applications.* Applications should include background description/justification, objectives, intended beneficiaries, expected outcome, description of activities, indicators for follow-up and budget. The budget should include the detailed costs (including costs of personnel/salary levels), clearly indicate other funding sources, and - where relevant - show the distribution of funds between the organisations collaborating (and being supported) within the initiative.
- *Reporting.* Depending on size and length of the supported initiative, reports will be required either once in total (for a shorter or smaller initiative), or once or twice every year. Financial reports shall include explicit reference to budget lines in the agreed budget, and explanations regarding possible changes. Annual and/or final independent audits are required

Proposals are discussed and formally assessed by the SwedBio Project Assessment Group (PAG)³. Larger proposals (500,000 SEK or more) must also be endorsed by the SwedBio Steering Group (SG)⁴. For the long-term proposals we recommend that as a first step a briefer (5-10 page) concept note⁵ be submitted as basis for preliminary assessment by the PAG and the SG rather than a full project proposal. If the PAG and the SG endorse the concept note a full proposal can be developed which then need to be endorsed only by the PAG.

The PAG meets about once/month (except during summer holidays, mid-June to mid-August), and proposals must be received at least one week before the meeting. The SG meets about every second month. Organisations will normally be informed about the outcome of the PAG-meetings within a week after the meeting. If the proposal is tentatively endorsed by the PAG, a programme officer at SwedBio will initiate a dialogue with the organisation on the more detailed contents and budget. The final formal decision for support (including signing the agreement with the applying organisation) is taken either by the SwedBio coordinator, or by the Director of the Swedish Biodiversity Centre or his/her designated representative.

The time required to process a proposal after it has been tentatively endorsed by the PAG can vary considerably, depending e.g. on how long time it takes until SwedBio and the applying organisation agrees on the final proposal and the budget. Normally it will take about 1-2 months for smaller proposals, and 3-6 months for larger, more long-term, proposals.

³ The PAG consists of all SwedBio staff plus a staff-member from the Swedish Biodiversity Centre who is also a member of the SwedBio Steering Group

⁴ The SG consists of two persons from Sida and two from the Swedish Biodiversity Centre.

⁵ Particularly if the proposal is developed for SwedBio only.