A policy perspective

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A policy perspective

1. Role of biodiversity in adaptation and mitigation strategies
2. Opportunities for co-ordination of policy and science
3. Communication

1. Role of biodiversity in adaptation and mitigation strategies

- Protection of biodiversity can contribute to adaptation and mitigation objectives and promote human well-being (eg. avoided deforestation and peatland restoration).
- Need to identify, promote and test such “win-win-win” solutions.
- De-centralised, community based, market focused solutions.

- However, not always possible to find “win-win-win” solutions and we need to deal with difficult trade-offs (eg biofuels).
- Need transparent decision-making frameworks and processes to be clear about winners and losers – seek to minimise negative impacts.
- Good governance critical for delivery of multiple objectives across different sectors.

Biodiversity - Climate Interactions: Adaptation, Mitigation and Human Livelihoods

- Dynamic approach to biodiversity management needed to enhance ecosystem resilience and capacity to accommodate change (see practical guidelines published by Defra)
- Approaches include networks of protected areas and broader land- and sea-scape management – ie cross-sectoral
- Evaluation of risks - need to know when to stop investing in protection of particular species – more research

2. Opportunities for co-ordination of policy and science

- Need to improve evidence and tools available to support decision-making – for example:

Ecosystem type	Climate regulation role	Biodiversity value	Benefits for human well-being	Mitigation potential	Adaptation potential
Peatland	Carbon sink	High	Medium	High	Low
Tropical forest	Carbon sink, water cycling	Very high	High	High	Low
Arable farmland	Carbon source	Low	High	Low	High

Biodiversity - Climate Interactions: Adaptation, Mitigation and Human Livelihoods

- Need for stronger co-operation between the international conventions and their scientific bodies and better mechanisms for science input.
- Request for an IPCC Special Report on interactions between climate change, biodiversity, ecosystem services and human well-being.
- Need to increase capacity for implementation of international conventions at both strategic and grass-root levels – share best practice.

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3. Communication

- Simple messages:
  - Evidence for climate change is unequivocal
  - Adaptation is necessary to cope with inevitable changes
  - Mitigation is essential to avoid dangerous climate change
  - Biodiversity is fundamental to human well-being and climate regulation and must be a central concern of sustainable development

- Simple messages require simple measures: climate change has benefited from reducing complexity to some key metrics, can we do the same for biodiversity – 2010 indicators?
- Impacts, and benefits of taking action, and the costs of in action need to be communicated effectively to those immediately affected. Need to generate responses at local levels because this is were ecosystems are managed.

- Decision-makers look at the bottom line – how much does it cost. Support the G8+5 Potsdam Initiative to undertake a ‘Stern-type’ review of the costs of biodiversity loss.

What can SBSTTA do?

- Call for more and better science and scientific advice to inform policy making at all levels
- Provide guidance to ensure that climate change impacts, adaptation and mitigation options are considered in all programmes of work
- Review and share experience of adaptation and mitigation projects
- Request and make proposals for stronger co-operation between Rio Conventions

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