



Convention on Biological Diversity

Distr.
GENERAL

UNEP/CBD/LG-GSPC/3/3
25 May 2009

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

LIAISON GROUP ON THE GLOBAL STRATEGY FOR PLANT CONSERVATION

Third Meeting*
Dublin, 26 - 28 May 2009

DEFINING THE FRAMEWORK FOR THE DEVELOPMENT AND UPDATE OF THE GLOBAL STRATEGY FOR PLANT CONSERVATION BEYOND 2010:

A SUMMARY OF THE ONLINE CONSULTATION ON THE FURTHER DEVELOPMENT AND UPDATE OF THE GLOBAL STRATEGY FOR PLANT CONSERVATION BEYOND 2010

Part 2 – A review of the sixteen outcome targets of the GSPC

1. INTRODUCTION

1. The Global Strategy for Plant Conservation was adopted in 2002 (annex to decision VI/9) with the ultimate goal to halt the current and continuing loss of plant diversity. The sixteen outcome-oriented targets of the Strategy provide a commonly agreed framework with interdependent targets for actions by a wide range of actors, hence the need to view the Strategy as a whole. In considering the elaboration of the targets, it was noted then that available baseline information and indicators, while not perfect, were not a limitation to the implementation or monitoring of most of the targets.

2. The ninth meeting of the Conference of the Parties considered the outcomes of the in-depth review of the Global Strategy for Plant Conservation conducted by the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice and the key messages resulting from the review as transmitted to the Conference of the Parties by the Subsidiary Body in paragraph 1 of its recommendation XII/2 (UNEP/CBD/COP/9/2, annex).

3. The in depth review indicated that although the time since the adoption of Global Strategy Plant Conservation in 2002 was not sufficiently long to allow significant achievement of the targets, there was notable progress in achieving targets 1 (A widely accessible working list of known plant species, as a step towards a complete world flora), 5 (Protection of 50 per cent of the most important areas for plant diversity assured;), 8 (60 per cent of threatened plant species in accessible *ex situ* collections, preferably in the country of origin, and 10 per cent of them included in recovery and restoration programmes), 9 (70 per cent of the genetic diversity of crops and other major socio-economically valuable plant species conserved, and associated indigenous and local knowledge maintained), 11 (No species of wild flora

* Organized jointly by the CBD Secretariat and Global Partnership for Plant Conservation

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endangered by international trade), 14 (The importance of plant diversity and the need for its conservation incorporated into communication, educational and public-awareness programmes), 15 (The number of trained people working with appropriate facilities in plant conservation increased, according to national needs, to achieve the targets of this Strategy), and 16 (Networks for plant conservation activities established or strengthened at national, regional and international levels).

4. However, limited progress had been made with respect to the targets 2 (A preliminary assessment of the conservation status of all known plant species, at national, regional and international levels), 4 (At least 10 per cent of each of the world's ecological regions effectively conserved), 6 (At least 30 per cent of production lands managed consistent with the conservation of plant diversity), 10 (Management plans in place for at least 100 major alien species that threaten plants, plant communities and associated habitats and ecosystems), and 12 (30 per cent of plant-based products derived from sources that are sustainably managed).

5. There were some gaps in achieving target 3 (Development of models with protocols for plant conservation and sustainable use, based on research and practical experience) especially in relation to development of tools and protocols for the targets of the Strategy whose progress is limited. Efforts to achieve target 7 (60 per cent of the world's threatened species conserved *in situ*) have been constrained by limited progress in achieving target 2, as target 7 is dependant on the base line data generated under target 2.

6. The review indicated that the constraints to the national implementation of the Global Strategy included limited institutional integration, lack of mainstreaming, and inadequate policies and legal frameworks at the planning stage; and at the operational level, lack of data, tools and technologies, limited sectoral collaboration and coordination, limited financial and human resources. The review indicates also that further development of the Global Strategy should include targets relating to: (i) climate change, a driver of biodiversity loss increasing in intensity in recent years; and (ii) the impacts of nutrient loading on plant diversity.

7. Overall, while the emerging global environmental challenges, namely, the impact of climate change and nutrient loading, were not addressed during the formulation of the Strategy, there was ample opportunity to address these further during the implementation of targeted activities under the existing targets.

8. The ninth Conference of the Parties therefore urged Parties to (a) further implement activities for achieving enhanced implementation of the Strategy, in particular its targets 1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 7, 10, 12 and 15, including by reaching other relevant sectors beyond the botanical and conservation communities; and (b) provide as appropriate, additional information on the progress made towards achieving the targets of the Strategy, including quantitative data and information from other sectors and processes such as in forestry and agriculture, in order to strengthen future reviews of the implementation of the Strategy.

9. In decision IX/3, the Conference of the Parties decided to consider the further development and implementation of the Strategy beyond 2010, taking into account current and emerging environmental challenges on plant diversity, including an update of the current targets within the broader context of and consistent with the new Strategic Plan beyond 2010, taking into account national priorities and circumstances, capacities and differences in plant diversity between countries.

10. The Conference of the Parties further requested the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice to provide, prior to the tenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties, proposals for a consolidated update of the Global Strategy, taking into account the Plant Conservation Report, the third edition of the Global Biodiversity Outlook, the fourth national reports and additional inputs from the Global Partnership for Plant Conservation and other relevant organizations.

11. In response to these decisions, the Executive Secretary has convened a Liaison Group Meeting of the GSPC to consider options for development and update of the Strategy beyond 2010, make recommendations for a framework to update and or revise the targets of the Strategy, prepare preliminary proposals for presentation to SBSTTA 14 and provide guidance on how these proposals should link to the overall process of the 2010 target review.

12. In order to prepare for the Liaison Group Meeting, the Executive Secretary invited Parties, partners and relevant stakeholders to provide their input, contributions and proposals for the further development and implementation of the Strategy through an online consultation on the GSPC conducted from 1 to 30 April 2009. The aim was to develop a broader stakeholder involvement, engage all sectors and provide opportunity for all segments of stakeholders who traditionally would not have access to meetings and fora organized by the Secretariat and the Global Partnership for Plant Conservation, to provide their input. The consultation gathered a broad range of responses from stakeholders and Parties with respect to effectiveness of the Strategy and additional input as a basis for defining the next steps for the GSPC. (http://www.surveymonkey.com/s.aspx?sm=BJFk1G7NAU8trnDpvwDQJA_3d_3d)

II. OUTCOMES OF THE ONLINE CONSULTATION – PART 2

2.1. *Rationale for the online consultation*

13. In order to define the basis for proposals for further development and implementation of the targets of the Strategy, it was considered appropriate to seek input from Stakeholders regarding the actions needed to enhance further implementation and or review of the sixteen outcome targets of the Strategy. Noting that not all stakeholders would be familiar with all the targets of the Strategy, a second part of the consultation was designed specifically targeting the internal audience, namely, those stakeholders involved in the implementation of the targets of the Strategy.

14. The online consultation was presented in two sections: Section A comprised of general questions, targeting all stakeholders, with a view to define the basis for a framework for further development and update of the Strategy. The questions here addressed (i) the effectiveness and relevance of the Strategy; (ii) effectiveness of the Strategy in responding to its objectives; (iii) the effectiveness of the Strategy in responding to the 3 objectives of the Convention on Biological Diversity; (iv) relevance of the Strategy in responding to pertinent issues as well as an opportunity for respondents to provide any additional information.

15. Section B of the online consultation targeted technical experts who have been involved in the implementation of the current Strategy, with an aim to garner more insight on proposals for the update/review and/or further development of the existing sixteen outcome targets. For each target, the respondents were requested to choose one of the four options (a) maintain target as is, (b) maintain target but put in place measures to enhance implementation, (c) update/review target and (d) create new target.

16. All stakeholders were invited to provide responses to section A while experts were invited to provide input to both sections. It was indicated that none of the questions were mandatory.

2.2. *Results from the online consultation: section B*

2.2.1 – *Response to the online consultation*

17. A total of 77 respondents provided input for section B of the online consultation, with an average of 40 respondents per target. Of these, an average of 24 (50 % of respondents) provided comments and detailed input.

2.2.2 *Proposals for review/update of the Targets of the Strategy*

18. In order to get a preliminary understanding of potential scenarios for review/update of each target, the consultation provided four guided questions under each target to determine the level of support for maintaining the target as is; maintaining the target but improving measures to enhance implementation; reviewing and/or updating the target and creating a new target instead. For each target, an open ended question was included to enable respondents provide input as to what new measures were required, how targets could be adjusted and provide suggestions for milestones and monitoring.

19. Overall, there was a clear indication that there was a need to define the targets better, improve clarity and reduce ambiguity in targets, ensure that all targets are SMART, define baselines for monitoring, milestones, indicators and sub targets where needed.

20. For example, it was noted that targets 3, 13, 14, 15 and 16 were enabling targets, hence open ended and difficult to measure and monitor as they were more aspirational than measurable.

21. On the other hand, some targets required no institutional and policy changes hence were easy to implement by all stakeholders such as target 1, while other needed cross sectoral investments, making it harder to implement them at national and regional level.

22. Some targets were better suited for global implementation and while progress had been made at this level, it was hard to deliver similar progress at national level. For example, target 4 was difficult to define at national level for action while target 10 was also a challenge for national and regional implementation.

23. The consultation noted in order to effectively define the next steps, it would be critical to establish progress made in achieving each target, define new baselines and on this basis, review targets for implementation post 2010. However, the general consensus was that the current targets should not be changed substantially as they have already been mainstreamed and adopted at national, regional and global level.

24. The impact of climate change was highlighted as an important consideration, creating urgency to achieve some targets (e.g. target 2, 7, and 10); providing a further justification for accelerated investment in the implementation of some targets at national and regional level (e.g. targets 8, 9,13) and defining a basis for reviewing some targets thresholds upwards (e.g. target 4, 5, 6, 12, 14 and 15).

25. The general observations from the online consultation are summarised below.

2.2.3 *The Framework for the Review of the Targets beyond 2010*

26. The Strategy had five sub-objectives, (a) understanding and documenting plant diversity, (b) conserving plant diversity, (c) using plant diversity sustainably, (d) promoting education and awareness about plant diversity and (e) building capacity for the conservation of plant diversity. The targets of the Strategy are linked to each of these objectives. A review of any of these objectives will create a basis for review/update of each related target.

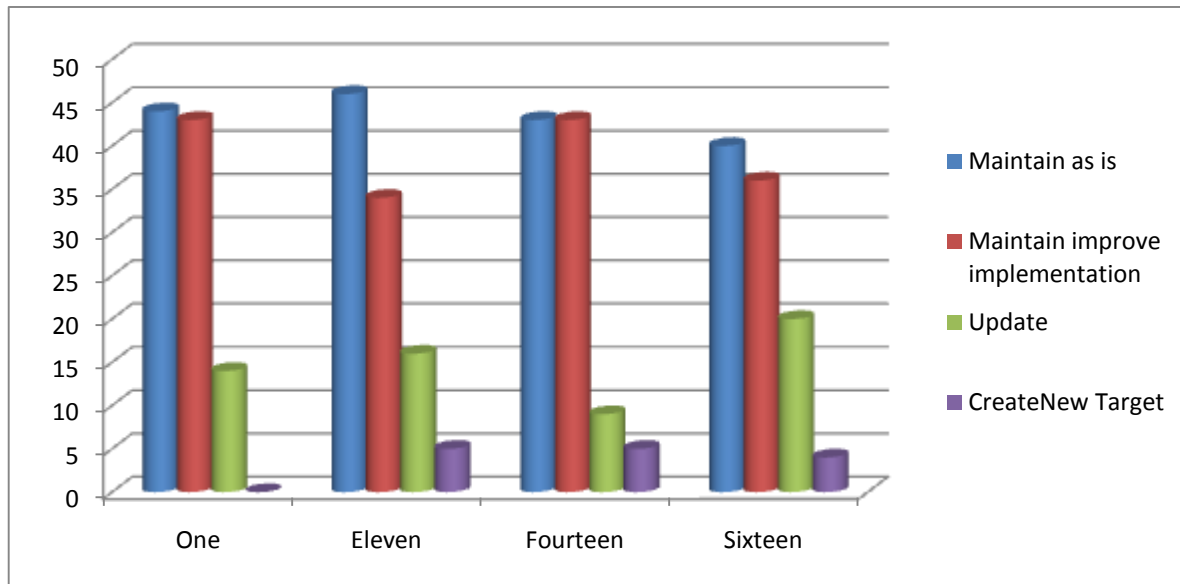
27. Section A of the online consultation already highlighted the need to address better the issues related to climate change, nutrient loading, linkages to indigenous and private sector and strengthen responses to sustainability, human well being and securing ecosystem services.

28. The responses from Section B of the online consultation can be summarised as follows: (a) maintain targets 1, 11, 14, and 16 as is; (b) maintain but improve measures for further implementation of targets 2, 3, 5, 6, 7, 8, 12, 13 and 15 and (c) update targets 4 and 10. There was limited support for

deleting these targets and creating new ones from them. New and additional targets may however be created to address gaps identified in updating the objectives of the Strategy.

(a) Recommendation for targets to be maintained as currently presented in the Strategy

29. There was strong support for maintaining targets 1, 11, 14, and 16 as shown below.



30. In addressing target 1, it was noted that the target may be 85% complete by 2010. However, there is still the need to complete the list and make it widely accessible, address resource and taxonomic skill constraints, address gaps such as lower and marine plants and begin to work towards a complete flora.

31. With regard to target 11, it was noted that this target reflects the core business of CITES and allows the Strategy to link directly to another Multi Lateral Agreement and the Plant Conservation Committee of CITES (PC 18, Argentina, March 2009) has recommended maintenance of the target beyond 2010. However, there is need to improve implementation through strengthening linkages between national GSPC focal points and CITES focal points. Efforts should made to generate more data related Non Detriment Findings and explore options to address species heavily exploited at national level.

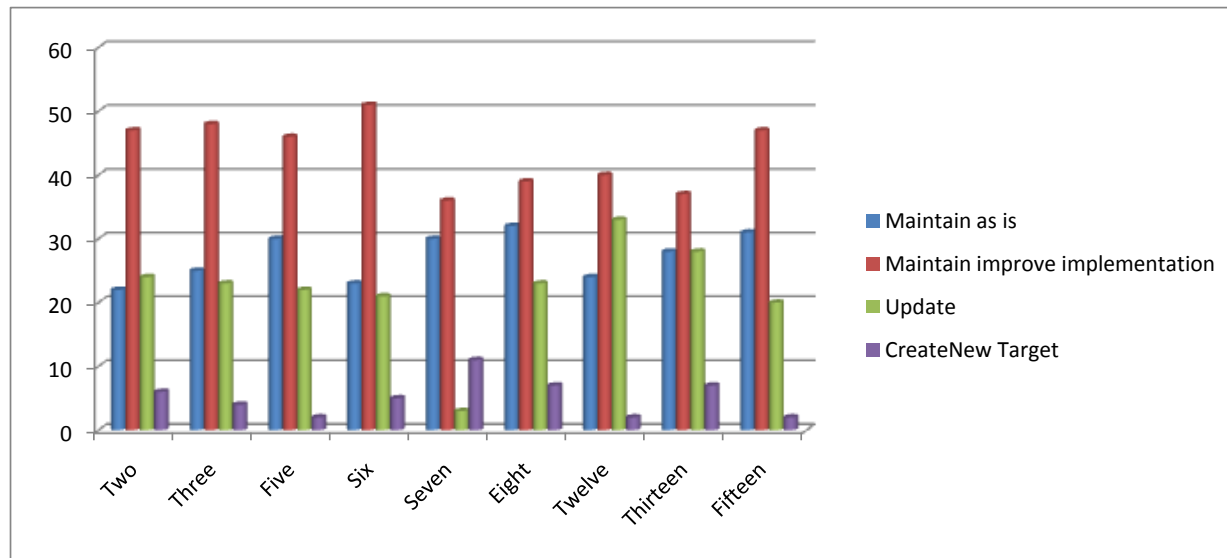
32. In general, target 16 was seen as an enabling target and critical to the success of the Strategy, notably through the formation of the Global Partnership. However it should be maintained as an enabling cross cutting target, since it not measurable, and has no assessment indicators.

(b) Recommendations for targets to be maintained but measures for further implementation improved

33. There was strong support from the online consultation to maintain targets 2, 3, 5, 6, 7, 8, 12, 13, and 15 but improve measures to enhance further implementation. These measures include through defining better the baselines, developing indicators for monitoring, clarifying terms, defining milestones, sub targets and in some cases refining thresholds. The levels of support for each option for each target is shown below.

34. There was a strong indication for the need to clarify terms such as ‘effective’ and preliminary in targets 2, 4, 5, and 6. In general, it was noted that the outcomes from the implementation of these targets will be greatly compromised by the growing challenge of climate change. In addition, there is great need to link the implementation of these targets to benefits accrued at local level by local communities,

incorporate more priorities and needs these communities as well as incorporate associated indigenous and local knowledge, innovations, practices and technologies.



35. For target 2, there was a recommendation to put in place measures for coordination and training, use of other available tools, set up national working groups and clarify ‘preliminary assessments’.

36. With regard to target 3, there was a concern that there is weak evidence based science for plant conservation, lack of attention to rigorous project design and while many tools and protocols were available, dissemination and access were the key constraints. There is more work needed under this target for targets 2, 6, 9 and 13. The toolkit requested by the Parties availed electronically on the website should be the repository and dissemination channel for this target.

37. Under target 5, it was noted the impact of climate change may make this target ineffective. There is need to review IPCC scenarios as a basis for further, define current baselines, and link effectively to the programme of work on protected areas. This target could be promoted as a measure to mitigate climate change, provide refugia and migration corridors for plant species as well as provide options for sustainable livelihoods. However, there is need also to clarify within this target how to address threats.

38. Target 6 was noted to be difficult to measure effect. There is need for clarity of baselines, performance indicators and definition of terms such as ‘effectively conserved’ and ‘production lands’. There was a recommendation to increase the threshold from 30% to 50% given the increasing challenge of land degradation and climate change and also develop sector specific sub targets. The target links to agricultural biodiversity programme of work and MDGs hence should be maintained.

39. There was strong support for maintaining target 7, but review it to take into consideration potential impacts of climate change. There is need to review the baseline in 2010, link to sustainable use and human well being but also address the need to improve the status of the threatened species *in situ* and aim for sustainable management. A sub target for endemic species could be defined to enhance national level implementation.

40. It was indicated that there is a stronger justification now for target 8 given the challenge of climate change on the adaptation of threatened species *in situ*. There is still need to place more emphasis on recovery and may be increase the threshold for recovery and restoration to 25%. In the absence of an

updated global list of threatened species (target 1 and 2), and with different lists in use, it may be difficult to measure this target. Further definition of priority taxa is needed, such as narrow endemics, sub specific taxa, critically endangered species and taxa with known or potential future use. Presence of species in *ex-situ* collections should not be seen as the outcome but rather genetically representative collections.

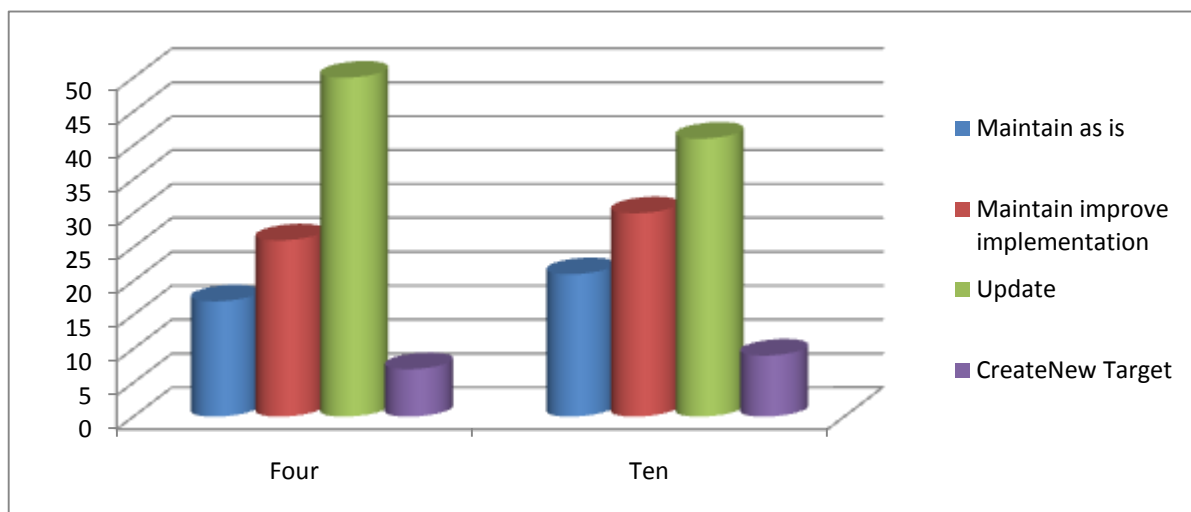
41. While there was support for maintaining target 12, this is one of the targets that was perceived as arbitrary and needs review, better refinement, definition of terms, and if possible development of sub targets. Terms to be clarified include ‘plant based products’ and ‘effective’. There is need to integrate this target better with target 6 and the programme of work on sustainable use. There is need to develop sub targets at sectoral level and strengthen linkages with the private sector and consumers.

42. Target 13 was noted as unsatisfactory, vague and complex hence difficult to measure and is not SMART. This target is a strategic link to the MDG framework, can be included in national sustainable development policies and links well to sustainable livelihood initiatives. However, there is need for guidance for practical implementation at national level and definition of sub targets for different priorities. This target provides a basis to address ABS and Article 8(j) related priorities within the Strategy, and in line with the ABS negotiations, the thresholds may be need to be increased. The consultation recommended that indigenous and local communities be involved in the review and update of this target.

43. While target 15 was noted as fundamental for the achievement of the targets of the Strategy, overall there has been limited commitment and leadership from all sectors. This target needs to be made more measurable, baselines defined and a coordination and monitoring framework recommended. The focus should not only be on numbers but also quality. National needs assessments may be an initial priority.

(c) Recommendations for targets to be updated/reviewed

44. The support from the online consultation for the update/review of targets 4 and 10 is highlighted below.



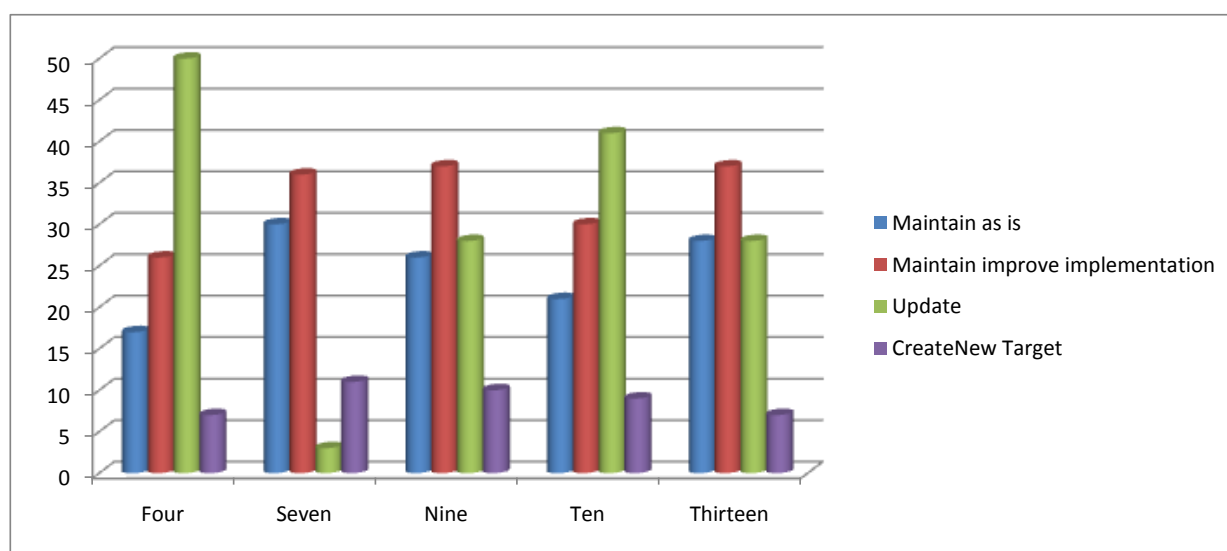
45. Given the threat and challenge posed by climate change, it was noted that target 4 will have to be reviewed and thresholds increased. Issues to be addressed in the review/update include definition of ‘ecological regions’ and ‘effectively conserved’; provision of a checklist of these regions; review of potential impact of climate change on existing protected area network, clarify if the focus is to be within protected area networks, and clarify how this target is linked to maintenance of plant diversity. There is

need however to link to sustainable use and human well being as well provide guidance on implementation of the target at national and regional level.

46. It was noted that target 10 did not lend itself to national and regional implementation. A key challenge was to establish whether existing management plans address the challenge of climate change. There is therefore need to review/update the target but maintain focus on invasive alien species, noting that national and regional level actions will be different from global actions. More clarity and guidance was requested for this target.

(d) Creation of new targets

47. There was limited support for creation of new targets for target 4, 7, 9, 10 and 13, and insignificant support for the rest; based on existing targets as indicated below. However, section A of the online consultation highlighted the need to address the impact of climate change within the context of existing targets, address livelihood and poverty reduction more explicitly as well as other new priorities.



48. There was also a recommendation to differentiate types of targets, i.e. enabling targets vs outcome targets; include learning targets related to generation of new knowledge and concrete action target which should all be SMART and enable monitoring and evaluation to assess the impact of the Strategy in the medium and long term.

49. While the Strategy may be developed for 10yr period, it is recommended that a review is made in 2015, in tandem with the review of the MDGs.

2.4. Concluding remarks

50. The online consultation has provided further insight into the priorities for the review/update of the targets of the Strategy beyond 2010. Together with the finding of the in depth review undertaken in 2008 and the updates in the Plant Conservation Report these observations provide a basis for further consultation and preparation of proposals on the consolidated update of the Strategy for SBSTTA 14.
