

IUCN One Programme Strategy for Freshwater Biodiversity Conservation: Putting to work first actions

The idea was to generate a framework to promote a *One Programme Strategy for Freshwater Biodiversity Conservation* directed to raise the urgency of freshwater biodiversity conservation and motivate coordinated action among Members, Commissions and Secretariat to address critical threats. The IUCN One Programme Strategy for Freshwater Biodiversity Conservation will raise the urgency of freshwater biodiversity conservation and motivate coordinated action among Members, Commissions and Secretariat to address critical threats. Critical to this response will be the need to mobilize with the necessary speed and scale to reduce and eventually reverse the loss of freshwater biodiversity and degradation of freshwater ecosystems worldwide.

Specifically, the workshop attempted to address different topics such as a) Lack of data on freshwater ecosystems, b) The need to Integrate ecosystem conservation into the water agenda

bio-engineering solutions, promote transparency and participation, integrate development and conservation, and support multidisciplinary trainings.

On the other hand the workshop recognized the complexity of balancing development and conservation and how to involve the society in this debate. Ecosystem services provided by freshwater environments were recognized as an important concept from which society can benefit but not in all cases such services are well understood. There is an inherent complexity in communicating how biodiversity need to be conserved in a broad perspective as healthy ecosystems require from species interactions, multi trophic levels, etc. Such limitations are well perceived with fish where target species become more relevant for societal perceptions than others species. Moreover, it is no rare that some governmental agencies relate biodiversity improvement with exotic species introductions in order to increase the recreational fisheries demands and quality.

The workshop identified 4 main outcomes;

- a) Legal framework, laws and governance
- b) Habitats conservation, restoration and species conservation
- c) Sustainable water use related to man-made impacts
- d) Major economic drivers impacts on biodiversity (dredging, agrivulture, mining, etc.)
- e) For each outcome some questions were posed: a) What actions, what interim targets could be achieved?; b) Which sectors must act differently; c) What stop us, d); How to overcome barriers; e) Who will be involves in practical actions, broader strategy, synergy, priority in outcomes?

Freshwater biodiversity was considered as a complex issue, even more complex than in marine environments as its integrity is affected by the basin effect. The workshop recognized such complexity and moreover, accepted that in transboundary basins the problem could be exacerbated under lack of common management policies. In this context, dams received during the workshop a great attention as a main source of was discussed and the philosophy of the UICN was also considered under the XXI century perspective. Whereas in North America and Europe dam growth has reduced and even several projects are now oriented to dams removal, in South America, Asia and Africa dams development is still a main policy in different countries. The cases of the Meckong and

Amazon basins were mentioned as example of developing new visions related to dams installation. No less important, small dams were also included in the discussion as they are more numerous and mostly oriented to irrigation and ester management rather than to hydro-