



Ethiopian Biodiversity Institute
Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services Network (BES-Net) Phase II Project
Implementation of Component I in Ethiopia of Post-National Ecosystem Assessment
Results Framework”

“A Trialogue Session of Policy makers, the Scientific Community and Practitioners”
(Report)



By: Project office

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1. Background of the Project

Ethiopia was among the four countries that received support to carry out National Ecosystem Assessment (NEA) under the first phase of the Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services Network (BES-Net I), together with Vietnam, Cameroon, and Colombia. Under the leadership of the Ethiopian Biodiversity Institute (EBI), with active participation of local key stakeholders and global backstopping support of United Nations Environment Programme World Conservation Monitoring Center (UNEP-WCMC), a group of leading scientists and experts from across Ethiopia have worked together since 2017 to undertake an in-depth assessment of the country's Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (BES) in line with the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES) guideline on the production of assessments.

The NEA was successfully implemented. Given the NEA related achievements in Ethiopia to date, the country was selected as a priority target country for catalytic financial support (BES Solution Fund) under the second phase of BES-Net (BES-Net II) Component 1, which seeks to create a shared vision and mode of collaboration among science, policy and practice communities for sustainable BES conservation and management in target countries. The BES Solution Fund support is allocated strategically to fully operationalize the National BES Platform (NBP-Ethiopia) with balanced cross-cutting representation from science-policy-practice communities and accelerate harmonized uptake of the key NEA recommendations into policy and on-the-ground activities.

The project objective is to strengthen the interface and partnership among policy, science and practice; and promote the harmonized uptake of NEA recommendations by these three groups of actors, contributing to achievement of BES-Net II's overall outputs for Component 1 "Create a shared vision and mode of collaboration among science, policy and practice communities for sustainable BES conservation and management in target countries"

Various activities are part and parcel of the project which was planned this year with appropriate budget breakdown in quarterly basis. Thus EBI, in collaboration with UNDP has prepared the 2023-2024 Rolling/Annual Work Plan. Among the planned activities to be implemented in the 1st quarter of 2024 AWP (Jan -June, 2024). However, it was delayed due to various technical problems like on its implementation modalities and delay of signature



from Ministry of finance.

Therefore, developing accelerated action plan is needed. As a result, by EBI a team of Planning and implementation was established to follow-up and implement each activity. Therefore, this proposal of expenses is developed to facilitate a **“A Trialogue Session of Policy makers, the Scientific Community and Practitioners” to Facilitate Deliberations on BES-related frameworks BES Net Phase II Project implementation April 29 to 30 /2024** at Bishoftu town.

2. General Objective of the workshop

The main objective of the workshop is to facilitate deliberations on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (BES) related issues, strengthen collective bargaining tradition, and enhance participation of actors (policy makers, the scientific community and practitioners) at national levels on BES and also obtain international experiences from BES Net team. The event, therefore, is expected to enhance and promote the harmonized uptake of National Ecosystem Assessment (NEA-Ethiopa) recommendations by key actors, contributing to achievement of BES-Net Phase II’s overall outputs for Component 1 “Create a shared vision and mode of collaboration among science, policy and practice communities for sustainable BES conservation and management in target countries”

More specifically the workshop focuses on:

- sharing knowledge and information on the work of BES;
- jointly identifying and analyzing the related issues, challenges and potential solutions;
- acquiring lessons and disseminating tools and experience on current work; programmes and priorities related to BES; and
- exploring areas of collaboration, joint programmes and next steps

3. EXPECTED OUTPUTS /Results

- (i) Participants have a good understanding of BES concepts, practices, strategies and measures in biodiversity and ecosystem service conservation;
- (ii) Participants are able to apply as well as facilitate local communities on BES and related sectors;
- (iii) Participants are able to grasp contribution of BES Net Project towards Biodiversity and Ecosystem services management in Ethiopia



- (iv) Participants are able to aware on the effective communication mechanisms to conserve BES in the country and obtain global experience
- (v) Understand the Post 2020, GBF targets and awared to support formulation and implementation of NBSAP.

4. Welcoming and Opening Addressed (By Dr. Melese Maryo, Director General of EBI)

The Honorable Standing Committee members of Agriculture Affairs of the House of People's Representatives of the Federal Democratic republic of Ethiopia

- Honorable Heads of Government of the Federal and State Governments,
- Dear Members of Ethiopian Religious Institutions Forum,
- Honorable elders of the country / traditional fathers,
- Dear academic and research experts,
- Honorable University Leaders,
- Dear Ethiopian scientists,
- Dear non-governmental organizations and professional associations
- Dear media professionals,
- Invited guests and EBI chief Executive Officers

Good morning, everyone, and welcome to the triologue meeting in Bishoftu City. We're delighted to have you all here today. Thank you for investing your valuable time to be with us. I see this meeting and your (policy makers, and key stakeholders) involvement as a strong commitment from stakeholders and partners to collaboratively influence the future of biodiversity and its ecosystem services in Ethiopia, the globe at large.

A key aspect of life on Earth is its remarkable diversity, encompassing genetic, species, and ecosystem variations (biodiversity) as well as cultural, linguistic, religious, and philosophical differences within societies (biocultural diversity). As stated by the UN Secretary General in his COP 15 opening speech, “Biodiversity is the source and sustainer of the air we breathe, the food we eat, the energy we use, the jobs and economic activities we count on, the species that enrich human life, and the landscapes and waterscapes we call home”. It is a foundation to the achievement of 80% of the SDGs, providing essential ecosystem services (NCP).



Biodiversity and nature's contributions to people are essential for a good quality of life on earth.

Ethiopia boasts rich biodiversity and is recognized as a megadiverse country. The government prioritizes biodiversity conservation, evident in the establishment of seven biodiversity centers, botanical gardens, and a duplicate gene bank in 2013. Over 30 community seed banks, 30 forest conservation sites, and 15 indigenous domestic cattle breed conservation sites have been set up. Additionally, there are 25 forest field gene banks, five crop field gene banks, and over 15 sites for wild and water animal conservation. The Ethiopian Gene Bank, the largest in Africa, holds over 90,000 plant species. Similarly, >96,000 semen straws of endangered cattle breeds, and nearly 1,300 microbial species conserved in in ex-situ conditions. Moreover, numerous permits for genetic resources and research have been granted, with over 250,000 accessions provided to support sustainable use of plant genetic resources, particularly for crop species.

Despite efforts, global biodiversity is rapidly declining, with many plant and animal species facing extinction due to the triple planetary crisis of biodiversity loss, climate change, and pollution. IPBES reports that one million of the world's estimated 8 million species are threatened with extinction, while human actions have significantly altered 75% of the Earth's land surface and 85% of wetland areas. Ecosystem health is deteriorating at an unprecedented rate, as evidenced by the NEA of Ethiopia-2022, attributing degradation to human-driven land-use changes, water abstraction, overgrazing, urbanization, climate change, and invasive alien species. Water and soil pollution, severe soil loss, and unsustainable farming practices further contribute to biodiversity and ecosystem service decline. Protected areas face encroachment, logging, and deforestation; shifts in crop growing periods, decreased agricultural productivity, and increased drought and flood hazards

To counter biodiversity loss and ecosystem service degradation, a transformational change (TC) is needed, requiring fundamental shifts in policies, attitudes, practices, and governance structures to address underlying drivers. TC involves Systemic Change (addressing root causes), Mainstreaming Biodiversity, Empowering Communities in conservation efforts, Resilience Building, and Strengthening collaboration and partnerships among governments, NGOs, businesses, indigenous peoples, local communities, and academia



Partnership and coordination are vital in biodiversity conservation and ecosystem service sustainability due to their complexity, involving ecological, social, and economic dynamics. They allow for pooling resources such as funds, expertise, and perspectives to effectively address challenges. Partnerships enable diverse stakeholders to share responsibility and contribute strengths, facilitating knowledge exchange and learning from successes and failures. Involving local communities ensures more equitable and culturally appropriate efforts. Coordination resolves conflicts and negotiates solutions, fostering buy-in and support for sustainable outcomes.

Ethiopia's collaboration with the BES-Net consortium, supported by the German Federal Ministry for Environment, Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety and SwedBio, has been pivotal in safeguarding biodiversity and ecosystems. In its first phase, BES-Net facilitated outputs like the National Ecosystem Assessment (NEA) and the establishment of a National Biodiversity Platform (NBP-Ethiopia), promoting integration and collaboration among stakeholders and adopting globally embraced best practices. In phase II, BES-Net continues to strengthen NBP-Ethiopia, support the uptake of NEA recommendations, integrate NEA findings into policy, develop policy briefs, outreach materials, and provide international experiences for staff. Such collaborations and partnerships are crucial for the future and must be further enhanced.

In today's triologue workshop, you'll receive over 3 presentations covering BES Net Phase II Project Overview and achievements, GBF Targets adoption in Ethiopia, and outputs of The National Biodiversity Platform Ethiopia. Your active engagement and inputs, especially in implementing BES Net objectives, GBF, and post-2020 NBSAP, will shape our future endeavors. Thanks to BES Net project office for financial support and the Office of DDG for organizing the meeting. Gratitude to policymakers, academia, and stakeholders for participating. With that, I officially open the BES Net triologue meeting and wish you fruitful deliberations.

I thank you





Figure1. Dr. Melesse Maryo, Director General of EBI



Dr. Melesse Maryo (DG of EBI)



Dr. Feleke Woldyes (DDG of EBI)





Dr. Demeke Datiko (BES Net Phase II Project Coordinator) Ana (Communication Analyst, BES Net Team)

Figure 2. Presenters on Various Issues During the Workshop

4. Presentation topics by Experts/higher officials

- 1) BES Net Phase II Project Overview and key achievements, By Dr. Demeke
- 2) Video show and exercise on the role of vultures By Dr. Feleke
- 3) GBF Targets and adopting in the Ethiopian context, By Dr. Melesse
- 4) BES-Net - Implementation Updates of Countries Tackling the Uptake of National Ecosystem Assessments by Dr. Feleke
- 5) BES-Net - Communicating for Amplifying Project Impact and Results by Ana
- 6) The National Biodiversity Platform Ethiopia: Outputs of the NEA by Dr. Feleke



Figure 3. Dr. Melesse, GBF Targets and adopting in the Ethiopian context



Figure 4. BES Net Phase II Project Overview and key achievements (Demeke Datiko)



Figure 5. BES-Net - Implementation Updates of Countries Tackling the Uptake of National Ecosystem Assessments (by Ana)



Figure 6. The National Biodiversity Platform Ethiopia: Outputs of the NEA; NBP-Ethiopia ... Establishment; NBP-Ethiopia ... Structure and Function; NBP-Ethiopia ... Undertaking so far; AWP of NBP; NBP-Ethiopia ... What is expected from Stakeholders (Dr. Feleke)





Figure 7. Participants attending presentations





Figure 8. Group discussions of participants on various topics

5. Questions and Answers on various topics of the group discussions

Q 1: Regarding the vulture-based video as ecosystem balancing

A. Your Impression on the way its produced and relevance

- The video was prepared using scientific data
- The video is comprehensive (encompassing all actors)

Impression

- The ways vulture balances the nature/environment & reduce disease causing organisms
- Vultures neutralized the bacteria from dead(wastes)
- It regulates and support the continuity of nature

Relevance

- Interconnected phenomena
- The video is an exemplary that each biodiversity interacts for the continuity of nature
- It shows the diversity of species that play their own roles.

Lesson learned

- All living biodiversity are equally important
- They are subjected to threat by human being
- Environmental pollution is evidenced- reducing the number of vultures
- Conservation is becoming crucial

- Vulture contribution to ecosystem very much

Q2. Suggest five biological resources /environmental challenging issues

- Invasive alien species
- Deforested Forest areas
- Soil degradation (Soil acidity and Soil sodality)
- Environmental pollution- (water, air & soil pollution)
- Endemic species extinction

Q3 – Traditional or local perception or attitude in relation to the five birds

- The presence of vulture indicating the presence of waste material and something killed/ left aside around,
- The elders consider the existence of these birds as a symbol of security
- The local communities understand that the existence of vulture is vital
- Give due attention for their existence & thriving to grow trees as a shed for these birds

Q 4- Implementation of GBF Target 2, 3, & 6 at country context (NBSAP)

i. Scientific Community

- Undertake survey, generate data and gap analysis
- Generate alternative restoration technology
- Forecast the future threat to come & areas to be restored
- Forward effective and specific scientific preventive measures on IAS
- Awareness creation
- Show the impact of the specific IAS
- Forward policy recommendation

Challenges

- Budget
- Security
- Capacity & resources
- Time constraints
- Awareness

ii. Policy Makers

- Show direction, allocate resources, policies and legal framework for all 3 targets
- Follo-up (monitoring and evaluation)

Challenges



- Awareness
- Participatory issues in some cases
- Budget constraints to participate all sectors

iii. Actors

- Take restoration measures in to practice
- Implementation policies issues
- Strategic collaboration

Challenges

- Awareness
- Law enforcement
- Resources





Figure 9. Reflection of honorable individuals from members of the house of people representative

6. Key issues/reflections raised during the general discussions with stakeholders

- Today's workshop is very good and has been helping us to come together and share ideas and update our self.
- This type of stakeholder workshop meeting is very relevant to continue our collaboration and integration for our future work
- From video vulture we noted each species are key for ecosystem services/maintenance
- Targets 2,3, and 6 very good but, 20230 is very near and it seems ambitious. Therefore, better if we focus on specific things to achieve in integrated ways

Parliament bodies

Uptake of NEA result/recommendation is crucial and it will continue

- Our participation as house of representative of parliament is very important and this type makes government knows what is going on in the ground and to act upon it and it will continue
- It good always integrate what is done by research with policy makers
- We understand we should see our policy in relation to biodiversity and mainstreaming



- For biodiversity conservation integrating, collaboration at regional and global level is very important for all stakeholders are key
- Commitment is very important across all sectors in BES
- We understand without biodiversity we cannot services, stable
- High level commitment is needed for biodiversity conservation, because our healthy environment and sustainable development in line with it
- If we committed, collaborated and integrated we can achieve the GBF Targets
- Parliament members are happy to support you now onwards

7. Reflection from Dr. Feleke notice as closing remark



- Triologue section (three actors) relationship, good experiences, knowing each other, we appreciate the participation of all the stakeholders
- The participation and commitment of parliament members are highly appreciated
- All the reflections, comments and suggestions taken as it is
- We will also plan to get all parliament members on the issues
- We give you assignment to make NBP-Ethiopia legal ground issues as top priority



- Regarding GBF targets we consider all the targets as very important and we have to act upon it accordingly our context

Finally, Dr. Feleke W. thank all stakeholders, and the workshop closed officially.

Key Achievements/results

- ☞ Strong stakeholders (since, policy and practices) integration and collaboration spirit created. This made they are started to work and plan together on the issues of BES related activities
- ☞ It enhanced stakeholders understanding of BES concepts, practices, strategies and measures in biodiversity and ecosystem service conservation;
- ☞ Stakeholders started to facilitate local communities (school children, farmers) on BES and related sectors;
- ☞ It created an atmosphere of dialogue and discussions on common concerns among stakeholders (since, policy and practices)
- ☞ Participants grasped the contribution BES Net at global and regional level towards BES as well as BES-Net Project towards Biodiversity and Ecosystem services management in Ethiopia
- ☞ (iv) Stakeholders are awared on the effective communication mechanisms to conserve BES in the country and obtained global experience
- ☞ It created understand of the Post 2020, GBF targets and formulation of NBSAP as per country context, and for its implementation.



