



**IUCN, the CBD and Mercuria Energy Group join forces to strengthen capacity and support economic approaches to biodiversity conservation and sustainable use in developing countries. Report of a regional workshop in Botswana.**



A key condition for mainstreaming biodiversity in development is increased awareness and capacity in the use of economic tools, notably valuation of biodiversity benefits and use of economic incentives to encourage conservation and sustainable use of biological resources. In decision X/2, the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) adopted the new Strategic Plan for Biodiversity and urged Parties and other Governments to develop national and regional targets, and to review and update their national biodiversity strategies and action plans (NBSAPs) in light of the new Strategic Plan. This process will promote the integration of biodiversity targets into national development and poverty reduction policies and strategies, national accounting, economic sectors and spatial planning processes.



The CBD has repeatedly emphasized the need for capacity-building and effective sharing of knowledge to support all countries, especially developing countries, to implement the Convention.



In response, the CBD Secretariat is organizing a series of regional or sub-regional workshops on updating NBSAPs during 2011 and 2012. The first such regional workshop, for Southern Africa, was held in Kasane, Botswana from 14 to 20 March 2011. The workshop was organised in collaboration with the Ministry of Environment, Wildlife and Tourism of Botswana and with the generous financial support from the Government of Japan, the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN), the European Community, and Mercuria Energy Group.



IUCN-Mercuria and the CBD Secretariat will next team up for the South, Southeast, and East Asia Workshop on Updating the NBSAPs, scheduled for 9-16 May 2011 in Xi'an, China.



The IUCN-Mercuria partnership, launched in September 2010, helped create strong economics influence at the Southern Africa workshop, by facilitating the active participation of IUCN's Economics team and by providing support to the more than 70 delegates from 14 countries in attendance. Dr. Joshua Bishop, IUCN Chief Economist, and Dr. Andrew Seidl, Head, IUCN Global Economics and Environment Programme, together with Dr. Markus Lehmann, the Economist of the CBD Secretariat, led two days of interactive sessions focusing on the economics of ecosystems and biodiversity (TEEB) as related to Targets 2, 3 and 20 of the Strategic Plan. The sessions addressed valuation, removing or reforming harmful incentives, promoting positive incentives, and resource mobilization for the effective implementation of the Strategic Plan. Workshop evaluation forms filled out by participants revealed that these sessions were among the most highly valued of the week long training.

