



# **The Use of Biodiversity Data for Policy Development and Decision Making in West Asia**

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World Environment Day 2015  
**Seven Billion Dreams.  
One Planet.  
Consume with Care.**  
June 5



# UNEP's Medium Term Strategy 2014-2017 with regional outputs

7 cross cutting thematic priorities to define  
UNEP's focus on environmental challenges of the  
21<sup>st</sup> century

1. Climate Change
2. Ecosystem management
3. Conflicts and Disasters
4. Environmental Governance
5. Harmful Substances
6. Resource Efficiency
7. Environment under review

Biodiversity  
MEAs

The diagram shows a blue rounded rectangle labeled "Biodiversity MEAs" on the right. Two red arrows point from this rectangle to the left, specifically to the items "2. Ecosystem management" and "4. Environmental Governance" in the list of priorities.



# UNEP Live

OUR CHANGING ENVIRONMENT: PLACE BY PLACE

Select Country/Region/Global

Or

Select Theme

Go

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# UNEP IN THE REGIONS

## The Regional Office for West Asia (ROWA)

*ROWA promotes collaboration and partnerships with organizations to develop relevant programmes to respond to the needs of the region, and disseminates environmental knowledge at the national and regional levels.*

### 12 member states:

- Support Environmental Governance
- mobilizing sound data for Decision making.
- Technical Policy guidance
- Synergistic implementation of MEAs
- Capacity building and Advocacy
- Technology transfer
- promotes scientific cooperation
- information management

- Bahrain
- Iraq
- Jordan
- Kuwait
- Lebanon
- Oman
- Palestine
- Qatar
- Saudi Arabia
- Syria
- U.A.E.
- Yemen





# DRIVING PROCESSES FOR UNEP'S BIODIVERSITY AND ECOSYSTEMS PROGRAMME IN THE REGION

- Decisions of the UNEP's Governing Body: United Nations Environment Assembly UNEA
- MEA COP and COP MOP decisions, scientific and technical advisory bodies (SBSTTA, STRP, IPBES...)
- Priorities of regional and sub-regional Ministerial Sessions (e.g. League of Arab States and GCC)
- Requests for technical/advisory support from Member States
- transboundary emerging issues: SDS, degraded river basins, illicit wildlife trade, endangered migratory species...







# UNEA 2



# UNEA

United Nations Environment Assembly  
of the United Nations Environment Programme

*Towards A Life of Dignity for All*



- The second UN Environment Assembly of UNEP will take place in Nairobi (23-27 May), under the theme: **Healthy Environment – Healthy People**
- It will follow up on the decisions of UNEA-1 (including wildlife trafficking, air quality, marine debris), but will also focus on the environment component of sustainable development and how to ensure integration across the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development



# The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development

## New UN paradigm: Biodiversity for Sustainable Development



- After several years and broad stakeholder engagement and consultation, the agenda for the next 15 years has been agreed and will be approved at the UN Summit on 25-27 September
- With 17 Sustainable Development Goals and 169 targets, it focuses on **people, planet, prosperity, peace and partnership**



# SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

**1** NO POVERTY



**2** ZERO HUNGER



**3** GOOD HEALTH AND WELL-BEING



**4** QUALITY EDUCATION



**5** GENDER EQUALITY



**6** CLEAN WATER AND SANITATION



**7** AFFORDABLE AND CLEAN ENERGY



**8** DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH



**9** INDUSTRY, INNOVATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE



**10** REDUCED INEQUALITIES



**11** SUSTAINABLE CITIES AND COMMUNITIES



**12** RESPONSIBLE CONSUMPTION AND PRODUCTION



**13** CLIMATE ACTION



**14** LIFE BELOW WATER



**15** LIFE ON LAND



**16** PEACE, JUSTICE AND STRONG INSTITUTIONS



**17** PARTNERSHIPS FOR THE GOALS



SUSTAINABLE  
DEVELOPMENT  
**GOALS**



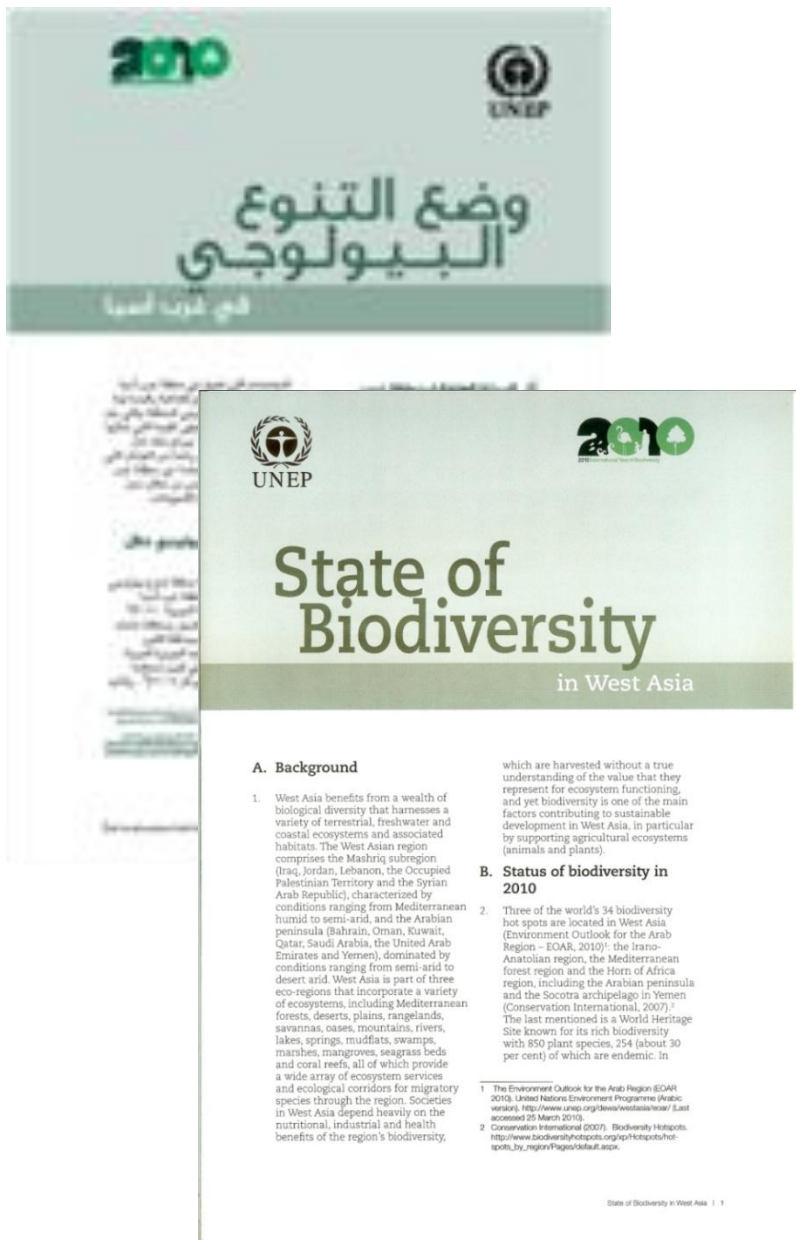
# UNEP Environment Outlook for the Arab Region (EOAR)

**\*Regional Biodiversity Strategy needed for the Arab region**





# 2010



# 2014

## Global Biodiversity Outlook 4



## STATE of Biodiversity in West Asia: A MID-TERM REVIEW OF PROGRESS TOWARDS THE AICHI BIODIVERSITY TARGETS

### A. Background

1. West Asia benefits from a wealth of biological diversity that harnesses a variety of terrestrial, freshwater and coastal ecosystems and associated habitats. The West Asian region comprises the Mashriq subregion (Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon, the Occupied Palestinian Territory and the Syrian Arab Republic), characterized by conditions ranging from Mediterranean humid to semi-arid, and the Arabian peninsula (Bahrain, Oman, Kuwait, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates and Yemen), dominated by conditions ranging from semi-arid to desert arid. West Asia is part of three eco-regions that incorporate a variety of ecosystems, including Mediterranean forests, deserts, plains, rangelands, savannas, oases, mountains, rivers, lakes, springs, mudflats, swamps, marshes, mangroves, seagrass beds and coral reefs, all of which provide a wide array of ecosystem services and ecological corridors for migratory species through the region. Societies in West Asia depend heavily on the nutritional, industrial and health benefits of the region's biodiversity,

which are harvested without a true understanding of the value that they represent for ecosystem functioning, and yet biodiversity is one of the main factors contributing to sustainable development in West Asia, in particular by supporting agricultural ecosystems (animals and plants).

### B. Status of biodiversity in 2010

2. Three of the world's 34 biodiversity hot spots are located in West Asia (Environment Outlook for the Arab Region – EOAR, 2010)<sup>1</sup>: the Irano-Anatolian region, the Mediterranean forest region and the Horn of Africa region, including the Arabian peninsula and the Socotra archipelago in Yemen (Conservation International, 2007).<sup>2</sup> The last mentioned is a World Heritage Site known for its rich biodiversity with 850 plant species, 254 (about 30 per cent) of which are endemic. In

<sup>1</sup> The Environment Outlook for the Arab Region (EOAR 2010), United Nations Environment Programme (Public version), <http://www.unep.org/press/pressreleases/> (Last accessed 25 March 2013).

<sup>2</sup> Conservation International (2007), Biodiversity Hotspots, [http://www.biodiversityhotspots.org/hp/hotspots/hotspots\\_by\\_region/Pages/default.aspx](http://www.biodiversityhotspots.org/hp/hotspots/hotspots_by_region/Pages/default.aspx).

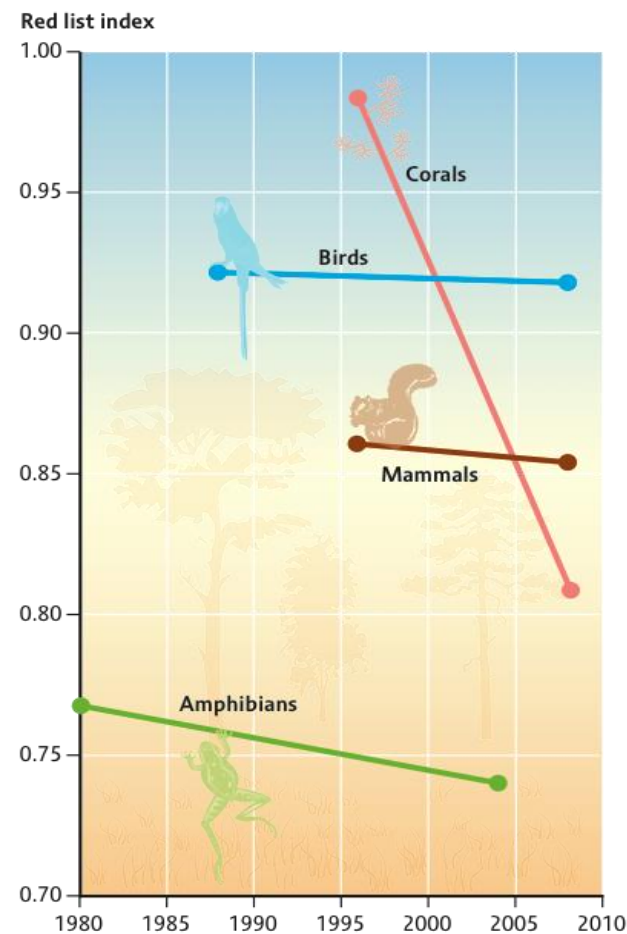
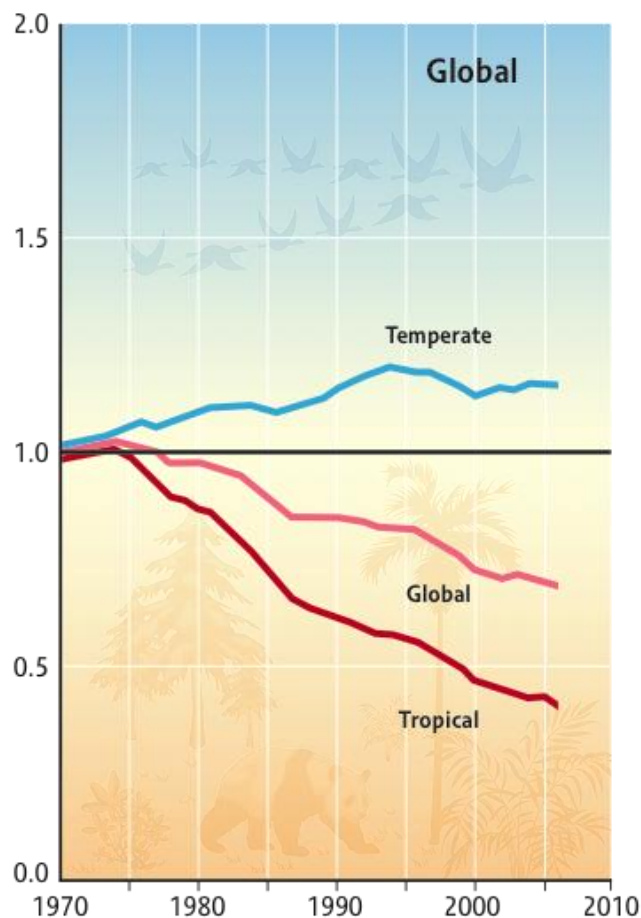


# STATE of Biodiversity in West Asia: A MID-TERM REVIEW OF PROGRESS TOWARDS THE AICHI BIODIVERSITY TARGETS



- UNEP highlighted that there *is a lack of coherent environmental data and information tools in the West Asia region for policy making*
- A recurring constraint in West Asia is the **lack of information and data and coherent policies**;
- information is scattered and insufficient to formulate a complete picture on biodiversity status and concluded that

# Biodiversity Indicators







2010 International Year of Biodiversity

# International Year of Biodiversity 2010

**Biodiversity – High Level Segment  
United Nations General Assembly  
20 September 2010, global  
community to take action**

Ban-Ki Moon's Message:

**“Business as usual is  
no longer an option,  
we owe our children  
the legacy of a  
healthy planet. Time  
for action is NOW!”**



# Aichi Targets



Awareness increased



Biodiversity values  
integrated



Incentives reformed



Sustainable consumption  
and production



Habitat loss halved or  
reduced



Sustainable management  
of marine living resources



Sustainable agriculture,  
aquaculture and forestry



Pollution reduced



Invasive alien species  
prevented and controlled



Pressures on vulnerable  
ecosystems reduced



Protected areas increased  
and improved



Extinction prevented



Genetic diversity  
maintained



Ecosystems and essential  
services safeguarded



Ecosystems restored and  
resilience enhanced



Nagoya Protocol in force  
and operational



NBSAPs adopted as policy  
instrument



Traditional knowledge  
respected



Knowledge improved,  
shared and applied



Financial resources from  
all sources increased



# Aichi Targets – clustering to form strategies



## Biodiversity mainstreaming **الدمج**



Understand values



Sustainable fisheries



Mainstream biodiversity



Manage within limits



Address incentives



Reduce pollution



Sustainable production



Reduce invasive spp.



Halve rate of loss



Minimize reef loss

## Protection **الحماية**



Protected areas



Prevent extinctions



Conserve gene pool

## Restoration **اعادة التأهيل**



Restore ecosystems



Enhance resilience

## ABS **الحصول على المارد الجينية وتقاسم منافعها**



Implement Nagoya Prot.

## Enabling **تمكين**



Revise NBSAPs



Respect and conserve TK



Improve knowledge



Mobilize resources



# GBO-4 Dashboard: Progress towards the Aichi Biodiversity Targets

## Target 2: Integration of biodiversity values

Element	Current Status	Comments	Confidence
Biodiversity values integrated into national and local development and poverty reduction strategies		Differences between regions. Evidence largely based on poverty reduction strategies	Medium
Biodiversity values integrated into national and local planning processes		Also shows regional variation, not clear if biodiversity is actually taken into consideration	Medium
Biodiversity values incorporated into national accounting, as appropriate		Initiatives such as WAVES show growing trend towards such incorporation	High
Biodiversity values incorporated into reporting systems		Improved accounting implies improvement in reporting	High

## Cross-sectoral policies

- Sust. Dev
- National Dev.
- Finance
- Poverty
- Land use
- Trade
- Intl Cooperation

## Sectoral policies

- Agriculture
- Fisheries
- Forests
- Tourism
- Energy
- Mining
- Transport
- Infrastruct.
- Health
- Labour
- Education
- ...

## Area based planning

- Coastal development
- Urban areas
- Sub-national
- Protected Areas
- Other specific territories

## Other BD & Evt. Related Plans

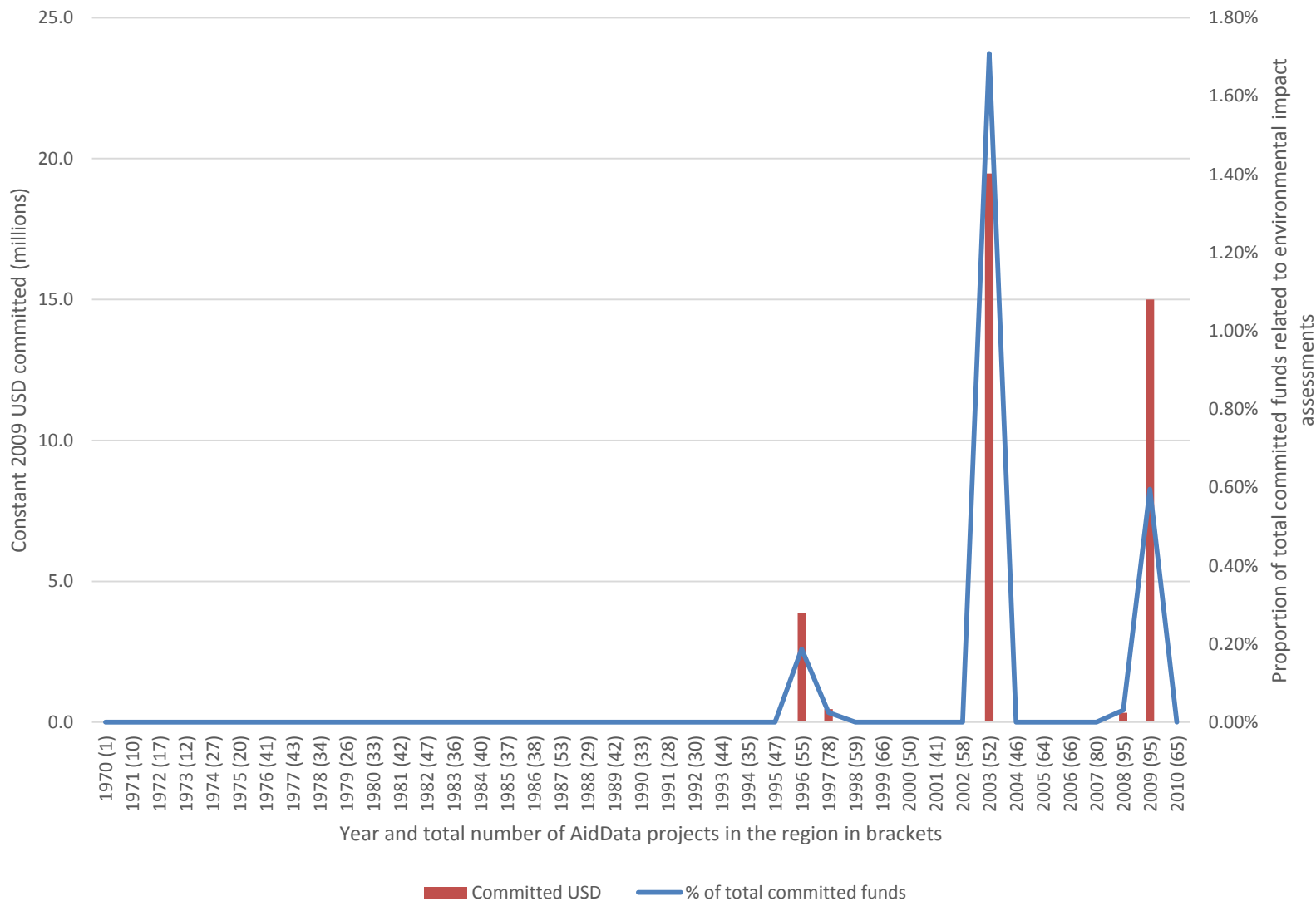
- Climate change (NAPAs)
- Desertification (NAPs)
- Redd+
- Green Economy
- MEA actions
- ...

**Mainstreaming Development**



**Biodiversity**

# Absolute and proportional investment in **environmental impact assessments (EIAs)** by donors on AidData between 1970 and 2010







# GBO-4 Dashboard: Progress towards the Aichi Biodiversity Targets

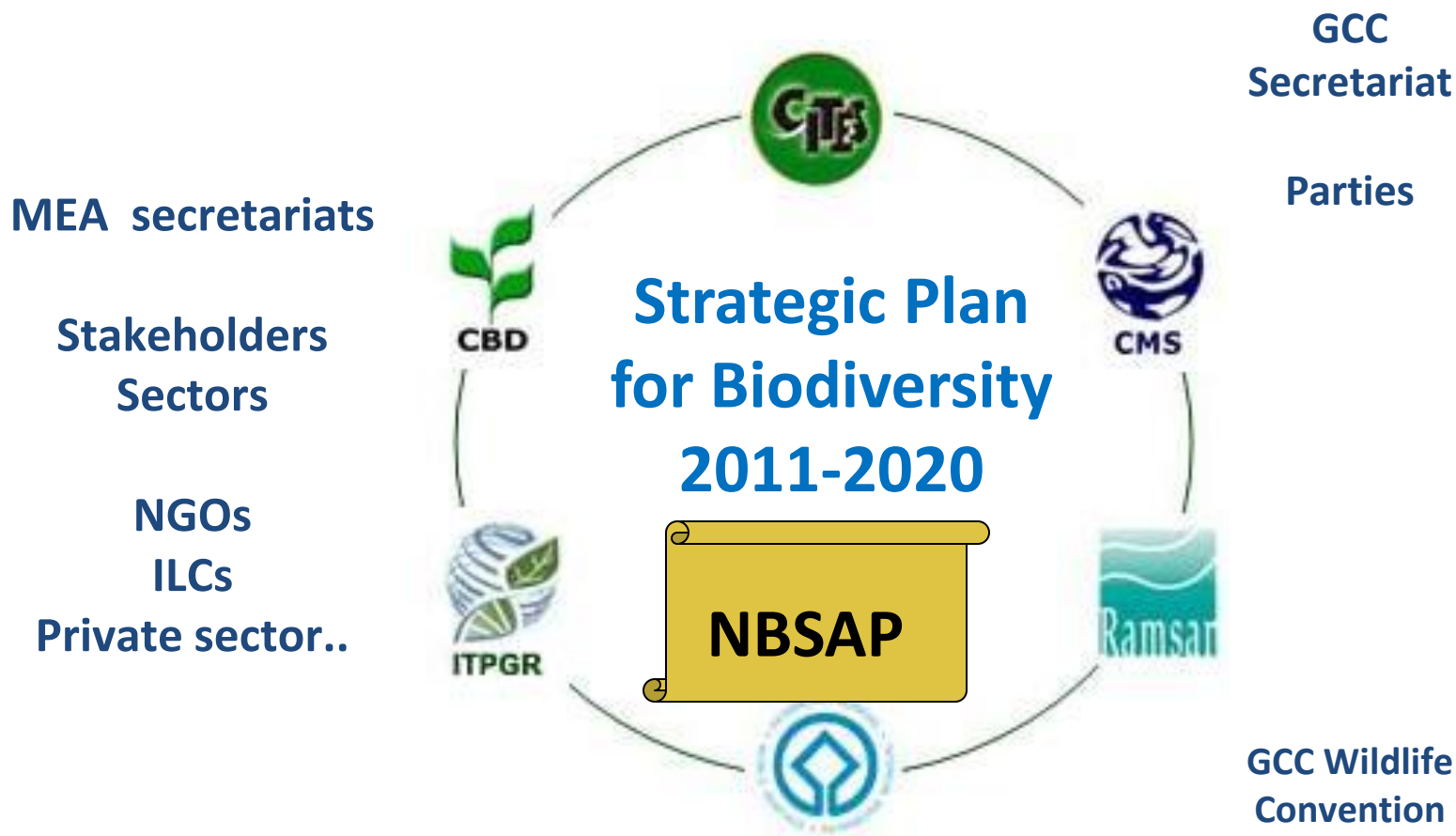
## Target 12: Preventing Extinctions and Improving Species Conservation Status



Target Elements	Status	Comment	Confidence
Extinction of known threatened species has been prevented	 <p>No Progress</p>	Further extinctions likely by 2020, e.g. for amphibians and fish. For bird and mammal species some evidence measures have prevented extinctions	Low
The conservation status of those species most in decline has been improved and sustained	 <p>Moving away from Target</p>	Red List Index still declining, no sign overall of reduced risk of extinction across groups of species. Very large regional differences	High



# UNEP-ROWA support to biodiversity MEAs



Arab League Working Group on biodiversity MEAs



ROPME  
PERSGA  
AOAD  
FAO  
IUCN  
WWF  
ACSAD  
RAED  
IFAW  
UNESCO  
ESCWA  
NGOs  
IGOs  
MEAs  
(CMS)  
UNU  
Academia  
Research,  
Monitoring

# Biodiversity-related Regional Mechanisms

## *League of Arab States: (22 states)*

- *Arab Working Group to review the implementation of MEAs related to Biodiversity and Combating desertification*
- *CAMRE (Council of Arab Ministers Responsible for the Environment)*

## *Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) 6 states*

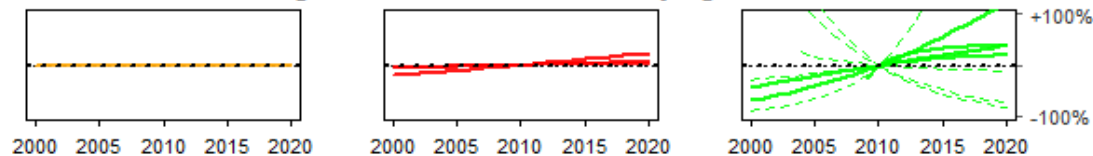
- *Convention on Wildlife (sub regional)*
- *Green Customs initiative*
- *Regional Network to combat wildlife crime (under construction)*



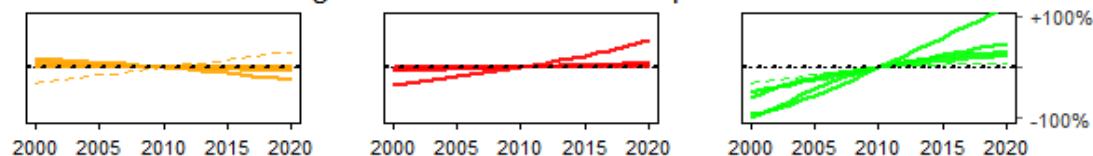
# Status Pressures Responses

## 2000-2010

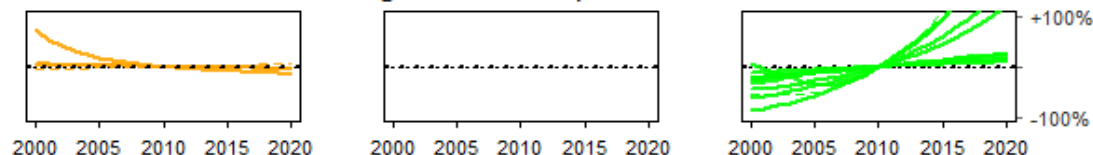
Strategic Goal A: Address underlying causes



Strategic Goal B: Reduce direct pressures



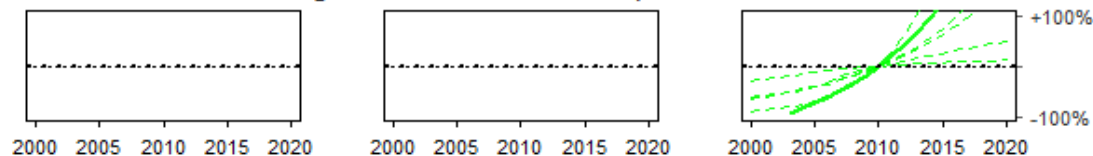
Strategic Goal C: Improve status



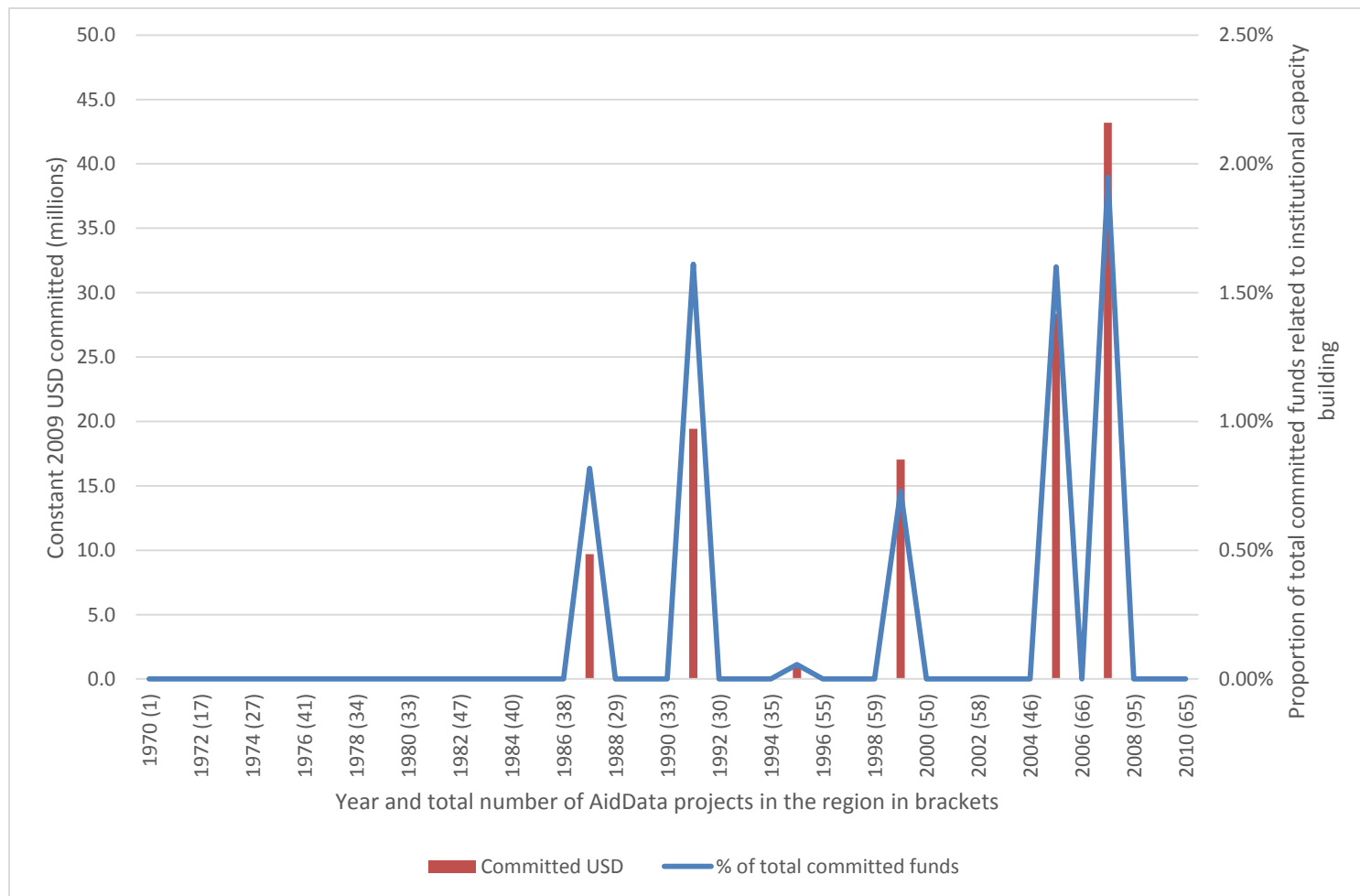
Strategic Goal D: Enhance benefits to all



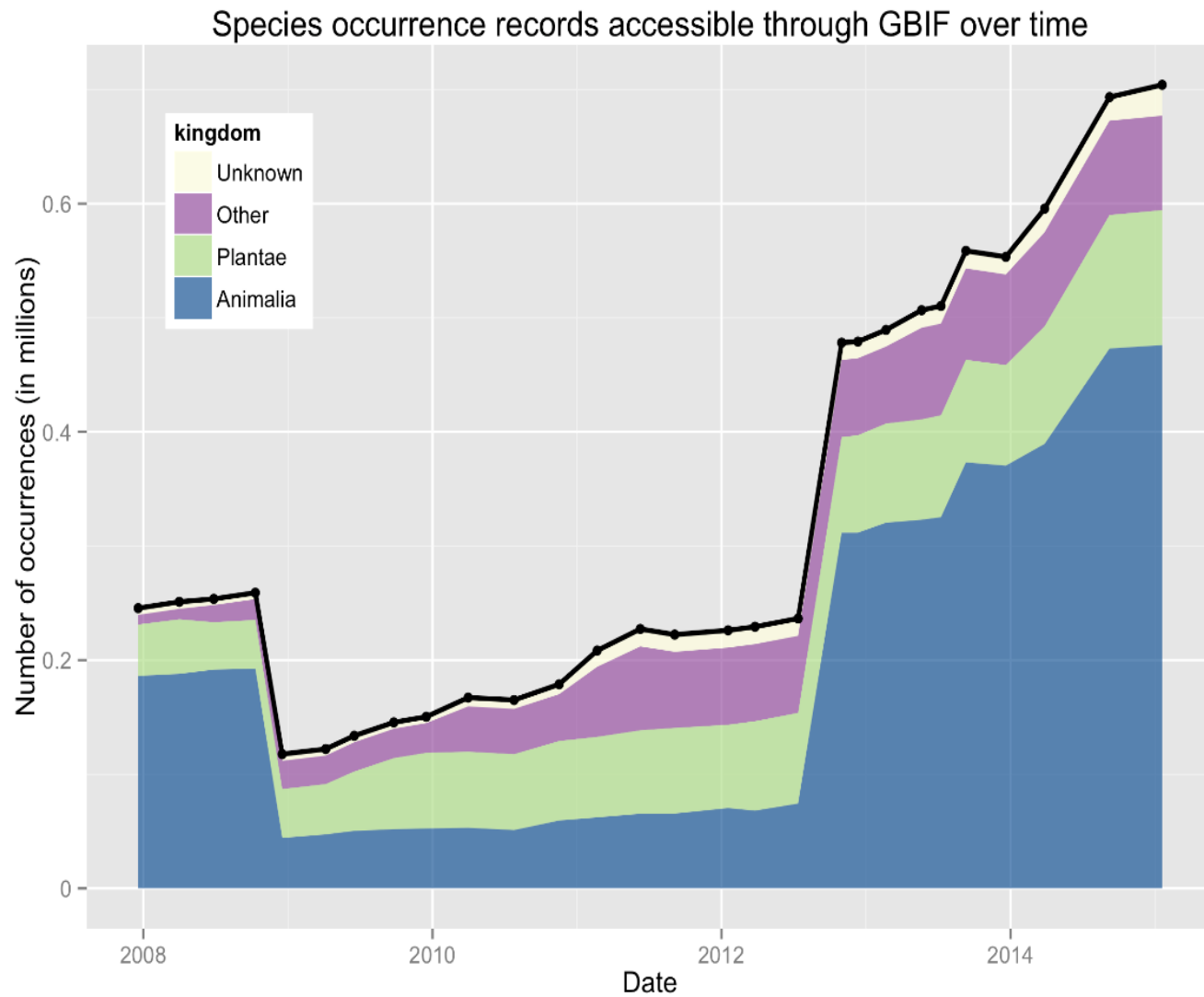
Strategic Goal E: Enhance implementation



# Absolute and proportional investment in institutional capacity building in the fishing sector by donors on AidData between 1970 and 2010

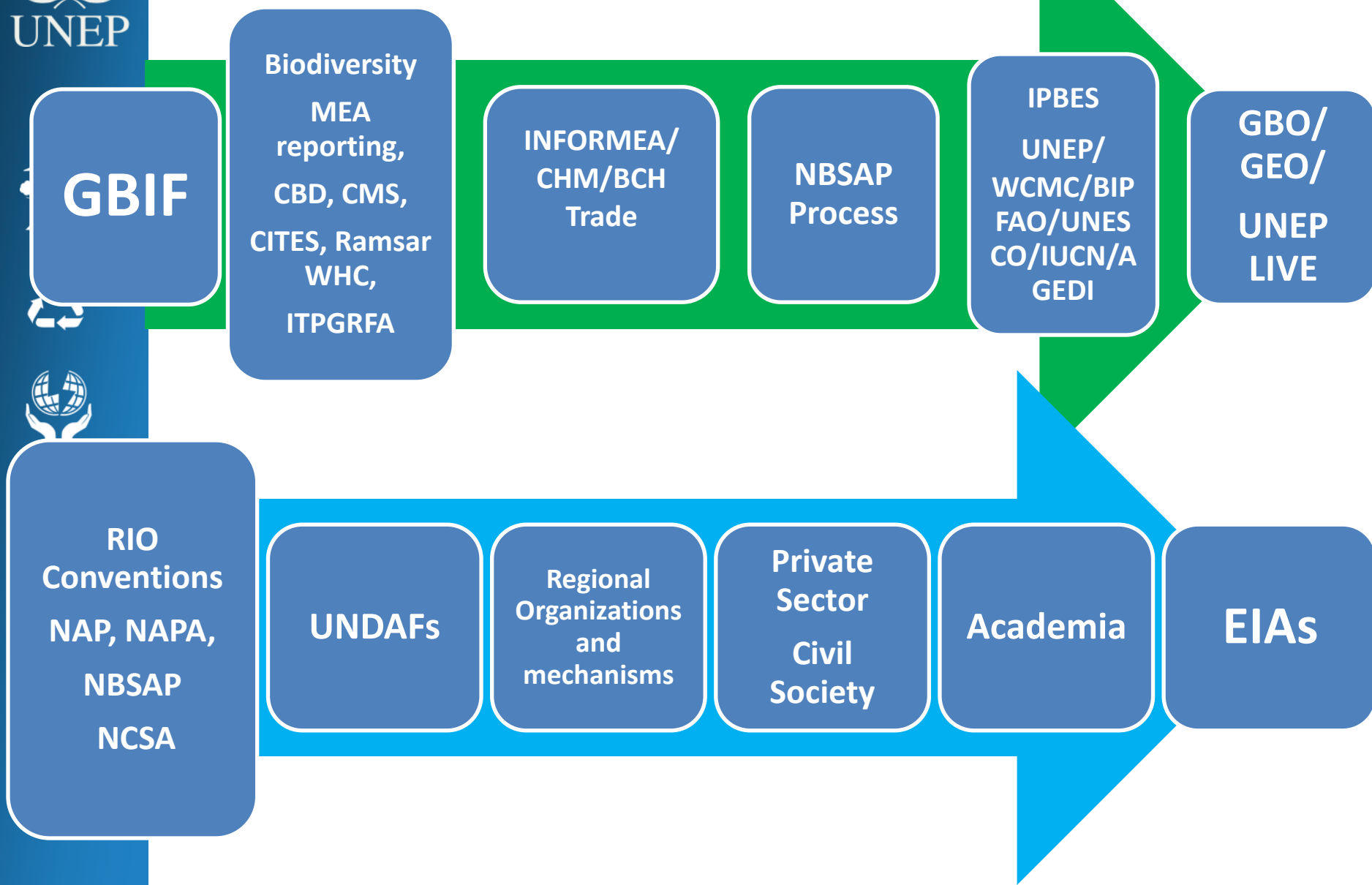


# ***Growth in the number of species occurrence records from West Asia region accessible through Global Biodiversity Information Facility between 2008 and 2014 (source: GBIF 2015).***



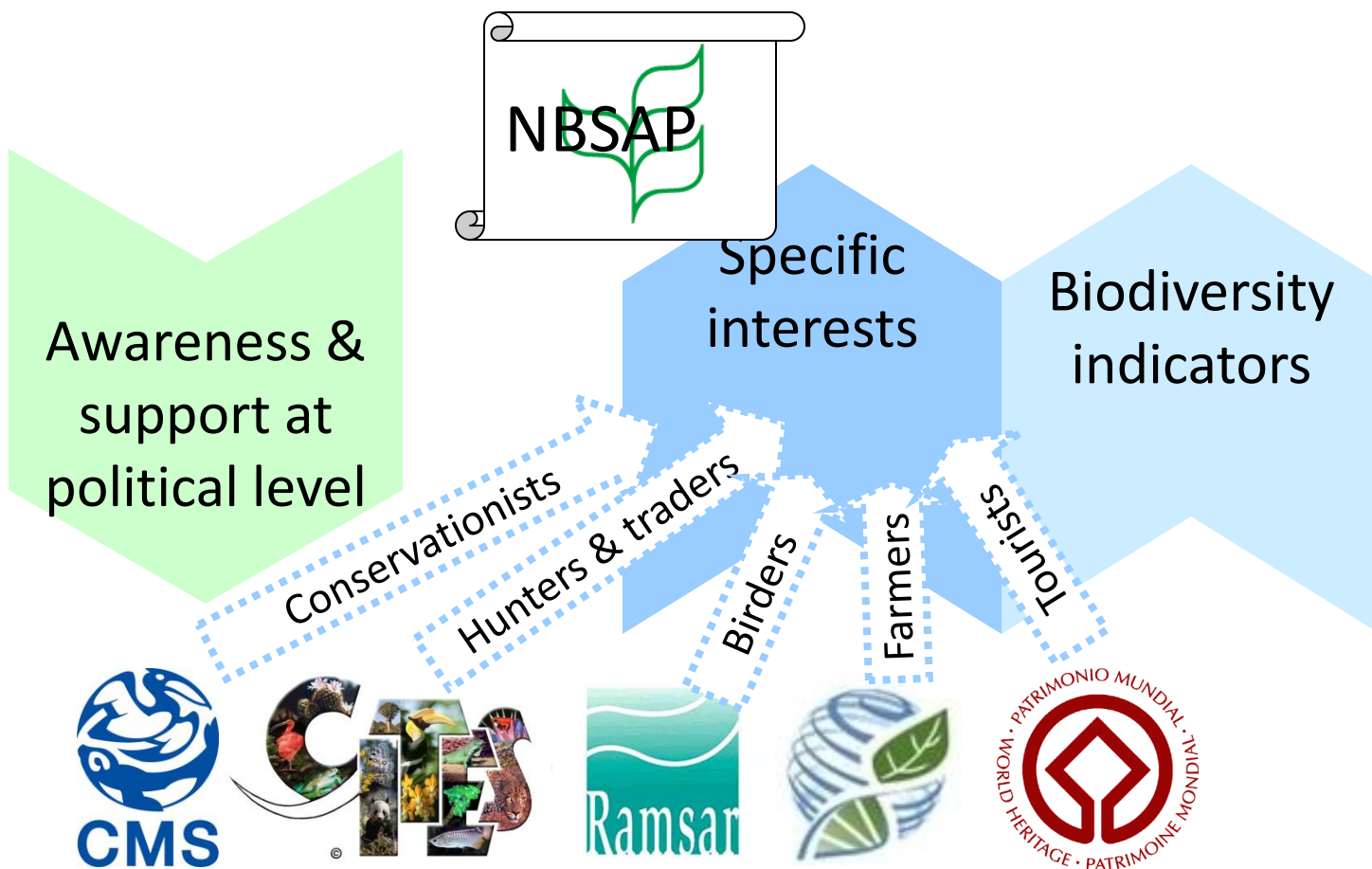


# FLOW of BIODIVERSITY information for Policy



# Catalyzing information through integrating biodiversity-related Conventions in NBSAPs

## Inclusive process promoting coherence







## NBSAP

# NBSAPs Framework for cooperation

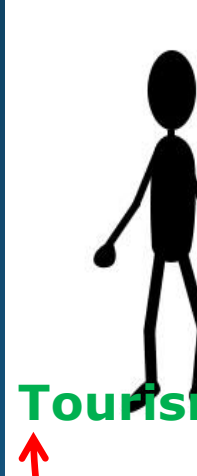
*stakeholder engagement, stocktaking  
information, assessments  
policies*

*National targets towards filling gaps  
in info (assessments, maps, data)*



- Iraq
- Oman
- UAE
- Bahrain
- Kuwait
- Qatar
- Lebanon
- Jordan





**Mining**



**Forestry**



**Fisheries**



**Tourism**

**Health**

**Industry/Trade**



**National  
Development**



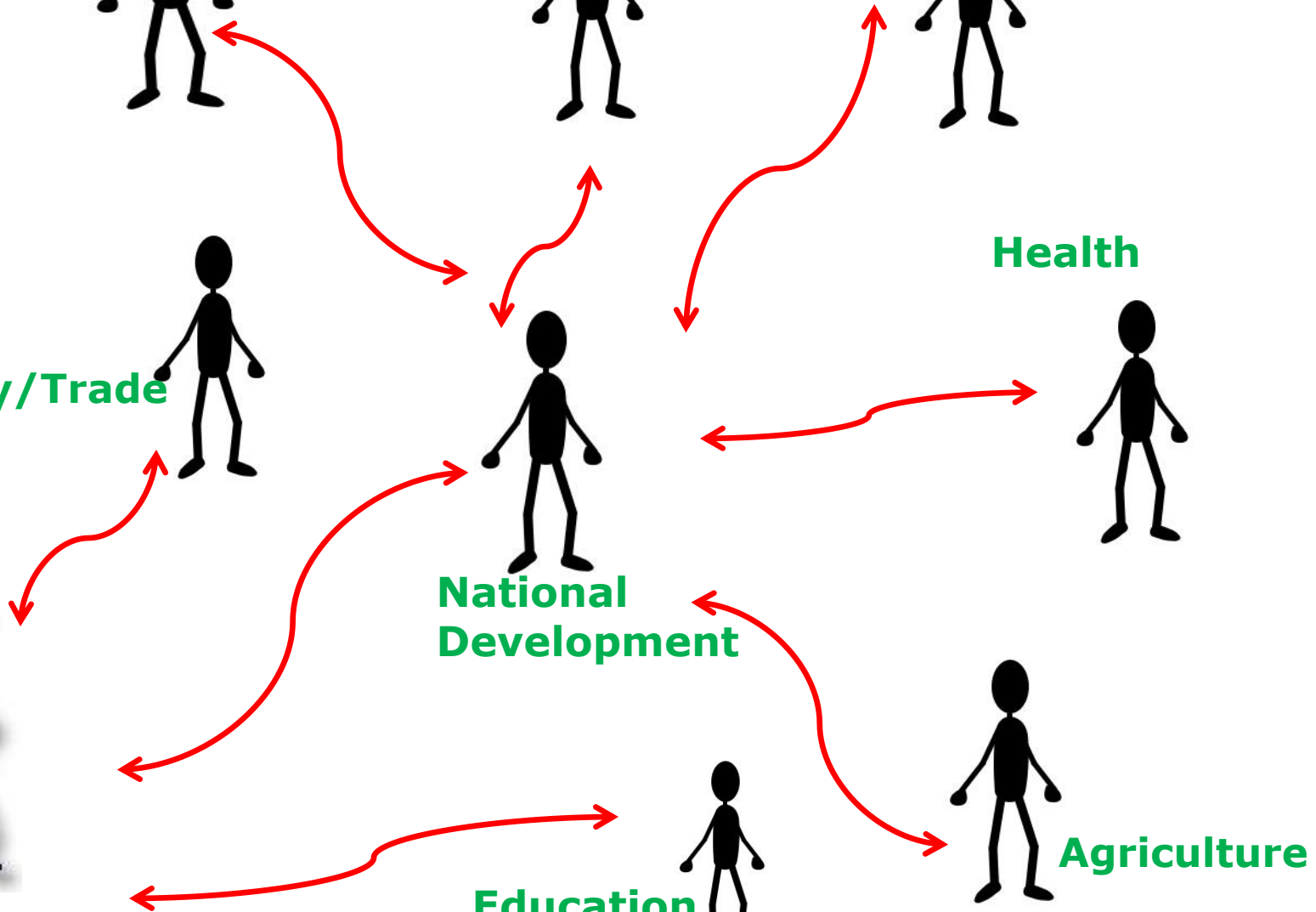
**Agriculture**



**Education**



**Biodiversity**





# The Biodiversity Data Challenge

- Policy makers need baseline information to formulate sound laws and measures
- The biodiversity information gap remains to be an issue till this date in policy formulation and meeting MEA compliance.
- Inconsistent data. Data from different sources sometimes say difference things.
- Standardized data
- There is no single reference to verification. **Need a network or partnership of data institutes with a lead publisher.**
- data are scattered in reports, databases and studies
  - **No one stop shop.**
- Property rights
- Difficulty access digital data



# Resources for Biodiversity Data



# InforMEA

TR



- InforMEA harvests COP decisions, news, meetings, membership, national focal points and reports from MEAs. Information is organised by terms from MEA COP agendas.
- InforMEA is a project of the MEA Information and Knowledge Management (IKM) Initiative with the support from the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP).

## United Nations Information Portal on Multilateral Environmental Agreements

- Harmonized data standards across MEA secretariats allow for easier and more cost-effective development of information systems and products in general
- A one stop portal harvests key information from 25 global and regional MEAs



Convention on International  
Trade in Endangered Species  
of Wild Fauna and Flora

[Español](#)

## CITES Trade Database

Please enter your search below:

Year Range:

Exporting countries:

Importing countries:

Source:

Purpose:

Trade Terms:

Search by taxon:

YEAR RANGE :

From 2014 ▼ To 2014 ▼

### Search Selection

Year Range:	From
Exporting countries:	All C
Importing countries:	All C
Source:	All S
Purpose:	All P
Trade Terms:	All T
Species:	

[Search](#)

Download: [A Guide to Using the CITES Trade Database](#)





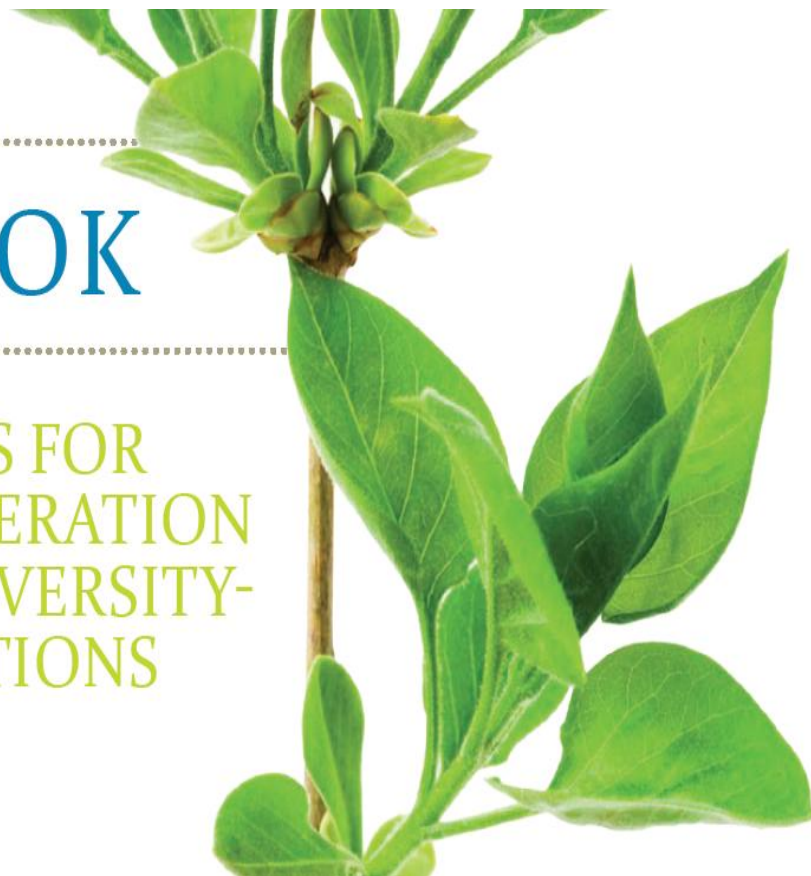
# Enhancing Synergies among Biodiversity related MEAs

<http://www.unep.org/ecosystemmanagement/Portals/7/Documents/cooperation-sourcebook-biodiversity-conventions.pdf>



## SOURCEBOOK

OF OPPORTUNITIES FOR  
ENHANCING COOPERATION  
AMONG THE BIODIVERSITY-  
RELATED CONVENTIONS  
AT NATIONAL AND  
REGIONAL LEVELS

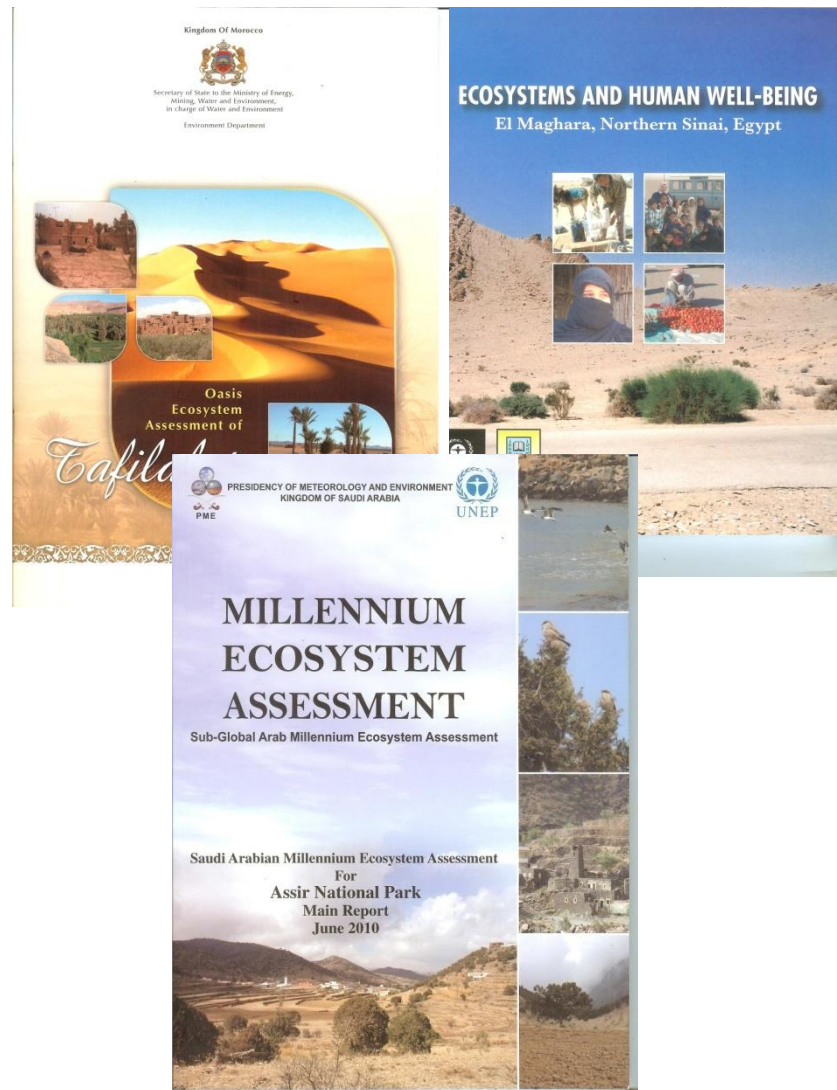




# Sub-global Assessment (SGA) Network



- **Objective:** create a common platform for practitioners involved in ecosystem assessment at regional, sub-regional, national and sub-national levels  
**examples:**





- interface between the scientific community and policy makers that aims to build capacity for and strengthen the use of science in policy making
- Knowledge generation; assessments; policy-relevant tools and methodologies; catalyze capacity-building





# Thank you

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**UN Decade on  
Biodiversity  
2011-2020**

