

External evaluation of the CBD Alliance

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Göran Eklöf

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Abbreviations

CBD	Convention on Biological Diversity
CBO	community based organisation
COP	Conference of the Parties
CSO	civil society organisation
IIFB	International Indigenous Forum on Biodiversity
IPBES	Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services
IPO	indigenous peoples' organisation
NGO	non-governmental organisation
SBSTTA	Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice
SEK	Swedish kronor
WG-8(j)	Working Group on Article 8(j) – (which addresses the knowledge, innovations and practices of indigenous and local communities)

Executive Summary

The CBD Alliance is a loose network of organisations which aims to facilitate more diverse, coordinated, and effective civil society input into policy-making within the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD). The central objective of the network is to broaden the scope of civil society groups involved in CBD processes, and particularly to increase the informed and effective participation of Southern NGOs, indigenous peoples, community based organizations (CBOs) and social movements. Among its core activities, the CBD Alliance:

- Facilitates general coordination and communication among civil society
- Provides financial support for nongovernmental, indigenous and community representatives to participate in CBD meetings
- Edits and distributes ECO – the newsletter of civil society at CBD sessions.

The CBD Alliance is a long-term SwedBio partner. SwedBio started supporting the Alliance before the 8th Conference of the Parties to the CBD (COP 8) 2006.

The evaluation

This evaluation, which has been commissioned by SwedBio, reviews the implementation of the CBD Alliance program entitled **Democracy, civil society and the Convention and Biological Diversity**¹ during the two program cycles 2007-08 and 2009-2010. The effectiveness of the CBD Alliance's work has been assessed with direct reference to 1) CBD Alliance's overall goals and objectives; and 2) the specific goals and objectives of the programmes supported by SwedBio. The evaluation has primarily focused on examining:

- The effectiveness of the Alliance's coordination, facilitation and communications within the CSO community, and between civil society groups and the CBD Secretariat
- The CSO community's assessment of Alliance's assistance to CSO preparations and input, and its efforts to increase the participation in the CBD by representatives of marginalised and disadvantaged groups and movements
- The impact of the work of the Alliance on CBD decisions and discussions
- The functionality, efficiency and legitimacy of the CBD Alliance management structure; the adequacy of its internal systems for monitoring, evaluation, analysis and reporting of projects and results; and the quantity and quality of efforts to fundraise from other sources than SwedBio.

The evaluation has been conducted through a review of available documentation (including Alliance publications and on-line resources), interviews with a broad set of informants from within and outside the Alliance, and direct observation of the work of the Alliance at a CBD meeting in Montreal in November 2011. In addition, the evaluation has been informed by the preliminary results of internal processes within the Alliance during 2011 to review, in consultation with the Alliance community, its own work and structures.

Findings and conclusions

The community of CSOs that engages with biodiversity policies is large and diverse. The CBD attracts participants from large international conservation NGOs as well as from a wide range of smaller organisations and social movements working on issues such as agriculture, forests, energy, technology, social mobilisation and human rights. Facilitation of CSO

¹ See under *Project Proposals* in the list of references, Annex A.

participation and inputs at CBD negotiation sessions is the core activity of the CBD Alliance. The Alliance is the only common platform for CSOs that attend these sessions.

The structure of the Alliance is open, participatory and inclusive. Although many of the large conservation NGOs take part to varying degrees in Alliance meetings and discussions, the CBD Alliance is not dominated by these organisations. Rather, it provides a platform for a broad diversity of CSOs that in some cases balances the weight of organisations with greater resources and opportunities to influence.

There is a high level of like-mindedness and coherence within the CBD Alliance, where issues of social equity, justice and rights are seen as central for addressing biodiversity issues. The collaboration is characterised by a strong community spirit and trust. While participation is dominated by Northern NGOs, the Alliance is proactively concerned about marginalised groups and consistently highlights Southern, indigenous and community perspectives on issues and in processes.

During the period under review, the CBD Alliance has become increasingly capable in performing the core functions of the network: to bring civil society organisations together and provide a forum for that enables them to effectively participate in and influence CBD processes and decisions.

Coordination, facilitation and communications

The main strength of the CBD Alliance lies in what it is able to do at, and in immediate connection with, the different meetings of the CBD.

The orientation, sharing and discussions at **capacity building and strategy sessions** that are organised before major meetings, as well as at the daily morning strategy sessions, are seen as particularly important for enabling the active participation and influence of a broad diversity of groups from different constituencies.

The **ECO newsletter** serves as a direct channel for communicating CSO and IPO positions and views, as well as for reporting from different parts of CBD negotiations and side events. In addition to information on positions and issues, Southern governments can also find arguments and language that strengthens their positions in ECO and the Alliance briefings. The Alliance also maintains a **blog** that can provide rapid comments and information during negotiating sessions.

For the last two COPs, the Alliance has coordinated the development of media kits and sets of **briefings** that presented key CSO positions (although not formally endorsed by the Alliance) on important issues that were being negotiated. In addition to the value of these briefings for the external communication, Alliance members also underline the importance they have had for information exchange and consolidation of positions within the CSO community.

Between sessions, the CBD Alliance **web site** is the main channel for external communication. The site also serves as a platform for transparency through the posting of Alliance governance documents, reports on implemented programs, etc.

Communications within the network is primarily done through two **listserves**: one general, with some 335 subscribers, and another on a specific issue. Members of the network unanimously describe the listserves as important channels for information, while some would also like to see them being used more for discussions on strategic issues.

During the period under review, the Alliance has strengthened its relations with CBD Secretariat and other official CBD structures, and is regularly engaging with them in constructive dialogues and partnerships, including in the production of the CBD civil society

newsletter [square brackets]. Still, the CBD Alliance maintains a healthy distance to and independence from these structures, and has avoided being too closely tied up with them.

The indigenous peoples' caucus in the CBD is coordinated through the International Indigenous Forum on Biodiversity (IIFB). A trustful working relationship has been established between the Alliance and the indigenous caucus. The two constituencies work alongside each other but consult on a regular basis on policy positions and strategies, cross-fertilise each other by regularly sharing information and experiences, and share communication spaces. The IIFB is also directly represented by two self-selected members on the CBD Alliance Board. As a result of this relationship, unnecessary conflicts are avoided.

Supporting participation

The CBS has contributed to promoting of broad-based participation by providing financial support to participants from the South, IPOs and social movements such as farmers organisations. In addition, the Alliance plays a crucial role in helping to secure and broaden the spaces that are available for CSO participate.

During the two program cycles, the Alliance has applied two different approaches to supporting increased participation. The first period had an emphasis on bringing in new voices and providing opportunities for a broader range of groups to be exposed to the negotiations and coordination, while the focus during the second period was on ensuring a higher level of continuity in order to maximise impacts. Due to the requirement of a funder, only indigenous peoples' representatives were eligible for longer-term support in 2009-2010.

Impacts of the work of the Alliance

In terms of impacts, given that the Alliance is but one of many actors that influence the outcomes of discussions and negotiations, it is difficult to attribute any specific influence to the work of the CBD Alliance as such. It is however clear that the CBD Alliance community has had a major influence on decisions related to a wide range of issues including participation in decision-making, the rights of communities to a fair share of the benefits from the use of biodiversity, precaution in the use of new technologies, and questioning newly suggested financial mechanisms for biodiversity protection (such as the proposed Green Development Mechanism and 'biodiversity offsets').

Management of the CBD Alliance

The CBD Alliance is governed by a Board which is composed of individuals from active CBD Alliance members in all regions, and self-selected representatives from the IIFB and from the previous and upcoming COP host countries. Since 2010 the Board appoints an Executive Committee that deals with more urgent and administrative issues on a regular basis, and thus makes time for the Board to focus more on longer-term and strategic issues.

In 2008 the Alliance adopted a governance document which stipulates that the Alliance "should endeavor to be as transparent as possible". Major decisions must be circulated to the community for comment. Work plans and final reports must be made available to the community via the website. Until recently the Board has, however, not produced or circulated formal minutes from Board meetings on a regular basis, and decisions taken by the Executive Committee and/or informally via e-mails are not always properly documented.

The CBD Alliance is hosted by an organization that is legally and fiscally responsible for the execution of the programme of work. The day-to-day work of the Alliance has been handled by CBD Alliance Coordinators who report to the Board and to the host organisation. In 2008 the time available for coordination was scaled up, but as hopes for more successful

fundraising did not materialise, the board decided in November 2010 not to renew the contract with the coordinator. The difficulties in fundraising, which is reflected in diminishing incomes over the past several years, has also resulted in an unhealthy dependence on SwedBio as the dominant provider of funds.

Monitoring and reporting of activities within the program has mainly been the task of the Alliance coordinator. The reports to SwedBio, which are reviewed by the Board, are quite analytical and of good quality. The CBD Alliance has carried out, at its own initiative, internal evaluations after each of the two program cycles (although the second evaluation was delayed until the end of 2011), as a basis for reflection and planning for the future.

During 2011, the Alliance has seen a significant drop in activities. The Board has been in a process of renewal for a large part of the year, and has not been able to pick up all the loose ends. However, important initiatives have been taken to deal with the situation, including the launching of an internal evaluation and a decision to recruit an interim coordinator with the main tasks to help develop a proposal/work plan for 2012 and to fundraise.

Although the governance system has become formalised and serves its main purposes, some further action is needed in order to ensure greater stability, effectiveness and transparency.

Recommended short-term priority actions

→ “Stay the course” – maintain core functions of the CBD Alliance

The core functions of the Alliance – to bring civil society organisations together and provide a forum that enables them to effectively participate in and influence CBD processes and decisions – are vital and need to be continued. This should continue to be the No. 1 priority of the CBD Alliance.

→ Organise efficient fundraising

Fundraising is a key challenge for the immediate future, and should be a core priority for the medium term. The degree to which the Alliance is dependent on a single donor is not sustainable, and SwedBio funds are not sufficient for the activities that the constituency of the Alliance want to see implemented. Board members will need to assume more responsibility for identifying and contacting potential new donors. A medium-term strategic plan and vision for the development of the Alliance would be an important component of a successful fundraising strategy.

→ Recruit a coordinator

The Alliance needs a coordinator who can facilitate the work on a regular basis. A process has already been started for recruiting an interim coordinator for the short term. There seems to be broad agreement that what is needed is a fairly senior person who knows issues, is familiar with the community, and understands the dynamics of NGO politics. Many express preference for recruiting a person from the South.

→ Continue to strengthen and clarify governance systems

One of the strengths of the CBD Alliance is that its governance has been kept light-weight, loose and flexible. Many Board members are heavily committed to work in their own organisations, and sometimes also in other networks. Care should be taken to ensure that the available capacity is harnessed for fulfilling the key functions of the Board. The recruitment of a coordinator is crucial for reducing the administrative burden of the Board and its ExCom. Measures that could help make governance more stringent include:

- Clarify the specific responsibilities of the Board and the ExCom, and define the relations between the Board, the coordinator and the Host Organisation.
- Assign specific responsibilities within the Board (the ExCom, groups of Board members, or individual point persons) for exercising oversight and monitoring of finances, organising fundraising, and liaising with the Host Organisation and staff.
- Revise project proposals on the basis of funds secured, and translate them into work plans for implementation.

→ 2012: Focus on COP 11

Given the current state and limited resources of the network, the CBD Alliance should focus its short-term strategy and work plan on consolidating the work within its core issues and forum: the CBD. The CBD COP 11 is a much more central and strategic task than trying to influence the Rio+20 summit.

The COP 11 host country, India, has a strong civil society and many vigorous social movements. However, Indian civil society is also divided, and international support for coordination will be critical.

→ Develop a medium-term strategic plan

The political and institutional landscape for biodiversity issues is becoming increasingly complex, and so is the landscape of civil society organisations. In order to remain relevant, it is important for the CBD Alliance to regularly review the needs of its constituency, identify and assess new opportunities, and adjust or redefine its mandate, aims and strategy. The CBD Alliance may want to develop a proper Strategic Plan for the network. Such a document would help in the identification of, and prioritisation among, different tasks and activities, and is also likely to be very helpful in the dialogue with potential future donors.

Strategic options for consideration

→ Broadening civil society participation in CBD meetings

Ensuring participation by a broad range of civil society organisations, social movements and indigenous peoples in CBD meetings and processes remains a critical challenge for the CBD Alliance. The two approaches – bringing in new voices and providing opportunities for a broader range of groups to be exposed to the negotiations and coordination, vs. ensuring a level of continuity in order to maximise impacts – probably need to be balanced. Ensuring that under-represented groups – primarily Southern NGOs, social movements and non-indigenous local communities – are provided with opportunities to attend meetings remains a key priority. The selection of participants to be sponsored should probably be more closely linked to the priorities and challenges to be defined in Alliance strategy and work plans. Ideas and observations on participation that have been proposed to the evaluator include:

- clearer requirements and procedures for participants to report back
- mentoring of new participants by more experienced members of the network
- provision of more capacity building before CBD meetings, and of translation in more Alliance meetings and discussions.

→ Building stronger links with the CBD Alliance constituency

Several interviewees expressed that there is a need for some more organised opportunities for members of the CBD Alliance community to receive feedback from the Board, coordinator

and participants at the CBD meetings, and to take part in and inform discussion on strategies and positions. Proposed options include:

- Organising CBD Alliance consultations/conferences in connection with major meetings, where strategic discussions and planning can be done face-to-face
- Organising consultations/Skype calls – regionally or issue-based – before meetings
- Publishing a resource database or circulating lists of who are active in the CBD Alliance, and on key resource persons/expertise on various issues
- Setting up a system of working groups or sub-networks on key issues
- Setting up a network of regional or sub-regional hubs, focal points or liaison persons.

Several of these options require more resources for coordination and facilitation at central level.

→ *Promoting participation in the implementation of the CBD*

During the coming years the CBD will focus more on supporting Parties to implement the Strategic Plan and other decisions from Nagoya at the national level. This provides new opportunities to push for and promote CSO engagement at the national and local levels, and to link work on the ground to the international processes. The issue of whether the Alliance should broaden its engagement to include a greater focus on implementation generated a variety of responses in the internal review, including suggestions for monitoring of compliance and accountability, support for national level processes, and coordination, capacity building and information sharing among CSOs.

→ *Deepen the dialogue with the indigenous caucus*

Alliance has built very good relations with the indigenous caucus, including some institutional arrangements and practices for dialogue and sharing. The direct interaction between members of the two constituencies is, however, rather limited. Both the Alliance and the indigenous caucus could benefit from exploring further opportunities and new strategies for more interaction and dialogue.

Recommendations to SwedBio

→ *Continue to provide core funding for the CBD Alliance*

The CBD Alliance is, by any standard, an important, successful and efficient project that provides significant outputs and impacts at a very low cost. After a brief period of relative inactivity, the Alliance is now in a credible process of self-evaluation and restructuring. SwedBio is strongly recommended to provide support for the network throughout 2012 and – assuming that the Alliance will present a workable proposal, and that resources remain available to SwedBio post-2013 – for the 2-year cycle that is likely to follow.

→ *Explore synergies with other SwedBio partners*

As has been mentioned, interviewees representing indigenous peoples' organisations have found SwedBio's support through capacity building workshops to be very valuable. SwedBio may want to explore opportunities for supporting similar initiatives for non-indigenous organisations, and preferably in ways that enhance the dialogue between the two constituencies.

1. Introduction

The CBD Alliance was founded after the 6th Conference of Parties (COP) to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) in April 2002. It is a loose network of organisations which aims to facilitate more diverse, coordinated, and effective civil society input into CBD policy-making.

The central objective of the network is to broaden the scope of civil society groups involved in CBD processes, and particularly to increase the informed and effective participation of Southern NGOs, indigenous peoples, community based organizations (CBOs) and social movements – groups that historically have little access to global policy-making.

Among its core activities, the CBD Alliance:

- Facilitates general coordination and communication among civil society throughout the CBD inter-sessional and sessional periods. This includes maintaining a web site, a blog and a list serve, posting secretariat notifications, coordinating civil society strategy meetings before and at all major CBD meetings, and fundraising for the Alliance and its activities.
- Supports financially nongovernmental, indigenous and community representatives to participate in CBD meetings through a transparent self-selection process.
- Edits and distributes ECO – the newsletter of civil society at CBD sessions.

The Alliance does not, however, represent CSOs, nor does it speak for the diversity of civil society voices.

2. Context and objectives of the evaluation

This evaluation has been commissioned by SwedBio. The main focus of the evaluation, as defined on the Terms of Reference (see Annex D), has been to examine the progress that has been made by CBD Alliance in its overall work over the period of the last two programme cycles, which covered the years 2007-2010. The effectiveness of the CBD Alliance's work has been assessed with direct reference to:

- CBD Alliance's overall goals and objectives, as stated in project documents, the CBD Alliance Processes and Procedures², and on its web site³; and
- The specific goals and objectives of the programmes supported by SwedBio, as stated in project proposals for 2007-08 and 2009-10 (see Box 1, page 13).

Implementation of the CBD Alliance program that SwedBio is supporting in 2011 is not covered by the present evaluation. However, the year has seen some important developments in the Alliance that need to be mentioned and considered, not least in relation to the discussion and recommendations for the future development and work of the Alliance. Notably, the CBD Alliance has faced a more difficult financial situation, and the resources for coordination of the network have been dramatically reduced. The CBD Alliance has initiated an internal process of reviewing its structures, roles and performance. This evaluation has been conducted in parallel with the internal process, and aims to complement it by providing an external view.

² <http://www.cbdalliance.org/policiesprocedures/>

³ <http://www.cbdalliance.org/mandate/>

2.1 Key issues addressed

In line with the Terms of Reference the evaluation has primarily focused on examining the following questions:

- How effective is the Alliance's external communications work? For example ECO and on-line resources – relevance, usefulness and added value to target groups (the CSO community, decision-makers)? Outreach to journalists?
- How effective is the Alliance's work to coordinate and facilitate communications within the CSO community?
- How effective is the Alliance in facilitating communications between civil society groups working on global biodiversity and the CBD Secretariat?
- How does the community assess the Alliance strategy sessions, briefings and other assistance to CSO preparations and input?
- Civil society participation and attendance of Southern, indigenous and community representatives – assessment of diversity, representativity and relevance. Has the Alliance been successful in providing space and voice to representatives of marginalised and disadvantaged groups and movements?
- Is the balance between the Alliance's work on communication, coordination and facilitation about right?
- What impact has the work of the Alliance had on CBD decisions and discussions (short term and long term, keeping in mind the problems of attribution and of casuality)?
- The CBD Alliance management structure – is it functional, efficient and legitimate?
- Adequacy of the internal systems for monitoring, evaluation, analysis and reporting of projects and results.
- The quantity and quality of efforts to fundraise from other sources.

2.2 Methodology

This evaluation is based on a combination of a review of documents, interviews and information gathered via e-mail, and direct observation of the work of the CBD Alliance.

Documents that have been reviewed (listed in Annex A) include :

- project proposals and reports for the period covered
- external communication material, such as the CBD Alliance newsletter, web site, blog, press releases, press kits etc
- documentation related to training and strategy sessions organised by the Alliance
- documents related to internal reviews of the CBD Alliance

Most interviews and other consultations (listed in Annex B) were conducted face-to-face in connection with the CBD SBSTTA 15, held in Montreal, Canada, on 7-11 November 2011. Additional interviews were made by telephone/Skype and e-mail. The evaluator has sought to solicit the input of individuals from the following categories:

- a broad range of men and women from the CBD Alliance community (including Alliance Board members) representing NGOs, IPOs, CBOs and their major networks – large and small, from the North and the South.
- CBD Alliance coordinators

- the CBD host organisation
- staff of the CBD Secretariat
- representatives of selected governments from North and South
- staff of SwedBio.

At SBSTTA 15 the evaluator also participated in the Alliance strategy session and morning meetings, two CSO side events, and one CSO consultation organised by the CBD Secretariat.

A full time table of the evaluation is provided in Annex C.

2.3 Limitations

Although efforts have been made to balance the set of persons consulted, the composition of the list is still dominated by the CSOs and IPOs that were present at the SBSTTA. Southern NGOs, social movements and non-indigenous local communities are under-represented among the interviewees.

The evaluator has not had access to the CBD Alliance listserves, and is thus unable to form an independent opinion of the character and quality of this instrument as a channel for information and forum for discussions and consultations.

Although the evaluation was concluded in December 2011, it has not assessed the activities carried out by the CBD Alliance during 2011. The review was initially planned to be carried out in May and June 2011, with much of the work centering around a CBD meeting in Montreal during the second week of June 2011. However, in consultation with the CBD Alliance it was agreed to postpone the process, as the SBSTTA meeting in November would provide a much better platform to meet with more people from the global CSO community, but the Terms of Reference for the evaluation were not revised.

3. Findings

The CBD Alliance is a long-term SwedBio partner. The program cycle of SwedBio support to the CBD Alliance has been loosely aligned with the cycle of biannual meetings of the CBD Conference of the Parties (COP). Before the period under review, SwedBio provided support for the Alliance in the preparation period for and during COP 8 (in Curitiba, Brazil, 2006). The SwedBio contribution to the programs from 2007 onwards can be seen as a direct continuation of this early support.

This evaluation reviews the implementation of the CBD Alliance program entitled **Democracy, civil society and the Convention and Biological Diversity**⁴, which SweBio has supported during two project cycles:

- 2007-08 (including COP 9 in Bonn 2008), and
- 2009-2010 (culminating with COP 10 in Nagoya, Japan, in November 2010).

The goals for the two program (Box 1) have differed only in minor details.

Box 1: Goals of the CBD Alliance program

The goals for the **2009-2010** program period were:

- **Goal 1.** Through effective communication, coordination and inter-agency collaboration, the CBD Alliance will monitor sessional and inter-sessional CBD activities and assist civil society organisation's in improved preparations for, and input to, the work of the CBD
- **Goal 2.** The CBD Alliance's ECO will be a high quality newsletter and on-line resource that keeps the key civil society and government actors well informed and enhances the quality of the decision-making
- **Goal 3.** The CBD Alliance will specifically target supporting southern, Indigenous Peoples' and community representatives' attendance to CBD meetings in order to promote the full and effective participation of these underrepresented sectors of civil society
- **Goal 4.** For COP10, produce an effective Media Kit in order to provide a source of targeted outreach on key CBD issues for journalists, Parties and CSOs

In the proposal for the **2007-2008** programme period, goals 1-3 were essentially the same as above. The 4th goal was to "Produce a civil society guide to implementing CBD decisions". This activity was abandoned, and replaced by the production of a media advisory kit for COP 9.

3.1 Coordination and facilitation within the CSO community

The Convention on biodiversity, CBD, is a relatively open space for civil society to engage. Little effort has been made by the organisation to regulate or regiment the participation of CSOs.

The community of CSOs that engages with biodiversity policies is large and diverse, and the CBD attracts participants from large international conservation NGOs like WWF and Greenpeace, as well as from a wide range of smaller organisations and social movements

⁴ See under *Project Proposals* in the list of references, Annex A.

working on issues such as agriculture, forests, energy, technology, social mobilisation and human rights. Facilitation of CSO participation and inputs at CBD negotiation sessions is the core activity of the CBD Alliance. The Alliance is the only common platform for CSOs that attend these sessions. Although the Alliance is mainly driven by the smaller CSOs, during the period under review it has strengthened good working relations both with the large conservation NGOs and with the indigenous caucus.

Among the former, major organisations like WWF; Greenpeace and BirdLife International usually attend Alliance meetings at CBD sessions and find them useful, while some other conservation NGOs are less engaged. IUCN has the status of an intergovernmental organisation in the CBD, but national chapters contribute actively to the Alliance coordination.

Indigenous peoples' organisations have a special and more formalised standing in the convention, and are provided significant opportunities to attend and organise. The indigenous caucus is coordinated through the International Indigenous Forum on Biodiversity (IIFB). IIFB regularly shares information and seeks support from the CBD Alliance for its draft positions, and also takes up initiatives from CBD Alliance. Members of the Alliance are frequently invited to present information and positions at IIFB meetings, particularly on new and emerging issues that few among the IPOs have yet engaged on. The IIFB is also represented by two members on the Alliance Board.

Facilitation of participation in CBD meetings

In preparation for the CBD meetings, the CBD Alliance liaises with the CBD Secretariat on issues related to CSO participation and inputs. Ahead of the CBD Conferences of the Parties (COP) the Alliance also provides support for the host country NGOs, and facilitates their contacts with the CBD Secretariat and host country governments. Before the most recent COP 10, held in Japan in 2010, the Alliance started working with the Japanese NGOs already at COP 9 in 2008, and continued discussions at several intersessional meetings. Among other things, the Alliance provided advice and a document/checklist for preparing for the event, and the coordinator accompanied the Japanese NGOs in a meeting with the CBD Secretariat.

The Alliance also facilitates the selection of, and provides funding for, a number of participants from Southern NGOs, social movement and communities in a variety of CBD meetings and working groups.

The central Alliance activities at CBD meetings are:

- Capacity building and strategy sessions for CSOs
- Daily strategy session
- Publishing of the ECO newsletter
- Updates on the Alliance web site and the “undercoverCOP.org” blog

All of these activities are presented in more detail and discussed in the following sections.

Facilitation between sessions – the CBD Alliance listserves

The day-to-day facilitation provided by the CBD Alliance between sessions is mainly done through two electronic listserves, which are facilitated by the CBD Alliance coordinator: one general list that covers all issues of relevance to the CBD, and one specific on access and benefit sharing (ABS). The general listserv currently has some 335 subscribers, while just under 100 subscribers follow the ABS list.

The listserves are the main channels for communication to and within the CBD Alliance community (including indigenous peoples' organisations) between negotiation sessions. They are used for dissemination of information to and among the CSO community, as well as for

discussions. They are also a channel for the CBD Alliance to consult with the community on issues related to the network.

As the evaluator has not had access to the listserves (with the exception of the temporary listserv for people attending SBSTTA 15), no independent assessment can be made of the character and quality of this service. Members of the community who have been interviewed and commented on the listserves unanimously describe them as important channels for information, and a core function of the CBD Alliance. However, some would also like the listserves to be used more for discussions on strategic issues. Others cautioned about expanding the listserv, as many people in the Alliance are already overloaded by e-mails from a variety of other channels. In fact, many members of the indigenous caucus do not subscribe to the Alliance listserv, some because they find the amount of e-mails overwhelming, others because of language: the listserv is only available in English. To help overcome this gap, the IIFB coordinator and Board help scan the Alliance list and forward/translate important information to their own list.

3.2 Assistance to CSO preparations and input

Capacity building and strategy sessions

Ahead of all major CBD meetings the CBD Alliance organises preparatory meetings/strategy sessions for the CSOs that are present. Before 2007 much of the strategising for CBD meetings took place the night before or the first morning of a COP. During the period under review the strategy sessions have ranged from one half or one day (SBSTTA and working group meetings) to 2 full days (at the COPs), and been more formalised and planned.

The preparatory meetings and strategy sessions serve a number of different objectives, including to:

- provide orientation and disseminate information on priorities, positions and processes from CSOs, the CBD Secretariat and other key players
- update each other on developments in different negotiations and at side events
- prepare and coordinate CSO inputs, statements and press briefings
- organize the production of the ECO newsletter, and updates for the Alliance web site and blog

These sessions are followed up through daily morning meetings of CSOs. At these meetings, participants report back from negotiations, side events and other development during the previous day. The agenda for the day is reviewed, background is provided on the underlying issues and positions when needed, key issues where CSOs need to intervene are identified, and responsibilities are assigned for preparing interventions or approaching strategic negotiators and delegations.

Both the strategy sessions and the morning meetings are usually held in parallel with similar activities of the IIFB. Although efforts are made from both sides to bridge the information gap and harmonise positions (such as by inviting IIFB representatives to present and discuss towards the end of the strategy sessions), it is unavoidable that this arrangement somewhat limits the coordination and dialogue between the civil society and indigenous caucuses.

While the preparatory and strategy sessions certainly help build the capacity of participating CSOs, the CBD Alliance also facilitates – in collaboration with COP host country CSOs and others – specific capacity building sessions for civil society organisations in connection with the bi-annual CBD COPs.

The capacity building day for COP 9 in Bonn, the CBD Alliance co-organised was attended by more than 100 participants. This session focused on providing background on the CBD process and mechanisms, and sharing advice and experiences on how civil society can be effective in intervening and influencing the process. Resource persons included representatives from a wide range of CSOs and IPOs, as well as CBD Secretariat staff and government negotiators.

The half-day capacity building session at COP 10, attended by more than 50 organisations, also included a more substantial focus on the ten issues that the CBD community had presented ahead of the meeting, the “Top 10 for COP 10” (see under *Briefings* below). The internal evaluation conducted in 2008 identified the capacity building sessions as one of the most important activities carried out by the Alliance, and particularly helpful for newcomers to orient themselves in the increasingly complex discussions in the CBD. CSO participants who have recently attended their first CBD meeting also told the present evaluator that they have found the Alliance to be welcoming, and that they have rapidly become integrated in the collective efforts. Both participation in the coordination and discussions with individual Alliance members have greatly helped them to orient themselves about the issues and the dynamics of the negotiation process, so that they better understand where and how they have opportunities to intervene.

In addition to the sessions provided in connection with the CBD meetings, several interviewees suggest there is need for more capacity building for participants *before* the meetings. IPO participants refer to a capacity building workshop on Article 8(j), organised with the support of SwedBio ahead of the session of the Working Group in Montreal in November 2011, as a good example.

At both COPs, the capacity building and strategy sessions have provided translation support for both English and Spanish. In addition, translation to French was provided at COP 9, and to Japanese at COP 10. However, although translation to Spanish is sometimes properly organised at SBSTTAs and working group meetings (with French translation usually individually when needed), this has not always been possible to arrange.

Briefings

One of the most appreciated and successful initiatives launched by the Alliance during the period under review was the briefing *Top 10 for COP 10*⁵ which was presented before and at the Tenth Conference of the Parties in Nayoya in November 2010. A similar set was produced for COP 9 in Bonn in 2008, but appears to have received less attention and praise. One possible explanation is that while the COP 10 briefings were actively embraced by the Japanese CSO hosts, the local organising group in Germany produced its own set of briefings.

The sets consisted of ten 2-page briefings on key issues of concern to the global community of civil society organisations. The themes for the COP 10 briefings were identified in close consultation with the CSO community through discussions on the CBD Alliance listserves, and with the active participation of some 30 CSOs and IPOs in the drafting of briefings. The process produced benefits to the community of civil society organisations itself by helping to consolidate positions and forge alliances among CSOs – while also highlighting existing differences. The kits also served as primers for CSOs who may be familiar with all of the issues, and were used as background material during the CSO capacity building and strategy

⁵ Available in English, Spanish and French at <http://www.cbdalliance.org/top-10-for-cop-10/>

sessions at the COPs. Several interviewees from the indigenous caucus mentioned the briefings on issues that are not central to their caucus as being particularly useful to them.

Both sets of briefings also constituted the main substantial part of the press kits that were distributed in connection with COPs 9 and 10 (see *Media outreach* below).

3.3 External communications

In its external communication, the focus of the Alliance has mainly been to provide channels for CSOs/IPOs and their networks to reach out with their information, analysis and positions. The CBD Alliance itself was not designed to coordinate common CSO positions or to represent CSO views other than on issues of procedure, such as defending the space for CSO participation.

This presents the Alliance with some challenges in its external communication work. Usually the problem can be handled, as in the case of the “*Top 10 for COP 10*” briefings which carried a note explaining that they:

“were developed by representatives of civil society and Indigenous Peoples’ organisations, facilitated by the CBD Alliance. It should not be understood as representing the position of the CBD Alliance nor civil society in general. Rather it is meant to provide background and current information, as well as some viewpoints on key issues for COP 10. The viewpoints represented in this paper are those of its contributors.”

In presenting statements facilitated by the Alliance at CBD sessions, it is usually emphasised that such statements are made on behalf of “CSOs present in the meeting” or some similar wording. In most cases, this is seen as satisfactory to the CSO community, but debates crop up at regular intervals, often when somebody from a Northern CSO has been perceived as speaking for a larger community.

The “ECO” newsletter

“ECO” is the title of several civil society newsletters that are produced for, and primarily distributed at, various UN meetings and forums. They complement other sources of information on negotiations, such as the ENB updates, mainly by presenting CSO and IPO positions and analysis in their own words.

The CBD Alliance produces the ECO editions for the CBD. The ECO is edited by a flexible team that has included the CBD Alliance coordinator as well as individuals from other organisations that are present at the different meetings. Texts are primarily sourced from CSO and IPO representatives that are present at the meeting for which each ECO is produced.

The ECO is the main channel for communicating statements, analysis and background information from civil society organisations to delegates at CBD meetings. The ECOs regularly also reproduce statements and interventions made by the indigenous peoples’ platform, IIFB. The distribution of the ECO – on a daily basis at major meetings – plays an important role for enhancing the visibility of CSOs and IPOs at these meetings. The ECOs are also made available in PDF format on the CBD Alliance web site and blog.

Between 2007 and 2010, a total of 66 ECOs were produced in connection with 18 CBD meetings. In addition, the CBD Alliance issued one “Biodiversity ECO” at COP 15 of the Climate Change Convention in Copenhagen 2009.

During 2011, a post-COP issue commenting on COP 10 in Nagoya was issued in March, one humorous issue was distributed at the first plenary meeting on the IPBES in October, and six regular ECOs were produced during the WG-8(j) and SBSTTA meetings in November.

There is convincing evidence that the ECO is widely read and appreciated by delegates and the CBD Secretariat. Some government delegates mention that they actively look out for it at CBD meetings. The ECO is recognised for presenting alternative views and perspectives on issues, as well as for providing quick and readable information, including about discussions that have taken place in parts of the sessions (working groups, side events) which delegates – not least from small delegations – have been unable to attend themselves.

One delegate specifically mentioned the usefulness of the ECO highlighting (including through reports from CSO side events) issues that are scheduled to be discussed at subsequent meetings (geo-engineering, synthetic biology), as this has the potential of contributing to and influencing discussions in the countries ahead of these meetings.

While opinions differ about the views and positions that are presented in the ECO, developing country delegates often find that these are supportive of their own positions in the negotiations.

Within civil society and indigenous constituencies themselves, the ECOs are also highly appreciated, for very much the same reasons that have been quoted above. For the indigenous caucus the ECO also provides an important channel to communicate their positions and statements to delegates and other organisations.

An additional value of the ECO is that the team that produces sometimes provides hands-on training to contributors on how to get their messages across.

The ECO produces extremely good value for a small amount of money. In addition to the cost of printing the ECO, the budget only allows for a small honorarium and travel costs for the editor. The main constraint is that the ECO is usually only produced in English (although at COP 10 in Nagoya, the newsletter was also produced in Japanese). If the newsletter could be produced in more languages, it would obviously have the potential to reach more people. An increase in the budget for the newsletter could also make it possible for members of the editorial team to take a more active part in following the meetings that they cover.

[square brackets]

In addition to publishing the ECO, the CBD Alliance also takes an active part in producing [square brackets] – a newsletter for civil society published by the CBD Secretariat, which was first launched at Cop 9 in 2008.⁶ CBD Alliance coordinator Jessica Dempsey has been one of three managing editors, and four to five civil society and indigenous organisations have been represented on the editorial board for each of the five issues that have been published so far.

[square brackets] is printed and distributed at the meetings in connection with which they are produced. It is also e-mailed to all CBD national focal points, and made available on the CBD web site. Although no figures are available, the newsletter undoubtedly reaches a larger and different audience, compared to the ECO.

The CBD Secretariat is very happy with the collaboration with CBD Alliance around the project. In addition to the contributions by the Alliance in producing the actual newsletter, the partnership helps broaden the CBD Secretariat's contacts with different parts of the CSO community. For the CBD Alliance, it provides an important channel to reach out with articles

⁶ Available for download at <http://www.cbd.int/doc/newsletters/#squarebrackets>

which tend to be somewhat longer and more worked through than the more instantaneous texts that are produced for the ECO.

The CBD Alliance web site

A basic CBD Alliance web site – www.cbdalliance.org – was built and launched in 2007. The site is primarily updated and active around major CBD meetings. However, it also serves as an information point on the CBD Alliance – providing basic information on the mandate, structure and governance of the network – and an archive of updates, ECOs and other Alliance documents.

The web site design was upgraded in October 2010. By then the site received on average about 3,000 visits per month, peaking at some 7,000 visits during the month of COP 10.

Almost all persons interviewed said that they use the web site, and find it useful. Some indicated, however, that they do not use the web site during CBD meetings, which suggests that the printed version ECO is the more important channel for information from the CSOs at these events. The only clear response to questions on what information is lacking was some more detailed information about the activities of the CBD Alliance itself.

Several respondents also noted that the web site has not been much updated recently – in fact during almost one year after November 2010, only one new posting was added.⁷ This may to some extent be a reflection of a less intensive CBD schedule after the Nagoya COP, but the main reason is the fact that the Alliance has not had a coordinator.⁸

The “Undercover COP” blog

The CBD Alliance blog, Undercover COP⁹, was first launched in connection with COP 9 in 2008. It is primarily intended to complement the web site by providing rapid information sharing, feedback and comments during negotiations, and is usually kept dormant between major sessions. During the first two month on-line, the site received some 17,000 visits viewing over 70,000 pages. The blog was deactivated soon thereafter, and re-launched before COP 10 when again it was again widely used and viewed. After COP 10 it was updated again during the SBSTTA meeting in November 2010, but was then only used as one more platform for posting pdf files of the ECO.¹⁰

Interviews suggest that the blog is not as widely read as the web site, and several of the interviewees were not aware of its existence. However, the importance of the blog during negotiations was also emphasised.

Media outreach

The Alliance’s collective efforts to reach out to journalists is largely limited to the COPs, as media tends to focus their attention on global biodiversity policy issues mainly in connection with such high-level events. COP 9 was the first occasion where the CBD Alliance made a coordinated attempt to work with the press. In the course of COP 9 and 10, the Alliance facilitated a couple of civil society press conferences and briefings. The Alliance has also

⁷ With the posting of the Post-COP 10 ECO. www.cbdalliance.org viewed on 2 November 2011.

⁸ As a result there has also been a general lack of web site maintenance such as updating of contact information, or cleaning up “Comments” fields that are currently littered with spam to an extent that essentially make the function useless.

⁹ <http://undercovercop.org>

¹⁰ <http://undercovercop.org> viewed on 2 November 2011.

developed some tools designed for attracting more media attention, such as a number of joint media statements, “score cards” to assess to what extent negotiations are progressing in relation to key CSO concerns, and presentation of the “Dodo Awards” to convention Parties who are “leading the world to extinction” by blocking progress in the negotiations.

The central outputs in terms of servicing the media have been the production of ambitious media kits for distribution in connection with COP 9 in Bonn and COP 10 in Nagoya. Both kits have consisted of an introductory media advisory (which explain the context, summarise key CSO positions, and provide contact details and links to CSO representatives and resources), and the sets of issue briefing papers that the CBD Alliance produced for each of the meetings (see under *Briefings* above). The media kits were made available in English, French, Spanish and the host country language. 1000 printed copies of the kit for COP 9 were distributed in connection with the conference, and almost 500 additional copies were downloaded between May and September 2008.¹¹

The internal evaluation after COP 9 indicated that media uptake was limited due, in part, to the technical language used in the briefings. It was also noted that media interest in the CBD overall was limited. At COP 10 the Alliance was reasonably successful in getting mainstream Japanese media to cover their issues and concerns, while international coverage was largely restricted to web-based media and free-lance writers.

3.4 Communications between CSOs and the CBD Secretariat

CBD Alliance liaises on a regular basis with the Secretariat of the CBD in order to:

- prepare for civil society participation the COPs, in consultation the CBD Secretariat, the host country government, the civil society focal point appointed by the host country government, and with the CSO community in the host country.
- facilitate CSO access, presence and participation in formal consultation processes, contributing documentation and positions in the lead-up, and participating in expert meetings
- identify specific/reciprocal focal points for on various issues
- liaise with the Secretariat on ensuring adequate facilities for CSOs in CBD meetings

The assessment of the CBD Secretariat is that the CBD Alliance serves their needs and does a very good job in ensuring inclusiveness, presence and participation of CSOs in various CBD forums and processes.

According to representatives from the CBD Secretariat one of the greatest values with the CBD Alliance is that it facilitates the contacts between the CBD, the Secretariat and a large number of smaller civil society organisations. In practice the CBD Secretariat sees the Alliance as its focal point for CSOs, and as the facilitator for a vast majority of the organisations. While the Secretariat also has bilateral and direct contacts with major conservation NGOs like WWF and Conservation International (as well as with IUCN which is, in the context of the CBD, considered to be an intergovernmental organisation), it also sees that the Alliance fills a role in facilitating contacts between these large organisations and the smaller CSOs.

¹¹ *CBD Alliance Final narrative report to SwedBio, January 2009*. No statistics are provided in the 2010 report regarding the kit for COP 10.

Correspondence between the Alliance, CBD Secretariat and COP hosts shows that the Alliance has been consistent and largely successful in protecting and broadening the space for civil society participation in CBD meetings and forums.

Representatives of the Alliance and the CBD Secretariat both indicate that the CBD Alliance is also playing a role in mediating and negotiating to ‘defuse’ tension and avoid unnecessary confrontation between civil society groups and host country officials and security staff.

While the relations between the CBD Alliance and the Secretariat are good, the Alliance has managed to avoid being too closely tied up with official CBD structures and is maintaining its integrity as the independent platform for the CSO community

3.5 Civil society participation and attendance

One of the central goals of the program is to support broad attendance and effective participation by Southern, community and indigenous peoples’ representatives in CBD negotiations and related meetings. This is done through the provision of dedicated funding to enable selected members of these communities to participate in COPs and meetings of working groups, technical expert groups and the SBSTTA.

Like in all international forums, it is easier for the better resourced international and Northern NGOs to be able to attend meetings. A certain “science bias” in the CBD is also said to keep farmers and community representatives away from some forums.

With the exception for the indigenous peoples’ caucus, for which there are special provisions in the CBD, it is only the COPs that sometimes attract a substantial number of organisations from the South (and particularly from the region if the meetings are held in the South – with COP 8 in Brazil as the outstanding example). Otherwise Southern CSOs and social movement are mainly able attend, in limited numbers, some SBSTTA and working group meetings where their priority issues are on the agenda.

The support from the CBD Alliance for participation can serve a number of different purposes. The first and central objective is to increase the diversity of civil society representation at the negotiations, particularly by strengthening the presence of otherwise under-represented groups. Linked to this is the ambition to broaden the circle of people from the CSO community who are engaged in the CBD processes.

There is also a strong capacity building component as participants – new-comers and less experienced participants in particular – can learn a lot from being able not only to follow the negotiations, but also to attend side events and interact with other CSOs/IPOs at the various strategy and capacity building sessions organised by the CBD Alliance, IIFB and others.

Other potential benefits include:

- greater civil society interaction with and support for country negotiators (many Southern CSOs have little opportunity to interact at the national level)
- opportunities for participants to present local/national perspectives in side events
- more direct channels for feed-back to civil society constituencies

There is strong evidence in the available documentation (annual reports, participant’s questionnaires etc) as well as from interviews with CSOs/IPOs, CBD staff and government negotiators, that the supported participants have collectively contributed to all of these objectives.

During the two program periods, two different approaches have been applied to this component:

- During 2007-2008, calls for participation were circulated widely within the community and participants to be funded were identified through a transparent self-selection process. Over the two years the program supported, with the help of additional funds from CIDA and HIVOS, a total of 41 participants in nine different meetings. Less than one third of the participants had previous experience of participating in CBD meetings.
- In 2009-2010, the Alliance shifted towards supporting more long-term participation in a series of meetings within specific areas of expertise (ABS, Article 8(j), climate change) by a more limited group of “supported partners”. The community was invited to propose candidates on the basis of pre-defined eligibility criteria. The final selection was made by the CBD Alliance Board. A total of four partners were selected, all four representing indigenous peoples’ organisations. In addition to the supported partners, one-off funding was provided for the participation by three persons in working group meetings.

The shift during the second program period was largely motivated by the ambition to be able to exert influence on decision-making in a more systematic manner, by enabling individuals to participate in a series of different meetings. These “supported partners” were also supported to conduct some work at the national level both before and after meetings, and to write briefing papers on their respective issues which could be shared nationally as well as with the CBD Alliance community. Additional outputs include daily reports from COP 10 of the climate change convention, a series of consultation meetings with government agencies in one country, and a 12-minute video documentary on the CBD (available on-line).

Interviewees from among the CBD Alliance community and Board make different assessments of the pros and cons of the two models. It was hoped that the shift from broader participation to “supported partnerships” would enable participants to be more effective during and between negotiations. Some are, however, concerned that this may reinforce a tendency for the CBD negotiations to become a concern for a select group of experts, while the opportunities for broadening the circle become more restricted.

The fact that all the four “supported partners” 2009-2010 were selected from within the indigenous community (two each from the global North and South) has been controversial both within the Board and the Alliance community. The IPOs are already, as has been mentioned, relatively well represented due to support provided through mechanisms of the CBD itself, as well as through IIFB and other channels. With a few exceptions Southern NGOs and, in particular, non-indigenous local communities (farmers, fisherfolk etc) seem to find it more difficult to be able to participate on a regular basis.

This decision was, however, an effect of requirements attached to the financing provided by different funders of the Alliance. 80 percent of the budget for supporting participation in CBD meetings in 2010 was sourced from the Christiansen fund, whose contribution was earmarked for indigenous groups.¹²

Due to the limited amount of funds available to the CBD Alliance, support for CSO participation was temporarily discontinued in 2011.

¹² In 2009, SwedBio and HIVOS each provided 50 percent of these funds.

3.6 Impacts on CBD decisions and discussions

In assessing the short and long term impacts of the work of the CBD Alliance on CBD decisions and discussions, a number of aspects have to be kept in mind:

- The Alliance is only facilitator for the CSO community, and mainly active during the meetings. Most of the actual work of informing and discussions with delegations is done by the participating organisations, largely in their respective home countries, and often over periods extending over and between several CBD meetings.
- At the same time, Alliance members play important roles both as watchdogs in relation to national governments, and as whistle-blowers on new and emerging issues. Information about specific issues that individual groups are working on is shared through the Alliance listserves, and the topics are discussed in Alliance preparatory and morning meetings so that other groups may support the issues and raise them with a wider range of delegations.
- The positions taken by country delegations are also informed and influenced by a number of other actors and considerations including domestic political processes, scientific findings, economic considerations, and the actions of other organisations and lobby groups.

To attribute specific “wins” to the work of the CBD Alliance alone is thus next to impossible. There are, however, strong indications that the CBD Alliance (including through actions taken by its participating organisations) has contributed to a significant degree to influencing decisions and outcomes on a number of issues.

Some examples of impacts, quoted by Alliance participants as well as by government and CBD Secretariat representatives, include:

- influencing, in particular, discussions on the rights of indigenous and local communities in the process leading up to the adoption of the Nagoya protocol on access and benefit sharing
- creating acceptance of the need for precaution in relation to other new technologies (such as synthetic biology) and mechanisms (including biodiversity offsets), and strongly influencing the COP 10 decisions to:
 - o adopt a *de facto* moratorium on geo-engineering, and
 - o not to adopt a paper on innovative financial mechanisms (thereby rejecting the proposed GDM)
- securing that important language on participation and traditional knowledge was included in the Strategic Plan
- influencing the debates on biofuels, bioenergy and biochar.

3.7 The CBD Alliance management structure

For many years, the CBD Alliance functioned as a very loose and informal structure. It is still defined more as a community or – at most – as a project, rather than as an organisation, and has a very light-weight management structure.

The network does not have any formal membership, and does not claim to represent civil society. The constituency of the CBD Alliance is defined as:

“the global civil society community around the CBD, which openly includes non-governmental organizations, Indigenous Peoples’ Organizations, community based organizations, and social movements”¹³.

On the basis of an internal evaluation of the 2007/08 program period, and consultations of the required future organisational and management structure, a governance document was agreed for the period 2009/10.¹⁴ These policies and procedures, which also define the mandate and core activities of the network, still guide the management of the CBD Alliance. The Alliance has recently initiated a process of reviewing its structures, roles and performance.

The CBD Alliance Board

The Alliance is governed by a Board (called the Advisory Board until 2008). The Board is composed of individuals from active CBD Alliance members in all regions (although not representing the regions as such), with additional seats for self-selected representatives from the International Indigenous Forum on Biodiversity (IIFB) and from CSOs in the previous and upcoming COP host countries. The Board is also open to having specific slots for major social movements if they request to be represented. The composition of the Board was renewed in 2011 on the basis of nominations and consultations with the Alliance community. However, although a new Board was proposed already in March the consultation process took a long time to sort out, and the first meeting of the new Board was only convened in November.

In May 2010 the Board decided to also appoint an Executive Committee comprising four Board members (later extended to seven). The intention is that the Executive Committee will deal with more urgent and administrative issues on a more regular basis, and thus make time for the Board to focus more on longer-term and strategic issues.

Decision making, transparency and accountability

The CBD Alliance governance document stipulates that major decisions (work plans, mandate, governance changes) must be circulated to the community for comment. The Board was also to be supported by a broader body called “Friends of the CBD Alliance”, an open group whom the CBD Facilitators and the CBD Board consult with on issues related to CBD Alliance activities and decisions. This body was, however, never operationalised.

With regard to accountability the document says the Alliance “*should endeavor to be as transparent as possible in all its activities, within the real constraints of funding and coordinator time.*” All new work plans and final reports must be made available to the community via the CBD Alliance website, and summaries of CBD Alliance activities should be made available to the community each year.

Major decisions and developments are communicated through the listserv, which is sometimes also used for consulting with the Alliance community. This includes the calls and nominations for members of the Board and for support to participate in CBD meetings, as well as the final decisions about who has been selected. The 2008 and 2011 internal evaluations have also been conducted via the listserv, and the resulting proposals from the

¹³ *The CBD Alliance Policies and Procedures 2009/2010 Term.*
http://www.cbdalliance.org/policiesprocedures/CBD_Alliance_policies.pdf

¹⁴ *Ibid.*

former were also posted on the Alliance web site. However, there appears to have been no consultation in the development of the proposal for 2011.

Until recently the Board has not produced or circulated formal minutes from Board meetings on a regular basis. In the past two years, minutes have been drafted from three Board meetings. Many decisions taken by the Executive Committee and/or informally via e-mails are, however, not properly documented.

The most recent narrative and financial report to SwedBio (2010) is posted on the CBD Alliance web site, but the project document/work plan for 2011 is not.¹⁵

Coordinators and fiscal host organisation

As the CBD Alliance is not a legal entity, the network is hosted by an organization (previously ELCI in Kenya, from 2007 to present the Indian NGO Kalpavriksh) that is legally and fiscally responsible for the execution of the programme of work and special projects submitted to funders.

During the period under review, the day-to-day work of the Alliance has been handled by CBD Alliance Coordinators who report to the Board and to the host organisation. In 2007 and early 2008 the coordinator was employed on a small part-time basis. In connection with COP 9 it was decided to hire a full time (or almost) coordinator. It was foreseen that the additional cost would be compensated by enabling more time to be spent on fundraising. But incomes have in fact dropped, and in November 2010 the Board decided not to renew the contract with the coordinator after the end of the program period.

The coordinators need to exercise a high degree of independence in order to organise their work implement project plans and Board decisions. As Board members have many other responsibilities, there have been times when the Board has had not had sufficient capacity to respond to coordinators' requests for guidance. As a result, coordinators have taken some decisions that the Board have not always been happy with. The Board has not had any specific person or persons assigned to the coordinator(s), but with the appointment of the Executive Committee there is now a clearly defined group for coordinators to turn to.

The Board does not have a treasurer or person responsible for financial issues, and rarely relates directly with Kalpavriksh. This function has mainly been performed by the coordinators, without much guidance or clear procedures.

3.8 Internal systems for monitoring, evaluation, analysis and reporting

Monitoring and reporting of activities within the program has mainly been performed by the Alliance coordinator, who have been tasked to report back to the community as well as to draft the annual project reports to SwedBio and other donors. The reports to donors, including the financial report, are reviewed by the Board before they are submitted to the donors.

The annual reports are quite analytical and of good quality, and have been accepted by SwedBio without any major remarks.

The reports also present much information on the developments within the CBD and CSO discussions on issues. This is valuable to SwedBio as they are not only a donor, but also play an active role in the CBD and related processes.

¹⁵ www.cbdalliance.org viewed on 1 December 2011.

The CBD Alliance has carried out, at its own initiative, internal evaluations after each of the two program cycles (although the second evaluation was delayed until the end of 2011), as a basis for reflection and planning for the future. The framework for evaluation is mainly based on the needs and expectations of the community, rather than on a formal evaluation framework. This is a reflection of the fact that the program documents do not specify very detailed targets or indicators, but only the four rather general goals that the Alliance will strive towards achieving. This is appropriate, given loose character and role of the network.

3.9 Fundraising

During the period from 2007, the Alliance has been able to secure funding from a number of other sources than SwedBio, including CIDA, the Christensen Fund, the Japan Civil Network for the CBD (JND-CBD), Hivos, Oxfam-Novib, the CBD Secretariat (in-kind contributions) and CBD Alliance member organisations (sponsorship for ECO issues).

However, the amount of additional funding has dropped, and in 2011 the SwedBio grant of USD 76,000 has been the only source of income for the Alliance. This amount only represents about 50 percent of the annual funds available to the Alliance in 2007 and 2008.

When the Alliance decided, in 2008, to hire a coordinator on almost full time, it was assumed that the cost could be compensated through more successful fundraising. There is, however, widespread agreement among Alliance staff and board members that efforts to fundraise have not been given enough priority and attention, and have largely failed. The explanations given differ, but key reasons cited include insufficient time spent by the coordinator, too little support from the Board, targeting of the wrong potential donors, and an increasingly difficult donor 'market' due to shifting priorities (not least towards climate change) and shrinking resources.

There may be some degree of conflict of interests for Board members to engage in fundraising for the CBD Alliance, as many of the organisations they represent are funded by, or may want to seek funding from, largely the same set of donors. However, in many cases these conflicts are limited or non-existent as the same donors may want to fund both national and international efforts.

The opportunities for the CBD Alliance to fundraise is also restricted by the fact that the host organisation, Kalpavriksh, applies a set of criteria for which donors they can accept funding from. These criteria are also applied to the grants the organisation receives on behalf of the CBD Alliance, to the effect that the network has in fact been blocked from receiving grants from some willing donors. The CBD Alliance respects the Kalpavriksh position on this issue, and the constraint can only be removed if the Alliance shifts to another host organisation. Although not directly connected to this particular issue, a discussion about the future host organisation for the Alliance has been initiated by Kalpavriksh and the Board.

4. Conclusions and recommendations

4.1 Key achievements of the CBD Alliance

The core function of the network is to bring civil society organisations together and provide a forum for that enables them to effectively participate in and influence CBD processes and decisions. During the period under review, the CBD Alliance has become increasingly capable in performing this role.

The infrastructure of the Alliance is very light, and operational costs are small: during 2009 and 2010 the staff and administration costs accounted for just over half of a total annual budget of only USD 125,000. Related to the outputs that are generated, this makes the Alliance a very cost effective project by any account.

Many respondents from different constituencies agree that the main strength of the CBD Alliance lies in what it is able to do at, and in immediate connection with, the different meetings of the CBD, and in particular:

- The orientation, sharing and discussions at the capacity building and strategy sessions that are organised before major meetings, as well as at the daily strategy morning sessions. These are seen as particularly important for enabling the active participation and influence of a broad diversity of groups from different constituencies
- Promotion of broad-based participation by providing financial support to participants from the South, IPOs and social movements such as farmers organisations. In addition, the Alliance plays a crucial role in helping to secure and broaden the space available for CSO participation.
- The regular publishing of ECO, which is a direct channel for communicating CSO and IPO positions and views, as well as for reporting from different parts of the negotiations and side events. In addition to providing information on positions and issues, Southern governments can also find arguments and language that strengthens their positions in ECO and the Alliance briefings.

There is a high level of like-mindedness and coherence within the CBD Alliance, where issues of social equity, justice and rights are seen as central for addressing biodiversity issues. While participation is dominated by Northern NGOs, the Alliance is proactively concerned about marginalised groups and consistently highlights Southern, indigenous and community perspectives on issues and in processes.

The collaboration is characterised by a strong community spirit and trust, and the core group is strongly committed to making the Alliance work. The network has brought together a wealth of experience, expertise and human resources.

During the period, the CBD Alliance has also strengthened and refined its relations with the CBD Secretariat, the large international conservation NGOs, and with the constituency of indigenous peoples' organisations:

- Although many of the large conservation NGOs take part to varying degrees in Alliance meetings and discussions, the CBD Alliance is not dominated by these organisations. Rather, it provides a platform for a broad diversity of CSOs that in some cases balances the weight of organisations with greater resources and opportunities to influence. The structure of the Alliance is open, participatory and inclusive, and works particularly well for small organisations to have a voice and be

heard – in stark contrast with some NGO networks that fill similar spaces in relation to other institutions and processes.

- The Alliance has strengthened its relations with CBD Secretariat and other official CBD structures, and is regularly engaging with them in constructive dialogues and partnerships. Still, the CBD Alliance maintains a healthy distance to and independence from these structures, and has avoided being too closely tied up with them.
- A trustful working relationship has been established between the Alliance and the indigenous caucus. The two constituencies work alongside each other but consult on a regular basis on policy positions and strategies, cross-fertilise each other by regularly sharing information and experiences, and share communication spaces such as ECO and [square brackets]. The IIFB is also directly represented by two self-selected members on the CBD Alliance Board. As a result of this relationship unnecessary conflicts are avoided. By contrast, tension remains primarily between the indigenous caucus and some of the large conservation NGOs that are not active in the Alliance.

In terms of impacts, as has been mentioned it is difficult to attribute any specific influence on decisions or discussions to the work of the CBD Alliance as such. It is however clear that the CBD Alliance community has had a major influence on a number of decisions related to a wide range of issues including participation, the rights of communities to a fair share of the benefits from the use of biodiversity, precaution in the use of new technologies, and questioning newly suggested financial mechanisms for biodiversity protection, such as biodiversity offsets.

Some of the Alliance's weaker spots are largely linked to the origins of the CBD Alliance, which are still reflected in its structure. The CBD Alliance emerged as an initiative for facilitating CSO participation and providing a space for CSOs to come together. It was not designed with the aim to coordinate CSO positions, to represent the CSO community, to promote implementation of the convention, or to fundraise.

The difficulties in fundraising is reflected diminishing incomes over the past several years, and has led to reduced staff capacity as well as less support for broadening the participation of groups from the South. It has also resulted in an unhealthy dependence on SwedBio – an institution that currently only has guaranteed funding for its Collaborative Program until 2013 – as the dominant provider of funds.

Although the governance system of the Alliance has become formalised and serves its main purposes, some glitches remain that will need to be addressed in order to guarantee greater stability, effectiveness and transparency.

4.2 Context of the discussion on recommendation

During 2011, the Alliance has faced a number of difficulties which have resulted in a significant drop in activities. Since the beginning of the year the network has not had a coordinator, although important contributions have been made on a very part-time basis. The Board has been in a process of renewal for a large part of the year, and has not been able to pick up all the loose ends.

However, on the basis of an analysis of the situation ('State of the Alliance') and discussions at the Board meeting in November, several important initiatives have been taken to deal with the situation. These include:

- The launch of an internal evaluation process, in which the responses from some 25 network members are being consolidated and analysed at the time of writing

- A decision to recruit an interim coordinator for 3 months, with the main tasks to help develop a proposal/work plan for 2012 and to fundraise. The ToR have been drafted and a job announcement circulated.

This external evaluation has largely been conducted in parallel with these new developments, and the report is being presented at a time when many of the issues identified are beginning to be addressed. Although it could be possible to leave some of these issues out of this presentation, the evaluator has opted to include them in the interest of providing a fuller and more coherent picture of the challenges at hand.

The conclusions that are presented below are divided into recommendations for priority short-term actions, and a discussion of strategic issues for the longer term. In order not to anticipate discussions in the CBD Alliance constituency and Board, the latter part is formulated in terms of options rather than recommendations.

4.3 Recommended short-term priority actions

→ “Stay the course” – maintain core functions of the CBD Alliance

The core functions of the Alliance – to bring civil society organisations together and provide a forum for that enables them to effectively participate in and influence CBD processes and decisions – are vital and need to be continued. This should continue to be the No. 1 priority of the CBD Alliance. The key functions are:

- Facilitation and coordination at CBD meetings
- Capacity building and strategy sessions
- Publishing the ECO and updating the web site
- Enabling broad participation in CBD meetings, particularly of marginalised groups
- Maintaining an active listserve for dissemination of information and discussion

→ Organise efficient fundraising

Fundraising is a key challenge for the immediate future, and should be a core priority for the medium term. While there is no indication that the Alliance would lose access to funding from SwedBio, the degree to which the Alliance is dependent on a single donor is not sustainable. Also, SwedBio funds are not sufficient for the activities that the constituency of the Alliance want to see implemented.

The CBD Alliance needs to adopt a more proactive approach to fundraising than in the past years. Board members will need to assume more responsibility for identifying and contacting potential new donors. The search for funders will probably also need to be expanded into areas and categories outside of the existing funders for biodiversity. A medium-term strategic plan and vision for the development of the Alliance (see below) will be an important, maybe even essential, component of a successful fundraising strategy.

→ Recruit a coordinator

The experience of 2011 strongly implies that the Alliance needs a coordinator who can facilitate the work on a regular basis. As mentioned, a process has already been started for recruiting an interim coordinator for the short term.

CBD Alliance members, including Board members, make somewhat different assessment of the required profile, but there seems to be broad agreement that what is needed is a fairly senior person who knows issues, is familiar with the community, and understands the dynamics of NGO politics. Many express preference for recruiting a person from the South. One more specific suggestion is to hire a coordinator from India on a one year contract, in order to facilitate the Alliance's work with the COP 11 hosts and Indian civil society organisations.

→ *Continue to strengthen and clarify governance systems*

One of the strengths of the CBD Alliance is that its governance has been kept light-weight, loose and flexible. At the same time, this is also a major vulnerability. It is a key challenge for the Alliance to strengthen its governance system, while at the same time avoiding bureaucratisation and centralisation of decision-making.

After the recent renewal, the Board seems to have been strengthened and re-energised. Still, many Board members are heavily committed to work in their own organisations, and sometimes also in other networks (most notably the IIFB representatives). Care should be taken to ensure that the available capacity is harnessed for fulfilling the key functions of the Board such as: addressing strategic issues, approving plans and proposals, and supervising their implementation. In this context, the recruitment of a coordinator is crucial for reducing the administrative burden of the Board and its ExCom.

Measures that could help make governance more stringent include:

- Clarify the specific responsibilities of the Board and the ExCom, and define the relations between the Board, the coordinator and the Host Organisation.
- Assign specific responsibilities within the Board (the ExCom, groups of Board members, or individual point persons) for exercising oversight and monitoring of finances, organising fundraising, and liaising with the Host Organisation and staff.
- Revise project proposals on the basis of funds secured, and translate them into work plans for implementation.

The CBD Alliance Policies and Procedures, including the Terms of Reference for the Board, Coordinator(s) and host organisation, should be updated to reflect these changes.

→ *2012: Focus on COP 11*

Given the current state and limited resources of the network, it would seem important for the CBD Alliance to focus its short-term strategy and work plan on consolidating the work within its core issues and forum: the CBD. Gearing up for the CBD-COP 11 a much more central and strategic task for the network than trying to influence the Rio+20 summit.

COP 11 presents many great challenges, with many conflictive issues on the agenda. The host country, India has a strong civil society and many vigorous social movements. COP 11 presents an important opportunity to mobilise a strong Southern civil society presence in the CBD process – much like at COP 8 in Brazil.

However, Indian civil society is also divided, and international support for coordination will be critical. The Japanese NGOs have started liaising and meeting with Indian groups to transfer experiences and provide advice. Plans are underway to invite Indian NGOs to meet at the next SBSTTA, and a workshop is scheduled about one month before the COP, in connection with a meeting in South Korea.

→ *Develop a medium-term strategic plan*

The political and institutional landscape for biodiversity issues is becoming increasingly complex. New issues are added to the agenda of the CBD itself (geo-engineering, synthetic biology etc), new forums are created (IPBES), and negotiations of central importance for biodiversity continue in a wide range of institutions (intellectual property in WTO, traditional knowledge in WIPO, agricultural biodiversity in FAO, forests and soils in UNFCCC, etc.)

The landscape of civil society organisations is also getting more complex. The diversity of organisations and movements – a key characteristic and strength of civil society – is growing. This is, however, accompanied by a growing diversity of positions and strategies and, in some cases, an increasing polarisation between groups that emphasise justice, equity and rights (a large part of the active constituency of the Alliance) and those who are mainly concerned with the environmental outcomes.

In order to remain relevant, it is important for the CBD Alliance to regularly review the needs of its constituency, identify and assess new opportunities, and adjust or redefine its mandate, aims and strategy.

So far, the activities of the Alliance has mainly been formulated within the context of biannual project proposals, which have been loosely synchronised with the cycles of the CBD COPs. This cycle remains useful for the purpose of programming, and should be continued.

In addition to the need for elaborating new project proposals and updating the Policies & Procedures, the CBD Alliance may also want to consider developing a proper Strategic Plan for the network. Such a document would help in the identification of, and prioritisation among, different tasks and activities. In addition, being able to clearly outline a scenario and vision for the Alliance in the medium term – at least until COP 12 – is also likely to be very helpful in the dialogue with potential future donors.

Some options for issues to be addressed in such a plan are discussed below.

4.4 Strategic options for consideration

→ *Broadening civil society participation in CBD meetings*

Ensuring participation by a broad range of civil society organisations, social movements and indigenous peoples in CBD meetings and processes remains a critical challenge for the CBD Alliance. In spite of earlier efforts by the Alliance, participation is still dominated – with the possible exception of some COPs – by Northern and international NGOs. There is a need to engage more from NGOs in the South, as well as from social movements and local communities whose livelihoods are strongly dependent on biodiversity. Parallel to this, there is also a need to strengthen the linkages between local/national and international advocacy work, as well as between advocacy and groups work with constituencies in the field.

In the four years under review, the CBD Alliance has experimented with two approaches to increasing participation: one emphasising the need to bring in new voices and provide opportunities for a broader range of groups to be exposed to the negotiations and coordination, the other with a stronger emphasis on continuity and impact.

These two approaches probably need to be balanced. In terms of broadening the participation, one key priority would be to ensure that under-represented groups – primarily Southern NGOs, social movements and non-indigenous local communities – are provided with opportunities to attend meetings. In terms of contributing to the meetings and having an

impact, the selection of participants to be sponsored should probably be more closely linked to the strategic priorities and challenges to be defined in Alliance strategy and work plans.

In order for such participation to bring tangible benefits to communities, and to close the loop international and national/local, the requirements and procedures for participants to report back need to be clarified. Opportunities for mobilising support for participants to continue working after returning home – for example by maintaining a dialogue with officials on their national delegations – could also be explored beforehand or at the meetings where they participate.

Some other ideas and observations related to participation that have come up in the course of the evaluation are:

- Can the Alliance facilitate more capacity building *before* the CBD meetings? SwedBio support to the indigenous community by providing a capacity building workshop on Article 8(j) is mentioned as a very useful initiative.
- Can the Alliance facilitate mentoring of new participants by more experienced members of the network?
- Language is cited, by activists from Latin America in particular, as major obstacle for Southern CSO and community participation – not so much in the negotiations, where translation is provided in all official UN languages, but in Alliance meetings and discussions.
- Bring in people (youth) to provide physical assistance at meetings, both as a way of off-loading the coordinators and other Alliance facilitators, and as an opportunity to introduce young activists to the Alliance and the CBD processes.

Some of the proposals presented in the following sections are also relevant in relation to these issues.

→ *Building stronger links with the CBD Alliance constituency*

In the informal structure of the CBD Alliance, the listserv is currently the main forum through which the Board and coordinator can communicate with the constituency of the network. Apart from taking part in discussions on the list, members of the community can only be part of the discussion by attending CBD meetings and the associated Alliance forums.

Several interviewees have expressed that there is a need for some more organised opportunities for members of the CBD Alliance community to receive feedback from the Board, coordinator and participants at the CBD meetings, and to take part in and inform discussion on strategies and positions. In the present governance system, Friends of the Alliance was intended to be channel for the Board to consult with a broader set of the constituency. However, this structure never got off the ground.

Options (not mutually exclusive) proposed to the evaluator include:

- Organising CBD Alliance consultations/conferences in connection with major meetings, where strategic discussions and planning can be done face-to-face. In the short term, a consultation could be organised in connection with the next SBSTTA meeting to discuss how to follow up on the external and internal evaluations.
- Organising consultations/Skype calls – regionally or issue-based – before meetings to share information and to discuss and consolidate positions on issues that need to be addressed.

- Publishing a resource database or circulating lists of who are active in the CBD Alliance, and on key resource persons/expertise on various issues.
- Setting up a system of working groups or sub-networks (e.g. the ABS mailing list) on key issues.
- Setting up a network of regional or sub-regional hubs, focal points or liaison persons with a mandate to facilitate more systematic feedback to the constituency from the international level, and solicit inputs on needs and views from each respective region. Like the Alliance itself, such structures can be kept light-weight if they are hosted by committed members of the community, and piggy-back on existing platforms and channels of information and communication.

Clearly, several of these options will require more resources for coordination and facilitation at central level. However, experiences from some other similar CSO networks show that structures like regional focal points can also provide new opportunities for fundraising.

→ *Promoting participation in the implementation of the CBD*

As noted by one interviewee, pushing for participation in the international negotiations is of little value unless it is followed up on the national level.

During the coming years the CBD will focus more on supporting Parties to implement the Strategic Plan from Nagoya at the national level. This provides new opportunities to push for and promote CSO engagement at the national and local levels, and to link work on the ground to the international processes. Multi-stakeholder committees set up to promote the implementation of the CBD Work program on protected areas is another example of a space for CSOs to be included, as well as an opportunity for CSOs and IPOs to work together.

The issue of whether the Alliance should broaden its engagement to include a greater focus on implementation generated a variety of responses in the internal review, including suggestions for monitoring of compliance and accountability, support for national level processes, and coordination, capacity building and information sharing among CSOs.

The realisation of any ambitions to get involved in these areas will undoubtedly have to be matched by additional financial and human resources at the international level. Engagement in processes like this will most likely also present new opportunities to fundraise for CSOs that work on biodiversity, including for some participation in international forums.

→ *Deepen the dialogue with the indigenous caucus*

Alliance has built very good relations with the indigenous caucus, including some institutional arrangements and practices for dialogue and sharing, and both constituencies seem quite satisfied with what has been achieved. The direct interaction between members of the two constituencies is, however, rather limited. Both the Alliance and the indigenous caucus could benefit from exploring further opportunities and new strategies for more interaction and dialogue.

4.5 Recommendations to SwedBio

→ *Continue to provide core funding for the CBD Alliance*

The CBD Alliance is, by any standard, an important, successful and efficient project that provides significant outputs and impacts at a very low cost. After a brief period of relative inactivity, the Alliance is now in a credible process of self-evaluation and restructuring.

SwedBio is strongly recommended to provide support for the network throughout 2012 and – assuming that the Alliance will present a workable proposal, and that resources remain available to SwedBio post-2013 – for the 2-year cycle that is likely to follow.

→ *Explore synergies with other SwedBio partners*

As has been mentioned, interviewees representing indigenous peoples' organisations have found SwedBio's support through capacity building workshops to be very valuable. SwedBio may want to explore opportunities for supporting similar initiatives for non-indigenous organisations, and preferably in ways that enhance the dialogue between the two constituencies.

Annexes

Annex A. Key documents and reference materials

Project proposals

Democracy, civil society and the Convention and Biological Diversity. A proposal from CBD Alliance & Kalpavriksh, November 2006

Democracy, civil society and the Convention and Biological Diversity. A proposal from CBD Alliance & Kalpavriksh, January 2009 (*updated 28 April*)

Democracy, civil society & the Convention and Biological Diversity. Proposal a& Budget 1 January to 31 December 2011. 2 September 2010

Democracy, civil society & the Convention and Biological Diversity. Summary Reduced CBD Alliance Project 2011

Project reports

Final narrative and financial reports to Swedbio:

- January 2009 (*covering 2007-2008*)
- 1 April to 31 December 2009
- 1 January to 31 December 2010

Other CBD Alliance and project related documents

CBD Alliance: Policies and Procedures 2009/2010 Term

Presentations of CBD Alliance Board members 2009-2010 and 2011

CBD Alliance Board Meeting minutes: May 2010, February 2011 and November 2011

'State of the Alliance' report, 28 November 2011

Invitations and agendas for CBD Alliance briefing/strategy and capacity building sessions

CBD Alliance letters to the CBD Executive Director and Secretariat, and to COP hosts

Questionnaire for and summary of responses to CBD Alliance internal evaluation 2009

Questionnaire for CBD Alliance internal evaluation 2011

SwedBio decision memos, decisions and project contracts

CBD Alliance external communication

CBD Alliance web site – www.cbdalliance.org

CBD Alliance blog – www.undercovercop.org

CBD Alliance press pack for COP 9

CBD Alliance briefings: Top 10 issues for COP 10. <http://www.cbdalliance.org/top-10-for-cop-10/>

COP 9 press release 13 May 2008

COP 10 press releases 13 and 15 October 2010

ECO - selected issues 2007-2011

[square brackets] – issues 1 (2008) to 5 (2011)

CBD

www.cbd.int - Convention on Biological Diversity

Annex B. List of persons interviewed/consulted

The following list only includes people whom the evaluator has interviewed or otherwise consulted (via e-mails, discussions) explicitly for the purpose of the evaluation. In addition, the evaluation has been informed by attending CBD Alliance strategy and coordination meetings at SBSTTA 15, as well as through a number of informal conversations with other representatives of CSOs and government delegations to the CBD.

CBD Alliance Board members

Faris Ahmed, Unitarian Service Committee, Canada

Joji Cariño, Tebtebba, The Philippines (*IIFB representative*)

Teppei Dohke, Nature Conservation Society of Japan/IUCN-Japan

Rodger Mpande, Community Technology Development Trust (CTDT), Zimbabwe

Malia Nobrega, Waikiki Hawaiian Civic Club, USA (*IIFB representative*)

Ricarda Steinbrecher, EcoNexus, UK & Federation of German Scientists

Christine von Weizäcker, Ecoropa, Germany

CBD Alliance coordinators

Jessica Dempsey, CBD Alliance coordinator (2004 – present, with gaps)

Miriam Anne Frank, CBD Alliance coordinator (May 2008 - December 2010)

CBD Alliance administrative host

Ashish Kothari, Kalpavriksh, India

CBD Alliance member organisations

Chee Yoke Ling, Third World Network

Maurizio Ferrari, Forest Peoples Programme

Laura Gavilán Iglesias and Jaume Grau López, Ecologistas en Acción, Spain

Antje Lorch, EcoNexus (*in role as ECO Editor*)

Simone Lovera, Global Forest Coalition

Patrick Mulvany, Practical Action, UK

Wilhelmina Pelegrina, SEARICE

Colleen Ross, La Via Campesina

Tove Ryding, Greenpeace International

Jim Thomas, ETC Group

IIFB member organisations

Florence Daguitan, Tebtebba, The Philippines

Lucy Mullenkei, Indigenous Information Network, Kenya

Yolanda Teráu, Red de Mujeres Indigenas sobre Biodiversidad, Ecuador

Yvonne Vizina, policy analyst, Métis National Council, Canada

CBD Secretariat

David Cooper, Principal Officer, Office of the Executive Secretary

Johan Hedlund, Program Assistant, Co-Editor of [square brackets]

Neil Pratt, Senior Environmental Affairs Officer, Outreach and Major Groups

Governments and funders

Ignatius Makumba, Environment Department, Ministry of Tourism, Environment and Natural Resources, Zambia

Pernilla Malmer, SwedBio

Epidio Peria, Legal Advisor, Department of Environment and Natural Resources, The Philippines

Tone Solhaug, Senior Adviser, Department for Nature Management, Ministry of the Environment, Norway

Annex C. Timetable for the evaluation

19 May	Evaluator selected
27 May	Agreement to revise time plan
10 June	Contract signed
May-June	Initial study of documents
14 Sept.	Start-up meeting with SwedBio
30 Sept.	Start-up call with CBD Alliance coordinator and Board member
October	Further collection and study of documents, initial Skype interviews
5 Nov.	Travel to Montreal
6 Nov.	Meeting with CBD Alliance Board Interviews with IIFB members Attended CBD Alliance strategy meeting
7-9 Nov.	Attended CBD Alliance morning meetings Attended CSO side events and CSO consultation with CBD secretariat Interviews with CBD Alliance board and community members Interview with CBD Secretariat and government representatives
10 Nov.	Return travel
17 Nov. -	Additional Skype interviews and e-mail correspondence Analysis and drafting of evaluation report
6 Dec.	Draft report submitted to CBD Alliance and SwedBio
21 Dec.	All feedback received on draft report
22 Dec.	Final report submitted to CBD Alliance and SwedBio

D. Terms of Reference

3 SPECIFICATION FOR THE REQUIRED SERVICES

3.1 General

3.1.1 Background: The CBD Alliance

The CBD Alliance is a long-term SwedBio partner, and the SwedBio contribution to the 2009-2010 programme can be seen as a direct continuation of the earlier support.

The Alliance does not represent CSOs, but exists to facilitate more diverse, coordinated, and effective Civil Society input into CBD policy-making. Among its core activities, the CBD Alliance:

Facilitates general coordination and communication among civil society throughout the CBD inter-sessional and sessional periods. This includes maintaining a web site, a blog and a list serve, posting secretariat notifications, coordinating civil society strategy meetings before and at all major CBD meetings, and fundraising for the Alliance and its' activities.

Supports financially nongovernmental, indigenous and community representatives to participate in CBD meetings through a transparent self-selection process.

Edits and distributes ECO – the newsletter of civil society at CBD sessions.

The CBD Alliance is hosted by an organization (at present the Indian NGO Kalpavriksh) that is legally, and fiscally responsible for the execution of the programme of work or special projects submitted to funders. The day-to-day work of the Alliance is handled by CBD Alliance Coordinator(s) that report to the Board and to the host organisation.

3.1.2 Mission

The CBD Alliance is currently in the process of reviewing its structures, roles and performance, and renewing the composition of the Board. The SwedBio evaluation will be conducted in parallel with the internal process of the Alliance, and aims to complement it by providing an external view.

The main focus of the external evaluation is to examine the progress that has been made by CBD Alliance in its overall work over the period of the last two programme cycles, between 1 January 2007 – 31 December 2010.

The evaluation will assess the effectiveness of the CBD Alliance's work with direct reference to:

CBD Alliance's **overall goals and objectives**, as stated in project documents, the CBD Alliance Processes and Procedures, and on its web site; and



The **specific goals and objectives** of the programmes supported by SwedBio, as stated in project proposals. The 2009-2010 program aimed to achieve the following goals:

Goal 1. Through effective communication, coordination and inter-agency collaboration, the CBD Alliance will monitor sessional and inter-sessional CBD activities and assist civil society organisation's in improved preparations for, and input to, the work of the CBD

Goal 2. The CBD Alliance's ECO will be a high quality newsletter and on-line resource that keeps the key civil society and government actors well informed and enhances the quality of the decision-making

Goal 3. The CBD Alliance will specifically target supporting southern, Indigenous Peoples' and community representatives' attendance to CBD meetings in order to promote the full and effective participation of these underrepresented sectors of civil society

Goal 4. For COP10, produce an effective Media Kit in order to provide a source of targeted outreach on key CBD issues for journalists, Parties and CSOs

The evaluation will focus on – but not be limited to – examining the following **questions**:

How effective is the Alliance's external communications work? For example ECO and on-line resources – relevance, usefulness and added value to target groups (the CSO community, decision-makers)? Outreach to journalists?

How effective is the Alliance's work to coordinate and facilitate communications within the CSO community?

How effective is the Alliance in facilitating communications between civil society groups working on global biodiversity and the CBD Secretariat?

How does the community assess the Alliance strategy sessions, briefings and other assistance to CSO preparations and input?

Civil society participation and attendance of Southern, indigenous and community representatives – assessment of diversity, representativity and relevance. Has the Alliance been successful in providing space and voice to representatives of marginalised and disadvantaged groups and movements?

Is the balance between the Alliance's work on communication, coordination and facilitation about right?

What impact has the work of the Alliance had on CBD decisions and discussions (short term and long term, keeping in mind the problems of attribution and of causality).

The CBD Alliance management structure – is it functional, efficient and legitimate?

Adequacy of the internal systems for monitoring, evaluation, analysis and reporting of projects and results?

Quantity and quality of efforts to fundraise from other sources?

The evaluation will be based on a desk **review** of documents, interviews and information gathered via e-mail.

Primary **documents** to be reviewed are:

project documents and reports for the period covered

reports and evaluations from training and strategy sessions organised by the Alliance

publications, the CBD Alliance web site and the undercovercop.org blog

documents that emerge from the internal review of the CBD Alliance

The evaluator will also conduct **interviews** with a representative sample of individuals from the following categories:

a broad set of representatives of the CBD Alliance “community”: including NGOs, IPOs, CBOs from the North and the South, and their major networks

CBD Alliance staff, Board members and members of the Friends of the Alliance

the CBD secretariat

selected governments

donors (SwedBio in particular)

The evaluation needs to be both gender and culture sensitive by respecting and reflecting the views and interests of civil society in all its diversity, in particular by actively seeking to consult with representatives of groups and movements who tend to be underrepresented or overlooked.

3.2 Requirements

3.2.1 Contact person

Provider **must** be liable to the University and **must** designate a responsible contact person.



3.2.2 Qualifications

The evaluation will be undertaken by a single consultant. The evaluator **must**:

be experienced in work with biodiversity policy, civil society organisations, the rights of indigenous peoples and local communities, and development

have at least 5 years experience of working in developing countries

have at least 5 years experience of managing CSO programmes related to biodiversity

have considerable experience of participating in international CSO networking & advocacy directed towards influencing international institutions and instruments

have a previous track record demonstrating good analytic skills and evaluation experience

have an eye for divergent points of view including political, cultural, ethnic or gender based differences

have sufficient language skills to be able to review documents and communicate with members of the CBD community in English, French and Spanish.

The tender **must** certify the requirements listed above regarding training, skills and experience for all offered consultants.

3.3 Reporting

The following guidelines **must** be followed when making reports for the evaluation:

Responsibility for the contents of the evaluation report lies with the evaluators.

The reports will be written in English.

The reports of the evaluators will be submitted in electronic format jointly to SwedBio and CBD Alliance, and will not be shared with other parties without the written authorisation of the CBD Alliance.

The report should be written to an internationally acceptable standard, determination of which will be made by SwedBio and CBD Alliance.

The report **must** explicitly include:

Cover page

Table of contents

An executive summary that can be used as a document in its own right. It should include the major findings of the evaluation and summarise conclusions and recommendations.

The objectives of the evaluation

The main question or central research question and derived sub-questions.

A presentation of the methods and techniques used, with a justification of the selections made (such as of persons interviewed).

Eventual limitations of the evaluation.

A presentation of the findings and the analysis thereof (including unexpected, relevant findings). All research questions should be addressed, paying attention to gender issues.

Conclusions, which will analyse the various research questions.

Recommendations, which should be clearly related to conclusions but presented separately.

Report appendices that include:

The Terms of Reference.

The programme adhered to (data and main features of the activities carried out).

A list of key documents and reference materials

A list of persons interviewed

A list of abbreviations.

A list of references.

The reporting style **should** be clear and accessible. References to sources used, such as interviews, literature, reports, **must** be given.

A draft report will be submitted first, and then revised and resubmitted based on comments received on the first draft from the CBD Alliance and SwedBio.

3.4 Timeline

Contract evaluators: May 2011

Reading and conducting telephone/email interviews/surveys (10 days): June

Attend the relevant CBD meetings to interact and interview participants, if possible. E.g., the CBD INCP-1 meeting in Montreal (4 days incl travel).

5 days write up: June

Interim report delivery date: 1 July 2011

3 days for final write up: delivery date 10 days after receipt of comments from SwedBio and CBD Alliance.

1 day for presentation/discussion of report with SwedBio

3.5 Price

Each applicant **must** indicate the price in terms of hourly rate per resource. Prices **must** be firm and be exclusive of VAT (moms).

3.6 References

The Consultant **should** have good ability to understand customer needs and propose solutions within given cost and time frames. Availability and quality service is essential.

Assessment and monitoring of the mission will be made if necessary.

3.7 Information

Both parties are obliged to continuously inform each other about changes that are relevant to the implementation of the ordered mission.