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Lessons learned from building biodiversity business for conservation

Maria Ana Borges, Business and Biodiversity Programme

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Executive Summary

Capitalising on the services offered by many ecosystems, conservation organisations increasingly use business development as a tool for conservation. These *biodiversity businesses* have the potential to generate investment for conservation and stimulate sustainable development through the equitable sharing of biodiversity benefits. However, lack of business expertise can also lead to products and services that fail the market test and, as a result, also fail to contribute to the conservation aims.

In late 2008, IUCN's Business and Biodiversity Programme embarked on a project to explore IUCN members' experiences in developing biodiversity businesses as part of their conservation programmes. The aim of the project was to strengthen IUCN's capacity to support members in the areas of business and biodiversity. To capture the diversity of approaches and the richness of the results, the research was based on a survey of as many members as possible with first hand experience in developing biodiversity businesses as a conservation tool.

The '*Lessons learned from building biodiversity business for conservation*' report is one of the outputs of the project. This report captures common challenges and lessons learned from the experiences of 40 IUCN members involved in different stages and forms in the development of biodiversity businesses. This exercise was considered important to enable cross-learning between organisations developing biodiversity businesses as well as for understanding the threats and opportunities of using business as a conservation tool.

The overarching lessons for developing and running biodiversity businesses emerging from this project are that:

- It is important to look at the bigger picture and develop a vision for the business;
- Stakeholder involvement needs to occur from the beginning;
- It is essential to learn about the market and its complexities;
- Partnerships can add value to the business;
- It is vital to manage expectations, particularly from local communities, and;
- The possibility of scaling up needs to be factored in from the outset.

With regards to IUCN's role, members believe that IUCN's convening role could be very useful in supporting biodiversity business development in many different ways. This role is considered particularly important for enabling the transfer of knowledge between member organisations. Furthermore, many members feel that IUCN's technical expertise at the interface between business and biodiversity could be instrumental in upgrading their skills.

1. Introduction: Developing business as a conservation tool

Market-based instruments (MBIs) are increasingly seen as a powerful means of bringing biodiversity conservation priorities into the realm of economic decision-making at multiple scales. The broad set of tools and approaches known as MBIs apply economic principles and the force of markets to target governments, the private sector or civil society in leveraging behavioural and policy changes for improved environmental and developmental outcomes.

By harnessing the very market forces that are often blamed for biodiversity loss, it is possible to generate additional investments in conservation activities and stimulate sustainable development through improved business approaches and equitable sharing of biodiversity benefits. In the realm of market-based approaches, an important instrument is the creation of markets that are able to reward products and services that enhance biodiversity conservation and allow the establishment of *biodiversity businesses* in the process.

These biodiversity businesses, as defined by a 2008 IUCN report entitled *Building Biodiversity Business*¹, are '*commercial enterprises that generate profits via activities which conserve biodiversity, use biological resources sustainably and share the benefits arising from this use equitably*'. Biodiversity businesses include eco-agriculture, sustainable forestry, sustainable fisheries, non-timber forest products (NTFPs), payments for watershed services, biodiversity offsets, ecotourism and others.

The concept of biodiversity business is not a new one and traditionally conservation organisations have supported the development of sustainable livelihoods for local communities including through enterprise creation and the sustainable use of natural resources. However, their success in achieving environmental and economic sustainability has been mixed. More often than not, a limited understanding of markets and business acumen result in products and services that fail to reach or effectively compete in the market or to bring about desired biodiversity benefits. Additionally, little effort has been invested into documenting the success stories and collecting lessons from creating biodiversity business development. There is a need to address these gaps and enhance the knowledge of what has been done so far and what has and has not worked.

In order to address these challenges, IUCN's Business and Biodiversity Programme began a project to determine IUCN members' experiences in developing biodiversity businesses as part of their conservation programmes. The aim of the project was to strengthen IUCN's capacity to support members in the areas of business and biodiversity. The project, which was funded by the French Ministry of Ecology, Energy, Sustainable Development and Town and Country Planning (MEEDDAT), had the following objectives:

- To identify and document the use of different business sectors for the creation of biodiversity businesses by conservation organisations, particularly IUCN members;
- To assess IUCN members' needs (capacity building, marketing and financial) and determine how to enhance the success of their efforts;
- To facilitate sharing/exchanging experiences, lessons learned and challenges encountered in developing such businesses;
- To determine IUCN's role in the field of biodiversity business development.

The project generated three outputs:

- The publication '*The Time for Biodiversity Business*' illustrating a selection of the diverse examples of businesses developed by the conservation organisations that participated in this study;

¹ *Building Biodiversity Business* was published by IUCN and Shell in 2008. Its main author, Joshua Bishop, is IUCN's Chief Economist. See <http://data.iucn.org/dbtw-wpd/edocs/2008-002.pdf>

- The power-point presentation '*A Guide to Enterprise Development for Conservation Organisations*', providing a checklist of key steps and available tools on how to set up biodiversity businesses;
- The present report entitled '*Lessons learned from building biodiversity businesses for conservation*', summarising the key lessons shared by the research participants.

The report on "*Lessons learned from building biodiversity businesses for conservation*" captures IUCN members' experiences in developing biodiversity businesses and highlights the common challenges and lessons learned in developing such businesses. In particular the report:

- identifies critical factors for consideration when developing biodiversity businesses;
- highlights areas of particular risk when developing these businesses and opportunities of using business as a conservation tool;
- facilitates cross-learning between organisations developing biodiversity businesses;
- contributes to the body of knowledge of market-based approaches through documenting cases where business is good for conservation and vice versa.

The "*Lessons learned from building biodiversity businesses for conservation*" report is structured as follows:

- **Section 2** provides a background to this document and describes the methodology used to research biodiversity businesses among conservation organisations.
- **Section 3** summarises the common lessons learned by IUCN members in developing such businesses.
- **Section 4** presents the potential role of IUCN in supporting further this approach.

2. Capturing the lessons from the development of biodiversity businesses

To capture the diversity of approaches and the richness of the results, the research was based on a survey of as many IUCN members as possible with first hand experience in developing biodiversity businesses as a conservation tool.

A questionnaire was structured in such way to enable a good understanding of the business developed, the conservation drive, the policy environment and the lessons learned in developing these businesses (see Appendix I for the questionnaire).

IUCN members with experience in developing businesses as part of their conservation programmes were then identified through a desk review of IUCN members' activities and with recommendations from the IUCN Secretariat's Membership Focal Points worldwide. Approximately 80 IUCN members were identified as using business development as part of their conservation programmes. Of these, approximately 63 were shortlisted based on further research into their work and subsequently contacted for interview. In this selection process, an effort was made to ensure a fair representation of the countries and regions in which IUCN works.

A total of 40 IUCN members provided input into the research through semi-structured telephone interviews and a review of project documents and other reference material. The interviewed members originated from more than 20 countries worldwide from across Latin America, Africa and Asia (see Appendix II for a list of all the organisations interviewed).

The interviews were carried out in two periods: from September to December 2007 and from January to April 2009. The first set of interviews focused exclusively on members with experience in developing ecotourism businesses. The preliminary results supported the design of a learning opportunity on "Developing market-viable ecotourism products", during the 2008 World Conservation Congress in Barcelona. The survey was then adjusted for the second set of interviews; in particular, its scope was enlarged to address also other type of businesses.

The information collected during the interviews served to compile the stories published in '*The Time for Biodiversity Business*' as well as to draw the key lessons captured in this report.

For the purpose of this report on '*Lessons learned from building biodiversity businesses for conservation*', specifically three questions were asked:

- What are the lessons you have learned and the challenges you have encountered in developing this business?
- What do you feel were your needs when developing the business (business skills, capacity building)?
- What do you think could be IUCN's role in furthering the work on biodiversity businesses by conservation organisations?

The experiences and lessons are organised according to a checklist of key actions for building biodiversity businesses (as also used in the '*A Guide to Enterprise Development for Conservation Organisations*'). These are:

- Identify targets and determine objectives;
- Assess product and market;
- Analyse the value chain and market niche;
- Outline the value proposition and market strategy;
- Develop financial mechanisms and partnership strategies, and;
- Operationalise plans and monitor performance

3. Checklist for building biodiversity businesses

This section describes the experiences that conservation organisations, in particular IUCN members, matured in developing biodiversity businesses. Emphasis is placed on transferable lessons from their work to assist conservation organisations relatively new to or starting out in business development. Given the wealth of knowledge in conservation among these organisations, these lessons focus on promoting a business approach to development. Key challenges are also highlighted here, as well as risks to business success and suggestions are made on how to best address them.

Identify targets and determine objectives

About this stage: In the first stage of enterprise development, a scoping exercise is carried out to determine stakeholder objectives, socio-economic and biodiversity targets that will frame planned activities. This stage is largely about bringing together the different stakeholders, understanding their motivations and developing a shared vision for the enterprise, including the establishment of a group that will take the process forward. This initial stage also generally includes looking at the social, economic and environmental costs and benefits of enterprise development.

The key lessons derived from the organisations interviewed for this study, are:

Involve all stakeholders from the start: Stakeholder involvement enables the formation of a more complete picture of the situation based on local and institutional knowledge within the stakeholder group. This also helps address the challenge of getting buy-in from the different stakeholders. This is done through open and transparent communication, team work and trust building. By involving all stakeholders early on it is also possible to develop a shared agenda and objectives which can then lead to an increase stakeholder feeling of ownership. For ensuring that everyone is on the same page and that the business progresses, it is also important to bring stakeholders together regularly. (See Box 1- Working with communities.)

Ensure an effective information flow: The information flow between stakeholders cannot be unidirectional; instead, it needs to happen at all levels and in all directions. In order to facilitate the active and effective participation of the different stakeholders it is also important that the information be packaged in different formats to accommodate varying levels of literacy and remoteness. Additionally, transparent communication is key for ensuring informed decision-making.

Make sure that you are up to the task: To carry forward this process, it is essential to review all stakeholder roles, responsibilities and capacities. It is particularly important to choose the right leader (this will not always correspond to the formal leader). For an NGO embarking on business development, good institutional management is also important with a need for visionaries willing to take risks and to put the “entrepreneurial cap” on.

Manage expectations: The need to manage expectations is a recurring theme in enterprise development. This is necessary at all levels and with all stakeholders but is particularly important when working with communities (see box 1). In order to ensure that expectations are managed, it essential to build stakeholder knowledge from the onset and make stakeholders aware of the pros and cons of developing the enterprise. Tourism is often the sector where expectations are raised the most due to it often being regarded as a panacea (see box 2).

Box 1: Working with communities

One of the components of the biodiversity business definition is the need to ‘*share the benefits arising from this [biological resource] use equitably*’. This component alludes to the social aspect of biodiversity business development and is related to the need to provide benefits to local communities that have been negatively affected by biodiversity conservation.

It is therefore not surprising, that communities are often involved in setting up these businesses. In fact, most of the organisations that contributed to this study work with local communities (or community members) to develop and/or run their business. As a result, many lessons relate specifically to this key stakeholder group.

Livelihood improvement and community empowerment are seen as the ultimate goals when working with communities. Many organisations mentioned the need to ensure that the communities are empowered to the point where they no longer require assistance to run the business sustainably. This is partly fulfilled by capacity building but does not stop there. It can also be encouraged by teaching community members to manage additional income through sound investment. Another key aspect for community empowerment relates to involving communities in the conservation aspect, including through monitoring and forest management. For example, in El Limón (Dominican Republic), the Centro para la Conservación y el Ecodesarrollo de la Bahía de Samaná y su Entorno (CEBSE) has worked towards empowering the local communities and making them self-sufficient. This has brought positive results for both the organisation that can now focus on areas with greater necessity and play a backstage role in El Limón and for the communities that have gained the skill set to develop and run their own businesses and have been given the responsibility of conserving this important natural area (see page 17, *The Time for Biodiversity Business*).

Capacity building is an important element for community empowerment but also a vital component of enterprise development. It needs to include both a sustainability aspect and a business aspect. On the sustainability side, it is important to ensure that the link is made between the enterprise and conservation and that communities are made aware of the need to conserve the resource-base for their products. On the business side, communities require a variety of practical skills for running the business including management, accounting, marketing, etc. It is also important that capacity is enhanced at different levels based on the existing community structures and adapting to the local conditions (economic, social and environmental).

Another lesson from this study is that communities possess an extraordinary amount of knowledge about their surrounding environment and natural resources and that it is important to tap into this knowledge and “not reinvent the wheel”. Tapping into local knowledge will also help in adapting to local conditions, which is an additional lesson learned by many organisations.

Product and market assessment

About this stage: The focus of this stage is to understand the settings in which the enterprise will operate. This is an exploratory phase and generally includes developing an understanding of the socio-economic and environmental conditions in the area, investigating market dynamics, exploring product and service possibilities and identifying major constraints to enterprise development.

The organisations involved in this study found particularly important to make use of existing stakeholder knowledge, understand market forces and chose products that locals are familiar with. Some key lessons were:

Take advantage of stakeholder knowledge: By working with different stakeholders one can maximise knowledge inputs and expertise from different perspectives for improved product development and market orientation. This will also enable factors of importance to the various stakeholders to be mainstreamed into the business and avoid conflicts arising from diverging opinions. Communities can have a considerable depth of knowledge about their local environment that should not be underestimated, whereas the private sector is knowledgeable about the market environment and business skills. Additionally, by exploring stakeholder knowledge, duplication of efforts can be avoided and synergies can occur.

Explore product and service options: Before selecting a specific product or service, a careful analysis of what are the opportunities and limitations is of crucial importance. This would

include the review of markets, availability and sustainability of resources, environmental, infrastructural, policy and other barriers to development. This step will help narrow down the product list to one or two for a more detailed market analysis.

Analyse the value chain and market niche

About this stage: This stage is about understanding the complex web of actors, flows of information, products and value that make up the value chain of the selected product or service. During this stage promising products are tested and adapted to respond to the needs of the market. Insight into key competitors and potential partners along the value chain is also gained.

Only a few of the survey participants specifically mentioned the use of a value chain analysis in developing their business. However, several participants alluded to the need for a more detailed analysis into the value chain and also mentioned challenges that related to lack of knowledge about their product's value chain (e.g. pricing issues, role of intermediaries and lack of business-oriented approaches/planning/capacity). The top lessons related to this stage are:

Understand the market and market forces: A careful market assessment at the planning stage is needed to ensure that the enterprise in mind could work. It is considered particularly important to explore elements like physical access to the market (infrastructure, transport...), supply and demand for product or service (competition and interest) as well as market players and potential partners. It also important to keep up to date with the market and how it progresses as the market is ever changing and this can affect enterprise prosperity. It is particularly useful to monitor the economic factors that affect availability and price of resources.

Analyse your value chain: By mapping the value chain, an understanding of the enterprise's place in the market can be gained and the risks and opportunities that the market presents can be identified. There are a variety of different ways to approach this task, and tools available to do so, as noted by the organisations interviewed. However, as one organisation stated, "there are no shortcuts to a systematic and thorough review of the internal and external factors affecting the market and supply chain". This mapping exercise can start from where their enterprise stands and work up the value chain looking at the key issues of importance in each individual node from producer to consumer. Alternatively, the organisation can first examine the bigger picture, thinking about the end market, about who will use the product and what they expect from it and then work their way down examining where the key opportunities are for the enterprise. In this mapping exercise it is also considered very important to link and associate with other market players at different levels of the value chain.

Invest in quality: A good understanding of the market and market demand is also essential in determining quality and quality standards. These standards are extremely important and can make or break the business. This is particularly the case when moving to larger or international markets. A lot of the learning related to quality was done through trial and error and the products tested in the market often came back due to quality related issues. However, many organisations also had support from private sector players for learning about quality standards and for putting in place mechanisms for quality testing. It is also important to make the business partners aware of the importance of quality standards.

Outline the value proposition and market strategy

About this stage: Effective marketing of the chosen product or service is a fundamental element for a successful business. The entrepreneurs may examine the key features of interest of their product, think about the key audiences as well as what their expectations are and develop a marketing strategy. In this stage it is also important to think about how markets will be accessed, understood and responded to.

Most organisations involved in this study considered marketing a priority and believed there is a need for developing a marketing strategy. Some key lessons related to this topic are:

Create simple but unique products: It is often the case that the simplest ideas are the ones that work best. These are also the easiest to replicate which is an important factor when thinking about scaling up. However, this does not mean that the product or service cannot be unique and innovative. In fact, most participants believe that the best way to succeed in the market would be to create unique products or services. As one IUCN member stated, “try to develop something new and get ahead of the game”.

Learn from professionals: In order to upgrade their marketing skills, many organisations feel that it is important to get external support and expertise for developing strategies or to learn from marketing professionals through partnerships with companies that have marketing know-how. They consider that marketing is one of the greatest challenges for NGOs. It is also considered necessary to invest more in marketing.

Create an appealing but true image: It is very important for an enterprise to have an image that appeals to its client-base. However, it is even more important that this image corresponds to reality. Raising expectations and then not meeting them can be detrimental to a business. It can also affect the credibility of the organisation behind the business as the partners, buyers and consumers will associate lack of professionalism in business with lack of professionalism in their conservation work.

Develop financial mechanisms and partnership strategies

About this stage: The aim of this stage is to ensure the operational success of the business. Here, the enterprise will address internal and external factors that can contribute to this success, particularly through partnerships and financial planning.

The organisations interviewed considered partnerships as an important way of accessing the skills they lack as well as influencing policy and identifying entrepreneurs. This can be particularly important in dealing with small or community-based biodiversity businesses that perform best when these partnerships are also used as a vehicle for accessing funds and markets. However, in terms of financial planning, less was offered in terms of solutions and more in terms of needs and challenges.

Form enabling partnerships: The formation of partnerships in general is considered important to gain different perspectives and develop broader support for the product and in the market. In many of the biodiversity businesses, partnerships have been formed to set up and/or run the business. These partnerships are often between the NGO and either a private sector player or a community (sometimes both). Partnerships with local governments and government agencies also occur and can be very important in dealing with regulatory issues, enforcement and governance. Partnerships with the private sector are considered valuable for complementing the skill set of the conservation organisation, particularly in aspects related to the market and business knowledge. Particular advantage is seen in associating with companies that belong to the same sector as the product or service developed. Partnerships with communities are also considered important both from a community empowerment perspective and due to the importance of community knowledge (see box 1). Partnerships with other NGOs can also be relevant for transferring and complementing skills.

Create strong relationships at the micro and meso policy level: The support of the local and regional authorities when starting a new business is crucial and this support needs to be pursued early on. This is instrumental in moving the business forward from a legal perspective and can also help change policies at a later stage. In trying to change things at the policy level, one organisation found it very effective to get politicians to the ground and engage them in site visits.

Create mechanisms for economic incentives: For the business to run smoothly and for stakeholders to feel engaged and motivated, incentives are needed. It is considered important that mechanisms for rewarding hard-working and creative individuals be in place from the beginning. Linking these incentives to conservation is also an additional way in which the business can raise awareness for conservation. Incentives are particularly important for the people responsible for selling the product or service as it can greatly improve the motivation to do so.

Finance the business: Identifying and accessing funds for enterprise development was one of the greatest challenges mentioned in interviews. Fundraising is often a challenge, but the fact that the development of biodiversity businesses is neither considered development nor conservation work means that on many occasions it is missed out by bilateral and multilateral donors. Overcoming this challenge is difficult and a number of the organisations interviewed could not take their enterprise forward due to lack of funds. Other organisations have succeeded in overcoming this challenge by adopting innovative ways of structuring their budgets whereby the different stages of the enterprise get funded as component of a bigger conservation or development project. Other organisations feel that partnerships are important both for establishing contacts with potential donors and as a way of matching their funds with those of partners for financing specific activities. Finally, a few organisations believe that a solution to this challenge would be to move away from the traditional NGO fundraising approach towards a more entrepreneurial approach of finding investors for the business.

Operationalise plans and monitor performance

About this stage: In this stage a business plan is developed to assist the short, medium and long term needs and plans of the enterprise as well as to guide enterprise decision-making, planning and adaptation. It involves the day to day running of the business but also learning from past experiences and adapting to changes. Monitoring both business success and sustainability are integral components of this phase of the business.

Very few of this study's participants specifically mentioned the creation of business plans, and the few that did considered it an important asset for enterprise development even if often a challenge. However, many organisations touched upon the need for planning when discussing the importance of long-term thinking, working with stakeholders, benefit-sharing and scaling up. The main lessons from business planning are:

Plan in advance for scaling up: The issue of scaling up is as much a challenge as it is an opportunity for small enterprises. It is therefore important to take this possibility into account in the early stages of enterprise development. On the supply side, it is important to assess the resource base and establish a maximum level of use that will not compromise sustainability. It is also necessary to look at the demand and make sure it does not exceed the supply. In this study, it was considered good to keep in mind the possibility of replicating or expanding the business from early on. Gradual scaling up is considered the best option. It is also deemed important to examine each situation individually and adapt to the local conditions.

Take time to develop a business structure: It is important to think about the business structure and ensure that the contributions of the business partners are optimised through it. For instance, one organisation has developed a shareholder system where community members are shareholders in the business. Another organisation has embraced a "mosaic" approach to business development by encouraging a development model that is based on the sum of multiple small-scale businesses using local resources in an integrated fashion.

Adapt in moving forward: This refers to the importance of regularly bringing stakeholders together to reflect on the lessons learned and adapt the programme accordingly. It is also reflected in the need to regularly monitor how the business is within the market and the need to adapt the products or services depending on the market trends.

Do not lose sight of sustainability: It is essential to continually monitor the resource-base and make sure that the product or service does not have a negative effect on the quality and availability of resources. This is particularly important when examining the trade offs of scaling up.

As ecotourism was the most common biodiversity businesses among those reviewed as part of this study, box 2 looks closely at what were the lessons and challenges in ecotourism development.

Box 2: Ecotourism: Friend or foe?

In the last decade, there has been a proliferation of ecotourism ventures developed by conservation organisations based on the premises that this type of tourism can bring revenue for local communities and fund conservation work with little impact to the environment. This relationship is no longer considered to be so straight forward. There have been many instances in which ecotourism has been detrimental to both the environment and local communities, particularly when the products or services developed do not succeed in the market. In other instances however, tourism development does bring about benefits to conservation and local people. So the question really is, what needs to be done to avoid negative impacts of tourism and how can benefits be achieved?

Quite a few of the organisations involved in this study have had hands-on experience in tourism development. For this reason, it is important to look into the lessons learned from developing tourism. However, many of the lessons herewith also apply to biodiversity businesses.

First and foremost, when developing ecotourism it is essential not to lose sight of the conservation objective behind its development. This needs to be clear when establishing the vision for the business and should be integrated in all components of tourism development. It is especially important to make the link to conservation clear to all the stakeholders involved and ensure that systems for monitoring the impacts are built into the business plan.

A second lesson is that tourism development requires a considerable investment both in terms of time and money. The tourism industry is competitive and fickle, which means that only the best products in the correct locations will succeed. In a long-term approach to developing tourism, time can be taken to study the market carefully and develop a product that meets the demand. This product or service must then be made to meet the high quality standards of the industry which requires substantial investment and some expertise.

When developing ecotourism, it was also considered important to look at the destination as a whole (be it a protected area, a village, a region or even a country), i.e. take the destination approach. More often than not ecotourism occurs in remote areas with little in terms of services and by creating a web of interlinked and complementary products and services such as accommodation, tours and other nature-based activities, the area will become more appealing to tourists.

Good marketing is also key to making tourism development successful and few NGOs have this notion present. Packaging the product in the right way and selling it to the correct audience can really make or break a tourism business. For instance, Wild Jordan's robust marketing strategy lead this business to prosper and penetrate a market traditionally focused on cultural tourism. Whereas, the Jamaica Conservation and Development Trust has clearly observed a positive link between their investment in marketing and visitor interest and numbers.

One issue that was mentioned time and time again is the need to manage expectations. Ecotourism is often seen as a panacea, particularly by communities who think it is easy to set up, tourists will arrive overnight and the local quality of life will greatly improve. This is not generally

the case, sustainable tourism development takes time and tourism revenue seldom can entirely replace existing livelihoods. It is therefore essential to build community knowledge of tourism from the onset, making them aware of the pros and cons of developing tourism as well as the timeframe needed for sound tourism development. On the other side, it is also important to ensure that the expectations of the tourists visiting the area are met. Word of mouth is one of the most powerful tools in tourism marketing and whether the product or service developed exceeds or falls short of tourist expectations will affect the prosperity of the business.

Other important considerations when developing ecotourism are health and safety as well as the need to look into destination-based obstacles such as security issues and infrastructure constraints.

4. Conclusions

Every product or service is unique. Its uniqueness stems from the conservation challenge it helps to address, from the cultural context, to the business model. In this report we brought together the experience of 40 IUCN members that have in common this particular approach to biodiversity conservation.

In addition to the lessons linked to the specific business development steps, there are some overarching lessons for developing and running biodiversity businesses:

- It is essential to look at the bigger picture, think about the end-product and envisage the place where the business will end up. This big picture thinking will help determine the long-term vision for the business and think through the steps to get there.
- Stakeholders' buy-in, involvement and collaboration are necessary for the long-haul. The earlier the stakeholders are on board, the more holistic the development of the business will be.
- The market is complex and an effort should be made to understand and respond to it.
- Partnerships are crucial. Liaising with a third party that can add value to the business either because they have expertise in the sector or possess a complementary skill-set will make the business more competitive.
- Manage expectations, particularly from local communities.
- Think about scaling up early on and ensure that the business has the capacity to do this without compromising the resources upon which it depends.

With regards to IUCN's role, the members interviewed believe that the convening role that IUCN has traditionally played could be very useful in supporting biodiversity businesses in many different ways. First, it is considered important to enable knowledge sharing and exchange between member organisations. Creating a platform that allows this exchange would be very useful. Second, IUCN can also assist in linking conservation organisations and the private sector, enabling members to become better at business. Many organisations also feel that IUCN could play an important role at the interface between the local members and international donors.

IUCN's technical expertise is also deemed an asset in this field and many members feel that IUCN can provide capacity on subjects such as certification, ecosystem services and carbon credits. IUCN can also assist in making the local to global link for these biodiversity businesses by making information available on conservation-friendly markets to local players. It is also believed that IUCN is well positioned to collate information regarding business-oriented skills and to bring together experts that could assist members in upgrading these skills. The collection and promotion of new ideas and innovative strategies was also seen as an area in which IUCN could help.

Some members consider that IUCN has an important role to play in promoting good practices for sustainable tourism development. Although this has been done by other organisations, it is believed that IUCN can be more influential because of its neutrality and having members from both government and NGOs. This role could easily be extended to promoting other practices and topics.

APPENDIX I



Interview: Developing business as a conservation tool

Organisation name:	
Member code:	
Website:	
Person interviewed:	
Position:	
Date:	

Please send us the electronic version of any documents/publications/promotional materials related to the biodiversity business described.

1. The main features of the product/service that you have developed
2. The Conservation challenges that led you to develop this product/service and also the conservation outcomes achieved in developing this business
3. Which government policies at the national level enhanced/limited your work (how did government policies present in your country enhance/limit your organisation's work on biodiversity businesses)
4. What are the lessons you have learned and the challenges you have encountered in developing this business?
5. What do you feel were your needs when developing the business (skills, capacity building)?
6. What do you think could be IUCN's role in furthering the work on biodiversity businesses by conservation organisations?
7. Do you feel there are risks to treating biodiversity as a business? What are these? What have you done to mitigate them?
8. Recommendations of other NGOs working in this field?

APPENDIX II

N	Organisation Name	Location	Mission	Biodiversity Business Example	Contacts
1	Acciónatura	Spain	Acciónatura is devoted to the protection, improvement and restoration of natural ecosystems.	They promote a code of good practice for restaurants particularly for sourcing seafood.	Website: www.accionatura.org Contact: Francesc Giró (Chairman) info@accionatura.org
2	Agencia para el Desarrollo de la Mosquitia (MOPAWI)	Honduras	MOPAWI facilitates the management of human development for indigenous peoples as well as the conservation of nature in the Mosquitia of Honduras in partnership with its partners.	In partnership with Canadian multinational Ojon, they have developed the Ojon palm supply Chain sustainably and market ojon hair products internationally.	Website: www.mopawi.org Contact: Osvaldo Munguia (Director Ejecutivo) mopawi@mopawi.org
3	Al Shouf Cedar Society	Lebanon	Al Shouf Cedar Society's main objective is natural and cultural heritage conservation in cooperation with the local community through environmental awareness and ecotourism activities	They have developed an Al Shouf brand under which local communities commercialise their products including jams, flavoured waters, syrups...	Website: www.shoufcedar.org Contact: Nizar Hani (Scientific coordinator) arzshouf@cyberia.net.lb
4	Arab Office for Youth and Environment (AYOE)	Egypt	The Arab Office for Youth and Environment (AOYE) seeks to be one of the best NGOs working in the field of Environment and Sustainable Developmental on the National, Arab and International levels through comprehensive environmental action plan that has economical sustainable approach; That offer an integrated services and activities towards the environment protection and conservation, capable to provide full enabling to its beneficiaries.	They organise punctual educational tours to Egypt's protected areas.	Website: www.aoye.org Contact: Essam Nada (Executive Director) aoye@link.net

5	Asia Network for Sustainable Agriculture and Bioresources (ANSAB)	Nepal	ANSAB has a vision of a “rich biodiversity and prosperous communities”. This vision includes rich, healthy, and productive ecosystems that are actively managed and used by local communities that could address threats to biodiversity and advance sustainable resource management. It also incorporates community-based enterprises that adopt commercial approaches for natural products (from the production stage through to the marketing stage) that are environmentally sustainable and that also increase the communities’ standards of living and harness social equity.	They created the Himalayan Bio Trade, a consortium of community-based enterprises that commercialise non-timber forest products such as essential oils, aromatic and medicinal plants, soaps and handmade paper. They have partnered with international companies such as Aveda and S&D Aromas.	Website: www.ansab.org Contact: Dr. Bishma P. Subedi (PhD) (Executive Director) ansab@ansab.org or BhishmaSubedi@ansab.org
6	Asociación Coordinadora Indígena y Campesina de Agroforestería Comunitaria (ACICAFOC)	Costa Rica	ACICAFOC’s focus is to disseminate sustainable forestry practices to indigenous and rural people throughout Central America.	They have created the Mesoamerican Network for Cocoa Production – a brand that commercialises sustainable cocoa from small producers.	Website: www.acicafoc.org Contact: Edgar Talavera etalavera@acicafoc.org
7	Associação Vida Verde da Amazônia (AVIVE)	Brazil	AVIVE defends, preserves and restores the environment, the cultural goods and values to improve human well-being, with special attention to women and in respect to the forest biome the Amazon.	They develop natural and beauty products from the Amazon.	Website: www.avive.org.br Contact: Barbara Schmal barbara@avive.org.br
8	BRAC	Bangladesh	BRAC works with people whose lives are dominated by extreme poverty, illiteracy, disease and other handicaps. With multifaceted	One of BRAC business wings is Aarong. Aarong is a fashion house and handicraft production and marketing centre. They also work in agriculture and fisheries.	Website: www.brac.net/index.php Contact: Dr Babar KABIR (Director, WASH

			development interventions, BRAC strives to bring about positive changes in the quality of life of the poor people of Bangladesh.		Programme) babar.k@brac.net
9	Bwindi Mgahinga Conservation Trust	Uganda	Bwindi Mgahinga Conservation Trust fosters conservation of biodiversity in MGNP and BINP through investment in community development projects, grants for research and ecological monitoring, funding park management and protection, and programmes that create greater conservation awareness.	They work with local communities to develop the Buhoma Village Walk, a tour through a village where tourists are shown different aspects of rural life in Uganda.	Website: www.bwinditrust.ug Contact: Charity Bwiza charity@bwinditrust.ug
10	Centro Mesoamericano de Estudios sobre Tecnología Apropiada (CEMAT)	Guatemala	CEMAT strengthens production models that are economically, socially and environmentally sustainable and that promote a short and long-term balance between natural resources, the growing population and development.	They research and provide technical assistance to communities developing small enterprises in several different sector including, agriculture, construction.	Website: www.cemat.org Contact: ceamat@intelnet.net.gt
11	Centro para la Conservación y el Ecodesarrollo de la Bahía de Samaná y su Entorno (CEBSE)	Dominican Republic	CEBSE's aim is the conservation and sustainable use of the natural and cultural resources of Samaná Bay and the natural areas which surround it, with the active participation of its communities.	They created ACESAL, an organisation that coordinates the tourism micro-enterprises in the Limon waterfall.	Website: www.samana.org.do Contact: Patricia Lamelas cebse@codetel.net.do
12	Culture and Environment Preservation Association (CEPA)	Cambodia	CEPA ensures that the environmental integrity of Cambodia's natural resources is equitably maintained and protected for the sustainable use and livelihood of its people today and for generations to come.	They have a sustainable livelihood programme where they work with local communities to develop small enterprises such as fisheries, forestry and ecotourism.	Website: www.cepa-cambodia.org Contact : Tep Bunnarith (Executive Director) tep@cepa-cambodia.org
13	Flower Valley Conservation Trust	South Africa	The Flower Valley Conservation Trust explores approaches and accesses resources to conserve lowland fynbos	They market Fynbos cut flowers to Tesco and Woolies etc. in the UK (now pursuing certification).	Website: www.flowervalley.org.za Contact:

			and empower people by promoting the sustainable and profitable utilisation of natural resources.		Lesley Richardson (Executive director) info@flowervalley.org.za
14	Fundação o Boticário de Proteção a Natureza (FBPN)	Brazil	FBPN has the mission to promote and take actions to conserve nature. Their actions include protecting natural areas, supporting projects of other organisations and raising public awareness for the conservation cause. With these actions they aim to contribute to the planet's ecological balance and to the safeguarding of life on earth.	They have a partnership with local tour operator to run tourism in one of their private reserves. They also have an incentive based conservation project – Watershed management (Projeto Oásis)	Website: www.fbpn.org.br Contact: Leide Yassuco Takahashi (Environmenta project manager) leide@fundacaoboticario.org.br
15	Fundación Ecológica Arcoiris	Ecuador	Fundación Ecológica Arcoiris' mission is to conserve biodiversity and natural resources with local participation to benefit current and future generations.	They developed mangrove tourism in Isla Costa Rica with local communities.	Website: www.arcoiris.org.ec Contact: Angel Hualpa Erazo ahualpa@arcoiris.org.ec
16	Fundación Futuro Latinoamericano	Ecuador	FFLA's mission is to promote constructive dialogue, strengthen citizen, political and institutional capacities, and articulate processes towards sustainable development in Latin America.	They work more at the policy level, but have developed one project on sustainable fisheries in Isla Isabella.	Website: www.ffla.net Contact: Juan Dumas (Director General) juan.dumas@ffla.net
17	Fundación Moises Bertoni	Paraguay	FMB works in an innovative way to promote sustainable development through nature conservation that actively involves the population.	They have partnered with the public and private sector to develop small businesses in the area of agriculture (including meat production).	Website: www.mbertoni.org.py Contact: Danilo Salas mbertoni@mbertoni.org.py
18	Fundación Natura	Colombia	FNC is dedicated to the conservation, use and management of biodiversity to generate social, economic and environmental benefits in the field of sustainable development.	They have developed ecotourism around 4 protected areas and a web portal that links these ecotourism activities for marketing purposes.	Website: www.natura.org.co Contact: fundacionnatura@natura.org.co ; Roberto Gomez Charry

					rlgomez@natura.org.co
19	Institute of Cultural Affairs International	Ghana	The Institute of Cultural Affairs International helps people to achieve a better future, through building their skills and strengthening their confidence. Its work focuses on rural, marginalised communities.	They focus on the development of the Allanblackia supply chain sustainably with Unilever (more on the capacity building side).	Website: www.ica-international.org/ghana Contact: Joseph Kekesi (Executive Director) icagh@africaonline.com.gh
20	Instituto Nacional de Biodiversidad (INBio)	Costa Rica	INBio promotes a greater awareness of the value of biodiversity as a means to ensure its conservation and improve the quality of life of human beings.	They work with different stakeholders to develop ecotourism in Costa Rica.	Website: www.inbio.ac.cr Contact: Elena Galante (Coordinator of the Ecotourism department) egalante@inbio.ac.cr
21	Istituto Centrale per la Ricerca Scientifica e Tecnologica Applicata al Mare (ICRAM)	Italy	ICRAM provides scientific support marine environmental issues to the central administration.	They created underwater itineraries in the marine protected area of Portofino.	Website: www.icram.org Contact: Leonardo Tunesi (Research Director) l.tunesi@icram.org
22	Istituto Oikos	Italy, Tanzania	Oikos Institute is a non-denominational and independent association, founded in 1996, operating in Europe and Africa to help conserve and sustainably manage the natural resources as tools of social and economic development.	They have worked with local communities in developing countries to establish ecotourism activities.	Website: www.istituto-oikos.org Contact: Lara Beffasti lara.beffasti@istituto-oikos.org
23	Jamaica Conservation and Development Trust (JCdT)	Jamaica	The Jamaica Conservation and Development Trust (JCdT) promotes environmental conservation and sustainable development, with particular emphasis on the Blue and John Crow Mountains National Park, for the benefit of Jamaica and its people.	They developed the Holywell recreational area with the help from local communities – includes accommodation, guided tours, interpretation and picnic areas.	Website: www.greenjamaica.org.jm Contact: Susan Otuokon jamaicaconservation@gmail.com

24	Kalahari Conservation Society (KCS)	Botswana	<p>The aims and objectives of the Kalahari Conservation Society are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To promote the knowledge of Botswana's rich wildlife resources and its environment through education and publicity; • To encourage and in some cases finance research into issues affecting these resources and their conservation; and • To promote and support policies of conservation towards wildlife and its habitat. 	They manage the project "Every river has its people" – working with local communities around this transboundary conservation project to develop products for commercialization to mainly tourists. Products are mainly: wood carvings, ornaments, baskets, fishing nets and pottery.	<p>Website: www.kcs.org.bw Contact: Felix Monggae (Chief Executive Officer) ceo@kcs.org.bw</p>
25	Lliga per la Defensa del Patrimoni Natural (DEPANA)	Spain	DEPANA works to defend, study and conserve natural heritage while promoting the concept of the global problems affecting species and ecosystems.	They develop tourist infrastructure in Punta de la Móra protected area.	<p>Website: www.depana.org Contact: Marta Grau (Project Manager) Marta.grau@depana.org</p>
26	Phytotrade Africa	Zimbabwe	Phytotrade Africa's aim is to facilitate the development of a viable and enduring natural products industry in southern Africa, engaged in both domestic and export trade and based on resources accessible to poor rural communities.	Phytotrade Africa is a Natural product trade association.	<p>Website: www.phytotradeafrica.com Contact: Lucy Welford lucy@phytotradeafrica.com</p>
27	Pronatura Sur	Mexico	Pronatura Sur's aim is the conservation of the flora, fauna and priority ecosystems, promoting social development in harmony with nature and through time.	They promote sustainable coffee and certification.	<p>Website: www.pronatura-chiapas.org Contact: Romeo Domínguez (Director General) direccion@pronatura-chiapas.org</p>
28	Royal Society for the Conservation of Nature (RSCN)	Jordan	RSCN aims to conserve the biodiversity of Jordan and integrate its conservation programs with socio-economic development, while	RSCN created Wild Jordan, a business department to the NGO, which focuses on ecotourism development, handicraft businesses and the management of the	<p>Website: www.rscn.org.jo Contact: Chris Johnson</p>

			promoting wider public support and action for the protection of the natural environment within Jordan and neighbouring countries. Their slogan is "Helping nature... helping people".	Wild Jordan Centre in Amman (café, shop, travel agent).	Chrisj@rscn.org.jo
29	SalvaNATURA	El Salvador	SalvaNATURA's aim is to contribute with the recovery and conservation of natural resources, to achieve sustainable development and improve the quality of life of the population of El Salvador and its surrounding region.	They have developed a few small businesses, including a publishing house and ecotourism in El Impossible National Park.	Website: www.salvanatura.org Contact: Andrea Lamer alamer@salvanatura.org
30	Secretaría de Estado de Medio Ambiente y Recursos Naturales (SEMARENA)	Dominican Republic	SEMARENA applies state policies that integrate conservation, protection and regulation of the management of natural resources and the environment to achieve sustainable development in Dominican Republic.	They have created associations of nature guides for the country's protected areas, capacity building for handicraft making and creation of infrastructure to support protected area use.	Website: www.medioambiente.gov.do Contact: Priscilia Peña Priscilia.pena@medioambiente.gov.do
31	Sewalanka Foundation	Sri Lanka	Sewalanka enhances the capacity of rural communities to democratically identify and address their own development needs and provides services that contribute to the economically viable, socially just, and ecologically sustainable development of Sri Lanka.	They have established paper, syrup, ecotourism and eco-agriculture enterprises. They have worked with local communities living in and around rainforest and coastal areas to develop these.	Website: www.sewalanka.org Contact: Dr. Amanda Kiessel (Program Director) amanda@sewalanka.org
32	Shushilan	Bangladesh	Shushilan's mission is to create opportunities for underprivileged communities through sustainable resource management, livelihood security, gender equality and human rights.	Their focus is beekeeping and honey production business. They are working on marketing honey that is produced from Sundarbans (mangrove forest, part of it World Heritage site) and adjacent areas.	Website: www.shushilan.org/development Contact: Mustafa Bakuluzzaman bakuluzzaman@gmail.com
33	Sociedad Española de Ornitología (SEO/Birdlife)	Spain	SEO is dedicated to the study and conservation of birds and nature.	They developed tourism in their ornithological reserves and created a national association of professional	Website: www.seo.org Contact:

				birding guides.	Ramon Marti Montes (Programme coordinator) rmarti@seo.org
34	Society for the Protection of Nature Lebanon (SPNL)	Lebanon	SPNL strives to conserve biodiversity for the provision of a better quality of life through sustaining sites, habitats, species and people.	They developed bird watching tourism in Lebanon's Important Bird Areas.	Website: www.spnlb.org Contact: spnlorg@cyberia.net.lb - info@spnlb.cyberia.lb
35	Southern Alliance for Indigenous Resources (SAFIRE)	Zimbabwe	SAFIRE's focus is the promotion of rural development through the sustainable utilisation, commercialisation and management of natural resources.	They have developed a variety of natural product enterprises, particularly food products – local plant oils, beverages, nutritional supplements. They operate in Zimbabwe and also internationally they supply to Phytotrade Africa.	Website: www.safireweb.org Contact: Gladman Kundhlande (Director General) gladmank@safire.co.zw
36	TEMA Foundation	Turkey	TEMA's mission is: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To prevent erosion, desertification, drought, pollution and the use of environmentally destructive agriculture techniques on the land; • To combat national and international administrative, political and economical pressures concerning the destruction of natural habitats, and to create solutions toward overcoming these problems; • To protect and increase the efficiency and sustainability of biological diversity, land, water and other natural resources; • To ensure that policies concerning the protection of natural habitats are created by governments, that much needed 	They created an eco-tour operator that specializes in scientific tours in Turkey.	Website: http://english.tema.org.tr/News/Releases/PresentationBiological.htm Contact: Yesim Erkan Yesim.erkant@tema.org.tr

			legal regulations are made, and that international contracts are followed.		
37	Union Nationale de la Femme Tunisienne (UNFT)	Tunisia	UNFT promotes women's advancement in all sectors: scientific, social, economic and political.	They focus on medicinal and aromatic plants in the region.	Website: www.unft.org.tn Contact: Leila Bahri (President) unft@email.ati.tn
38	Veld Products Research and Development	Botswana	Veld Products Research and Development undertakes research and development projects in partnership with rural communities and households to improve their quality of life through the sustainable utilisation and management of veld resources.	They focus on the NTFPs sector, mainly through research, capacity building, and technological support. They are at the stage of beginning on the enterprise development but have not yet been able to secure funds for this work.	Website: www.veldproducts.org Contact: Bernard Lesolame veldprod@info.bw
39	Winrock International India	India	Winrock International India: 1. Encourages and empowers primary users of natural resources to sustainably manage the resources that they depend on, 2. Promotes energy efficiency and use of renewable energy for rural development, 3. Understands and addresses the challenges of global climate change, and 4. Reaches out to involve people, communities and institutions to strengthen the efforts to develop and implement sustainable solutions.	They work on Payments for Environmental Services and in particular watershed management – more incentive-based conservation.	Website: www.winrockindia.org Contact: Chetan Agarwal (Group coordinator, incentives-based mechanisms group and senior Programme officer) chetan@winrockindia.org
40	WWF Mekong Region	Vietnam, Cambodia, Laos	WWF aims at stopping the degradation of the planet's natural environment and to build a future in which humans live in harmony with nature, by:	They are working with IKEA to develop the rattan supply chain in a sustainable way.	Website: www.panda.org/greatermekong Contact: Thibault Ledecq, WWF rattan program manager

			<ul style="list-style-type: none">- conserving the world's biological diversity- ensuring that the use of renewable natural resources is sustainable- promoting the reduction of pollution and wasteful consumption.		thibault.ledecq@wwfgreatermekong.org
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**INTERNATIONAL UNION
FOR THE CONSERVATION OF NATURE**

WORLD HEADQUARTERS

Rue Mauverney 28

1196 Gland, Switzerland

mail@iucn.org

Tel +41 22 999 0000

Fax +41 22 999 0002

www.iucn.org