

## Managing biodiversity impacts: 10 tips for success in the oil and gas industry



# 10 TIPS

- 1. Begin yesterday:** Allow time for undertaking scoping surveys, careful planning of multi-season data collection, and developing strategic collaborations. Start to build the capacity to enhance conservation and project delivery straight away. Opportunities may be missed if biodiversity risks are not identified early. *IPIECA, 'A guide to developing biodiversity action plans for the oil and gas sector' (2005)*
- 2. Assess sensitive areas:** Understand the location and significance of protected areas, endangered species, sensitive habitats and key natural resources. This is critical to the early selection of facility locations and a project's overall biodiversity action planning. It will help keep projects on track and limit impacts. *UNEP-WCMC World Data Base on Protected Areas; EBI, 'A framework for integrating biodiversity into the site selection process' (2003)*
- 3. See the big picture:** Recognize the contribution of climate change, external resource exploitation, and other natural and anthropogenic stressors upon biodiversity. These are important background considerations for assessment of project and operational footprints. *EBI, 'Integrating biodiversity into environmental and social impact assessment processes' (2006)*
- 4. Consult openly:** Engage in open dialogue with a diverse group of interested stakeholders. This is an effective means of leveraging local ecological knowledge, understanding the value of traditional ecosystems, learning how natural resources are used and avoiding potential resource conflicts. *IPIECA, 'Guide to successful, sustainable social investment for the oil and gas industry' (2008)*
- 5. Think about whole landscapes:** Understand the scale at which different ecosystem processes occur in order to design sound impact assessments, mitigation measures and monitoring programmes. For large projects, assuming a landscape perspective assures that area-demanding species and broad-scale ecological processes are adequately considered. *IPIECA, 'An ecosystem approach to oil and gas industry biodiversity conservation' (2007)*
- 6. Say 'no' to hitchhikers:** Prevent the introduction of Alien Invasive Species (AIS) based on a robust understanding of the pre-existing ecological baseline. This avoids large-scale economic damage - and the need for expensive eradication programmes - that is sometimes caused when new species are inadvertently introduced into an oil and gas asset area. *IPIECA, 'Alien invasive species in oil and gas activities' (2010)*
- 7. Understand interdependence:** Conduct early, high level screening of project dependencies to identify risks related to resource competition. Ecosystems do more than support wildlife: for example, resources such as land and water may be critical to the operation of oil and gas facilities in addition to their contribution to habitat and community needs. *IPIECA, 'Ecosystem services checklist and guidance - linking ecosystem services to oil and gas activities' (in development)*
- 8. Follow the ARRC:** Follow the general order of preference for mitigating biodiversity impacts. In order the preference is: Avoid; Reduce; Remedy; and Compensate (including offsetting). *IPIECA, 'A guide to developing biodiversity action plans for the oil and gas sector' (2005)*
- 9. Make your benefits mutual:** Understand social and economic needs and potential impacts to find solutions that integrate ecosystem health with human well-being and economic progress. This should minimize conflict between socioeconomic development and conservation goals. *IPIECA, 'Indigenous peoples and the oil and gas industry: context, issues and emerging good practice' (in development)*
- 10. Adapt and improve:** Integrate biodiversity into HSE Management Systems to assure the 'plan-do-check-act' cycle is complete and that risks are addressed throughout the asset life cycle. Respond to feedback from monitoring and reporting activities, adapting and improving mitigation and management approaches. *EBI, 'Integrating biodiversity into environmental management systems' (2003)*