Industrialisation or modernization of agriculture has recently been confirmed as one of the key issues for biodiversity loss in many countries, so mainstreaming biodiversity in agriculture is crucial for achieving the Aichi Biodiversity Targets. Mainstreaming biodiversity means to influence development decisions and improve outcomes of biodiversity conservation and poverty reduction with a variety of activities on the ground. Furthermore, issues related to food security in order to reduce poverty is a crucial aspect of the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda.

One of the key agendas of the CBD COP 13 is to discuss how to make agriculture more sustainable for biodiversity. Under the joint 10-year initiative “CARD (Coalition for African Rice Development)” in collaboration with AGRA (Alliance for Green Revolution in Africa), FAO, IFAD and many other partners to double the rice production in Africa to cater for rising rice consumption in the region, JICA is implementing two projects in parallel in Uganda; one is to support Ramsar wetland management and the other is to assist the development of irrigation areas. These two projects can be considered as the joint implementation of the Paddy Resolution of the Ramsar Convention (Resolution X.31).

A side event “Mainstreaming of Biodiversity into Agricultural Practice: Rice Paddy Resolution of the Ramsar Convention for Biodiversity Conservation Practice” took place on 12 December 2016 at CBD COP13.

Following the presentation of case studies a panel discussion took place inviting international experts from the CBD, Ramsar Convention, FAO and others to exchange views on how they can contribute to the Aichi Biodiversity Targets by mainstreaming biodiversity in agriculture.

One of the unique features of JICA assistance is to develop an institutional platform to promote practical collaboration
A panel discussion invited international experts from the CBD, Ramsar Convention, FAO and others to exchange views on how they can contribute to the Aichi Biodiversity Targets by mainstreaming biodiversity in agriculture between wetland and agriculture sectors. In addition to this case of Uganda, other practical cases harmonizing biodiversity with agriculture such as irrigation in Africa and/or Asia countries were presented at the event.

In the past Ramsar Convention as CBD partner provided one of the first guidelines on economic valuation regarding integration of biodiversity. During the panel discussion Ramsar Convention Senior Advisor for Americas, Maria Rivera highlighted that the case of Ministries of Environment and Agriculture from Uganda working together shows how projects can be efficiently carried out and such examples need to be showcased. She also stressed that the Ramsar Strategic Plan 2016-2024 is aligned with Aichi Targets and this contributes to reporting by Contracting Parties to Ramsar Convention and CBD.

Other outcomes of the panel discussion:

- Environmental issues need to always be taken into consideration in feasibility studies not have them as an afterthought;
- Population growth is an important issue to consider in agriculture in Africa; need of integrated approaches;
- Harmonization of agriculture and biodiversity is vital. i.e. through river basin approach which is a holistic approach;
- Inter-agency and cross-sectoral approaches are key for successful projects.