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## NOTIFICATION

### **Analysis of Zero draft of the outcome document for the United Nations Summit to adopt the post-2015 Development Agenda**

Madam/Sir,

I am pleased to inform you that the Zero draft of the outcome document for the United Nations Summit to adopt the post-2015 Development Agenda has been made available on the Sustainable Development knowledge platform at: <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/post2015>. This document will form the basis of discussions within the United Nations General Assembly, beginning next week in New York, and will culminate in a package for adoption at the Summit to be held in September 2015.

At its twelfth meeting, the Conference of the Parties (COP) to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) adopted decision XII/4 with a view to integrate biodiversity into the post-2015 United Nations development agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals. In paragraph 3 (b) of the decision, the COP requested the Executive Secretary, *inter alia*: “to continue the collaboration, with key partners, to actively contribute to the discussions on the post-2015 United Nations development agenda and the sustainable development goals, to follow the relevant outcomes and to inform Parties of any major developments related to biodiversity, including potential positive and negative impacts of the proposed goals and targets on biodiversity and ecosystems”. Furthermore, in paragraph (c) of the same decision, the COP requested the Executive Secretary “to support Parties by continuing to engage in the ongoing processes to ensure the appropriate integration of biodiversity and ecosystem functions and services in the post-2015 United Nations development agenda and sustainable development goals and related targets and indicators, and also by continuing to assist Parties in their efforts to integrate biodiversity and ecosystem functions and services into poverty eradication and development”.

Pursuant to this decision, the Secretariat has continued its engagement in this process, and has worked closely with other United Nations agencies, as well as the other global biodiversity convention secretariats, to ensure that the outcomes are consistent with and mutually supportive of the commitments under the biodiversity instruments.

I am pleased to share with you a brief analysis, highlighting some key points in relation to the status of biodiversity in the Zero draft, attached herewith. This includes the extent to which the role of biodiversity for sustainable development is included in the Zero draft, some important issues with respect to how the draft Sustainable Development Goals relate to the Aichi Biodiversity Targets, and how national-level commitments might relate to the global aspirations of the Sustainable Development Goals. Please also find attached for your consideration, a document prepared by the Secretariat that suggests how elements of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 might be relevant for the mechanisms used in the Sustainable Development Goals for translating the global goals into national actions.

The Secretariat stands ready to assist you further in any way that we can.

Please accept, Madam/Sir, the assurances of my highest consideration.

Braulio Ferreira de Souza Dias  
Executive Secretary

Enclosure

To: CBD National Focal Points, relevant organizations and stakeholders



Convention on  
Biological Diversity

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## Annex 1

# Analysis of the Status of Biodiversity in the Zero draft of the outcome document for the UN Summit to adopt the Post-2015 Development Agenda

### I. Overview

The nature and scope of the post-2015 development agenda as reflected in the Zero draft provides a new and ambitious vision. The agenda seeks to be universal, collaborative and transformational, and to address, in an integrated manner, environmental, social and economic objectives, while emphasizing that poverty eradication remains the number one priority.

The Zero draft includes the following major components: 1) a preamble; 2) text in the form of a declaration, entitled “Transforming our world by 2030: A New Agenda for Global Action”; 3) the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) that were produced by the Open-Working Group established by the United Nations General Assembly (along with a short set of introductory statements); 4) a section entitled “Means of Implementation and the Global Partnership”, and 5) a section on “Follow-up and Review.” It also includes three Annexes: Annex 1 with proposed changes to a number of the SDG targets – including one related to biodiversity (target 15.2); Annex 2 with ideas relating to a possible technology facilitation mechanism; and Annex 3 with the introduction of the Open Working Group Proposal for sustainable development goals and targets.

### 2. Preamble and Declaration

While the importance of addressing climate change is well-covered in the preamble and declaration sections of the document, other environmental issues are not given much attention, including biodiversity, as well as water, chemicals and disaster risk reduction. In particular, although biodiversity features prominently in the SDGs themselves, the important role of biodiversity for sustainable development, and for achieving other SDGs, is not highlighted in the draft declaration. Governments may wish to strengthen the text with respect to biodiversity. For instance, the preamble could note as an objective the need to “protect the planet, **its biodiversity and ecosystems**, fight climate change, use natural resources sustainably and safeguard our oceans.”

Governments may also wish to consider including references to biodiversity and/or ecosystems and natural resource use in various paragraphs, such as Paragraphs 3, 12, and 24.

Paragraph 27 of the declaration emphasizes the importance of addressing climate change. Governments may wish to consider adding a separate paragraph addressing the need to conserve and sustainably use terrestrial and marine biodiversity and ecosystems, and to tackle biodiversity loss, natural habitat protection, sustainable land-use, and maintain ecosystem services.

### 3. Sustainable Development Goals

#### *The issue of 2020 vs. 2030 as the target date for achievement.*

Biodiversity is included not only in Goal 14 on oceans and coasts, and Goal 15 on terrestrial ecosystems, but also plays an important role in targets under several other Goals: Goal 2 (hunger and food security), Goal 6 (water and sanitation), Goal 11 (cities) and Goal 12 (sustainable consumption and production).

There is, however, a very important issue that has yet to be resolved. In order to ensure that the SDGs do not fall below the ambition level of the Aichi Biodiversity Targets, the biodiversity targets included in the SDGs use 2020 as the date for their achievement. A number of targets for other subject matters in the SDGs also use the date of “2020”; however, most of the other SDGs use 2030 as their target date.

The Conference of the Parties of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) will conduct a review of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 and associated targets in 2020 and may update them. It is expected that most of the issues to which the current Aichi Biodiversity Targets refer will remain important issues after 2020. Thus, it will be very important to find a way to include these issues in the SDGs beyond 2020, so that biodiversity remains an active part of the SDGs until 2030. Note that this is an issue of importance not only for the CBD, but for the other global biodiversity agreements that also have aligned their work with the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020.

One solution could be the inclusion, in the introductory section of the SDGs language to the following effect:

*“In line with existing commitments, a number of targets use the date of “2020”. These targets should be reviewed at an appropriate time, taking into account discussions in relevant inter-governmental forums, with a view towards further action that may be warranted to 2030”.*

#### Proposed changes to target 15.2 on Forest Ecosystem

As finalized by the Open Working Group, Target 15.2 reads as follows:

“15.2 By 2020, promote the implementation of sustainable management of all types of forests, halt deforestation, restore degraded forests and increase afforestation and reforestation by [x] per cent globally”. The co-facilitators have sought a way to address the “x” per cent figure in this and similar targets, in order to finalize the SDGs for adoption.

The Secretariat has developed a common position to address this with the other co-leaders of the Technical Support Team on Biodiversity (Food and Agriculture Organization, United Nations Environment Programme, United Nations Development Programme, United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification, Convention on Biological Diversity), as well as with the UN Forum on Forests, which would read as follows:

*“By 2020, promote the implementation of sustainable management of all types of forests and restore at least 150 million hectares of deforested and degraded lands, and by 2030, halt deforestation and increase afforestation and reforestation, stabilize forest cover, and reduce forest degradation by 30%”.*

#### 4. Follow-up and Review

The Zero draft does not set forth a clear mechanism by which countries can contribute at the national level to the achievement of the global SDGs, in a common manner. The Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 provides a useful model that governments may wish to consider for this purpose.

Like the SDGs, the Strategic Plan represents a set of global commitments by all Parties to the CBD. It is primarily implemented at the national level, and provides a flexible framework so that countries can contextualise the global commitments to fit their national conditions and priorities.

Parties to the CBD use National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plans (NBSAPs) as the principal instrument for implementing the Strategic Plan at the national level. The NBSAPs identify and prioritize national targets within the framework of the global Aichi Biodiversity Targets. The NBSAPs are to be policy instruments, applicable to all relevant governmental actors and agencies. While flexible in nature, the Strategic Plan calls on Parties to monitor and report on their progress through mandatory national reports submitted to the Secretariat.

In the context of the SDGs, governments may wish to consider adopting an approach whereby countries can develop their own national Sustainable Development Plans (SDPs). The plans could highlight the relevant considerations in a country, the priorities and the challenges. The SDPs could set forth a set of national actions to be taken, possibly in the form of goals and targets.

Ideally, the plans would be adopted at the highest levels of government, after an interministerial process, which provides for inputs from stakeholders to help shape the plan. Implementation of the plans could also be supported through an

interministerial committee or council, thereby bringing together the key governmental agencies who have a role to play on sustainable development.

# Translating Universal Sustainable Development Goals to Country Action



Member countries of the United Nations are embarked on a promising new path to achieve poverty eradication, economic development, social priorities and a healthy environment, building on the work of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). One of the core elements of the “post-2015 development agenda” is a set of ambitious Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), which provide for an integrated approach to achieving sustainable development.

The SDGs establish a set of universal goals and targets, to be achieved through the collective action of member countries and partners. While discussions have begun regarding how to track and report on progress made at the national, regional and global levels, a major element that must be considered is how to translate global goals and targets to national-level action. What will countries be expected to undertake as part of the post-2015 development agenda? How will they establish their priorities? What will they report on?

The Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020, a UN-wide framework for action, has many parallels to the SDGs, with global goals and targets and a process for national actions. It provides a useful model that may help inform the discussions on the architecture of the post-2015 development agenda and SDGs, including with respect to an approach for establishing national-level commitments.



Convention on  
Biological Diversity

## I - THE STRATEGIC PLAN FOR BIODIVERSITY 2011-2020

The Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 was adopted in 2010 at the tenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD). The CBD has nearly universal membership, with 196 parties. The Strategic Plan takes an integrated approach, seeking to mainstream biodiversity into economic and social policies.

The Strategic Plan sets forth a long-term vision, five goals, twenty targets (known as the “Aichi Biodiversity Targets”), and a series of tools and mechanisms for implementation, monitoring, review and evaluation.

The five goals of the Strategic Plan address the mainstreaming of biodiversity into other sectors, reducing the pressures on biodiversity, improving the status of biodiversity, enhancing the benefits to all from biodiversity and ecosystem services, and providing for a participatory process of implementation. With this approach the Strategic Plan links the three aspects of sustainable development: social, economic, and environmental.

The characteristics and various components of the Strategic Plan illustrate an approach that may be relevant to the SDG process. In particular the Strategic Plan:



- represents a set of **global commitments by all Parties**;
- is primarily implemented at the national level through a **national strategy** adopted as a **high-level policy** instrument;
- provides a flexible framework so that countries can contextualise the global commitments to fit their national conditions and priorities;
- contains practical means to support its implementation, monitoring, review and evaluation; and
- provides a mechanism to keep progress and needs under review.

### 1. Universality - Global Commitments

The Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 and its Aichi Biodiversity Targets establish a set of global goals and targets agreed to by all Parties. It provides the overarching strategic, policy and monitoring framework on biodiversity, not only for the Parties to the biodiversity-related conventions, but for the entire United Nations system, and creates the framework for action by partners at all levels. The importance of the Strategic Plan was affirmed by leaders at the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development, known as “Rio+20”, and by the UN General Assembly.

### 2. A flexible framework focused on national priorities

Like the discussions for the post-2015 development agenda, a central challenge for the Convention on Biological Diversity was how to create a means for coun-

tries to meaningfully contribute to the implementation of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity given its global nature, as well as how to taken into account national differences and priorities.

The approach taken to address this challenge was an agreement that each country would adopt a National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (NBSAP) as the principal instrument for implementing the Strategic Plan at the national level. An NBSAP is a policy instrument in which a country states where it wants to go and which route it will take to get there. Its role is to identify and prioritize national targets within the framework of the global Aichi Biodiversity Targets, and the action required to meet the targets and fulfil the objectives of the CBD for the country. National targets are set in relation to national circumstances, priorities and potential constraints, which in turn will outline the actions and contributions of the country to the global effort to meet the objectives of the Strategic Plan and its Aichi Biodiversity Targets. This approach recognizes that each country has particular needs and circumstances and can therefore tailor its actions accordingly all while contributing to an overall collective vision.

### 3. Practical means for implementation, monitoring and accountability

The Strategic Plan establishes requirements for monitoring and reporting. It includes a range of measures to assist countries with its implementation. It includes provisions for partnerships, technical and scientific cooperation,

and support mechanisms for research, monitoring and assessment.

- While flexible in nature, the Strategic Plan calls on Parties to monitor and report on their progress through mandatory national reports submitted to the Secretariat. These reports are shared publicly. In order to review overall progress, a separate initiative was agreed to develop a common set of biodiversity indicators to be used to assess the status and trends of biodiversity, drivers of biodiversity loss, benefits to society, and policy response, through the Biodiversity Indicators Partnership (BIP).

- The Parties also agreed on a number of steps for keeping implementation of the Strategic Plan on track. A “mid-term” review of progress took place at the twelfth meeting of Parties in October, 2014, where Parties agreed on next steps to ensure that implementation stays on course. A subsidiary body on implementation was also created by Parties to monitor progress and provide recommendations for how to overcome obstacles. Each successive COP will review progress made towards implementation.

- The Global Environment Facility (GEF) is the major international funding mechanism supporting Parties in implementing the Convention and the Strategic Plan. The Parties also adopted a Strategy for Resource Mobilization, which includes not only conventional means of support but also identifies and accesses a range of innovative domestic and international financial resources. It includes the development of

concrete initiatives, targets and indicators, and processes for developing innovative mechanisms in order to provide adequate, predictable and timely new and additional financial resources, in support of the implementation of the Strategic Plan. Parties also agreed to report regularly on resource mobilization, both from international and domestic sources.

- Likewise, the Parties also called on the Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity to set up a clearing-house mechanism for knowledge-sharing and technology transfer, and the Secretariat has also developed an innovative approach to facilitate technical and scientific cooperation.

Finally, the Parties have stressed the need for partnerships in implementing the Strategic Plan. The Secretariat has formalized relationships with many key partners, including other UN agencies, scientific institutes, and other entities, to take ownership of the Strategic Plan and work towards its implementation. The major biodiversity-related conventions have agreed to cooperate, and align their own work programs with the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity.

## II - TOWARDS SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT PLANS AND COUNCILS

The elaboration of the SDGs has many parallels to the experience of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity. The SDGs are to be universal, yet must take into account different national situations. They are to be monitored in the

long-term, yet need specific milestones and indicators to measure progress. Implementation should be driven by country-based priorities, but will require adequate institutional arrangements as well as partnerships with stakeholders and creative means for financing, both from domestic and foreign sources.

The implementation and achievement of the SDGs will require a strategic and coordinated approach, including a long-term and integrated perspective, linking various national processes, related, among other things, to sectoral and cross-sectoral policies, data production and processing, monitoring and reporting. It will also require some vertical linkages, so that local, national and regional policies and actions in support of the global goals and targets are coordinated and mutually supportive, as well as partnerships among the many stakeholders involved in sustainable development.

### ***National Sustainable Development Plans***

The current discussions in the post-2015 development agenda have recognized the need to consider national priorities and circumstances when shaping how member states will contribute to the achievement of the SDGs. There has also been some discussion regarding monitoring progress, and the need to consider different models and capacities. Yet there has been little discussion of **how** the global goals would be translated into national action – i.e., on **what** countries would be reporting upon.

Member states may wish to consider adopting an approach whereby countries can develop their own national Sustainable Development Plans (SDPs). The plans would highlight the relevant considerations in a country – the priorities and the challenges. It could set forth a set of national actions to be taken, possibly in the form of goals and targets. Importantly, the plan would ideally be adopted at the highest levels of government, after an inter-ministerial process. A process for seeking inputs from stakeholders would also help shape the plan.

### ***National Sustainable Development Councils or Committees***

Parties to the CBD have utilized numerous internal coordination mechanisms to help to create and implement an NBSAP that integrates the priorities and interests of all relevant ministries. One such mechanism used by numerous parties is the establishment of an inter-agency or inter-ministerial committee. Such a mechanism provides an effective formal forum for exchange of views, enhancing the opportunity for better mainstreaming and integration.

Member states may wish to consider the establishment of an inter-ministerial process or mechanism by which to develop the SDPs. Such a mechanism could include a high-level body of ministers, and a working-level group of policymakers from various agencies or ministries.

Such a mechanism could also be useful for countries to ensure collaboration across agencies and ministries with respect to



## STRATEGIC PLAN FOR BIODIVERSITY 2011-2020

### THE VISION

By 2050, biodiversity is valued, conserved, restored and wisely used, maintaining ecosystem services, sustaining a healthy planet and delivering benefits essential for all people.

### STRATEGIC GOALS

**Goal A:** Address the underlying causes of biodiversity loss by mainstreaming biodiversity across government and society

**Goal B:** Reduce the direct pressures on biodiversity and promote sustainable use

**Goal C:** To improve the status of biodiversity by safeguarding ecosystems, species and genetic diversity

**Goal D:** Enhance the benefits to all from biodiversity and ecosystem services

**Goal E:** Enhance implementation through participatory planning, knowledge management and capacity building

more information:

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implementation of the SDPs, reporting, and highlighting areas of need, such as capacity building and other areas of support. It can also be a means to provide inputs of stakeholders and members of civil society with respect to scientific and technical data, technical expertise, as well as policy development and implementation.

A similar kind of mechanism was proposed as part of the Earth Summit in 1992, in Agenda 21. Agenda 21 stressed the importance of setting up coordinated and participatory mechanisms at the national level to implement sustainable development. Many countries created National Councils for Sustainable Development (NCSDs), supported by inter-ministerial committees. However, many other countries did not follow this path, or such councils faded over time.

Given the cross-cutting nature, the magnitude and the level of

ambition of the SDGs, such an inter-ministerial approach could be extremely useful as countries seek to focus their efforts on implementation. Such a mechanism could also be a way of revitalizing or providing a framework for what many countries are doing or planning to do as efforts shift to implementation.

### III - CONCLUSION

In order to move from aspiration into action, translate global goals into steps that could be taken at the national level, and ensure an integrated approach, member states will need to consider possible mechanisms. The Strategic Plan for Biodiversity and the mechanisms to implement it provide one model that may usefully inform the post-2015 development agenda and SDGs.

