



## Convention on Biological Diversity

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BUREAU OF THE SUBSIDIARY BODY ON  
SCIENTIFIC, TECHNICAL AND  
TECHNOLOGICAL ADVICE  
Montreal, 16-17 February 2012

### MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE BUREAU OF THE SUBSIDIARY BODY ON SCIENTIFIC, TECHNICAL AND TECHNOLOGICAL ADVICE (SBSTTA)

**Present:** Nine Bureau members were present: Ms. Senka Barudanovic (Bosnia and Herzegovina), Mr. Ole Hendrickson (Canada), Mr. Alexander Shestakov (Russian Federation), Ms. Gabriele Obermayr (Austria), Mr. Maadjou Bah (Guinée), Mr. Ignatius Makumba (Zambia), Ms. Larissa M. Lima Costa (Brazil), Ms. Nenenteiti Teariki-Ruatu (Kiribati), and Mr. Floyd Homer (Trinidad and Tobago). Mr. Monyrak Meng (Cambodia) was unable to attend.

From the CBD Secretariat, the following staff members were present: Mr. Braulio Ferreira de Souza Dias (Executive Secretary of the Convention on Biological Diversity), Mr. David Cooper (Head of STTM), Mr. Robert Höft, Ms. Jihyun Lee, Mr. Sarat Babu Gidda, Mr. David Coates, Mr. Tim Christopherson, Mr. Johannes Stahl, Ms. Jaime Webbe, Mr. Matthew Dias, Ms. Junko Shimura, Ms. Kathryn Campbell, Ms. Cristina Romanelli, Mr. Kieran Mooney, Ms. Lisa Janishevski, Ms. Claudia Paguaga, Ms. Veronica Lo, Ms. Leah Mohammed, Ms. Jacqueline Grekin and Mr. Raphaël Goulet.

#### 1. Opening of the meeting and adoption of the agenda.

1. The Chair of SBSTTA, Ms. Senka Barudanovic, opened the meeting at 9:15 am and welcomed the Bureau members. Following introductions the Bureau adopted the agenda for the meeting, noting the need to work in a flexible manner.

2. In his opening remarks Braulio Ferreira de Souza Dias, the Executive Secretary of the Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity, noted the importance of the creation of the Intergovernmental Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES), highlighting that while the UN General Assembly resolution welcomed the creation of IPBES, further discussions are required to formalize the arrangements for its operation. The Executive Secretary also noted that it would be important for Bureau members to exchange views on how the CBD could liaise with IPBES and its role in terms of assessments and capacity-building. The Executive Secretary further noted that IPBES itself would not be policy prescriptive but that its recommendations would be policy relevant. Given the ongoing discussions on how to implement SBSTTA's mandate, it was suggested that the Bureau should discuss the kind of recommendations required to enable SBSTTA to fulfil its original mandate, as well as the best way to make new recommendations to the Conference of the Parties (COP), especially in the light of the establishment of the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES). In so doing it would be important to consider, among other things: the Strategic Plan and its

Aichi Biodiversity Targets; establishing a good monitoring system with indicators; and identifying ways in which biodiversity can be mainstreamed into the broader agenda of sustainable development. The importance of marine issues as a central focus of SBSTTA 16 was also highlighted.

## **2. Overview of the agenda and update by the Secretariat on preparations for SBSTTA-16**

3. David Cooper, SBSTTA Secretary, introduced the annotated agenda for SBSTTA 16 (UNEP/CBD/SBSTTA/16/1/Add.1). It was noted that most pre-session documents are almost final and that a call for posters on “Oceans, Coasts and Islands: Achieving the Aichi Biodiversity Targets” as well as a call for side-events for SBSTTA 16 had been made.

## **3. Strategic Issues for SBSTTA, including collaboration with IPBES**

4. David Cooper introduced a draft of document UNEP/CBD/SBSTTA/16/2 which considers the work of SBSTTA in the light of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 and collaboration with IPBES. He also indicated that discussions on strategic issues and IPBES should address the role of SBSTTA, as set out in Article 25 of the Convention, and how the work of SBSTTA can assist Parties to implement the Strategic Plan and achieve the Aichi Biodiversity Targets. Some elements of Article 25, such as the preparation of scientific and technical assessments or the impact of measures taken to comply with the provisions of the Convention, may have received less attention in the past and this may be a good opportunity to examine how SBSTTA can more effectively respond to them. It was noted that the policy guidance, case studies, capacity-building activities and workshops that have or will be undertaken could potentially be complemented by more effective technical and scientific cooperation among Parties through the clearing-house mechanism, and possibly by taking into account a greater number of evidence-based reviews of what works and what does not.

5. With regards to the Aichi Biodiversity Targets, the Secretariat noted that some Targets are already well-positioned for implementation. A good example of this is Target 11 on protected areas, for which there is clear guidance that enables countries to implement gap analyses and plans of action. There may also be lessons learned that could be applied to other Targets. Overall, it may be useful to consider targets and issues in a more integrated way. It was stressed that to achieve progress on the Aichi Biodiversity Targets there must be greater integration of both the natural and social sciences.

6. Robert Hoft introduced key elements of the draft IPBES document, noting that IPBES would be expected to carry out different types of assessments (comprehensive subglobal/global; thematic) with different time horizons and different ways in which SBSTTA might be able to influence or respond to them. In so doing it was noted that there are many uncertainties regarding IPBES, but that there is no intention to duplicate work. He indicated that the biodiversity-related conventions would all be able to transmit requests to IPBES and that there could be concerns about overburdening IPBES.

7. During discussions on strategic directions, it was pointed out that decision X/12 (Ways and Means to improve SBSTTA) provides helpful language in terms of strengthening the role of SBSTTA. It was also suggested that procedures and guidance for assessments could potentially be developed by SBSTTA and delivered by IPBES. Bureau members agreed that there was insufficient time, capacity and resources in the past for SBSTTA to be able to carry out full assessments.

8. Questions on the interactions between the IPBES, SBSTTA and regional hubs, as well as the role of IPBES in filling any potential gaps and inefficiencies of SBSTTA were also raised. The division of tasks between SBSTTA and IPBES, and the timing, scope and length of assessments were also discussed. Some Bureau members felt that IPBES should go beyond the evaluation of biodiversity, ecosystems, and genes to also incorporate ecosystem services in its mission, which is at the heart of the Strategic Plan. Furthermore, some members noted that IPBES could carry out some of the tasks originally envisioned for SBSTTA and suggested that it may be helpful to develop a memorandum of understanding (MOU)

between SBSTTA and IPBES. One member, recalling recommendation XV/8, noted that options other than an MOU also needed to be examined. The Secretariat noted that IPBES will need to respond to all of the biodiversity-related conventions. As a result, not all requests by the CBD may be met. It was also noted that advice is more likely to be heard if it responds to a common request or concern of the different biodiversity-related conventions.

9. The Chair reminded members that the relationship between IPBES and SBSTTA must be examined in relation to the framework of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020. The Chair also noted that Parties would expect clear and complete information for discussion at COP11 in an effort to address, *inter alia*, how requests for adoption by IPBES should be prepared and the timeframe required to make assessments useful to CBD.

10. David Cooper noted that in terms of assessment, the IPBES would likely undertake large, comprehensive assessments, but that these would be slow, predictable and serve all biodiversity-related conventions and organizations. However the IPBES would also be likely to undertake smaller, more focused and more technical assessments which could be delivered more quickly. He noted that one potentially important limitation to the effectiveness and timeliness of assessments is if SBSTTA or COP requests a smaller assessment that IPBES does not consider to be a priority, causing the issue to be postponed.

11. It was also noted that IPBES would act on requests made by Governments and governing bodies of conventions and other UN agencies and that requests that are relevant to multiple stakeholders would most likely be prioritized. To that effect, one could envisage that IPBES enters into strategic partnerships with biodiversity-related conventions, especially with their scientific and advisory bodies, and these could help to align interests and activities, and to streamline the decision-making process. The Liaison Group of Biodiversity-related Conventions as well as the meeting of the Chairs of Scientific Advisory Bodies of Biodiversity-related Conventions could be relevant in this regard.

12. Regarding the involvement of SBSTTA Bureau members in the preparation of the pre-session document on this agenda item, it was agreed that the document would be prepared drawing on the Bureau members' comments. Further once prepared the document would be sent to the SBSTTA and COP Bureaus as well as to the former Chairs of SBSTTA for their comments before being finalized.

13. With regard to scientific and technical cooperation the Chair suggested that it would be helpful to hold a roundtable discussion on the margins of SBSTTA16. Such a roundtable could be used to discuss options for strengthening scientific and technical cooperation, including amongst neighbouring countries facing comparable challenges. Bureau members felt that such a discussion could be useful. The Secretariat agreed to explore options for convening this roundtable and to involve the Bureau in its preparation.

#### **4. Preview of issues for consideration at SBSTTA 16**

##### ***REDD +***

14. Tim Christophersen introduced the pre-session document (UNEP/CBD/SBSTTA/16/8), supporting information documents (UNEP/CBD/SBSTTA/16/INF/19 through to UNEP/CBD/SBSTTA 16/INF/25) and presented key elements of the recommendations.

15. The Chair noted the importance of reflecting the lack of cooperation between forestry and other relevant sectors and departments and to make a distinction between high and low biodiversity forests. She also noted the importance of addressing deforestation/degradation and its underlying causes as a whole, particularly as it pertains to developing countries. The Bureau members were pleased with the progress which had been made on safeguards, which is in part attributable to the processes under the CBD as well

as under the UNFCCC (which made significant progress at COP-16 (December 2010, Cancun)) and felt that this element should be emphasized when this item is introduced at SBSTTA 16.

### *Ecologically & Biologically Significant Areas and other marine issues*

16. Jihyun Lee gave a presentation on the pre-session (UNEP/CBD/SBSTTA/16/5, UNEP/CBD/SBSTTA/16/5/Add.1, UNEP/CBD/SBSTTA/16/6, UNEP/CBD/SBSTTA/16/7, UNEP/CBD/SBSTTA/16/7/Add.1, and UNEP/CBD/SBSTTA/16/8) and information documents. She explained the CBD's process for dealing with ecologically and biological significant areas (EBSAs), including its historical context, and the scientific criteria for their identification as set out in decision IX/20. The COP 10 guidance on marine protected areas (MPAs) was also noted. It was explained that the CBD's EBSA process serves to facilitate scientific collaboration and data sharing on identifying marine areas in need of protection, and to increase awareness on the value of and threats to marine biodiversity in open-ocean waters. The EBSAs repository and information sharing mechanism, the development of a training manual and modules and the request to produce a draft study on social and cultural criteria for EBSAs and MPAs were also discussed. The other marine issues on the agenda for SBSTTA 16, namely addressing adverse impacts of human activities on marine and coastal biodiversity, including coral bleaching, ocean acidification, fisheries, and underwater noise as well as marine spatial planning, marine protected areas and voluntary guidelines for the consideration of biodiversity in environmental assessments in marine and coastal areas, were also discussed.

17. Bureau members found the presentation on the marine agenda item to be very useful and it was suggested that key elements of it be used to introduce the agenda item during SBSTTA 16. The Secretariat noted that the EBSAs process is procedurally innovative and as a result one must not only think about the relative complexity of the negotiation process but also of the decision that will ensue. Given the breadth of the issues considered in Decision X/29, the information needs to be presented in a logical way. It was also noted that it may make more sense to negotiate several smaller documents than one large one.

18. The Bureau noted that the process for identifying EBSAs was transparent and that there was ample opportunity for those who wished to provide comments to do so. The need for guidance on how to deal with workshops that would be held between SBSTTA and COP was also raised and the Chair noted that something could be reflected in the SBSTTA recommendation to accommodate this point. Further several Bureau members considered it important to include a brief description of the preparation process of the workshop, demonstrating that it was a transparent and credible process, in the document. It was also noted that information arising from the EBSA process may also be used to feed into land-based protected areas decisions. The Secretariat also noted that the EBSA process should be viewed as the beginning of a long-term process, which may require a focus on capacity-building for some years. The role of Bureau members in explaining the EBSA process, in particular that the process seeks to identify areas important for biodiversity as a means of supporting decision making and that it is not a process for creating new marine protected areas, was highlighted.

### *Geoengineering*

19. David Cooper introduced the agenda item on Geoengineering, noting that the Executive Secretary was requested to carry out two studies, one on the impact of geoengineering on biodiversity, taking into account the views and experiences of indigenous and local community and another on the legal and regulatory framework. Both documents will be available to SBSTTA as information documents. Each of the documents was subject to two rounds of peer review. The Secretariat also launched an online consultation, by partnering with the UNESCO frontline initiative, to solicit views from Indigenous and Local Communities. All the comments received as part of the review process will be documented. The key messages from the two information documents will form the basis of the final pre-session document. While the subject of geoengineering is controversial, the recommendations contained in the document are

not necessarily so. However the Secretariat noted that it would be difficult to predict how much debate the topic will generate during SBSTTA 16.

#### ***New and Emerging Issues***

20. The document on New and Emerging Issues relating to the conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity (UNEP/CBD/SBSTTA/16/13) was introduced. There were no comments on the document.

#### ***Global Strategy for Plant Conservation***

21. Robert Hoft presented the document on the Global Strategy for Plant Conservation (GSPC) (UNEP/CBD/SBSTTA/16/11), noting that few comments were received during the peer review process. Key issues pertained to ensuring ownership on behalf of ministries of the environment and promoting dialogue with other key organizations and focal points. In their discussions of this item no clearly contentious issues were identified, in particular as the indicators in the document were derived from the list discussed during SBSTTA 15. The expectation was that SBSTTA 16 will use this opportunity to have discussion on the role of GSPC focal points and how the GSPC can be tied in with Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020. The Secretariat also noted that the Liaison Group of the GSPC found that the suggested milestones and indicators for the GSPC arising from COP10 were considered unhelpful. It was considered more useful to have national, rather than global, milestones for the monitoring, review and evaluation of the Strategy.

#### ***Fourth edition of Global Biodiversity Outlook***

22. Robert Hoft introduced the document noting that some Parties have indicated through the review process that the timetable to prepare GBO-4 may be too ambitious. However, in order to have enough time to make any course corrections to achieve the Aichi Biodiversity Targets, it is important that GBO-4 be available to help inform discussions at COP12. Given this it is important to ensure that the deadline for submission of the fifth national reports is abided by. Following discussions it was not felt that this document would be heavily debated at SBSTTA16.

#### ***Draft Capacity-building Strategy for the Global Taxonomy Initiative***

23. Junko Shimura introduced the document on the draft capacity-building strategy for the global taxonomy initiative (UNEP/CBD/SBSTTA/16/12), explaining that a conference call was held with members of the Coordination Mechanism to discuss the integration of comments arising from the peer-review process and interventions made by Parties and relevant organizations during SBSTTA 15. David Cooper introduced a document on the GTI and the Implementation of the Nagoya Protocol which was prepared by the Coordination Mechanism who requested its inclusion as an information document. It was noted that the document would be relevant to Actions 3, 4 and 7 of the Capacity Building Strategy which mention the Nagoya Protocol. One participant noted that, from a SIDS perspective, the document could be useful to establish a link with access and benefit sharing. Other members also found that the document could be useful to clarify references to the Nagoya Protocol contained in the draft capacity-building Strategy for the GTI. However one Bureau member expressed concern that it may lead to an opening of the debate on the draft Strategy itself.

#### ***Progress Report on Biofuels***

24. David Coates presented the document on biofuels (UNEP/CBD/SBSTTA/16/14) noting that it consisted of a progress report to Parties. An information document (UNEP/CBD/SBSTTA/16/INF/32) would follow. It was noted that biofuel sustainability is a part of sustainable land management, which Parties generally consider a major gap. It is not expected that a Contact Group will be necessary during

SBSTTA 16 although there may be a need for a Friends of the Chair as this item also addresses subsidies which could generate debate.

### ***Progress Report on Incentive Measures***

25. David Cooper introduced the draft report on progress made, difficulties encountered, and lessons learned, in the removal or mitigation of perverse incentives, the promotion of positive incentive measures, and the assessment of values of biodiversity and ecosystem services (UNEP/CBD/SBSTTA/16/15). He noted that Parties had made several substantive submissions, including on the analysis of subsidies and other incentive measures. It was also noted that much work had already been carried out to identify subsidies, most notably in OECD countries.

26. One SBSTTA Bureau member noted that one of the challenges in his region is the difficulty of changing government policy. Harmful incentives are often linked to well-entrenched government policies because the latter are often perceived to increase investment opportunities. The Bureau member also noted that something should be added in terms of policy advice, indicating that other sectors must also be engaged.

### ***In Depth Review of Island Biodiversity***

27. David Cooper introduced the document (UNEP/CBD/SBSTTA/16/4) on island biodiversity noting that the program of work on islands was one of the last to be developed and it reflects all relevant CBD programs of work and that the Global Islands Partnership (GLISPA) are partners in this work programme.

28. Some Bureau members felt that the recommendations in the draft document needed to be strengthened. One member was also concerned that some of the statements in the document do not sufficiently emphasize the real challenges faced by islands. It was noted that the key obstacles/challenges listed in paragraph 23 of the draft document have always been problematic and that the human dimension was not fully reflected in the draft version of the document. In relation to the appropriateness of evaluation tools, a Bureau member felt that rather than having lengthy studies carried out by teams of economists, it could be more efficient to have a quick evaluation, even using proxy values, to facilitate decision-making. The urgency of developing the necessary tools and methods to facilitate evaluation was also noted.

### ***Other Issues***

29. It was requested that an estimate of the cost implications of the SBSTTA recommendations be prepared as it would help to have a more complete picture of the implication of the recommendations. The Secretariat stated that it would attempt to produce general estimate for the SBSTTA Bureau, highlighting the challenge of coming up with accurate estimates.

30. David Cooper noted that a revised version of the annotated agenda for the SBSTTA 16 meeting would be issued as there was an small error in the existing version which noted a meeting that did not take place.

## **5. Organizational Aspects of SBSTTA-16**

31. David Cooper noted that Chairs and/or co-chairs would be required for Working Group 1 and Working Group 2 and that the Bureau may also wish to consider who would chair contact groups and friends of the chair sessions. In addition the need for someone to serve as rapporteur was also noted. Following a discussion on this issue the Bureau noted the following possible roles for SBSTTA Bureau members during SBSTTA 16:

- i. Chair - Senka Barudanovic

- ii. Rapporteur - Monyrak Meng
- iii. Working Group 1 - Maadjou Bah and Ole Hendrickson
- iv. Working Group 2 - Gabriele Obermayr and Larissa Maria Lima Costa
- v. Contact Group (marine, geo-engineering, IPBES or as needed) - Alexander Shestakov
- vi. Contact Group (islands) - Floyd Homer and Nenenteiti Teariki Ruatu
- vii. Contact Group (REDD+) - Ignatius Makumba

32. It was requested by several Bureau members that the Secretariat prepare guidance for the Chairs detailing the procedures for the meeting and their responsibilities and to make it available in languages if possible.

## **6. Discussion on Rio +20**

33. Tim Christopherson and Jaime Webbe introduced the Rio +20 programme and the activities of the Rio Pavilion. They welcomed any ideas on the subject. It was explained that each of the events planned for Rio+20 have specific objectives and that the CBD was working with the secretariats of the other two Rio Conventions. One SBSTTA Bureau member wanted to know how the role of science is stressed under the Rio Pavilion. It was noted that while the primary focus of the pavilion is not to promote science, the presentations are based on science and many of the participants present scientific findings. Therefore science is inherent in the pavilion's activities. The Chair noted that SBSTTA focal points could be included in discussions/national consultations on Rio +20 and that the Secretariat may wish to consider sending a notification to that effect.

## **7. Conclusions and Closing of the meeting**

34. The Chair asked Bureau Members to share their final conclusions on the meeting. Bureau members were very pleased with the outcome of the meeting. It was suggested, that for future meetings, it could be helpful to develop a few clear messages that Bureau members could pass on to their regions. It was also suggested that the Secretariat consider a carbon offset programme for its meetings.

35. Some Bureau members noted that for developing countries or countries with economies in transition with small delegations, there is only one representative to act as both the Bureau member and the country delegate. It would be more efficient if, in such cases, two representatives for the country could be funded to participate in meetings. It was requested that the Secretariat explore this possibility, noting that funding for participation in meetings is usually limited.

36. Bureau members expressed their thanks to the Chair for her leadership, their satisfaction with the work carried out by the Secretariat and the discussions held in preparation for SBSTTA 16. It was also noted that it was helpful to have a face-to-face meeting prior to SBSTTA 16. Bureau members thanked Canada for their generous support of the Bureau meeting and noted that they were pleased that the Executive Secretary was able to interact with SBSTTA bureau members. The Secretariat thanked the Bureau members for the useful guidance. The meeting was closed at 4:00 p.m.

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