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COOPERATION WITH OTHER CONVENTIONS: THE BIODIVERSITY-RELATED CONVENTIONS AND THE RIO CONVENTIONS: SUBMISSIONS OF VIEWS ON THE FORM AND CONTENT OF A PROCESS TO ENHANCE COORDINATION, COHERENCE AND NATIONAL LEVEL SYNERGIES AMONG BIODIVERSITY-RELATED CONVENTIONS

Note by the Executive Secretary

INTRODUCTION

The Working Group on Review of Implementation of the Convention, at its fourth meeting, invited Parties to submit their views regarding the form and content of a process to enhance coordination, coherence and national level synergies among the biodiversity-related conventions (recommendation WGRI 4/6). The Executive Secretary, through notification 2012-094, invited Parties to do so by considering decision X/20, in particular its paragraphs 5 and 8, as well as document UNEP/CBD/WG-RI/4/8. The Executive Secretary is pleased to circulate herewith, for the information of participants in the eleventh meeting of the Conference of the Parties, a compilation of the submissions provided by Parties on issues related to cooperation with other conventions: the biodiversity-related conventions and the Rio conventions.

* UNEP/CBD/COP/11/1.

VIEWS ON THE FORM AND CONTENT OF A PROCESS TO ENHANCE COORDINATION, COHERENCE AND NATIONAL LEVEL SYNERGIES AMONG BIODIVERSITY-RELATED CONVENTIONS

I. SUBMISSION FROM CANADA:

1. WGRI-4 invited Parties to submit their views regarding the form and content of a process to enhance coordination, coherence and national level synergies among the biodiversity-related conventions. Canada notes that at WGRI-4 Parties made the following recommendations to the Eleventh Conference of the Parties (COP):

- reiterate the importance of cooperation among the biodiversity-related conventions and the Rio conventions for achieving full implementation of the CBD and the Strategic Plan;
- welcome the work carried out under the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals (CMS) and CITES to support parties to incorporate the objectives of these conventions in the revision of their NBSAPs;
- welcome the establishment of IPBES and encourage the platform to provide relevant biodiversity information in order to support the implementation of the objectives of the CBD and the Strategic Plan; and
- stress the role of the NBSAPs in developing a coherent approach at the national level, encouraging parties to incorporate the objectives of the biodiversity related-conventions and the Rio conventions into their revised NBSAPs, as appropriate, and supporting them with all sources and means available.

2. Through this submission Canada would like to highlight several important considerations relevant to determining the form and content of a process to enhance coordination, coherence and national level synergies among the biodiversity-related conventions:

- In any process to enhance coordination, cooperation and synergies, as per COP decision X/20, the independence of each of the conventions should be respected.
- Any process should take into account existing activities and forums that have been contributing to promoting synergies and exploring opportunities for increased coordination and cooperation, such as the Liaison Group of the Biodiversity-related Conventions (BLG). In this context, Canada is of the view that mechanisms and bodies to advance collaboration among conventions and organizations are already in place and there is no need for the creation of new structures.
- In addition to synergies and cooperation among biodiversity-related conventions and the three Rio conventions, cooperation with other relevant organizations and bodies is important. Other bodies could include the recently established Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES), the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN), United Nations agencies and organizations, among others.
- Any process to enhance synergies should also encourage coordination domestically on biodiversity-related issues. It is beneficial for the national focal points of the various biodiversity-related conventions to interact regularly and it is helpful to have frameworks in place to ensure appropriate interdepartmental engagement, particularly on cross-cutting issues. To this end, Canada developed a Biodiversity Outcomes Framework, further to our national biodiversity strategy, which was approved by Ministers responsible for Environment, Forests, Parks, Fisheries and Aquaculture, and Wildlife in October 2006.
- In Canada, our approach to biodiversity coordination at the federal level is to assign lead responsibility for different thematic areas (forests, agriculture, fisheries, etc) to the individual departments and agencies with a primary mandate for each issue area, while meeting regularly to

discuss common priorities and overall synergies. As the national focal point to the CBD, we also coordinate regularly with provincial and territorial governments, as they have jurisdiction over natural resources and the implementation of the CBD depends in large measure on their activities.

- Any process should also explore how to advance work that achieves the objectives of multiple conventions, including through joint work programmes, meetings between scientific advisory bodies and through other activities. Examples of such an approach include the joint work programme between the CBD and the Ramsar Convention as well as work taken to ensure that biodiversity benefits from measures taken to address climate change, such as what has been accomplished through REDD+.
- In implementing the CBD Strategic Plan and the Aichi Biodiversity Targets, there is a need to consider some of the interrelated challenges related to climate change, biodiversity and desertification.
- The ultimate goal of any process should be to promote synergies that result in greater coordination, efficiencies, and better results.

II. SUBMISSION FROM THE EUROPEAN UNION

3. The recent call made by world's highest political leaders at the Rio+20-Conference for enhancing synergies by clustering MEAs needs to be fully reflected in the decision on the form and content of a process to enhance coordination, coherence and national level synergies among biodiversity-related conventions.¹ This enhancement of synergies should be seen in the overall framework of strengthening the international environmental governance as also reaffirmed at the Rio+20 Conference (paragraph 87).

4. In this context, is also relevant the recent decision SS XII/3 of UNEP Governing Council that recognizes the importance of enhancing synergies, including at the national and regional levels, among the biodiversity-related conventions, and encourages the Conferences of the Parties to those conventions to strengthen efforts further in that regard, taking into account relevant experiences.

5. The EU and its Member States believe that progress has been achieved in cooperation at the international level between the biodiversity-related conventions through the Liaison Group on Biodiversity-Related Conventions (BLG) and the Chairs of the Advisory Bodies of the Biodiversity related Conventions, but a huge potential for synergies still lies unrealized. Additional efforts need to be taken, including use of existing processes and actions, to enhance synergies among biodiversity-related MEAs at the national, sub-national, regional and global levels in a balanced and mutually supportive manner.

¹ "The Future We Want" Outcome Document states: "We recognize the significant contributions to sustainable development made by the multilateral environmental agreements (MEAs). We acknowledge the work already undertaken to enhance synergies among the three Conventions in the chemicals and waste cluster (the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm Conventions). We encourage parties to MEAs to consider further measures, in these and other clusters, as appropriate, to promote policy coherence at all relevant levels, improve efficiency, reduce unnecessary overlap and duplication, and enhance coordination and cooperation among MEAs, including the three Rio Conventions as well as with the UN system in the field." (paragraph 89)

6. Strengthening coordination and cooperation at the national and sub-national level is essential to further promote what is the overall aim of any type of cooperation between the conventions namely coherent and synergistic implementation. We welcome the development of guidelines under the Convention on Migratory Species (CMS) and the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES) on how to integrate implementation of these conventions into NBSAPs and encourage other biodiversity related conventions to prepare similar material.

7. We also welcome the establishment of the IPBES which, under its mandate, will open new areas for synergy and collaboration in the science-policy fields related to biodiversity and ecosystem services. EU and its Member States would like to emphasize as well the importance of the effective international cooperation among relevant multilateral environmental agreements and international organizations.

8. Enhanced coordination and cooperation at national level is also the key for harmonizing and streamlining reporting requirements of the different conventions. This issue has been on the international environmental agenda for many years with several decisions adopted by COPs and other fora. However, harmonization and streamlining of reporting is difficult at the convention level due to different evolution of reporting systems in different conventions as well different reporting cycles. Through cooperation between focal points on specific issues across conventions and better integration and sharing of national biodiversity information, the implementation itself could be more harmonized which would result as well in easing the burden of reporting independently of the different reporting systems and cycles of the different conventions.

9. Lastly, EU and its Member States believe that the 2012 publication prepared by UNEP WCMC "Promoting synergies within the cluster of biodiversity-related multilateral environmental agreements" with the support of Finland provides interesting options for enhanced cooperation and collaboration between the biodiversity related conventions at all levels that could be further explored.

III. SUBMISSION FROM GRENADA

10. The Ministry of Environment, Foreign Trade and Export Development would like to submit the following points for the cooperation and partnerships of the biodiversity-related conventions and the Rio conventions:

- There should be joint activities and initiatives undertaken (expert meetings, workshops) amongst the biodiversity-related conventions and the Rio conventions
- Harmonization of programme of works
- Establishment of a liaison person network from each of the focal areas under the conventions mentioned above
- Biennial meetings of the conventions held
- In corporation of other focal points in respective meetings of the different conventions as deemed necessary
- Establishment of a database to house all documents related to the conventions or the linking of all existing databases and or the use of an intranet
- Dissemination of notifications to the other focal points for comments when necessary and where applicable.
