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TECHNICAL AND SCIENTIFIC COOPERATION ON INVASIVE ALIEN SPECIES IN ISLANDS

Note by the Executive Secretary¹

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity organized a capacity-building workshop for small island developing States (SIDS) with a view to facilitate achievement of Aichi Biodiversity Target 9 on invasive alien species through enhanced capacity-building and technical and scientific cooperation (Montreal, Canada 14 to 15 June 2014). The workshop was attended by 23 SIDS and countries with islands² as well as UN implementing agencies and their implementing partners and invasive alien species experts. The workshop identified existing challenges in capacity development, in particular, in the area of technical and scientific cooperation in SIDS during the process of developing project proposals. To further facilitate project development in order to implement the national and regional biodiversity strategies and action plans among the Parties of SIDS, the relevant organizations that provided technical information at the workshop continued to elaborate a coordination mechanism to support capacity development for SIDS. The Group proposed an International Islands Initiative for Achieving Aichi Biodiversity Target 9 on Invasive Alien Species, with voluntary participation of SIDS Governments, expert organizations, potential donors, including multi- and bi-lateral development cooperation, private donors and others to a partnership to share the information on capacity needs, expertise and possible financial resources on web based coordination platform. Such an initiative could be implemented within the broader context of enhanced technical and scientific cooperation on biodiversity. With additional support at the regional level to maximize the efficiency of proposed projects the initiative could provide opportunities for SIDS to collaborate with appropriate experts and additional funding

* UNEP/CBD/COP/12/1.

¹ This note has been prepared by the Executive Secretary in close collaboration with Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme, Global Island Partnership and its invasive alien species working group, Island Conservation, IUCN-Invasive Species Specialist Group, Pacific Invasives Initiative and all experts supported the capacity building workshop for small island developing States to achieve Aichi Biodiversity Target 9.

² Antigua and Barbuda, Bahamas, Cabo Verde, Comoros, Cook Islands, Cuba, Dominica, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Fiji, Grenada, Haiti, Jamaica, Maldives, Marshall Islands, Palau, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, Sao Tome and Principe, Seychelles, Singapore, Tonga and Vanuatu.

opportunities. The initiative will also be one of the priority actions on invasive alien species under the Island Resilience Campaign to be launched at the twelfth meeting of the Conference of the Parties in Pyeongchang, Republic of Korea, in October 2014.

I. INTRODUCTION

A. Island biodiversity, invasive alien species and sustainable development

1. Invasive alien species are those alien species which threaten ecosystems, habitats or species (Article 8(h)). In island ecosystems, invasive alien species are the leading cause of biodiversity loss. Over the last five hundred years, invasive alien species, including primarily invasive vertebrates have been partly or wholly responsible for the extinction of at least 65 bird species (Birdlife International). Eighty percent of known species extinctions have occurred on islands and currently 45 percent of IUCN Red List endangered species occur on islands. (IUCN Red List).

2. In addition, invasive alien species currently present in SIDS can pose a threat to food security, human health and economic development. New introductions of invasive alien species to SIDS pose additional, future threats. Rapid globalization of trade, travel, and frequent transport of sea, water and land vessels are now exacerbating and accelerating alien species introduction, creating new problems for the future. The interaction between invasive alien species and other drivers of ecosystem change such as climate and land use change can in some cases magnify the impacts.

3. Island States, particularly small island developing States (SIDS) are vulnerable in terms of economic development due to a narrow range of resources, resulting in specialization and dependence on international trade. However, trade and tourism it facilitate entry of invasive alien species to island ecosystems and production landscapes, including aquatic environments.

4. Tourism is a major driver of development in many of tropical islands which inevitably contributes to arrival of potentially invasive alien species associated with ships, planes and the demands of the tourist industry. The economic value of tropical islands in tourism is associated with their rich biodiversity in natural landscape. When biodiversity is threatened such value is also threatened.

5. Production in many SIDS is dependent on primary production in agriculture, aquaculture and fisheries and access to international markets. In these sectors, the management of invasive alien species including pests.

6. Opportunities for development are negatively impacted if invasive alien species continue to be introduced. Comprehensive prevention, early detection, control and management frameworks focusing on the highest risk invasion pathways are critical steps to address invasive alien species in SIDS.

7. Prevention of entry of alien species through the common pathways of introduction in islands via sea ports and air ports was identified as a priority action in SIDS at the capacity-building and technical and scientific cooperation (Montreal, Canada, 14-15 June 2014).³ In addition, eradication of the worst already established invaders, primarily invasive mammals, is also an established tool to prevent extinctions and restore island ecosystems in small islands. To be successful, eradication efforts must also include measures to prevent reintroductions. Management options such as biological control based on established guidelines and science-based eradication technologies, such as integrated pest management or integrated feral animal management were recommended by experts.

8. In terms of Aichi Biodiversity Targets, Target 9 (management of invasive alien species and its pathways), is critically important for SIDS to achieve many other Aichi biodiversity targets. For example, the chances of success of achieving the following targets - biodiversity loss (Target 12), protected areas (Target 11), and sustainable agriculture, forestry and fisheries (Target 7) - could be considerably enhanced

³ <http://www.cbd.int/doc/?meeting=IASWS-2014-01>

if invasive alien species were efficiently managed on island ecosystems. Some of the targets related to underlying causes of biodiversity loss may also be more effectively addressed if many of those in relevant sectors become more aware on the negative impact of invasive alien species through enhanced awareness (Target 1) appropriate business decisions and consumer choices (Target 4).

B. Result of Capacity-building workshop for Small Island Developing States to Achieve Aichi Biodiversity Target 9 on Invasive Alien Species

9. In view of the impact of invasive alien species on the biodiversity and economic development of SIDS, a capacity-building workshop for Small Island Developing States to achieve Aichi Biodiversity Target 9 on Invasive Alien Species was held in Montreal, Canada, on 14 and 15 June 2014 with generous financial and technical support from the Governments of Japan and Germany. A total of 27 SIDS Parties and countries with islands participated. This workshop primarily focused on the development of project proposals targeting GEF-6 signatory programme on islands invasive alien species.

10. The workshop produced 15 draft proposals by participants. The report of the workshop is at <http://www.cbd.int/doc/?meeting=IASWS-2014-01>.

11. Draft proposals included:

(a) Strengthening National Frameworks for and Management of Invasive Alien Species (IAS), along with Prevention of Entry of IAS for Antigua and Barbuda and Revitalizing Redonda (Antigua and Barbuda);

(b) Decreasing the Impact of Invasive Alien Species in the Bahamas (Bahamas);

(c) Prevention, Control and Management of Invasive Alien Species (IAS) in Ecuador with a focus on National Protected Areas (Ecuador);

(d) Eradication of selected Alien Invasive Species from the state of Grenada. This proposal was further elaborated by the Government and a new title is 'Assessment, Coordination and Workshop Implementation on IAS for the General Awareness in the Dominican Republic to Prevent Invasive Alien Species Introduction' (Grenada);

(e) Managing IAS impacting endemics and livelihoods and strengthening Jamaica's capacity for Biosecurity (Jamaica);

(f) Enhancing Resilience against Invasive Alien Species in Maldives (Maldives);

(g) Enhancing the Prevention, Control and Management of Invasive Alien Species in vulnerable ecosystems of Micronesia (Republic of Palau, Republic of the Marshall Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, Territory of Guam, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands);

(h) Pacific Regional Project for Smart Capacity Development and Mainstreaming IAS Financing (Pacific Region);

(i) Development of an invasive species policy and strategy (Sao Tome and Principe);

(j) Management adaptations to increase ecosystem resilience of Seychelles UNESCO World Heritage Sites (Seychelles);

(k) Development of an invasive species policy and strategy (Saint Kitts and Nevis);

(l) Reducing impacts of invasive species (Saint Lucia);

(m) Vanuatu's Inter Island Biosecurity Project and implementation of the National Invasive Species Strategy and Action Plan (Vanuatu);

(n) Integrating Invasive Species Prevention and Management into Protected Areas Management in Micronesia (Palau, FSM, RMI, Guam, CNMI);

(o) Identification of IAS for Singapore (Singapore);

(p) Promotion d'un programme de gestion intégrée de lutte contre les espèces exotiques envahissantes en Union des Comores (Comoros).

12. The workshop also identified the following common challenges that SIDS potentially face to achieve Target 9 include:

(a) Limited border control capacity to prevent entry of potentially invasive alien species;

(b) Limited expertise to identify invasive alien species;

(c) Limited capacity to conduct risk analysis;

(d) Limited human resources and technical expertise to eradicate or control invasive alien species;

(e) That many of the invasive alien species most damaging to biodiversity, agriculture and tourism, primarily invasive mammals, already occur in SIDS and the only way to reduce their impact is through eradication and control, combined with preventive measures to stop future reintroductions;

(f) Unsustainable financial resources to manage invasive alien species;

(g) Dependency on overseas expertise.

13. The workshop also identified some of the favourable aspects in the prevention of the introduction and management of invasive alien species in SIDS including:

(a) Limited number of entry points of alien species (sea and air ports);

(b) Management of pathways of introduction of alien species can be focused on international trade/border controls;

(c) Additionally, robust networks and collaborations have been established between SIDS and experts at the global and regional levels, and, if funding becomes available, capacity will be further enhanced.

14. The workshop concluded that:

(a) Further coordination of relevant sectors (such as trade, border controls, transport) at the national level has to be facilitated;

(b) Sharing of experiences on management of common pathways of invasive alien species may lead to collaboration and harmonization of measures among neighbouring SIDS;

(c) Coordination of available expertise within the country or region and remote countries is needed to maximize the use of funds and opportunities for capacity-building and to avoid duplication of efforts in development of tools and project proposals;

(d) Best practices, case studies and experiences of failures of and challenges to invasive alien species management are equally important to share at the regional and global levels for SIDS where available expertise is limited;

(e) Capacity building needs in management of invasive alien species and species identification is high in all SIDS. Additional workshops, trainings and mentoring for on the ground officials will help ensure that technology is transferred and the results of this transfer are sustained;

(f) To sustain the projects for long-term scientific expertise need to be established within the region.

15. Taking into account the findings above, technical experts and the GEF implementing partner organizations (the Group) that have provided assistance to the capacity-building workshop continue to exchange information on how to maximize the efficiency of various independent support measures for SIDS to attain the necessary capacity to achieve Aichi Biodiversity Target 9 on invasive alien species.

16. To further facilitate capacity development for SIDS, the Group¹ felt that an international mechanism is required to enhance coordination among the SIDS Governments, donors, international organizations and the Secretariat of the CBD. The Group also noted that technical and scientific capacity is critical importance for development of capacity in SIDS. A main function of this international coordination mechanism will, therefore, be to broker the matching of the capacity needs of SIDS Parties with the most suitable capacity development supporters and donors.

17. Sustaining the supporting activities of capacity development is also important. There are strong needs for human resources that cannot be replaced by tools (e.g. providing training, communication, data management). The coordination mechanism should also provide appropriate opportunity for individuals or organization to enhance the efficiency of their support for capacity development and sustainability of such function.

18. The Group also urged that the mechanism should be flexible and cost effective, and respectful for the supporting organizations' strength in their expertise to maximize the efficiency of their support and avoid duplication or unnecessary competition for funding.

19. The following section (a) describes how to operationalize such a coordination mechanism with minimal cost implications; and (b) sets out provisional activities between 2014 and 2020.

II. INTERNATIONAL ISLANDS INITIATIVE FOR ACHIEVING AICHI BIODIVERSITY TARGET 9 ON INVASIVE ALIEN SPECIES

A. Vision and goals of the International Islands Initiative

a. Vision

20. Biodiversity and human life on every island are protected from invasive alien species and the value of island biodiversity continues to contribute sustainable development of islands.

b. Goals

21. To develop capacity for long-term invasive alien species management in small island developing States.

22. To prevent the introduction, establishment and spread of invasive alien species.

23. To manage already established priority invasive alien species and minimize their impacts.

24. To make progress in small island developing States to achieve Aichi Biodiversity Target 9 by 2020.

B. Partners of the initiative and their roles in the initiative

25. Participation in the initiative is voluntary. Partners of the initiative include the following entities, but not limited to:

(a) The Governments of SIDS that are willing to develop their capacity to manage invasive alien species and enhance the attained capacity through national investment and international cooperation in longer term;

(b) Technical and scientific expert organizations in invasive alien species;

(c) Environment financial institutions;

(d) Official development aid agencies;

(e) Private companies that are operating their business in SIDS e.g. tourism, trade, transport, waste management, aquaculture, fisheries and others;

(f) Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity.

26. Each Partner will contribute within their mandates to achieve the goals of this initiative by providing their expertise, funding or opportunities to support capacity development within the organizations' mandates. Although Partnership partners have diverse mandates, the Partnership's services are primarily intended to support SIDS who are carrying strong political will to the effective implementation of Article 8(h), Aichi Biodiversity Target 9 (invasive alien species), and the various decisions under the CBD pertaining to the prevention, eradication, and control of invasive alien species.

27. The initiative partners will continue to assist SIDS with the development of project proposals to address invasive alien species, building on the first opportunity of project development organized by the Secretariat of the CBD at the capacity-building workshop for small island developing States to achieve Aichi Biodiversity Target 9 on invasive alien species, Montreal, Canada, on 14 and 15 June 2014 (<http://www.cbd.int/doc/?meeting=IASWS-2014-01>).

28. The initiative will also facilitate technical and scientific cooperation and technology transfer to manage invasive alien species in SIDS and the needed capacity-building actions to identify alien species, assess risk of invasion, and intercept their entry at ports and for early detection and rapid response, including eradication. The initiative should include the provision of trainings for the national border officials and environment managers through the projects.

29. As described in section I, the capacity-building workshop enhanced communication among Parties, technical and scientific experts, donors and their implementing partners to design projects with exchange of experiences and up-to-date technical tools and information between neighboring SIDS. The participants strongly requested the Secretariat to continue such exchange to further elaborate the project proposals and to find opportunities to access funding to sustain their efforts. It was suggested that developing technical and scientific expertise that is currently not sufficient in most of SIDS Parties should be implemented at the regional level. The experts expressed that their knowledge and experience in invasive alien species management should be further extended for use by a wider range of regions (e.g. biosecurity measures in the Pacific, and information accessible through the Global Invasive Alien Species Information Partnership).

30. The activities of the initiative will be built with continuous project development driven by Parties. For example, project proposals to the Global Environment Facility 6th cycle, programme 4 on invasive alien species and other relevant funding resources that are supporting improvement of control of

agricultural pests or diseases of animals and humans can also be in this initiative in the context of biosecurity on islands.

31. The Secretariat of the CBD continues to facilitate project development with partner organizations and the GEF implementing partners under the initiative. The partner organizations that have the technical and scientific expertise are encouraged to share and transfer their knowledge, technology and skills through the projects and fill the gap of expertise in SIDS.

32. In this process enhancing activities of regional centres of expertise in collaboration with global experts would be effective as a way of sharing and transferring the necessary technology to every SIDS Party. The islands within a region share biogeographic zones and pathways of introduction of alien species (air and water transports between the islands) and it is reasonable to take steps with common stakeholders and their interests at the regional level.

33. The initiative will not develop a physical body or secretariat for coordination. Rather information on capacity needs of expertise in SIDS and potential collaborators to fill gaps will be exchanged in electronic form. A web-based coordination platform could be established at the Secretariat of the CBD.

34. Capacity development and technology transfer are conducted under the projects that will be developed through the initiative and funded by the partner donors. Cost of physical meetings and opportunities for trainings, seminar, and educational events should be a part of project finance that is proposed by partners. The initiative will not function as a funding donor by itself but will apply coordination and collaboration opportunities for implementation.

35. Any organization or other entity that provides capacity development support and could help maximize the ability of SIDS to achieve Aichi Biodiversity Target 9 on invasive alien species is welcome to become a partner of the initiative.

36. The initiative would provide a flexible coordination mechanism during the period from 2014 and 2020 and its effectiveness would be reviewed and means of coordination could be adjusted in due course.

a. Web based coordination platform

37. In accordance with Article 18 of the Convention on Biological Diversity and the relevant recommendations of the fifth meeting of Ad Hoc Open-ended Working Group on the Review of Implementation of the Convention relevant to technical and scientific cooperation (UNEP/CBD/WGRI/5/11), the Secretariat of the CBD provides opportunities for SIDS to express their capacity development needs to achieve Aichi Biodiversity Target 9 on invasive alien species through the function of a clearing-house mechanism to find existing expertise providers that can support the capacity development, as well as sources for funding, if necessary.

38. The match making for the initiative may be composed of the following three elements:

- (a) Project proposals from SIDS Party (Parties) or the partner(s);
- (b) Offers of expertise, tools, sharing best practices including training and mentoring to enable their application if the project is funded;
- (c) Offers of funding from interested donors.

39. Capacity needs to achieve Aichi Biodiversity Target 9 may include:

- (a) Technical capacity for project development;
- (b) Technical and scientific capacity to identify priority invasive and potentially invasive alien species;

- (c) Technical and scientific capacity to analyse the risks of biological invasions;
- (d) Technical and scientific capacity to enhance border control measures;
- (e) Technical and scientific capacity to eradicate or control invasive alien species;
- (f) Technical and scientific capacity to digitize, maintain, update and share invasive alien species information on the internet;
- (g) Technical and scientific capacity to improve surveillance on invasive alien species;
- (h) Technical and scientific capacity to improve readiness to respond to new invasive alien species incursions.

40. Offers of expertise, tools, sharing best practices including training and mentoring to enable their application can be made by the organizations that signed a memorandum of cooperation with the Secretariat of the CBD as partners of the Convention. For example, the memoranda of cooperation for the Global Invasive Alien Species Information Partnership, Consortium of Scientific Partnership for Biodiversity and others. The members of the Inter-agency Liaison Group on Invasive Alien Species may also be invited.

41. Offers of funding are open for the Governments, international donors, private donor foundations and business sector. The business sector which operates the business on islands or at ports on islands will be welcomed.

42. Web based platform will be developed on the experience of LifeWeb Initiative of the Secretariat of the CBD, subject to funding.

b. Ad hoc workshops

43. The Secretariat of the CBD, partners of the initiative and any other organizations invited by the Executive Secretary could organize workshops to develop projects or writing project proposals at regional or global levels, subject to funding. The regional centres of expertise are invited to organize such workshops.

44. The partners of the initiative will be encouraged to support project development process of the SIDS after the workshop, as needed and as appropriate.

c. Meetings of SBSTTA and COP to be held in 2014-2020

45. The partners may meet in the margins of statutory meetings of the CBD to exchange information to ensure the progress of the projects developed through the initiative for the objective of achieving Aichi Biodiversity Target 9.

46. The partners of the initiative may meet and review the effectiveness of the initiative and adjust or improve technical efficiency of the operating projects by collaboration among the Parties, participating technical experts or implementing partners and report to SBSTTA.

47. If necessary, such meetings may produce suggestions to the Executive Secretary for consideration in the scope of facilitating the process of achieving Aichi Biodiversity Targets.

C. Provisional activities in 2014-2020

48. Based on the findings of the capacity-building workshop for small island developing States to achieve Aichi Biodiversity Target 9 on invasive alien species some provisional activities of the initiative were suggested by the Group¹ as follows:

(a) Consultation with the Governments of small island developing States, technical experts, potential donors in the margins of the twelfth meeting of the Conference of Parties on the initiative;

(b) Continuous support for project development in collaborative action among the Government of small island developing States, technical experts and potential donors, as appropriate.

(c) Implementation of web based mechanism for coordination and collaboration;

(d) Facilitation of regional actions for project implementation once the project is funded;

(e) Exchange of information on the progress of project implementation;

(f) Facilitation on review of progress of the initiative with appropriate indicators;

(g) Facilitation of review process on achievement of Aichi Biodiversity Target 9, taking into account the national, regional and global indicators relevant to Target 9.

49. In the margins of twelfth meeting of the Conference of the Parties (COP) this initiative will provide an important component of the Island Resilience Campaign and organize a presentation at Rio Pavilion and a side event with potential partners for the Initiative.

50. Additional events would be linked to major events and conferences of particular relevance to SIDS.

D. Expected outcomes by 2020

51. The initiative and possible projects developed and driven by SIDS Parties may produce tangible outputs as they are proposed to achieve Aichi Biodiversity Target. Moreover, the expected outcome from each project could become assets for SIDS for long term activities that sustain their capacity to manage invasive alien species. The expected outcomes may include:

(a) Project development on invasive alien species becomes regular action of national environment measure in SIDS and expand the projects towards climate change adaptation and waste management in SIDS;

(b) List of priority alien species that can be shared among neighboring SIDS countries facilitating harmonization of measures at the regional level and regionally standardized methods of prevention, eradication or control;

(c) Technology for prevention, eradication or control will be transferred to SIDS and sustainable project development can occur at the national level;

(d) Participation of the business sector in project development and funding will facilitate responsible international trade, transport and tourism to be in place;

(e) The experience of the projects will be widely shared and it will also help populate the Global Invasive Alien Species Information Partnership mechanisms to support other countries and regions to address invasive alien species;

(f) Project development will mobilize funds to SIDS and achieve Aichi Biodiversity Target 9 on invasive alien species as well as Target 20 (mobilization of funds from all sources).

(g) Overall improvement of technical capacity in SIDS makes SIDS champions of invasive alien species management and further helps to achieve other Targets such as on biodiversity loss (Target 12), protected areas (Target 11), and sustainable agriculture, forestry and fisheries (Target 7). In addition, such achievement may positively influence to progress on achieving Target 1 on public awareness on

value of biodiversity and Target 4 on taking steps for sustainable production and consumption by the Government, business and stakeholders.

E. Review of implementation

52. Review of the effectiveness of this initiative has to be conducted in an objective manner. Indicators of effectiveness may help this process in view of achieving Aichi Biodiversity Target 9. Some measurable indicators may include:

- (a) Number of SIDS that GEF-6 project proposals were submitted/funded;
- (b) Number of SIDS that project proposals were funded through the web-based platform for coordination;
- (c) Number of SIDS that identified priority invasive alien species are managed;
- (d) Number of islands where prioritized invasive species are eradicated;
- (e) Number of SIDS where border controls at ports cover the prioritized invasive alien species to be intercepted.

53. The indicators above are provisional as the initiative is still in a consultation stage.
