



**Convention on
Biological Diversity**

Distr.
GENERAL

UNEP/CBD/SBI/1/INF/39
31 March 2016

ENGLISH ONLY

SUBSIDIARY BODY ON IMPLEMENTATION

First meeting

Montreal, Canada, 2-6 May 2016

Item 13 of the provisional agenda*

**ANALYSIS OF THE NATIONAL REPORTING PROCESSES IN AGREEMENTS RELEVANT
FOR BIODIVERSITY – WITH EMPHASIS ON THE CONVENTION ON
BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY**

Note by the Executive Secretary

1. The Executive Secretary is circulating herewith, for the information of participants in the first meeting of the Subsidiary Body on Implementation, an analysis of the national reporting processes in agreements relevant for biodiversity with emphasis on the Convention on Biological Diversity. The document was prepared for and funded by the Federal Office for the Environment of Switzerland.
2. The document recognizes the potential for consolidating reporting across agreements relevant to biodiversity and for enhancing synergies on national reporting.
3. The document is being circulated in the form and language in which it was received.

* UNEP/CBD/SBI/1/1/Rev.1.



Analysis of the national reporting processes in agreements relevant for biodiversity – with emphasis on the CBD



Final version – March 2016
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Analysis of the national reporting processes in agreements relevant for biodiversity – with emphasis on the CBD

Prepared for and funded by the Federal Office for the Environment FOEN, International Affairs Division, Switzerland

Prepared February 2016

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Suggested citation: Wiedmer E., 2016: Analysis of the national reporting processes in agreements relevant for biodiversity – with emphasis on the CBD. NatureConsult Ltd, Federal Office for the Environment. Wahlendorf, Bern. 30pp.

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List of abbreviations and acronyms

ABSCH	Access and Benefit-sharing Clearing-house
AEWA	Agreement on the Conservation of African-Eurasian Migratory Waterbirds
Aquatic Warbler	Memorandum of Understanding concerning Conservation Measures for the Aquatic Warbler (<i>Acrocephalus paludicola</i>)
BCH	Biosafety Clearing-House
BISE	Biodiversity Information System for Europe
CBD	Convention on Biological Diversity
CHM	Clearing House Mechanism
CITES	Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora
CMS	Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals
COP	Conference of the Parties
EEA	European Environment Agency
EIA	Environmental impact assessment
EU	European Union
Eurobats	Agreement on the Conservation of Populations of European Bats
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
GBO	Global Biodiversity Outlook
GEF	Global Environment Facility
IAS	Invasive Alien Species
InforMEA	United Nations Information Portal on Multilateral Environmental Agreements
IUCN	International Union for Conservation of Nature
LMO	Living Modified Organism
MDGs	United Nations Millennium Development Goals
MOP	Meeting of the Parties
NGO	Non-governmental organization
NFP	National Focal Points
NBSAPs	National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans
ORS	Online Reporting System
PA	Protected Area
PGRFA	Plant genetic resources for food and agriculture
Ramsar Convention	Convention on Wetlands of International Importance especially as Waterfowl Habitat
Raptors	Memorandum of Understanding on the Conservation of Migratory Birds of Prey in Africa and Eurasia
RIS	Information Sheet on Ramsar Wetlands
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
SCBD	Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity
SFM	Sustainable Forest Management
SIB	Swiss Information System Biodiversity
SoWBFA	State of the World's Biodiversity for Food and Agriculture
TCT	Biodiversity 2020 Target Cross-Linking Tool
UNFCCC	United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change
UNFF	United Nations Forum on Forests
WHC	Convention Concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage

I. Introduction

Parties implement their international and regional environmental obligations in three distinct phases. First, by adopting national implementing measures; secondly, by ensuring that national measures are complied with by those subject to their jurisdiction and control; and, thirdly, by fulfilling obligations to the relevant entity¹, such as submitting information about the measures taken to give effect to international and regional obligations on a periodic basis (Table 1).

Table 1: Indicative overview of the periodicity of the reporting obligations.

Agreement	Cycle	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
UNFF	2 years	X		X		X		X
CMS	3 years	X			X			X
Ramsar (National Reports)	3 years	X			X			X
Eurobats	4 years*	X				X		
CBD	4 years*	X					X	
Aquatic Warbler	2 years*		X		X		X	
Bern Convention (Biennial Report)	2 years		X		X		X	
CITES (Biennial Report)	2 years		X		X		X	
AEWA	3 years		X			X		
Biosafety Protocol	4 years*		X				X	
Ramsar (Information Sheets)	6 years		X					
Raptors	tbd		X					
SoWBFA	tbd		X					
Bern Convention (Quadrennial Report)	4 years				X			
Nagoya Protocol (National Report) ²	tbd					X ³		
WHC	6 years						X	

* The periodicity of the meeting has become established practice, but is defined through CoP/MoP decisions.

This process of national reporting is, indeed, a core requirement for Parties and Signatories of agreements targeting biodiversity (Table 2). Normally the information is submitted by completing a report template adopted by the CoP/MoP or other bodies of an Agreement. National reports typically request information about:

- General information (enforcement authorities, national focal points, etc.)
- Legislative measures;
- Compliance measures (action plans, monitoring programmes, trade data, success-stories, etc.)
- Status trends of ecosystems, species, genetic diversity;
- Capacity building and awareness raising;
- Collaboration (at various levels);
- Financial information; and
- Areas of future work.

¹ Sands, P. (2003) Principles of international environmental law. Second edition, Cambridge University Press, 1116 pp.

² The periodicity of the reporting will be determined at COP/MOP 2 in 2016

³ A draft reporting template is included in document UNEP/CBD/NP/COP-MOP/1/3

The information submitted by countries serve multiple purposes. At the national level, national reports can be an important communication tool for increasing public awareness, conveying the urgency of the situation, and for taking action and mobilizing support from all sectors of society.⁴ National reports are a tool to assess and monitor the progress in implementing an obligation, and to plan future priorities for national action.

Within a convention or agreement, the data and information provided by countries are generally analysed and made accessible to relevant bodies of the convention/agreement in form of global, regional or thematic reports. These reports not only provide the opportunity to support the sharing of experiences, good practices, knowledge and lessons learnt between countries, but are likely to be of fundamental importance for identifying outstanding obstacles and progresses in achieving the goals of a convention/agreement and for the further development of a convention/agreement based on an informed decision-making process.

The number of conventions/agreements/protocols has increased over the past decades, bringing with them a substantial implementation and reporting burden in terms of human, financial and technical resources. A number of projects have tested approaches to streamline or harmonize national reporting in order to reduce the reporting burden as well as for improve the quality of the reports for users (coherent data and analysis).⁵ The effectiveness of national reports for the monitoring of the implementation of an agreement as well as regarding the efficiency of their establishment by parties/signatories to a large extent depend from an adequate design of the reporting guidelines and the reporting format. General principles for good guidelines/useful national reports include:

- National reports are a tools supporting the implementation of an agreement, and therefore draw on data and information that national focal points should already have access to;
- Duplication in relation to the submission of information already made available are prevented, by not requesting again information that is already available;
- Parties/signatories make information available in a form supporting the elaboration of regional/global/thematic synthesis reports;
- Information is submitted in a form supporting the sharing of information with other agreements and processes, and the reuse of the information for subsequent reports.

The CBD CoP requested the Executive Secretary to develop a proposal on guidelines for the sixth national report.⁶ The proposal should take into account the types of information from the fifth national reports used in the preparation of the fourth edition of the Global Biodiversity Outlook and gaps that have been identified. CBD CoP further requests the Executive Secretary to explore the potential for a more coherent reporting framework with other biodiversity-related conventions to improve access to relevant data for the implementation of the Convention and to reduce the

⁴ SCBD: National reports (factsheet)

⁵ Document UNEP/CBD/NP/COP-MOP/1/3

⁶ CBD CoP decision XII/1, para. 9(a)

reporting burden on Parties, and make use of the experiences from this work when preparing proposals for the sixth national report.⁷

The Subsidiary Body will, at its 20th meeting (25 – 29 April 2016 – Montreal, Canada), be invited to address the technical considerations underlying the proposed guidelines for the sixth national reports. The advice of the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice will inform the Subsidiary Body on Implementation in its preparation of a recommendation to the Conference of the Parties, including draft guidelines.⁸

Table 2: Reporting obligations as specified in the texts of biodiversity related agreements.

Agreement	Reporting provisions
AEWA: Article 5.1(c)	Each Party shall prepare for each ordinary session of the Meeting of the Parties, ... a report on its implementation of the Agreement with particular reference to the conservation measures it has undertaken. ... Each report shall be submitted to the Agreement secretariat not less than one hundred and twenty days before the ordinary session of the Meeting of the Parties for which it has been prepared, and copies shall be circulated forthwith to the other Parties by the Agreement secretariat.
Aquatic Warbler MoU: Article 6	Provide to the CMS Secretariat at least every two years, by 31 March of the respective year, a report on implementation of this Memorandum of Understanding in each of the respective countries. The Secretariat will transmit to each of the Range States and the Co-operating Organisation all of the reports received, together with an overview report that it will compile on the basis of information at its disposal.
Bern Convention: Article 9.2	The Parties shall report every two years to the Standing Committee on the exceptions made. Under the preceding paragraph. These reports must specify: the populations which are or have been subject to the exceptions and, when practical, the number of specimens involved; the means authorised for the killing or capture; the conditions of risk and the circumstances of time and place under which such exceptions were granted; the authority empowered to declare that these conditions have been fulfilled, and to take decisions in respect of the means that may be used, their limits and the persons instructed to carry them out; and the controls involved.
Biosafety Protocol ⁹ : Article 33	Each Party shall monitor the implementation of its obligations under this Protocol, and shall, at intervals to be determined by the Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to this Protocol, report to the Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to this Protocol on measures that it has taken to implement the Protocol.
CBD ¹⁰ : Article 26	Each Contracting Party shall, at intervals to be determined by the Conference of the Parties, present to the Conference of the Parties, reports on measures which it has taken for the implementation of the provisions of this Convention and their effectiveness in meeting the objectives of this Convention.
CITES: Article VIII.7	Each Party shall prepare periodic reports on its implementation of the present Convention and shall transmit to the Secretariat: (a) an annual report containing a summary of the information specified in sub-paragraph (b) of paragraph 6 of this Article; and (b) a biennial report on legislative, regulatory and administrative measures taken to enforce the provisions of the present Convention.
CMS: Article VI.3	The Parties which are Range States for migratory species listed in Appendix I or Appendix II should inform the Conference of the Parties through the Secretariat, at least six months prior to each ordinary meeting of the Conference, on measures that they are taking to implement the provisions of this Convention for these species.
Eurobats: Article VI	Each Party shall present to each meeting of the Parties an up-to-date report on its implementation of this Agreement. It shall circulate the report to the Parties not less than 90 days before the opening of the ordinary meeting.

⁷ CBD CoP decision XII/29, para 6

⁸ UNEP/CBD/SBSTTA/20/1/ADD1: Annotations to the Provisional Agenda (item 11)

⁹ Article 20 establishes a Biosafety Clearing-House to facilitate the exchange of scientific, technical, environmental and legal information on, and experience with LMOs, and to assist Parties to implement the Protocol

¹⁰ Article 18.3 establishes a Clearing-House Mechanism to promote and facilitate technical and scientific cooperation

Agreement	Reporting provisions
ITPGRFA Article 17.3	17.3 The Contracting Parties shall cooperate with the Commission on Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture of the FAO in its periodic reassessment of the state of the world's plant genetic resources for food and agriculture in order to facilitate the updating of the rolling Global Plan of Action referred to in Article 14.
Nagoya Protocol ¹¹ : Article 29	Each Party shall monitor the implementation of its obligations under this Protocol, and shall, at intervals and in the format to be determined by the Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to this Protocol, report to the Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to this Protocol on measures that it has taken to implement this Protocol.
Ramsar: Rec. 2.1 (1984)	The recommendation recommends that all Parties should submit detailed national reports (NRs) to the Bureau at least six months prior to each ordinary meeting of the Conference of the Parties.
Raptors MoU: Article 15	At the first session, the Interim Coordinating Unit will present an overview report compiled on the basis of all information at its disposal pertaining to birds of prey. The first session will also adopt a format for and schedule of regular progress reports on implementing the strategies or equivalent measures.
UNFF: Resolution 2000/35, para 2(e)	Monitor and assess progress at the national, regional and global levels through reporting by Governments, as well as by international and regional organizations, institutions and instruments, and on this basis consider future actions needed;
WHC: Article 29(1):	The States Parties to this Convention shall, in the reports which they submit to the General Conference of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization on dates and in a manner to be determined by it, give information on the legislative and administrative provisions which they have adopted and other action which they have taken for the application of this Convention, together with details of the experience acquired in this field.

Objective and aim of this report

The objective of this report is to provide the technical basis for the definition of the Swiss negotiation position regarding future national reporting under the CBD as well as other conventions relevant for global biodiversity.

This report focuses on the following conventions and treaties: Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), Cartagena Protocol, Nagoya Protocol, Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES), Convention on Migratory Species (CMS), African-Eurasian Waterbird Agreement (AEWA), Eurobats, Aquatic Warbler MoU, Raptors MoU, International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture (ITPGRFA), Ramsar Convention on Wetlands and World Heritage Convention (WHC). Further, the reporting process for the first report on the State of the World's Biodiversity for Food and Agriculture (SoWBFA), prepared under the guidance of the Commission on Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture of the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) is taken into account.

The report is aimed at developing a set of practical proposals supporting the preparation of the reporting guidelines for the CBD 6th National Report including suggestions of useful instruments that could be used, such as databases, reporting formats, indicators, CHM, etc.

¹¹ Article 14 establishes an Access and Benefit-sharing Clearing-House for sharing of information related to access and benefit-sharing

II. Analysis of the CBD guidelines

National reports are periodic reports provided by Parties to a convention/agreement/process. These reports address a number of issues, including the status and trends of biodiversity at the national level, the implementation of national biodiversity strategies and action plans, the mainstreaming of biodiversity, as well as the successes and challenges encountered.

Introducing the CBD guidelines for the 5th National Report

The objective of the CBD 5th national report was, besides allowing the Conference of the Parties to keep the implementation of the Convention under review, to provide a key source of information for a mid-term review of the implementation of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020, which was undertaken at the twelfth meeting of the CoP.

To achieve this goal, the guidelines for the national report¹² propose that the report be composed of three main parts, with Part III drawing upon the information in the first two parts of the report to analyse how national actions taken to implement the Convention are contributing to relevant strategic goals and the Aichi Biodiversity Targets as well as to the Millennium Development Goals. The three Parts are:

- Part I - An update on biodiversity status, trends, and threats and implications for human well-being.
- Part II - The national biodiversity strategy and action plan (NBSAP), its implementation, and the mainstreaming of biodiversity.
- Part III - Progress towards the 2015 and 2020 Aichi Biodiversity Targets and contributions to the relevant 2015 Targets of the Millennium Development Goals.

Annexes to the national report are used to provide detailed or supporting information that is not necessary in the main report, including information on the reporting party and the preparation of the report (appendix I), further sources of information (appendix II) and on national implementation of the thematic programmes of work under the CBD or decisions of the COP related to cross cutting issues (appendix III).

For the clarification of the information to be provided in the three parts, the guidelines include a set of 12 general questions, with some key guidance notes. Further, a resource manual for the fifth national report provides suggestions on the scale of reporting, and some tables, graphics and indicators that countries could use for analyses.

Further, the Secretariat of the CBD (SCBD) published a resource manual¹³, a complementary and supportive tool to assist parties in gaining a clearer idea of what information could be included in the fifth national report and where and how to gather relevant information.

¹² CBD: National Reports Guidelines, <https://www.cbd.int/reports/guidelines/default.shtml>

¹³ CBD: Fifth National Reports Resource Manual, <https://www.cbd.int/nr5/resource-manual/default.shtml>

Developments since the 5th National Report

CBD CoP-12 underscored the importance of a coherent and mutually supportive approach regarding exchange of information (among others) in support of the implementation the objectives of the Convention and its Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020. CBD CoP requested the Executive Secretary to continue developing the information services of the central clearing-house mechanism, including (a) the establishment of a fully functional online reporting tool enabling Parties to submit, on a voluntary basis, information on their progress towards national targets and the Aichi Biodiversity Targets, directly involving Parties in the development and testing of this tool; (b) Interoperability with national clearing-house mechanisms, among which is the existing portal toolkit used by many national and regional clearing-house mechanisms, where applicable; (c) Interoperability with InforMEA to allow relevant information on the Convention on Biological Diversity to be globally searchable on the InforMEA website.¹⁴

Since then, an Information Submission Services has been established, including a CBD Online Reporting Tool¹⁵ for the online submission of national targets and national indicators. The CBD Online Reporting Tool could be further developed to serve the global assessment of the 2020 Aichi Biodiversity Targets.

III. Formats for the submission of information

The initial purpose of national reports is the provision of information and data for the assessment of the state of implementation a convention/agreement/strategic plan. In the case of SoWBFA, the country reports aim at contributing to the establishment of a global baseline on biodiversity for food and agriculture (see introduction).

Most agreements organise their reporting obligation in a **periodical reporting cycle** serving the conferences/meetings of parties (*CBD, CMS, AEWA, Raptors, Eurobats, Aquatic Warbler, WHC*).

Several agreements have established **multiple reporting channels** to this purpose. Multiple reporting channels allow the timely submission of information/data on the one hand or according to timeframes exceeding the periodicity of CoPs/MoPs where the period of information/data update is larger. For instance, *CITES* trade data are submitted on an annual basis, whereas institutional information is reported on a biennial basis. The *Cartagena* and *Nagoya Protocols* request information on trade as well as legal, scientific and administrative information to be submitted continuously through the Clearing-House Mechanism (CHM), whereas information on the implementation of the Protocol's articles is submitted in form of a national report. The *Ramsar Convention*, on the other hand, has established a three year reporting cycle targeting information on national implementation efforts and a six-year cycle for detailed information on protected areas of international importance designated under the convention.

National information is usually reported using **questionnaires including further techniques to standardise the information** such as tick-boxes, predefined answers and tables or scoring systems.

¹⁴ CBD CoP decision XII/2, para 18

¹⁵ CBD Online Reporting Tool: <https://chm.cbd.int>

Questionnaires usually include narrative boxes that allow Parties giving further information and/or setting the scene for the information provided according to national needs and priorities. A purely **narrative reporting format** was used by the CBD for the 4th and 5th national reports as well as by the Bern Convention for the quadrennial report.

Both approaches, based on a questionnaire or a narrative format, have strengths and weaknesses:

Table 3: Strengths and weaknesses of reporting using a questionnaire.

From a reporter's perspective:	From a secretariat's perspective:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> + Facilitates the coordination and allocation of questions between stakeholders; + Tends to be easier to complete, requiring less time and effort; + Answers are potentially in blocks or modules that can also be reused for reporting under other conventions; - Tabular reports are not suited for awareness raising; - Reports may be even longer than narrative ones because of the breakdown of complex issues. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> + Secretariat are more likely to get all the information needed; + Information can be more easily analysed and compared.

Table 4: Strengths and weaknesses of a narrative reporting format.

From a reporter's perspective:	From a secretariat's perspective:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> + Increased ownership of the national authorities and stakeholders; + Stakeholders show a pronounced willingness to contribute to or to review a well-structured narrative report; + Compendium of relevant information that can be referenced; - Resource intensive and time consuming production process; - With the existing guidelines (CBD 4th and 5th national reports), the reports are too long to be used for awareness raising activities; - Less easy to recycle information for use in reporting to other conventions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> + Huge amount of information, ideally well documented and illustrated; - Reports do not necessarily include the information/data needed for a global/regional analysis and synthesis; - Information/data are presented in a form not necessarily supporting data aggregation and analysis in a systematic manner; - Highly resource intensive to analyse and synthesize the information received.

IV. Comparison of the categories of information

National reporting is a dynamic process with the structure and content of the reporting formats evolving according to the implementation of an agreement with its strategic plan, the decisions of the CoP/MoP, the successes achieved, the obstacles encountered or emerging issues identified. At the same time, because of the cross-cutting nature of the Aichi Biodiversity Targets, all reports from the different agreements, contribute information relevant to them in one way or another (Table 5).

Table 5: Indicative overview of the categories of information being requested for national reporting as well as their relevance for the Aichi targets. The categories of information provided in the table have been determined according to the headings/subheadings of the report templates.

Agreement	Types of information requested	Aichi Targets
AEWA	General/institutional information (NFP), Status of waterbirds (2012), Status non-native waterbirds (2015), species conservation (legal measures, action plans, emergency measures, introductions (IAS)), Habitat conservation (inventories, conservation areas), management of human activities, research and monitoring, education and information, implementation of the AEWA at the regional level, climate change, avian influenza	4, 9, 10, 11, 12, 17, 19, 20
Aquatic Warbler	Legislation and policies (species and habitat protection, EIA, action plan), habitat conservation (status of habitats, management), potential habitats (management restoration), monitoring and research, awareness and funding.	1, 4, 12, 15, 17, 19, 20
Bern Convention (Biennial report)	According to Art. 9.2: the populations which are or have been subject to the exceptions and, when practical, the number of specimens involved; the means authorised for the killing or capture; the conditions of risk and the circumstances of time and place under which such exceptions were granted; the authority empowered to declare that these conditions have been fulfilled, and to take decisions in respect of the means that may be used, their limits and the persons instructed to carry them out; and the controls involved.	12, 17, 19
Cartagena Protocol (National report)	General provisions (regulations, instruments, staff), pharmaceuticals (art. 5, regulations), transit and contained use (art. 6), advanced informed agreement (art 7-10), LMOs used as food or feed (art. 11), review of decisions (art. 12), simplified procedure (art. 13), agreements (art. 14), risk assessment and management (art. 15-16), unintentional movements and emergency measures (art. 17), handling/ transport/packing (art. 18), national authorities (art. 19), BCH (art. 20), confidential information (art. 21), capacity building (art. 22), public awareness (art. 23), illegal transboundary movements (art. 25), socio-economic considerations (art. 26), liability and redress (art. 27), financial mechanism and resources (art. 28), monitoring reporting (art. 33).	17
Cartagena Protocol (BCH)	<i>National Records:</i> National Contacts, Laws and Regulations, Country's Decisions and other Communications, Roster of Experts. <i>Reference Records:</i> LMOs, Genetic elements or Organisms, Capacity-Building, Directory of International Organizations involved in Biosafety Activities, The BCH Virtual Library	17, 19
CBD	Update on biodiversity status, trends, and threats and implications for human well-being; national biodiversity strategy and action plan (NBSAP), its implementation, and the mainstreaming of biodiversity; Progress towards the 2015 and 2020 Aichi Biodiversity Targets and contributions to the relevant 2015 Targets of the Millennium Development Goals.	1-20
CITES (Biennial Report)	General information (agency), legislative and regulatory measures, compliance and enforcement measures, administrative measures.	1, 4, 12, 17, 19
CMS:	General information (NFP, relevant legislation, agreements signed), Appendix I species (general questions on species conservation, species specific questions and activities), general information on Appendix II species, national and regional priorities for the conservation and sustainable use	1, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 11, 12, 17, 20

Agreement	Types of information requested	Aichi Targets
	of migratory species, protected areas, satellite telemetry, awareness raising, resource mobilization, implementation of COP resolutions and recommendations.	
Eurobats	General information (authorities, compilation of the report), summary information about bats occurring in the country, population trends, Red Lists, habitats, threats, monitoring, Article III: legal measures and protected areas, public awareness; additional measures, programmes, pesticides; international cooperation, implementation of MoP resolutions.	1, 4, 5, 7, 8, 11, 12, 17
ITPGRFA	Laws, regulations procedures or policies (Article 4), conservation, exploration collection, characterisation, evaluation and documentation of PGRFA (Article 5), sustainable use of PGRFA (Article 6), national commitments and international cooperation (Article 7), Technical Assistance (Article 8), Farmers' Rights (Article 9), Coverage of the Multilateral System (Article 11), Facilitated access to PGRFA (Article 12), Benefit-sharing in the Multilateral System (Article 13), Global Plan of Action (Article 14), Ex Situ Collections of PGRFA (Article 15), International Plant Genetic Resources Networks (Article 16), Financial Resources (Article 18).	
Nagoya Protocol (National report)	Institutional structures; Legislative, administrative or policy measures, Fair and equitable benefit-sharing; Compliance with domestic legislation or regulatory requirements on ABS (Article 15 and Article 16) and monitoring the utilization of genetic resources (Article 17); Compliance with mutually agreed terms (Article 18); Special considerations (Article 8); Provisions related to indigenous and local communities (Articles 6, 7 and 12); Contribution to conservation and sustainable use (Article 9); Transboundary cooperation (Article 11); Model contractual clauses etc.; Awareness-raising and capacity (Article 21 and 22); Technology transfer, collaboration and cooperation; Optional additional information.	13, 16, 17, 18
Nagoya Protocol (ABS-CH)	Focal Points, competent national authorities; legislative, administrative or policy measures, checkpoints, international recognised certificate of compliance, checkpoint communiqués, national websites or databases, virtual library.	16, 17
Ramsar Convention (National Reports)	Institutional information (List of NFP), summary of national implementation (progress and challenges), indicator questions according to the strategic plan, implementation capacity according to the strategic plan.	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 7, 9, 11, 14, 15, 17, 18, 19, 20
Ramsar Convention (Information Sheets)	Site specific information: data & location, statements of reasons why a site is important (Ramsar criteria, lists of species), description of the ecological character of the site (including ecosystem services), site management, additional materials (reports, documents).	9, 10, 11, 12, 14, 18
Raptors:	Legislation (species conservation), protection and management of specific sites, habitat conservation and sustainable management, awareness raising, monitoring, supporting measures.	1, 5, 11, 12, 17, 19
SoWBFA:	Drivers of change, State and trends of biodiversity for food and agriculture, State of use of biodiversity for food and agriculture, State of interventions on conservation and use of biodiversity for food and agriculture, Future agendas for conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity for food and agriculture.	4, 8, 9, 10, 12, 13, 14, 17, 18
UNFF:	Development of legislation and policy instruments, efficiency of instruments, awareness raising on importance of forests, coordination for SFM, national forest policy/strategy, activities to reverse the loss of forest cover, stakeholder participation, financing SFM, payment for ecosystem services, private sector involvement, international cooperation, research institutes, public awareness, indicators, success stories, contribution to MDGs.	1, 2, 4, 5, 7, 17, 18, 19, 20
WHC: Article 29(1):	Section I: 1. Introduction, 2. Inventories/Lists/Registers for Cultural and Natural heritage, 3. Tentative List, 4. Nominations, 5. General Policy Development, 6. Status of Services for Protection, Conservation and Presentation, 7. Scientific and Technical Studies and Research, 8. Financial Status and Human Resources, 9. Training, 10. International Cooperation, 11. Education,	4, 5, 11, 14, 17, 19

Agreement	Types of information requested	Aichi Targets
	Information and Awareness Building, 12. Conclusions and Recommended Actions, 13. Assessment of the Periodic Reporting Exercise. <i>Section II:</i> 1. World Heritage Property Data, 2. Statement of Outstanding Universal Value, 3. Factors affecting the Property, 4. Protection, Management and Monitoring of the Property, 5. Summary and Conclusions, 6. Conclusions of the Periodic Reporting Exercise	

General approach to national reporting

The general structures of national reports are heterogeneous and in many cases is a mix of reporting against the objectives/articles of a convention including its strategic plan (Table 6). However, with the adoption of new strategic plans, aligned with the Aichi targets by CMS¹⁶, Ramsar¹⁷ and CITES¹⁸ (extension of the validity of the Strategic Vision and Action Plan until 2020) new opportunities for a more coherent approach to national reporting are created.

To make best use of the potential synergies, national reporting, the assessment of national reports as well as communication and outreach activities need to be closer coordinated in future. This especially applies to the assessment of the achievement of the Aichi targets in 2020. This could be achieved through the following:

- Coordinate national reporting frameworks among conventions supporting the Aichi targets, using the Aichi Targets as part of a more “coherent reporting framework”;¹⁹
- Define a common communication and outreach strategy;
- Increase opportunities for sharing reported information at national and international levels, so that it can be more effectively and efficiently used/re-used.

Categories of information with a high potential for consolidation

When comparing the information to be provided in national reports, it becomes apparent that comparable information is submitted through various reports (Table 6). Information with a high potential for consolidation among agreements include:

General information for country profiles: total land area, population, terrain, land use, importance of biodiversity, threats to biodiversity, climate, institutional and state-organisational character.

¹⁶ CMS COP Resolution 11.2: Strategic Plan for Migratory Species (2015-2023), Annex A

¹⁷ Ramsar Resolution XII.2: The 4th Strategic Plan 2016 – 2024, Annex 2

¹⁸ CITES Conf 16.3: CITES Strategic Vision: 2008-2020. See also: [Revised mapping of the CITES Strategic Vision: 2008–2020 objectives and the Aichi Targets in the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2010-2020.](#)

¹⁹ CBD CoP decision XII/29, para 6

General information about legislative/policy measures: legal framework for sustainable development, use of natural resources, conservation of ecosystems, species and genetic diversity, trade.

General information about strategies and planning: National strategies targeting biodiversity conservation / spatial planning / development, etc., Red List programmes, protected area system.

General information on compliance and enforcement measures: National targets and indicators, action plans for conservation of ecosystems, species and genetic diversity, management of protected areas/species, education programmes.

Cooperation: Cooperation among NFP at the national level, national networks, transboundary cooperation (e.g. protected area, river basin management, conservation programmes/activities etc.), regional cooperation (species action plans, data centres, capacity building etc.).

Table 6: Type of information to be submitted by Parties.

	AEWA	Aquatic Warbler	Bern Convention	Biosafety Protocol	CBD	CITES	CMS	Eurobats	ITPGRFA ²⁰	Nagoya Protocol ²¹	Ramsar	Raptors ²²	SoWBFA	UNFF	WHC
Structure to report against:			2	4											
Objective(s) of a convention				X	X						X		Na	X	X
Articles of a convention				X		X	X	X	X	X			Na		
Selected articles of a convention			X		X							X	Na		
Strategic plan/Action Plan	X	X			X	X	X				X	X	Na		
Decisions/Resolutions				X			X	X					Na		
Information to be provided:															
General/Institutional	X			X		X	X	X		X	X		X	X	X
Legislative/policy measures	X		X	X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Compliance and enforcement measures	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X		X	X
Conservation of Ecosystems		X		X	X			X			X		X	X	
Species conservation	X	X		X	X		X	X				X	X		
IAS	X			X	X						X		X		
Conservation of genetic resources					X				X				X		
Capacity building	X		X			X					X				
Cooperation	X	X		X		X	X		X	X	X		X	X	X
Financial information/incentive measures	X				X				X		X			X	
Priorities / areas of future Work						X	X						X		X
Case studies (success-stories)			X		X		X		X		X		X	X	X

²⁰ Standard reporting format pursuant to section v.1 of the procedures and operational mechanisms to promote compliance and address issues of non-compliance; included in Resolution 9/2013 Rev.1, annex 2

²¹ A draft reporting template is included in document UNEP/CBD/NP/COP-MOP/1/3

²² Preliminary draft format

V. Crosslinking national targets with Aichi targets

In 2010, CBD CoP-10 adopted the global Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011–2020 with its five goals and twenty Aichi Biodiversity Targets. The Strategic Plan was subsequently endorsed and/or supported by the governing bodies of other biodiversity-related conventions. For first time, a universal framework for action on biodiversity has therewith been agreed for all stakeholders.

The goals and targets of the global Strategic Plan for Biodiversity are expected to be reached through the implementation of National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans (NBSAPs), regional strategies and targets, as well as through the strategies and targets developed by other biodiversity-related conventions.

To this purpose the CBD CoP urged Parties to “**Develop national and regional targets, using the Strategic Plan and its Aichi Targets, as a flexible framework, in accordance with national priorities and capacities and taking into account both the global targets and the status and trends of biological diversity in the country, ...**”.²³

On 25 April 2012, the Federal Council adopted the Swiss Biodiversity Strategy, which was developed in the light of the global Strategic Plan for Biodiversity and its Aichi Targets (Table 7). During the elaboration of the CBD fifth National report it became apparent, that the initial mapping of the national goals to the Aichi targets produced apparently inconsistent results. Indeed, the crosslinking of targets between the national and the global level can be tricky due to the following issues:

- The Aichi targets aim at guiding the implementation of the strategic plan at the global level. Not all targets are equally relevant for each country (e.g. landlocked countries cannot create marine protected areas, and have an indirect impact on the conservation of coral reefs);
- With exception of Aichi target 20, all targets include multiple elements that might be mapped with multiple national targets (Table 8);
- Both global and national targets are worded in a rather open way so as to accommodate multiple stakeholders at all levels across various thematic fields, which leaves a number of targets open to multiple interpretations depending on circumstances;
- The NBSAPs do not necessarily include all national targets relevant for the implementation of the Aichi targets. Indeed, additional targets may have been defined through other national policies, strategies and programmes.

To avoid the mapping of apparently inconsistent targets, the following recommendations are put forward:

- Review the mapping of national versus global targets: the further development of policies as well as a deeper understanding may generate other results than the initial mapping (e.g. Table 7).
- Map the national targets against the Aichi target elements used in GBO-4 (see Table 8): the target elements provide a finer screen for the mapping and are likely to result in a better picture of the cross-mapping.
- Take into account national strategies other than NBSAPs: Relevant national targets might be included in other policies and/or strategies, or have been subsequently concluded.

²³ CBD CoP decision X/2, para 3b

- Organise the mapping according to primary and secondary interlinkages: Not each national target is of equal importance for an Aichi target.
- Include a brief rationale of the relevance of a cross-link: The relevance of a cross-link might become apparent through a brief description of the national circumstances and the actions planned.

Cross-linking strategic objectives between the national/regional and the global level is an important task. Indeed, a global overview of cross-linkages will provide evidence that countries are translating their commitment taken at CBD CoP-10 and reiterated by decisions/recommendations at various other CoPs/MoPs, into national policies. However,

Table 7: Proposal for a revised mapping of the Swiss national goals against the Aichi targets

(bold underlined refers to a new crosslink suggested; bold crossed-out refers to a weak relationship that could be waived)

Swiss Strategic Goal	Swiss national target	Related Aichi Target(s)
Strategic Goal 1	By 2020, the use of natural resources and interventions involving them are sustainable so that the conservation of ecosystems and their services and of species and their genetic diversity is ensured.	4, <u>3</u> , <u>6</u> , 7
Strategic Goal 2	By 2020, an ecological infrastructure consisting of protected and connected areas is developed. The state of threatened habitats is improved.	5, 8, 11, 14 , 15
Strategic Goal 3	By 2020, the conservation status of the populations of national priority species is improved and their extinction prevented insofar as possible. The spread of invasive alien species with the potential to cause damage is contained.	9, 12
Strategic Goal 4	By 2020, genetic impoverishment is decelerated and, if possible, halted. The conservation and sustainable use of genetic resources, including that of livestock and crops, is ensured.	13, 16
Strategic Goal 5	By 2020, the negative impacts of existing financial incentives on biodiversity are identified and avoided, if possible. Where appropriate, new positive incentives are created.	3
Strategic Goal 6	By 2020, ecosystem services are recorded quantitatively. This enables their consideration in the measurement of welfare as complementary indicators to gross domestic product and in regulatory impact assessments.	2, 3, <u>14</u> , <u>19</u> , 20
Strategic Goal 7	By 2020, sufficient knowledge about biodiversity is available to society and provides the basis for the universal understanding of biodiversity as a central pillar of life, and for its consideration in relevant decision-making processes.	1, 19
Strategic Goal 8	By 2020, biodiversity in settlement areas is promoted so that settlement areas contribute to the connection of habitats, settlement-specific species are conserved and the population is able to experience nature in the residential environment and in local recreational areas.	4, 7
Strategic Goal 9	By 2020, Switzerland's commitment to the conservation of global biodiversity at international level is strengthened.	6, 10, 16, 18 , 20
Strategic Goal 10	By 2020, the monitoring of changes in ecosystems and in species and genetic diversity is ensured.	17, 19

Table 8: Aichi Biodiversity Targets, broken down into their components.²⁴

Target	Aichi Target element(s)
	<p>1.1 People are aware of the values of biodiversity</p> <p>1.2 People are aware of the steps they can take to conserve and sustainably use biodiversity</p>
	<p>2.1 Biodiversity values integrated into national and local development and poverty reduction strategies</p> <p>2.2 Biodiversity values integrated into national and local planning processes</p> <p>2.3 Biodiversity values incorporated into national accounting, as appropriate</p> <p>2.4 Biodiversity values incorporated into reporting systems</p>
	<p>3.1 Incentives, including subsidies, harmful to biodiversity, eliminated, phased out or reformed in order to minimize or avoid negative impacts</p> <p>3.2 Positive incentives for conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity developed and applied</p>
	<p>4.1 Governments, business and stakeholders at all levels have taken steps to achieve, or have implemented, plans for sustainable production and consumption...</p> <p>4.2 ... and have kept the impacts of use of natural resources well within safe ecological limits</p>
	<p>5.1 The rate of loss of forests is at least halved and where feasible brought close to zero</p> <p>5.2 The loss of all habitats is at least halved and where feasible brought close to zero</p> <p>5.3 Degradation and fragmentation are significantly reduced</p>
	<p>6.1 All fish and invertebrate stocks and aquatic plants are managed and harvested sustainably, legally and applying ecosystem based approaches</p> <p>6.2 Recovery plans and measures are in place for all depleted species</p> <p>6.3 Fisheries have no significant adverse impacts on threatened species and vulnerable ecosystems</p> <p>6.4 The impacts of fisheries on stocks, species and ecosystems are within safe ecological limits, i.e. overfishing avoided</p>
	<p>7.1 Areas under agriculture are managed sustainably, ensuring conservation of biodiversity</p> <p>7.2 Areas under aquaculture are managed sustainably, ensuring conservation of biodiversity</p> <p>7.3 Areas under forestry are managed sustainably, ensuring conservation of biodiversity</p>
	<p>8.1 Pollutants (of all types) have been brought to levels that are not detrimental to ecosystem function and biodiversity</p> <p>8.2 Pollution from excess nutrients has been brought to levels that are not detrimental to ecosystem function and biodiversity</p>
	<p>9.1 Invasive alien species identified and prioritized</p> <p>9.2 Pathways identified and prioritized</p> <p>9.3 Priority species controlled or eradicated</p> <p>9.4 Introduction and establishment of IAS prevented</p>
	<p>10.1 Multiple anthropogenic pressures on coral reefs are minimized, so as to maintain their integrity and functioning</p>

²⁴ Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity (2014) Global Biodiversity Outlook 4. Montréal, 155 pages.

	10.2 Multiple anthropogenic pressures on other vulnerable ecosystems impacted by climate change or ocean acidification are minimized, so as to maintain their integrity and functioning
	11.1 At least 17 per cent of terrestrial and inland water areas are conserved 11.2 At least 10 per cent of coastal and marine areas are conserved 11.3 Areas of particular importance for biodiversity and ecosystem services conserved 11.4 Conserved areas are ecologically representative 11.5 Conserved areas are effectively and equitably managed 11.6 Conserved areas are well connected and integrated into the wider landscape and seascape
	12.1 Extinction of known threatened species has been prevented 12.2 The conservation status of those species most in decline has been improved and sustained
	13.1 The genetic diversity of cultivated plants is maintained 13.2 The genetic diversity of farmed and domesticated animals is maintained 13.3 The genetic diversity of wild relatives is maintained 13.4 The genetic diversity of socio-economically as well as culturally valuable species is maintained 13.5 Strategies have been developed and implemented for minimizing genetic erosion and safeguarding genetic diversity
	14.1 Ecosystems that provide essential services, including services related to water, and contribute to health, livelihoods and well-being, are restored and safeguarded ... 14.2 ... taking into account the needs of women, indigenous and local communities, and the poor and vulnerable
	15.1 Ecosystem resilience and the contribution of biodiversity to carbon stocks have been enhanced through conservation and restoration 15.2 At least 15 per cent of degraded ecosystems are restored, contributing to climate change mitigation and adaptation, and to combating desertification
	16.1 The Nagoya Protocol is in force 16.2 The Nagoya Protocol is operational, consistent with national legislation
	17.1 Submission of NBSAPs to Secretariat by (end of) 2015 17.2 NBSAPs adopted as effective policy instrument 17.3 NBSAPs are being implemented
	18.1 Traditional knowledge, innovations and practices of indigenous and local communities are respected 18.2 Traditional knowledge, innovations and practices are fully integrated and reflected in implementation of the Convention ... 18.3 ... with the full and effective participation of indigenous and local communities
	19.1 Knowledge, the science base and technologies relating to biodiversity, its values, functioning, status and trends, and the consequences of its loss, are improved 19.2 Biodiversity knowledge, the science base and technologies are widely shared and transferred and applied
	20 Mobilization of financial resources implementing the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011–2020 from all sources has increased substantially from 2010 levels

VI. Information and data for global and national assessment of the Aichi targets

Data for global assessment of the Aichi targets

The mid-term review of the achievement of the Aichi targets was conducted at two different levels:

- I. A review of the achievement of the Aichi targets at the national level through the fifth national reports, based on national targets and indicators as well as information on the development of the legal, strategic and programmatic framework;
- II. The global review (GBO-4) assessed the achievement of the Aichi targets based on national reports, indicator-based extrapolations of recent and current trends to 2020, model based scenarios to 2050 and scientific literature and other reports.

GBO-4 draws upon an analysis of only 64 national reports submitted in due time to SCBD. The very low return of reports on time is unsatisfactory and might reflect the very intensive and time consuming production process of the narrative reports (Table 4).²⁵

Regarding the global assessment towards the implementation of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020, the rate of timely returned national reports has to be increased significantly so as to provide a solid basis for the production of GBO-5. This could potentially be achieved by alleviating the reporting burden of Parties by organising national reporting using a questionnaire (Table 3), may be combined with online submission of information. Such a questionnaire consists of the following categories of information:

Contact data of National Focal Points and relevant organisations: Parties to the CBD were requested to update the contact information of National Focal points and relevant national organisations/institutions within the third national report for the last time. Even though the adjustment of contact information is a permanent task, it is noteworthy to remind Parties to do so. Indeed, this information is a prerequisite for an effective collaboration between SCBD and the Parties as well as among Parties. Further, the contact information feeds into InforMEA, an information tool drawing on the information provided by MEAs and making it accessible in a coherent manner.

NBSAPs and other relevant policies and approaches: The fourth and fifth national reports to the CBD emphasized NBSAPs. This is an important issue, as NBSAPs are the central instrument for the implementation of the Convention. However, NBSAPs might not cover all efforts implemented by a Party, as biodiversity strategies do not necessarily reflect the existing/entire biodiversity conservation framework, but may rather address gaps in the existing framework. It is therefore recommended to consider all relevant existing legal, strategic and programmatic activities.

Information on activities highlighting national compliance: Such activities often support more than one national target / Aichi target, and this must be considered in reporting formats and approaches. For example, if gathering the information using an online reporting tool, it is important to focus the common formats on the activities themselves (rather than on the target) and to provide the opportunity to map an activity to several targets.

Data on the state and trends of biodiversity at the national level: It is important to obtain an as detailed as possible overview on the state and trends of biodiversity, taking into account the circumstances of a country. It is recommended to request updates of national biodiversity assessments and illustrative case-studies on successes and failures in biodiversity conservation.

²⁵ 174 fifth national reports are submitted per February 2016. The analysis of the reports is still ongoing.

Indicators: The identification of global indicators is a challenging task. In order to support this task for the next period of a strategic plan, it is recommended for each Party to conduct an assessment of existing national indicators relevant for the implementation of the CBD.

Information on the contribution of national actions to the achievement of the Aichi targets: This is probably the most challenging part in designing a national reporting format, due to the fact that most Aichi targets are composed of several sub-targets and that the national data baseline will hardly allow for a quantitative assessment the achievement (e.g. the Swiss Red lists are updated every ten years only). Due to the lacking quantitative data, a qualitative approach is recommended, by mapping the information on national compliance activities (see above), biodiversity data (as far as available) and indicators with the Aichi targets. Based on the mapping, a narrative appreciation of the progress on the national level can be provided.

A self-assessment by Parties, based on icons as used in GBO-4, provides no added value as input to a global assessment, as any attempt to combine such national self-assessments will yield in highly questionable results.

Additional, national information

To date, Switzerland's national reports have been elaborated based on information published by federal authorities and data originating from federal data centres or federal monitoring programmes. Specific topics are illuminated using additional data sources, such as reports published by the Swiss Academy of Science and its Biodiversity Forum, publications from cantonal authorities as well as from NGOs.

This procedure is considered robust in terms of data quality (generally recognised high quality data sources), however, possesses also weaknesses. Indeed, it takes some time for emerging measures to be included into national programmes and some relevant processes at the subnational level might be of less priority at the national level.

In order to open up access to new sources of information, stakeholders from NGOs and the scientific community are in general consulted on draft national reports. In order to increase information from the sub-national level, it is recommended to also invite the 26 cantonal authorities to comment and complement national reports.

VII. Evaluation of synergies for national reporting

Synergies among international agreements and organisations

The call for synergies and the need for enhanced coordination and cooperation among the biodiversity-related conventions have been emphasized in policy for many years. Various assessments highlighted the common ground among agreements relevant for biodiversity, be it in terms of convention articles and/or decisions of the COP. In consequence joint bodies were established among secretariats and Memorandums of Cooperation/Understanding as well as joint work programs were concluded among secretariats. In 2011, 28 institutions committed themselves to contribute successful and timely implementation of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020.²⁶

²⁶ Memorandum of Cooperation between international Agencies, organisations and conventions and the Secretariat of the Convention on biological Diversity on the implementation of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011 – 2020 and the achievement of the 2020 Aichi Biodiversity Targets.

Despite this progresses and specifically the recognition of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 as a common goal, the creation and use of synergies in national reporting received little attention so far.²⁷ CBD CoP therefore requested the Executive Secretary to explore the potential for a more coherent reporting framework with other biodiversity-related conventions to improve access to relevant data for the implementation of the Convention and to reduce the reporting burden on Parties.²⁸

The assessment of the content of national reports delivered in recent years (Table 9) as well as the scheduling of the upcoming reporting cycles (Table 1) reveal a huge potential for increased collaboration for the assessment of the Aichi Targets until 2020 as well as the Sustainable Development Goals.

Table 9: Information relevant for the assessment of the Aichi Target included in reporting frameworks of biodiversity related agreements (other than the CBD). The mapping of the Aichi Targets with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) is based on the information provided by SCBD on importance of biodiversity to the issues addressed by each goal.²⁹ An analysis of the links between the Aichi Biodiversity Targets to the relevant targets from the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development is available in document UNEP/CBD/SBSTTA/19/INF/9.

Aichi Target	Assessment of the Aichi Targets: relevant information included in national reports	SDG
	<p>Aquatic Warbler: Activities implemented to raise awareness for conservation needs in favour of the Aquatic Warbler</p> <p>CMS: Actions to increase awareness of the relevance of CMS in the context of biodiversity conservation, list of activities implemented for education & awareness rising (per species listed in annex I)</p> <p>CITES: Detailed list on capacity building activities</p> <p>Eurobats: List of important activities to promote the awareness of the importance of bats</p> <p>Ramsar: Recognition of the role of the convention, list of activities, publications etc.</p> <p>Raptors: Activities to raise awareness for the conservation of bird of preys</p> <p>SoWBFA: List of education programmes</p> <p>UNFF: List of activities to raise importance of forests and SFM, list of actions to increase public awareness</p> <p>Assessment: Many national reports include information about awareness raising activities conducted by Parties. This information is useful for documenting awareness raising activities for selected parts of biodiversity, does, however, not provide a comprehensive overview. Additional information is needed.</p>	<p>Goal 1</p> <p>Goal 4</p> <p>Goal 11</p> <p>Goal 12</p>
	<p>CMS: Information on policies on economic development and land-use planning</p> <p>Ramsar (national report): List of research activities on valuation of ecosystem services</p> <p>Assessment: National reports for agreements relevant for biodiversity include few information for the assessment of Aichi target 2. Additional information from Parties need to be requested through the reporting format.</p>	<p>Goal 1</p> <p>Goal 2</p> <p>Goal 8</p> <p>Goal 9</p> <p>Goal 10</p> <p>Goal 11</p> <p>Goal 12</p> <p>Goal 15</p> <p>Goal 16</p> <p>Goal 17</p>

²⁷ UNEP-WCMC. 2015. Mapping Multilateral Environmental Agreements to the Aichi Biodiversity Targets. UNEP-WCMC, Cambridge.

²⁸ CBD CoP decision XII/29, para 6

²⁹ Convention on Biological Diversity: Sustainable Development Goals, www.cbd.int, visited March 2016

Aichi Target	Assessment of the Aichi Targets: relevant information included in national reports	SDG
	<p>Ramsar (national report): List of incentive measures encouraging wise use SoWBFA: Incentive measures – state and trends</p> <p>Assessment: Incentive measures are address within the CBD framework predominantly, the information base is not sufficient for a global assessment. Additional information from Parties need to be requested through the next reporting format.</p>	<p>Goal 1 Goal 2 Goal 7 Goal 12 Goal 14 Goal 16 Goal 17</p>
	<p>AEWA: Hunting practices, lead fishing, SEA/EIA, impact of powerlines and renewable energy Aquatic Warbler: EIA CITES: List of relevant legislation and regulations, description of permitting system CMS: List of relevant implemented legislation and national policy instruments, involvement of government departments/NGOs/private sector, Eurobats: Policy initiatives for bat conservation (e.g. training for forest managers and workers, code of practices for research, for pesticides/biocides, protection of bat roots, impact of wind turbines) Ramsar (national report): List of national policies, legislation and institutions, plans and projects to sustain and enhance wetlands in supporting/maintaining viable farming systems, involvement of the private sector SoWBFA: Detailed information on drivers of change and measures taken, list of programmes targeting sustainable use, list of practices negatively impacting biodiversity</p> <p>Assessment: Sustainable use of biodiversity is an important issue to many agreements and national reports include plenty of information on the promotion of sustainable practices in general. However, specific information on plans for sustainable production and consumption need to be requested through the next reporting format.</p>	<p>Goal 1 Goal 2 Goal 7 Goal 8 Goal 9 Goal 11 Goal 12</p>
	<p>CMS: Impact of habitat destruction on migratory species (birds, aquatic mammals, reptiles, terrestrial mammals, fish), list of actions taken to overcome these obstacles Eurobats: Consideration given to critical habitats (underground sites, bat roots in buildings, importance of the landscape), list of transboundary programmes for bat habitats Ramsar (national reports): Information on the implementation of integrated water resource management Raptors: Indications on management and sustainable use of habitats SoWBFA: State and trends of wild resources used for food, management practices impacting/in favour of biodiversity for food and agriculture, list of practices negatively impacting biodiversity, list of landscape based initiatives to protect/recognise areas of land UNFF: List of activities implemented to reverse loss of forest cover/ enhance quality of forests</p> <p>Assessment: Substantial information is available for migratory species (CMS family), Wetlands (Ramsar), forests (UNFF) and agriculture (SoWBFA). Information is deficient for mountain ecosystems and drylands.</p>	<p>Goal 6 Goal 11 Goal 15</p>
	<p>CMS: General information on obstacles to migration of fish and aquatic mammals, actions taken to overcome these obstacles, success/progress report SoWBFA: State and trends of associated biodiversity, list of species at risk in agricultural production systems, list of conservation programmes for species of associated biodiversity, State and trends of wild resources used for food, Wild food resources at risk, conservation programmes for wild resources used for food, list of practices negatively impacting biodiversity, detailed information on drivers of change and measures taken, list of programmes targeting sustainable use, state and</p>	<p>Goal 2 Goal 6 Goal 8 Goal 12 Goal 14 Goal 15</p>

Aichi Target	Assessment of the Aichi Targets: relevant information included in national reports	SDG
	<p>trends of wild resources used for food, management practices impacting/in favour of biodiversity for food and agriculture, list of practices negatively impacting biodiversity, list of landscape based initiatives to protect/recognise areas of land</p> <p>Assessment: Information is available for migratory fish species (CMS family, FAO database). Information is scarce for recovery plans securing that fishery remains within safe ecological limits and is almost lacking for aquatic plants.</p>	
	<p>CMS: List of actions taken to prevent, reduce or control factors endangering migratory species</p> <p>Eurobats: Consideration given to critical habitats (underground sites, biocides/pesticides, role of landscape)</p> <p>Ramsar (national report): Information on national wetland inventories and assessments</p> <p>SoWBFA: State and trends of associated biodiversity, list of species at risk in agricultural production systems, list of conservation programmes for species of associated biodiversity, State and trends of wild resources used for food, Wild food resources at risk, conservation programmes for wild resources used for food, list of practices negatively impacting biodiversity, detailed information on drivers of change and measures taken, list of programmes targeting sustainable use, state and trends of wild resources used for food, management practices impacting/in favour of biodiversity for food and agriculture, list of practices negatively impacting biodiversity, list of landscape based initiatives to protect/recognise areas of land</p> <p>Assessment: Information has been submitted by Parties within the SoWBFA country report. The global SoWBFA report (2017) is expected to provide a comprehensive assessment of the achievement of Aichi Target 7 at the global level.</p>	<p>Goal 2</p> <p>Goal 6</p> <p>Goal 8</p> <p>Goal 12</p> <p>Goal 15</p>
	<p>CMS: Enumeration of policies on pollution control</p> <p>Eurobats: Potential effects of biocides/pesticides on bats, remedial timber treatments, antiparasitic drugs for livestock</p> <p>SoWBFA: State and trends of pollution</p> <p>Assessment: Important information on pollution is available for migratory species (CMS family) and agricultural ecosystems (i.e. agriculture, forest, fishery). However, the information is not sufficient for a global assessment of the progress towards Aichi target 8.</p>	<p>Goal 2</p> <p>Goal 3</p> <p>Goal 6</p> <p>Goal 9</p> <p>Goal 11</p> <p>Goal 12</p> <p>Goal 14</p> <p>Goal 16</p>
	<p>AEWA: Comprehensive database on non-native waterbirds (status, trends, legal status, red list status, risks posed by the species), eradication programmes for non-native waterbirds</p> <p>Ramsar (national report): Information on IAS impacting wetlands</p> <p>Ramsar (RIS): Site specific list of recorded IAS in wetlands of international importance</p> <p>SoWBFA: Detailed information on pest diseases and IAS, list of IAS for food and agriculture</p> <p>Assessment: Important information is available for waterbirds (AEWA), wetlands' (Ramsar) and agricultural/forest/aquatic ecosystems (SoWBFA). Additional information is needed, especially regarding mountain ecosystems and drylands.</p>	<p>Goal 15</p>
	<p>AEWA: climate change research</p> <p>Ramsar (national report): Information on climate change research activities conducted to inform wetland policies and plans, policies or guidelines for enhancing the role of wetlands in mitigating or adapting to climate change</p> <p>Ramsar (RIS): Ramsar site specific information</p> <p>SoWBFA: Impact of climate change on production systems</p>	<p>Goal 12</p> <p>Goal 13</p> <p>Goal 14</p> <p>Goal 15</p>

Aichi Target	Assessment of the Aichi Targets: relevant information included in national reports	SDG
Assessment:	Information available for the assessment of Aichi target 10 is predominantly focus on general climate change impacts/policies and therewith too fragmentary for an assessment of Aichi target 10.	
	<p>AEWA: Habitat inventories (number of sites, surfaces), implications of climate change on protected areas, designation and management of PA, ecological network, resilience of PA.</p> <p>Aquatic Warbler: Description of status of habitats and indications management measures</p> <p>CMS: List of policies on protected areas</p> <p>Eurobats: Protection and management of important habitats (underground sites, bat roots in buildings)</p> <p>Ramsar (national report): Information on national wetland inventories and assessments, information on wetlands of international importance (ecological character, management)</p> <p>Ramsar (RIS): Ramsar site specific information</p> <p>Raptors: Indication of legal provisions for the conservation of birds of prey</p>	<p>Goal 1</p> <p>Goal 6</p> <p>Goal 15</p> <p>Goal 16</p>
Assessment:	Comprehensive information on the number/surface of protected areas is available. The information base regarding management, representability, and interconnections is critical.	
	<p>AEWA: Comprehensive database on waterbirds (status, trends, legal status, red list status)</p> <p>Aquatic Warbler: Conservation measures for the Aquatic Warbler</p> <p>Bern Convention:</p> <p>CITES: List of research activities in relation to CITES</p> <p>CMS: Species database (birds, aquatic mammals, reptiles, terrestrial mammals, fish) including conservation measures, obstacles, actions taken, success/progress report</p> <p>Eurobats: Red list, status and trends of bat species listed in the agreement, list of legal measures for bat conservation, list of actions to safeguard bat populations</p> <p>Ramsar (RIS): List of endangered species recorded in Ramsar sites</p> <p>Raptors: Information on PA and the flyways</p> <p>SoWBFA: State and trends of associated biodiversity, list of species at risk in agricultural production systems, list of conservation programmes for species of associated biodiversity, State and trends of wild resources used for food, Wild food resources at risk, conservation programmes for wild resources used for food, list of practices negatively impacting biodiversity</p>	<p>Goal 15</p>
Assessment:	Comprehensive information is available for the state of threat, but not regarding improvements.	
	<p>SoWBFA: Effects of drivers (climate change, natural disasters, pest. Diseases, IAS, markets, trade, private sector, policies population growth, economic and socio-cultural factors, science and technology on genetic resources; state and trends of genetic resources</p>	<p>Goal 2</p> <p>Goal 3</p> <p>Goal 8</p>
Assessment:	Information provided through FAO's state of animal/plant genetic resources reports as well as through SoWBFA seems sufficient for the assessment of Aichi target 13.	
	<p>Aquatic Warbler: Management and restoration of potential habitats</p> <p>Ramsar (national report): Information on national assessments of ecosystem benefits/services provided by wetlands, integrated water resource management</p> <p>Ramsar (RIS): Ramsar site specific information</p> <p>SoWBFA: Effects of drivers (i.e. land and water management, pollution, over-exploitation, climate change, natural disasters, pest, diseases, IAS, trade, policies, population, economic and socio-cultural factors, science and technology) on ecosystem services (pollination, pest & diseases regulation, water purification, natural hazard regulation, nutrient cycling, water cycling, habitat provisioning, production of oxygen) according to production systems, state and trends of ecosystem services according to production systems</p>	<p>Goal 1</p> <p>Goal 2</p> <p>Goal 3</p> <p>Goal 5</p> <p>Goal 6</p> <p>Goal 7</p> <p>Goal 8</p> <p>Goal 9</p> <p>Goal 10</p> <p>Goal 12</p>

Aichi Target	Assessment of the Aichi Targets: relevant information included in national reports	SDG
Assessment:	Ecosystems providing essential services are identified through existing reports. Additional information regarding restoration and safeguarding is needed.	Goal 15
	Aquatic Warbler: Information on activities for restoring aquatic warbler habitats	Goal 1
Assessment:	Additional information is needed for the assessment of the present Aichi target (other processes than those addresses in the report may contribute to the assessment, e.g. UNFCCC)	Goal 13 Goal 15
	Nagoya Protocol: SoWBFA: Policies, programmes for ABS	Goal 2 Goal 3
Assessment:	The information is available through the ABS-CH. There is no need for additional information gathering.	Goal 8 Goal 10 Goal 15 Goal 16
	AEWA: Overview on legal measures, species action plans, re-establishments and introductions of waterbird species) Aquatic Warbler: List of legislation and policies for the conservation of the Aquatic Warbler CITES: List of relevant legislation and regulations, list of cooperation/collaboration initiatives CMS: List of relevant implemented legislation and national policy instruments, information on inclusion of migratory species in NBSAPs, regional policies, policies regarding economic development, land-use planning policies, pollution control, ecological networks, powerlines, dams. Eurobats: list of policy initiatives for bat conservation Ramsar (national report): List of national policies, legislation and institutions Raptors: Indication of legal provisions for the conservation of birds of prey SoWBFA: List of monitoring programmes for associated biodiversity, list of policies, programmes and frameworks supporting conservation and sustainable use UNFF: List of policy instruments, legislation, programmes in support of SFM (including an assessment of effectiveness),	Goal 11 Goal 14 Goal 16 Goal 17
Assessment:	This issue is central for the CBD. State of the art information should be gathered through national reporting.	
	Ramsar (national report): List of plans and projects to sustain and enhance wetlands in supporting/maintaining viable farming systems Ramsar (RIS): Ramsar site specific information SoWBFA: Effects of drivers on traditional knowledge, list of stakeholders UNFF: List of mechanisms in place for involving stakeholders	Goal 1 Goal 2 Goal 3 Goal 4 Goal 7
Assessment:	Partial information is available for traditional knowledge, innovations and practices of indigenous and local communities relevant for the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity. The information base needs to be completed through national reporting.	Goal 8 Goal 10 Goal 14 Goal 16

Aichi Target	Assessment of the Aichi Targets: relevant information included in national reports	SDG
	<p>AEWA: Waterbird monitoring schemes, recent research programmes</p> <p>Aquatic Warbler: List of monitoring and research activities regarding the Aquatic Warbler</p> <p>Bern Convention: number of derogations for taking protected species (incl. legislation, and responsible authorities),</p> <p>CMS: Information on policies on satellite telemetry</p> <p>CITES: List of research activities in relation to CITES, list of national electronic information systems</p> <p>Eurobats: list programmes on the conservation and management of bat species, information on bat monitoring schemes</p> <p>Ramsar (national report): Research activities on agriculture-wetland interactions, climate change and valuation of ecosystem services, threats to wetlands, regional initiatives, wetlands inventories</p> <p>Raptors: Information on the monitoring of bird of prey, information on re-establishment projects</p> <p>SoWBFA: List of monitoring programmes for associated biodiversity, list of national information systems, list of institutions involved in research</p> <p>UNFF: List of centres of excellence (scientific, technical, technological innovations), list of criteria/indicators for SFM</p>	<p>Goal 3</p> <p>Goal 4</p> <p>Goal 6</p> <p>Goal 8</p> <p>Goal 9</p> <p>Goal 11</p> <p>Goal 12</p> <p>Goal 17</p>
<p>Assessment: Information about knowledge, the science base and technologies relating to biodiversity, its values functioning, status and trends, and the consequences of its loss is available, however, insufficiently shared and applied</p>		
	<p>AEWA: Technical and/or financial support of other parties'/range states, funding International Bird Census, support to activities coordinated by the secretariat</p> <p>Aquatic Warbler: Information on funding of activities for the conservation of the aquatic warbler</p> <p>CMS: Financial support to conservation activities, the CMS Trust Fund and other contributions (without providing detailed amounts)</p> <p>Ramsar (national report): Contributions and additional financial support to convention activities</p> <p>UNFF: Existence of financing strategies to achieve SFM, list of PES, financial resources mobilized for the implementation of SFM (USD), steps taken to encourage private sector investment in SFM</p>	<p>Goal 8</p> <p>Goal 15</p> <p>Goal 17</p>
<p>Assessment: Information is gathered through the Resource Mobilization reporting framework.</p>		

Synergies at the national level

National reporting is a key obligation for Parties to biodiversity conventions and treaties. Since 1998, a number of pilot projects in developing countries including small island developing states have tested approaches to more integrated or harmonized reporting to the biodiversity-related conventions as well as to the three Rio Conventions, and a number of reports have been produced and workshops have taken place. A range of preconditions and options for synergies between the biodiversity-related conventions in the area of national reporting to the biodiversity-related conventions can be identified, including:^{30,31}

1. At the national level, immediate gains can be made through improved communication, coordination and collaboration between national focal points to the biodiversity-related conventions on national

³⁰ UNEP-WCMC (2009) Preconditions for harmonization of reporting to biodiversity-related multilateral environmental agreements (www.cbd.int/cooperation/preconditions-harmonization-unesp-wcmc-en.pdf)

³¹ UNEP WCMC (2012) Promoting synergies within the cluster of biodiversity-related multilateral environmental agreements (<http://www.unep-wcmc.org/resources-and-data/promoting-synergies-within-the-biodiversity-cluster-of-biodiversity-related-multilateral-environmental-agreements>)

reporting and through streamlining and integrating the national management of biodiversity information that underlies the reporting processes.

2. National efforts in streamlining biodiversity data and information could be supported through the development and testing of guidelines/common formats for strengthening and integrating national management of biodiversity information.

3. National experience could result in new insights into what should and what can be done at the global level, for example regarding changes to reporting formats.

4. The current efforts for the development of indicators for the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 and its goals and targets could inform efforts for harmonization of national reporting to the range of the biodiversity-related conventions.

The **Swiss Information System Biodiversity** (SIB, www.sib.admin.ch), i.e. Switzerland's contribution to the global network of Clearing-House Mechanisms under the CBD. It is a cornerstone for the creation and use of synergies for national reporting by making accessible relevant national information in a single location. The SIB includes:

- a broad overview of reports submitted by Switzerland to various agreements relevant for biodiversity (SIB > Documentation > National reports) thus fostering the re-use of relevant information;
- a searchable literature database with the relevant publications of the federal offices (SIB > Documentation > Publications addressing biodiversity);
- a compilation of brief descriptions (en, fr, de) of the legal, strategic and programmatic framework governing Switzerland's biodiversity policy (SIB > Convention on Biodiversity > National implementation);
- a gateway to national monitoring programmes, biodiversity data centres and indicators used for national reporting (SIB > Convention on Biodiversity > Data & State).

An additional instrument supporting the creation of synergies at the national level is **the Biodiversity 2020 Target Cross-Linking Tool**, in short TCT. This tool, actually being developed by the European Environment Agency (EEA), is an instrument supporting multiple target reporting by cross-linking national information various targets, e.g. to the Aichi Targets or to targets included in the NBSAPs (Box 1). The TCT is a stand-alone application – free of charge- to be completely “owned” by user countries.

VIII. Mechanisms of reporting

Ideally, the provision of national information is channelled through reporting guidelines or formats supporting a rapid identification and concise provision of relevant national information on the one hand, while securing the assessability of the information by convention secretariats on the other. Several types of reporting mechanisms have been and are being developed to date (Table 10), including:

Reporting guidelines for narrative reports are used by the Bern Convention for the General (quadrennial) report as well as by the CBD. This approach generally results in comprehensive, well documented reports that are well suited for awareness raising activities among decision makers or may serve as reference books at the national level. However, from a secretariats point of view, the assessment of the information in such reports requests a huge effort (see Table 4).

Most conventions and agreements use **questionnaires/templates** for their national reporting obligations. Tick-boxes facilitate the completion of reports and mandatory/predefined answers secure that the

information is provided in a form supporting their assessment (Table 2). These reports are submitted electronically, thus permitting the inclusion of information into a database facilitating the assessment.

Some agreements have developed **online reporting systems** permitting the submission of information by the mean of a web browser. This approach is implemented for instance by the World Heritage Convention, Cartagena and Nagoya Protocol, CMS, AEWA, Raptors, CITES, etc. Other agreements are currently developing such a system (e.g. CBD, Eurobats, etc.), and others are discussing it (Ramsar Convention, ITPGRFA, Bern).

The main difference between an online reporting system and an electronically submitted questionnaire is that Parties – at least theoretically – could use the information management system of the online reporting system to submit or update information during the whole intersessional period. A stable information system further could allow the sharing of information between secretariats. Such as system also retains information for potential editing and use in future reports, so there is no need to start a new each time a report is due.

From a Parties point of view, it is crucial that both electronic questionnaires and online reporting system templates can be processed offline and common formats permit text editing (track-changes) so as to support consultations by multiple stakeholders at the national level. Also important for many Parties are ensuring appropriate sign-off procedures before data and information is publically available.

Box 1: Creating a regional architecture to support national decision-making and reporting: The Biodiversity 2020 Target Cross-Linking Tool used in Europe

The European Environment Agency (EEA) collects environmental data and information from its 33 members and six collaborating countries, through regular environmental reporting and surveys. A joint information and report management system, Reportnet, stores data from across Europe. (<http://www.eionet.europa.eu/reportnet>).

The European Commission and the EEA set up a separate IT structure, the Biodiversity Information System for Europe (BISE), to give information on progress under the EU Biodiversity Strategy and its contribution to the Aichi Targets. BISE functions as Europe's Biodiversity Clearing House Mechanism (CHM) and brings together data and information from the EU level and from individual countries. An ad-hoc BISE-CHM working group was set up in 2013 to explore options for "Sharing information on implementation of national strategies and reporting on progress towards biodiversity targets between global, regional and national levels".

The working group particularly aims to avoid duplicate reporting at the global and EU levels, by encouraging the re-use of country information for assessing progress towards the EU Biodiversity Strategy, the CBD and the Aichi Targets. National biodiversity policies may also set out national requirements for monitoring and internal reporting on progress. The working group decided that the most appropriate way to harmonize these three layers of reporting would be to look at targets.

A trial of a Biodiversity 2020 Target Cross-Linking Tool, in short TCT, has been developed to respond to this recommendation. This tool will allow countries to see the inter-linkages between the Aichi Targets, the EU Biodiversity Strategy and any national strategy, in terms of the thematic content of implementation and the reporting requirements. An online demonstration version was developed by Belgium, with support from EEA, and contains data from the Belgian Biodiversity Strategy 2006-2016 and the 3rd National Report to the CBD. An official version of the Belgian use of the tool has been available since May 2014, based on the revised Biodiversity Strategy 2020 and information from the fifth National Report to the CBD. Further development of the tool will take into account the national, EU and global indicators for each target. This might be done in collaboration with the Biodiversity Indicators Partnership (BIP).

The demonstration tool can be found here: <http://demo.tct.biodiversity.europa.eu/>

The Swiss use of the tool is available here: <http://ch.tct.biodiversity.europa.eu>

Source: UNEP (2015). Sourcebook of opportunities for enhancing cooperation among the Biodiversity-related Conventions at national and regional levels. United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), Nairobi, Kenya.

Table 10: Reporting templates/mechanisms developed by the various agreements.

	AEWA	Aquatic Warbler	Bern Convention	Biosafety Protocol	CBD	CITES	CMS	Eurobats	ITPGRFA	Nagoya Protocol	Ramsar Convention	Raptors	SoWBFA	Unff	WHC	
Reporting format:			2	4												
Guidelines:				X	X								X			
Questionnaire /common format:	X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
Format:	Online form	Excel-sheet	Online form	-	Word-Form	-	Word-Form	Online form	Online form	?	Word-Form	Word-Form	Online form	Pdf-Form	Word-Form	Online form
Narrative		X		X		X										X
Tick-boxes					X		X	X	X	X	X		X	X	X	
Mandatory, pre-defined answers		X										X				X
Predefined tables		X	X				X		X				X			X
Narrative sections to provide details			X		X		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Scoring system		X				X							X	X	X	
Specific request:																
Provision of documents	X			X	X	X		X			X	X	X		X	
Provision of URL's	X			X				X							X	

IX. Conclusions

National reporting is a core requirement for Parties and Signatories of agreements targeting biodiversity (Table 2). The information submitted by Parties serves multiple purposes, most prominent being the provision of a solid knowledge base allowing the CoPs/MoPs an informed decision making.

At the 10th Conference of the Parties (COP-10), the Parties to the CBD adopted the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 and its Aichi Biodiversity Targets. The strategy has been widely accepted by the international community as an overarching framework on biodiversity, and consequently, biodiversity-related conventions are increasingly aligning themselves with the plan and in efforts to achieve the Aichi Biodiversity Targets. This common basis for the first time provides an optimal platform for the use of synergies in national reporting.

The analysis of the content of national reports submitted in recent years confirms the potential for consolidated reporting:

- Untapped potential for consolidated reporting is identified regarding general information for country profiles, information about legislative and policy frameworks, strategies and planning, compliance and enforcement measures as well as regarding cooperation (Table 5, Table 6).
- Each of the reports analysed, includes information relevant for the assessment of the progress towards the achievement of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 including its Aichi Targets (Table 9).

This potential for consolidated reporting should be realized in order to avoid multiple submissions of identical information to the various agreements and therewith reduce the national reporting burden. Information gathered by different agreements should be used for increasing the knowledge base for the global assessment of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity (i.e. GBO-5).

Not all countries are necessarily Parties to the agreements addressed within the present report. There is a need for an additional analysis to identify potential geographic and thematic gaps.

However, this shall not prevent from undertaking further efforts to consolidate national reporting, e.g. by developing reporting templates that favour brief and concise answers that can be easily re-used and updated, or circulated electronically among national, regional and global levels as adequate.

The use of a **questionnaire** seems best suited to this purpose. In order to support the re-use of information, be it by Parties or through the transition of information between secretariats, the questions within the reporting template should allow answering in two steps:

- A first step includes a **factual description** of an issue (e.g. strategy, programme, indicator, state and trends of an entity). This first part of an answer is intended to be re-used across various agreements as adequate. This description will be updated as appropriated in future reports.
- In a second step, the answer should highlight the **specific weight of the information** for the respective agreement. This appreciation is specific for a distinct report and is not necessarily targeted at being re-used.

Various kinds of **reporting processes and templates** have been developed so far (Table 10), with each of them having its advantages and disadvantages. From a Party's point of view, the type of mechanism is secondary, as long as the reporting mechanism:

- is **embedded into a coherent framework** for the assessment of the state of implementation of the relevant agreement;
- supports the **re-use of information**;
- provides **information import/export facilities** to share information among various systems;
- supports the editing of texts, especially **track-change functions**, which is of fundamental importance for the conduct of consultations among broad stakeholder groups.

Table 1 provides an indicative overview of the periodicity of national reports up to 2020. As can be seen from the table, many reports will be due in the next years thus providing the opportunity for agreement secretariats to **coordinate the content of the reports** among each other (even if the time lapse is tight). The Liaison Group of Biodiversity-related Conventions could facilitate the coordination process and should take responsibility to explore possibilities and make propositions for the coordination of national reports up to 2019 according to the respective mandates provided by the CoPs/MoPs. The objective of coordinating the content of the reports should focus on i) promoting a modular design of national reporting formats and ii) defining the contributions of the various agreements towards the global assessment of the achievement of the Aichi Targets.

Last but not least it should be recalled that the creation of synergies for national reporting are also the responsibility of national entities. Increased collaboration among focal points an appropriate management of national information, e.g. in Clearing House Mechanisms or using the recently developed Target Cross-Linking Tool, can contribute to significantly reduce the reporting efforts.