



Convention on Biological Diversity

Distr.
GENERAL

UNEP/CBD/SBSTTA/16/INF/2
7 April 2012

ENGLISH ONLY

SUBSIDIARY BODY ON SCIENTIFIC,
TECHNICAL AND TECHNOLOGICAL ADVICE
Sixteenth meeting
Montreal, 30 April – 5 May, 2012
Item 4 of the provisional agenda*

DRAFT COMMUNICATION STRATEGY FOR THE FOURTH EDITION OF THE GLOBAL BIODIVERSITY OUTLOOK

Information note by the Executive Secretary

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. In decision X/2 the Conference of the Parties requested the Executive Secretary to prepare a plan for the preparation of the fourth edition of the Global Biodiversity Outlook (GBO-4). As part of the plan for the preparation of GBO-4 a communication strategy for the report has been prepared. The communication strategy contains information on the goals of the publication, the target audiences, a situational analysis, key messages, related information products, considerations for language and regional summaries, proposed communication and launch activities, possible partners, a proposed timetable, resources requirements and evaluation considerations. The communication strategy will be kept under review throughout the preparation of GBO-4.
2. The communication strategy in this note has been developed, taking into account the GBO-4 preparation plan (UNEP/CBD/SBSTTA/16/3) as well as the results of an assessment of the process of preparation and production of the third edition of the Global Biodiversity Outlook carried out in response to decision X/4 (UNEP/CBD/SBSTTA/16/INF/1).

* UNEP/CBD/SBSTTA/16/1.

I. INTRODCUTION

1. The Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 and its Aichi Biodiversity Targets is an ambitious plan developed with the purpose of inspiring broad-based action in support of biodiversity over the next decade by all countries and stakeholders.

2. In decision X/2 the Conference of the Parties decided that the fourth edition of the Global Biodiversity Outlook (GBO-4) should be prepared to provide a mid-term review of progress towards the Aichi Biodiversity Targets, including an analysis of how the implementation of the Convention and its Strategic Plan has contributed to the Millennium Development Goals. As such GBO-4 will help to build momentum for the implementation of the Strategic Plan by, amongst other things, reviewing progress in the implementation of the Strategic Plan, identifying the types of actions which need to be taken to ensure that the Aichi Biodiversity Targets are met and the tools which are available to overcome the challenges to the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity.

3. In decision X/2 the Conference of the Parties also requested the Executive Secretary to prepare a plan, to be considered by the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice prior to the eleventh meeting of the Conference of the Parties, for the preparation of the fourth edition of the Global Biodiversity Outlook on the basis of the fifth national reports, the use of headline global biodiversity indicators and other relevant information. This plan is available in UNEP/CBD/SBSTTA/16/3. The communication strategy in this note has been developed, taking into account this plan as well as the results of an assessment of the process of preparation and production of the third edition of the Global Biodiversity Outlook carried out in response to decision X/4 (UNEP/CBD/SBSTTA/16/INF/1).

4. This document is divided into twelve sections which provide an overview of GBO-4, the goals for the publication and its communication strategy, a situational analysis, elements of main messages, possible information products, considerations for different language versions and regional summaries, proposed activities and launches, possible partners, a timetable, resource requirements and considerations for measurement and evaluation. A draft of this note was made available for review for a period of two weeks and the comments received¹ were taken into consideration in its finalization.

5. The communication strategy will be kept under review throughout the preparation of GBO-4. This is to allow for adjustments to explore of emerging opportunities and/or changes in resource availability.

II. ABOUT GLOBAL BIODIVERSITY OUTLOOK 4

6. The fourth edition of Global Biodiversity Outlook (GBO-4) will answer four policy relevant questions:

(a) *What actions need to be taken to reach each of the 20 Aichi Biodiversity Targets?* – This question will identify the actions which need to be taken by Governments and other stakeholders in the course of the current decade in order to reach the Aichi Biodiversity Targets by 2020;

(b) *What national and regional commitments, plans and targets have been adopted by Parties in response to the global Aichi Biodiversity Targets?* This question will be answered in two parts:

(i) Governments have committed to developing national and regional targets, using the Strategic Plan and its Aichi Targets as a flexible framework, with a view to contributing to collective efforts to reach the global targets. GBO-4 will analyse the aggregate of these commitments in relation to the level of ambition set out in the Aichi Biodiversity Targets;

¹ By 24 February 2012 comments were received from the governments of Belgium, China and Japan and from the IUCN Commission on Education and Communication.

- (ii) GBO-4 will provide a mid-term assessment of the implementation of the Strategic Plan with the aim of informing discussions as to whether the world community is on track to reach the global Aichi Biodiversity Targets by 2020. This question will be answered by drawing on information contained in the fifth national reports, other information provided by Parties and supplemented with scientific information, including indicator-based information provided by the members of the Biodiversity Indicators Partnership;
- (c) *If each of the Aichi Biodiversity Targets was met, how close would we be in attaining the 2050 Vision of the Strategic Plan?* – In developing the Strategic Plan the Conference of the Parties developed a long term vision of “By 2050, biodiversity is valued, conserved, restored and wisely used, maintaining ecosystem services, sustaining a healthy planet and delivering the benefits essential for all people”. The Aichi Biodiversity Targets are one step towards reaching this Vision. In order to predict which steps would need to be taken after 2020 it will be important to know how far the world community will be from its overall vision;
- (d) *How does implementation of the Strategic Plan and progress towards the Aichi Targets contribute to the 2015 targets of the Millennium Development Goals and, in the longer term, to the Goals themselves?* The Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 is consistent with the Millennium Development Goals and its implementation contributes to their achievement. GBO-4 will undertake a qualitative assessment of the contribution of implementing the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity to the Millennium Development Goals.

III. GOALS FOR THE PUBLICATION AND ITS COMMUNICATION STRATEGY

7. In light of these questions, GBO-4 will seek to communicate the following:

- (a) The extent to which the commitments and actions taken to date by governments are contributing to the achievement of the Aichi Targets. The purpose of communicating this is to urge further action in support of the Strategic Plan, and to suggest which actions could be taken up by Parties and other stakeholders. It would also help to make the public aware of the commitments governments have made in relation to the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020;
- (b) The specific actions, innovations and approaches that will be needed after 2020, in order to achieve the 2050 Vision of the Strategic Plan. Upon receiving this information, global actors can begin to prepare and anticipate the need and parameters for another ten-year plan;
- (c) The contribution of the Aichi targets to the Millennium Development goals. In communicating this, actors can better understand the relationship between biodiversity targets and sustainable development goals, and therefore, in future iterations of the Strategic Plan, better integrate the two sets of objectives.

IV. TARGET AUDIENCES

8. In communicating the messages presented in section III, GBO-4 will seek to build a broad coalition of support amongst a variety of target audiences. The audiences are listed below:

- (a) *“Biodiversity community.”* This is a broad group that includes technical, scientific and cultural experts, as well as policy makers and civil society actors interested in biodiversity issues. In general, GBO-4 is meant to assist this community in better understanding the effectiveness of their actions in support of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity and to provide the basis for a readjustment, if necessary, of such actions.
- (b) *High-level decision makers.* In general, the success of the Strategic Plan will require the engagement of this group. Without such engagement, mainstreaming the required policy changes across a number of sectors is less likely to be successful. This group contains several distinct audiences:

- (i) *Government Ministries.* Government decisions makers, such as Ministers, Assistant Ministers and their advisors, are a key group. They need to be made aware of the answers to the questions in GBO-4, and need to know the kinds of actions they can take to facilitate better policy interventions that will support the strategic plan. Reaching those involved in decision making in government ministries of finance, education, transport, infrastructure, natural resources, fisheries, and agriculture will be particularly important.
 - (ii) *Private Sector.* Heads of major corporations, or major business and sectorial associations need to be made aware of the ways that their economic activities either contribute to or prevent achievement of the Strategic Plan. They need to know what is at stake for their business models should biodiversity loss continue and what actions are within their control to implement. While it will be important to target major corporation and business associations as they are capable of leveraging additional actions, it will also be important to reach out to the private sector generally.
 - (iii) *United Nations Agencies.* Heads of UN Agencies need to be made aware of the impact of the Strategic Plan on their programmes and goals. Mainstreaming of the goals of the Strategic Plan into all work of the UN system should be communicated, along with the benefits this will provide.
 - (iv) *Education sector:* Providing information to teachers, educators and organisations which regularly interact with children and students that they could incorporate into their classroom activities has the potential of reaching a large segment of the population. This would help to develop a greater understanding of biodiversity and its importance and directly contribute to Target 1 of the Aichi Biodiversity Targets.
 - (v) *Scientific Community:* While the scientific community is, for the most part, already aware of the importance of biodiversity, GBO-4 could help to create ideas for future avenues of research.
- (c) *General Public.* This group is segmented by a variety of factors and therefore, reaching the entire group will be a challenge. It includes the segments of the population which are already interested in environmental issues as well as those that are not. Ensuring that GBO-4 presents clear and easily understandable messages will be important in reaching this group.
- (d) *Media.* The media is a communication multiplier and has the ability to amplify messages to all target groups. The report will communicate to media that biodiversity stories are relevant to a variety audiences.

V. SITUATION ANALYSIS

9. In assembling the communications strategy, the following basic situation analysis should be considered and policies adjusted to take advantage of strengths and opportunities, and to minimize weaknesses and avoid risks:

- (a) *Strengths:*
 - (i) *GBO is becoming an established brand.* GBO-4 will be the fourth assessment report issued by the Convention on Biological Diversity. Each iteration of the report has gained greater exposure and reception by global and regional audiences. Each report has been praised for being scientifically sound and credible. This will make it easier to continue to expand the readership of the report.
 - (ii) *The Convention on Biological Diversity enjoys a growing positive reputation.* The strong results of COP-10 in 2010, have led to greater stakeholder engagement and involvement. The expected positive results of the eleventh meeting of the Conference of the Parties, matched with the growing prominence of the Convention on Biological

Diversity in the United Nations system, are likely to continue this growth. In the context of this, GBO-4 will be recognized as an important document.

- (iii) *GBO-4 is linked to the Strategic Plan.* The Strategic Plan, as the key policy instrument for biodiversity for the international community, has a visibility and importance at the global level. Because GBO-4 is linked to the Strategic Plan, it will also benefit from this profile.
 - (iv) *Data for GBO4 comes from a variety of credible sources.* Datasets are from scientific partner organizations and National Reports. This ensures that data is relevant to Parties. This also provides for a high degree of ownership of the data, which will increase adoption of the report's conclusions.
- (b) *Weaknesses:*
- (i) *Other assessments enjoy greater prominence.* Other sectorial assessments, such as the World Water Assessment and the Global Environment Outlook, have greater profile. This will require that we emphasize the unique nature and positive contribution of GBO-4 to debates on environmental issues while also indicating how these various reports are complimentary and contribute to the better understanding of environmental issues.
 - (ii) *The report will be assembled very close to its release date.* This runs the risk of working with incomplete data sets and information. This also puts pressure on stakeholder contributions and the generation of their ownership, particularly through the review process. Further, it puts pressure on the creation of a number of other products, such as the video news release, in advance of the final report and figures. It may also make it difficult to distribute the products to the regions. To reduce this, any data that can be approved in advance should be and efforts should be made to provide publication on demand and other means of rapid printing in the regions.
- (c) *Opportunities:*
- (i) *GBO-4 is released in the context of the United Nations Decade on Biodiversity (UNDB) and implementation of the Strategic Plan.* By the time GBO-4 is released, both the UNDB and the Strategic Plan will be well-established outreach and policy instruments that should enjoy a relatively high degree of support and profile. GBO-4 can draw upon these to garner attention and profile.
 - (ii) *GBO-4 is being released during the final year of the United Nations Decade for Education for Sustainable Development.* This offers an opportunity to link the launches of GBO-4 to another international awareness raising initiative as well as to frame the GBO-4 conclusions in relation to sustainable development.
 - (iii) *Biodiversity is growing in importance on the international agenda.* At the time of writing of this strategy, Biodiversity was increasing its importance and linkages with other international environmental and sustainable development issues. It is expected that this prominence will continue, and GBO-4 can take advantage of this growing awareness and support.
 - (iv) *The COP 12 meeting is an excellent platform for the launch of the report.* Meetings of the Conference of the Parties to the CBD represent a tremendous occasion to launch reports and provide exposure to policy makers and high-level audiences. The presence of media also provides the opportunity for profile. If the launch can coincide with COP 12, these opportunities will be realized, and the impact of the report can be multiplied.
 - (v) *GBO-4 will be released just prior to the "final assessment" of the Millennium Development Goals.* GBO-4 will devote considerable space to the linkage between the Strategic Plan and the MDGs. Therefore, its release before the final assessment of the

MDGs, in 2015, provides an opportunity for the conclusions of GBO-4 to have an impact on this important document.

(d) *Threats:*

- (i) *Data and project is delayed.* Delays to the project will lead to a need to reassess all parts of this communication plan, and could lead to severe reduction in the impact of the report.
- (ii) *Lack of funds to implement the Strategy.* If this communications strategy is not sufficiently funded, the scope of launch activities will not be possible, and it will be difficult to attract attention to the report. If funds are not made available for the production of press kits and the video news release, then it will be difficult to reach out to the media around the world. If funds are not made available to support regional launches, UNEP and UNICs will not be able to host journalists and regional actors in support of the launch. The assessment of GBO-3, called for in decision X/4 and made available as document UNEP/CBD/SBSTTA/16/INF/1, noted that the funding shortfall for preparing GBO-3 hampered the full implementation of the GBO-3 work plan and in particular the report's communication strategy. The inability to fully implement the GBO-3 communication strategy was considered to be a key weakness of GBO-3, which limited its ability to reach beyond the biodiversity community.
- (iii) *Other products and assessments, or other media events take up the intended media space.* If other assessments that deal with a similar topic are released at the same time, then there is a possibility that GBO4 will have to share the space and its message will be diluted. Further, should a major media event happen during the launch, it will be hard to capture media attention.

VI. TOWARDS MESSAGES

10. Messages should be created and translated into all official languages of the United Nations, and made available to partners. The messages of the GBO-4 will be developed over the course of the project. However it is anticipated that there would be messages on:

- (a) The actions which need to be taken by Governments and other stakeholders in the course of the current decade in order to reach the Aichi Biodiversity Targets by 2020.
- (b) The extent to which the Aichi Biodiversity Targets will be achieved on the basis of national and regional commitments, plans and targets adopted by Parties and their implementation of these.
- (c) The extent to which the Aichi Biodiversity Targets will, by 2020, put the global community on track to achieving the 2050 vision.
- (d) The contribution that implementation of the Aichi Biodiversity Targets makes to the Millennium Development Goals.

VII. INFORMATION PRODUCTS AND THEIR DELIVERY

11. *Print Products.* The primary monograph for the report and its executive summary will be produced in the 6 United Nations languages. Should a publishing house be selected as a partner, distribution of the report will also be through their online and bookseller channels, with the Secretariat distributing the report at our launches and to our constituencies. If the Secretariat manages the distribution itself, then the selection of printers should include provisions for rapid dissemination of the report, including the possibility of printing the report in a number of regions, and dispatching from within the

region itself. Regional summaries of the report should also be produced. Details on this are below in the section on considerations for language and regional versions.

12. *Website.* The website should include online versions of the report (including e-book formats), the graphics of the report, datasets, and other multimedia products. The website should also have a mobile version for smartphones and tablets. The website should include summaries of media coverage and a forum for the posting of comments and discussion on the report. The forum could be managed through a consortium of partners.

13. *Multimedia.* A stand-alone CD or DVD version of the report should be produced. This can resemble the Website in its look and feel and navigation, but it should be downloadable from portable drives. A number of power point presentations on GBO-4 should also be prepared and made available through the Convention's website in the six United Nations languages. The possibility of convening or participating in relevant webinars will also be explored.

14. *Videos.* A video news release, including extensive b-roll footage should be created in all United Nations languages and distributed in advance of the launch, under embargo. The contractor hired to produce the video news release should assist in its dissemination, as should UNEP and the DPI of the United Nations.

15. *Social media.* Social media outlets, such as Facebook, Twitter, Vimeo, and Youtube, should be used to help to generate interest for the report and ensure that it reaches beyond the traditional biodiversity constituency.

16. *Datasets.* The datasets should be available in excel and other formats, so that researchers may use these in other works. For case studies that are part of the main report, these should be available in structured formats, including possibly fact sheets.

17. *Charts and Graphics.* All photos, charts and graphs to the report should be available in the six United Nations languages. Further, they should be available in resolutions and file formats that are suitable for web posting, use in PowerPoint presentations, use in videos and use in high resolution publishing. Photos need to be rights-free so they can be used by partners around the world.

18. *List of Experts.* A list, including contact details and brief biographies of experts available for interview by the media should be created. The list should include experts from all United Nations Regions. Similarly Parties should be encouraged to identify national experts who could speak to biodiversity issues for national media outlets.

19. *Press Kit and Press Releases.* A Press kit, featuring the press release of the report, the executive summary, fact sheets and other materials, should be available in all United Nations languages and disseminated to all regional launches. Specific regional cases and materials should be prepared in collaboration with Regional Economic Commissions, UNIC and UNEP regional offices. All press kits, including regional summaries should bear the same branding as the main report.

20. *Toolkits.* Toolkits for various audiences should be developed to help make the conclusions emerging from GBO-4 easier to incorporate into the activities and messaging of other organizations. Such toolkits can have a multiplier effect as they enable those not directly involved in the preparation of the report to easily disseminate its conclusions.

VIII. CONSIDERATIONS FOR LANGUAGE AND REGIONAL SUMMARIES

21. Ensuring the existence of language and regional summaries will help expand the impact of the report to regional audiences. As with previous releases of the report, these regional summaries were well received. A number of issues need to be taken into consideration to permit this regional reporting:

- (a) All source files for the products need to be made available in a format that can be customized for regional language versions. Graphs and charts should be made in such a way that language can easily be switched out;
- (b) Regional photos need to be available. Photos should also be royalty free so that they can be easily reused in the different versions of the report;
- (c) Regional case-studies should be available not only for the main report, but also for Press Kits;
- (d) Sufficient time needs to be provided for translations and typesetting;
- (e) Regional experts on the content of GBO-4 should be available to media at regional launches.

IX. PROPOSED ACTIVITIES AND LAUNCHES

22. *Advance announcements and prelaunches.* As data is being made available in advance of the release of GBO-4, opportunities should be made to publicise and make this available to the media. At the same time, it is important to build momentum towards the report and not to fully exploit all messages in advance of the launch of GBO-4. Partners should consult with the secretariat to ensure that the information which is released from the datasets is enough to generate attention, but not so much as to release the entire story.
23. *Main report launch.* If possible, the main report should be launched at the twelfth meeting of the Conference of the Parties. This would give it prominence and allow the launch to take advantage of the infrastructure of the meeting to promote the report. If, for reasons of timing, this is not possible, then the report should be launched in a duty station with a major United Nations office. This could be in New York, London, Geneva, or Nairobi. If the report is to be launched in Montreal, the home of the Secretariat, then particular attention will be needed to have all materials available in French, to ensure that local French media pay attention to the report. Provision should be made for a press conference that should be web streamed.
24. *Regional report launches.* At the same time as the main launch, regional launches should be held in all United Nations Regions, using the facilities of UNEP Regional Offices and United Nations Information Centres. National Focal Points to the Convention should be mobilized to provide support.
25. *Considerations on activities for high-level decision makers.* For the launches, and subsequent to this, it is important to link launch activities with ministerial and other high-level forums that may be taking place at the same time, such as the final assessment of the Millennium Development Goals. Using the COP presidencies as facilitators, the findings of the report should make their way onto the agenda of these meetings. Some kind of conference outcome or statement on the report could be made.

X. PARTNERS

26. *UNEP regional offices.* Regional launches will require the assistance of UNEP staff, both the biodiversity focal points, as well as information officers. These staff persons should facilitate the launch of regional versions of the report (in collaboration with UNIC's, as indicated below), including organizing launch events, managing interviews with local media, and ensuring dissemination of the report.
27. *Regional Economic Commissions.* Regional Economic Commissions provide access to decision-makers at the regional level. They, along with UNICs and UNEP regional offices, should be mobilized in support of this report.
28. *United Nations Information Centres (UNIC).* UNICs are well placed to be locations for the launch of the report in the regions. In collaboration with Regional Economic Commissions, UNEP and other relevant agencies, UNICs can become a hub for dissemination and publicity of the report. Similarly the UNESCO National Committees could contribute to the development and dissemination of the report.

29. *GBO-4 Partners.* The agencies involved in the collection of the datasets for GBO-4, and for the preparation of any specialized analysis, including regional analyses, are important communication partners. These agencies should be available to comment on the report to the media, using the key messages.

30. *COP Presidencies (COP 11, COP 12 and COP 13).* A global launch should fully involve the COP presidencies. The presidencies for COP 11, 12 and 13 should be involved, to ensure that the messages of the report, as they are in preparation, during the launch and following the release, are highlighted. The presidency should be invited to make use of the GBO-4 messages and report in its own international, regional and national work to promote the Convention and its Strategic Plan. The COP Presidency could be a means to elevate the messages of the report to ministerial level meetings at the international level.

XI. TIMETABLE

31. The following deadlines for GBO-4 products are envisaged:

| <i>Product</i> | <i>Deadline</i> |
|--|-----------------|
| GBO-4 Advisory Group constituted | September 2012 |
| Draft outline | December 2012 |
| First peer review of selected sections | October 2013 |
| Revision of selected sections | January 2014 |
| Second peer review of all sections | May 2014 |
| Revision of drafts | June 2014 |
| Typesetting in English | July 2014 |
| Translation into official UN languages | July 2014 |
| Printing and dispatch to launch events | September 2014 |
| Launch of the main GBO-4 report | October 2014 |

XII. RESOURCE REQUIREMENTS FOR THIS COMMUNICATIONS STRATEGY

32. As indicated in the evaluation of the results of GBO-3 (UNEP/CBD/SBSTTA/16/INF/1) the success of any communication strategy rests on the timely provision of sufficient resources. The elements of the communications strategy mentioned above, and including the evaluation exercise mentioned below, need to have sufficient funding. Securing adequate funding as early as possible will be key in the success of GBO-4 as outlined in document UNEP/CBD/SBSTTA/16/3.

XIII. MEASUREMENT AND EVALUATION

33. The launch and dissemination of the report should be accompanied by a full suite of evaluation tools. The tools could include the following:

(a) *Media Monitoring.* The number of references to the report in print, online, television and radio media should be catalogued. Press clippings books for global and regional launches should be collected. The persistence of the report in media coverage after the launch of the report should be considered, as should be the linkage of GBO-3 coverage with the coverage of other assessment reports. As this is a very labour intensive activity, it is recommended that an internship be created at around the time of the launch for this activity. For regional launches, the assistance of UNEP's regional information

officers or the UNIC information officers should be solicited. If resources are available, the services of a media monitoring organization such as the Meltwater Group should be considered. Other possible avenues for monitoring the impact of GBO-4 could include tools such as Google Trends and Google Read. Similarly monitoring any social media platforms used to disseminate GBO-4 could provide an indication of the impact and spread of the report. Depending on the resources available it may also be effective to contract local media monitoring agencies in those countries which are hosting launch events for the report. In conducting any monitoring it will be important to consider both quantitative and qualitative information in order to gain an accurate picture of the reports impact.

(b) *Website statistics.* Visits to the GBO-4 website should be tracked. Detailed statistics including times on pages, exit pages, and other information that will track the use of the materials are also needed. Also under this heading, the traffic on any social media sites and Twitter feeds should also be considered.

(c) *Feedback from users.* A few months following the launch of GBO-4 a number of small focus groups, matching the target audiences, should be polled using online and telephone surveys. The focus groups should represent some of the main groups listed at the beginning of the communications strategy.
