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SUBSIDIARY BODY ON SCIENTIFIC,  
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Item 6 of the provisional agenda\*

### **PROGRESS REPORT ON THE PREPARATION OF THE FOURTH EDITION OF THE GLOBAL BIODIVERSITY OUTLOOK**

*Note by the Executive Secretary*

#### **I. INTRODUCTION**

1. The Global Biodiversity Outlook is the flagship publication of the Convention. It provides a regular assessment of the status and trends of biological diversity and of the steps being taken by the global community to ensure that biodiversity is conserved and used sustainably, and that benefits arising from the use of genetic resources are shared equitably. The third edition of the Global Biodiversity Outlook was published in 2010. It concluded that the 2010 Biodiversity Target had not been achieved, and provided the rationale for the development of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 and the Aichi Biodiversity Targets.<sup>1</sup>

2. At its tenth meeting, the Conference of the Parties decided that the fourth edition of the Global Biodiversity Outlook shall 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 2015 targets of the Millennium Development Goals (paragraph 13 of decision X/2).

3. The Subsidiary Body, at its sixteenth meeting, emphasized that:

(a) GBO-4 should provide a mid-term assessment of progress towards the Aichi Biodiversity Targets;

(b) GBO-4 should address:

\* UNEP/CBD/SBSTTA/17/1.

<sup>1</sup> <http://www.cbd.int/gbo/>.

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- (i) The possible policy responses that could be effective in contributing to the achievement of the Aichi Biodiversity Targets;
  - (ii) The level of progress towards the Aichi Biodiversity Targets (considering both national commitments, plans and targets adopted by Parties; and the level of implementation on the ground);
  - (iii) How achievement of the Aichi Biodiversity Targets would contribute to the 2050 Vision of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020;
  - (iv) How progress towards the Aichi Biodiversity Targets contributes to the Millennium Development Goals and their 2015 targets.
- (c) GBO-4 should be easy to understand and accessible to a variety of different audiences and will consist of several products, to be released at key events starting with the twelfth meeting of the Conference of the Parties. The content will draw on available information from a range of sources, including available information provided by Parties.

4. At its eleventh meeting, the Conference of the Parties took note of the progress report on the preparation of the fourth edition of the Global Biodiversity Outlook (UNEP/CBD/COP/11/27) and stressed the importance of national reports and their timely submission to preparing the fourth edition of the Global Biodiversity Outlook (decision XI/3 C). In the same decision, the Conference of the Parties requested the Executive Secretary to undertake a number of activities in preparation of the fourth edition of the Global Biodiversity Outlook (GBO-4).

5. The current note reports on progress in undertaking these activities. It includes, in its annex, an indicative draft outline of GBO-4.

## II. PROGRESS IN IMPLEMENTING DECISION XI/3 C

6. The Conference of the Parties, in paragraph 6 of decision XI/3 C, urged Parties and invited others to make timely financial contributions for the preparation and production of GBO-4 in accordance with the work plan and budget estimates for its preparation contained in the note by the Executive Secretary on Global Biodiversity Outlook: considerations for the preparation of the fourth edition of the Global Biodiversity Outlook (UNEP/CBD/SBSTTA/16/3).

7. Accordingly, the Executive Secretary continued to liaise with Parties and others with a view to securing the financial contributions needed to pursue the plan for the preparation and production of GBO-4, including its ancillary products, language versions and launch events.

8. In addition to the early financial pledges by the European Union and Switzerland, the Secretariat has since received grants from Canada, Germany and Japan and an in-kind contribution from the Netherlands (in the form of technical support through the Netherlands Environmental Assessment Agency) as well as follow-up grants from by the European Union and Switzerland.<sup>2</sup>

9. These contributions have enabled the Executive Secretary to proceed with the preparations for GBO-4 as envisaged.

10. In paragraph 7(a) of decision XI/3 C, the Conference of the Parties requested the Executive Secretary to continue collaborating with other biodiversity-related conventions and other relevant processes, including the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem

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<sup>2</sup> <http://www.cbd.int/en/gbo4/resource-requirements>.

Services and other organizations and partners, and to engage them in the preparations of the fourth edition of the Global Biodiversity Outlook.

11. As the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 is increasingly being recognized as a framework for implementing the biodiversity agenda beyond the Convention itself, the Executive Secretary continues to engage with partners soliciting participation in and contributions to the mid-term review of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020.

12. In paragraph 7(b) of decision XI/3 C, the Conference of the Parties requested the Executive Secretary to explore, with the Secretariat of the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services, options for the preparation of a global assessment on biodiversity and ecosystem services (...), including its implications for future editions of Global Biodiversity Outlook.

13. In response to this request, the Executive Secretary, in his note on the contribution of the Convention to the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES) intersessional process (UNEP/CBD/SBSTTA/17/4), prepared as a result of exchanges with the IPBES Secretariat, discussed the scope and timing of a future comprehensive biodiversity assessment as well as the relevance of the ongoing GBO-4 process to IPBES and links of future editions of Global Biodiversity Outlook to IPBES, noting the opportunities for synergy and the need to avoid duplication of efforts.

14. In paragraph 7(c) of decision XI/3 C, the Conference of the Parties requested the Executive Secretary, in consultation with the Bureau of the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice and the Advisory Group for the fourth edition of Global Biodiversity Outlook, to keep under review the work plan, communication strategy and financial plan for the development of the fourth edition of the Global Biodiversity Outlook.

15. Reports on progress in preparing GBO-4 have been made regularly in meetings of the SBSTTA Bureau. The second face-to-face meeting of the Advisory Group for GBO-4 is scheduled to be held on 13 October 2013. In addition, the web pages on GBO-4 (<http://www.cbd.int/en/gbo4>) have been regularly updated.

16. In paragraph 7(d) of decision XI/3 C, the Conference of the Parties requested the Executive Secretary to further develop, in collaboration with relevant partners, the communication strategy for the fourth edition of the Global Biodiversity Outlook.

17. In response to this request, the Executive Secretary has begun to develop the communications network which will support the launch in 2014. Arrangements are being made to communicate the launch through the global networks of the Division of Communication and Public Information (DCPI) of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), and the Division of Public Information (DPI) of the United Nations Secretariat.

18. In addition, information materials are being developed to support the launch including:

(a) A video news release (VNR) on Global Biodiversity Outlook, that will include the main messages of the report, as well as secondary footage that includes interviews and diagrams from the report. The VNR will be produced in all United Nations languages and will be distributed through global and regional broadcast networks;

(b) An information kit for media that includes information sheets on the main findings of Global Biodiversity Outlook, and other supporting information for the media. This kit will be produced in all United Nations Languages and will be distributed through the networks of DPI and DCPI.

19. Discussions have also been held with the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and others with a view to producing targeted communication products for relevant events such as the 7th World Water Forum (Daegu, Gyeongbuk, Korea, March 2015) 14th World Forestry Congress (Durban, South Africa, September 2015)

20. In paragraph 7(e) of decision XI/3 C, the Conference of the Parties requested the Executive Secretary to provide guidance on the type of information that Parties, other Governments and relevant organizations, including indigenous and local communities, may wish to provide for possible inclusion in GBO-4.

21. Accordingly, the Executive Secretary prepared guidance on case-studies, data, indicators and information on implementation of national biodiversity strategies and action plans (NBSAPs) that would be particularly suitable for GBO-4 and made this available on the web pages for GBO-4.<sup>3</sup>

22. In paragraph 7(f) of decision XI/3 C, the Conference of the Parties requested the Executive Secretary to make use of relevant regional and subregional capacity-building workshops organized under the Convention to facilitate inputs and contributions to the preparation of GBO-4.

23. In response to this decision, the Executive Secretary:

(a) Included the preparation of GBO-4 and a discussion on opportunities for Parties and partners to contribute to GBO-4 as a specific agenda item in the series of regional workshops on the preparation of the fifth national report (four workshops have been held to date and one further workshop will be held prior to the seventeenth meeting of the Subsidiary Body<sup>4</sup>);

(b) Organized, in collaboration with the Netherlands Environmental Assessment Agency, parallel sessions on the use of scenarios for policy assessment and planning in three of the regional workshops on the preparation of the fifth national report noted above;

(c) Discussed, in the regional workshops on the updating of NBSAPs, the review of NBSAPs and the role in the mid-term review of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 through GBO-4;

(d) Highlighted, in the series of regional workshops on indicators undertaken in collaboration with UNEP, the role of indicators in assessing progress towards national targets and their contribution to the mid-term review of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 through GBO-4; and

(e) Discussed, in other thematic workshops on a range of subjects, the progress being made towards respective Aichi Biodiversity Targets and the implications for the mid-term review of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 through GBO-4.

24. An indicative draft outline of GBO-4 is being presented in the annex to this note. This draft reflects the current status of information and thinking with regard to the format and content of GBO-4. The main purpose of this draft outline is to serve as a basis for discussion and as general guidance as the preparations for GBO-4 move forward.

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<sup>3</sup> <http://www.cbd.int/gbo/gbo4/GBO-4-InformationNeeds.pdf>.

<sup>4</sup> Nairobi, Kenya, 28 January-1 February 2013; Yaoundé, Cameroon, 15-19 April 2013; Incheon City, Republic of Korea, 20-24 May 2013; Nadi, Fiji, 22-26 July 2013; Gros Islet, Saint Lucia, 16-20 September 2013.

*Annex***INDICATIVE GBO-4 OUTLINE***-Draft-*

This outline is indicative of the overall structure and content of the fourth edition of the Global Biodiversity Outlook (GBO-4). It needs to be considered in conjunction with the production plan for GBO-4 (<http://www.cbd.int/doc/meetings/sbstta/sbstta-16/official/sbstta-16-03-en.pdf>) and its communication strategy (<http://www.cbd.int/doc/meetings/sbstta/sbstta-16/information/sbstta-16-inf-02-en.pdf>).<sup>5</sup>

**Table of contents** (*1 page*)

**Foreword/Message/Preface** (*2 pages*)

Statements from the Secretary General, Executive Director and Executive Secretary.

**Executive summary** (*5 pages*)

Main messages from each section, focussing on the overall level of progress towards the achievement of the Aichi Biodiversity Targets, prospects for their achievement, and implications for progress towards the vision of the Strategic Plan and the contribution to sustainable development.<sup>6</sup>

**1. Introduction** (*10 pages*)

- (a) Biodiversity and its importance for sustainable development;
- (b) A brief outline of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 and the Aichi Biodiversity Targets, its different elements and its rationale:
  - (i) Based in part on the conclusions of GBO-3 and lessons from the 2010 Biodiversity Target;
  - (ii) The Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 provides an overarching framework for biodiversity which is relevant to all stakeholders and its scope is significantly broader than the first Strategic Plan;
  - (iii) Comprises of a shared vision, a mission, strategic goals and 20 ambitious yet achievable targets;
  - (iv) Serves as a flexible framework for the establishment of national and regional targets and it promotes the coherent and effective implementation of the three objectives of the Convention on Biological Diversity.
- (c) The Global Biodiversity Outlook:
  - (i) To provide a mid-term assessment of progress towards the implementation of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 and the achievement of the Aichi Biodiversity Targets;
  - (ii) Outline of the different types of information it draws on;
  - (iii) Outline of related products.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> Given that much of the information required for GBO-4 will only become available over the coming months, some flexibility will be required when preparing the report in order to ensure that relevant information is reflected in the most appropriate way. Some elements in the section identified below may need to change or be moved in order to improve the flow of the text and/or to avoid repetition. The page lengths are only indicative of the relative size of each section. As such this outline is illustrative of the overall scope and content of GBO-4.

<sup>6</sup> This would be the basis for a short stand alone publication detailing the main messages of the report as was done for GBO-3.

<sup>7</sup> The additional types of products that are produced will depend on the funding available. Possible products could include a standalone summary, presentations, technical series reports, etc.

(d) Introduction to biodiversity scenarios. This section will introduce the scenarios for biodiversity towards 2020 and 2050.<sup>8</sup>

## **2. Progress towards the Aichi Biodiversity Targets - (50 pages)**

This section will constitute the 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 section will also consider action at the national level (e.g. the number of countries that have set national targets, examples of targets) to provide further context on the progress observed. Where possible case-studies based on national information will be used. Where available, information/case-studies from sectors will also be used. Specifically, for each target, progress will be reviewed using information provided by Parties, the indicators noted in decision XI/3, and information provided by the Biodiversity Indicators Partnership. These information sources will be supplemented by information from published literature.

As far as possible and appropriate, the following information will be provided for each of the Aichi Targets:

- (a) Status of progress and how things have changed since GBO-3 or the adoption of the Strategic Plan (where possible). This assessment will be based on indicators where they are available;
- (b) Examples of national commitments which have been made in relation to the target;
- (c) Significant regional/national actions/steps that have been taken;
- (d) Prospects of meeting the target by 2020, based upon projections from the current rate of progress as well as the outcomes of the scenario areas;<sup>9</sup>
- (e) An assessment of how progress towards the target may contribute to the 2050 vision of the Strategic Plan;
- (f) Gaps in knowledge and level of confidence with the assessment;
- (g) National/regional case-studies;
- (h) Notable sectoral commitments, case studies or examples where available.

In addition, a review of progress towards each of the five strategic goals will be included.

- (a) For the Mission and Vision:

By way of a conclusion and as a lead into the next section, messaging on what the progress to date implies for the mission and vision of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020.

- (b) Overall statement on the status and trends of biodiversity as well as the pressures on it.

## **3. Synthesis: Progress towards the Mission and Vision of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 and contribution to sustainable development (10 pages)**

The purpose of this section is to place the Aichi Biodiversity Targets and progress towards their achievement, in the context of the fifty year Vision of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity. This is a forward-looking section that will inform future plans or the steps that would need to be taken in the lead-up to 2020 and afterwards. Specifically, this section will address the following questions in light of the information generated through the scenario work:

- (a) Given current conditions, what types of actions can be taken to achieve the 20 Aichi Biodiversity Targets?

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<sup>8</sup> Based on the scenarios report being prepared by DIVERSITAS, UNEP-WCMC, PBL-Netherlands, and the UBC Fisheries Centre and others.

<sup>9</sup> This will be based on projections into the near future for some indicators as well as on the review of scenarios undertaken by the Consortium of DIVERSITAS, UNEP-WCMC, PBL-Netherlands, and the UBC Fisheries Centre and others.

(b) How does the attainment of the Aichi Biodiversity Targets as well as our progress towards achieving them position us to realize the 2050 Vision of the Strategic Plan?

(c) How do implementation of the Strategic Plan and progress towards the Aichi Targets contribute to the 2015 targets of the Millennium Development Goals and sustainable development more generally?

#### **4. Towards 2020 – Stock taking (10 pages)**

(a) Generally, for those targets that have exhibited little progress what are the reasons?

(b) Given the progress that has been made (as illustrated in section 2) and the direction we are heading (as suggested by the scenarios in section 3), what additional actions are needed to ensure that the targets are reached by 2020?

(c) What actions need to be taken by Governments and other stakeholders in the remainder of the decade in order to reach all the Aichi Biodiversity Targets by 2020 and the Mission of the Strategic Plan?

(d) Message on likelihood of attaining the Aichi Biodiversity Targets if current trajectory is maintained;

(e) Position progress in relation to the overall 2050 Vision of the Strategic Plan;

(f) Message on the urgency for action and making cross-references to previous sections of the report. This would include messages around the benefits of biodiversity to human well-being and the economic rationale for conservation and sustainable use.

#### **References (5 pages)**

#### **Acknowledgements (1 page)**

#### **Photo Credits (1 page)**

#### **List of tables, boxes and figures<sup>10</sup> (2 pages)**

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<sup>10</sup> GBO-4 will include text boxes as well as full page inserts. These would contain information and messages that are important to communicate but which do not necessarily fit the main story line. Some of these elements could include boxes on biodiversity and the CBD, the importance of NBSAPS and national target setting, information on why biodiversity matters, the Rio+20 outcomes, the MDGs/SDGs, the twentieth anniversary of the Rio conventions and links between the different conventions.