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General Statement of Switzerland

Thank you Mister chair

Parties were encouraged to give a general statement at one point of this SBSTTA - so Switzerland is at this point taking this opportunity to emphasize a few points we think is important to this intersessional work.

We congratulate the secretariat for the preparations of this meeting and the courage shown by you, the chair of SBSSTTA and the bureau, as well as the executive secretary and its staff to organize SBSTTA in a different format. We are happy to see that the first day took off well.

Switzerland is currently developing the Action Plan to implement our national Biodiversity Strategy. At the beginning of this year Switzerland launched a vast participatory process. Over 600 experts and 250 organizations are currently engaged in this process. Representatives of federal and regional governments, NGO, private sector and research are developing a broad set of measures which will have legal, financial and/or procedural impact. The action plan should be adopted by the government in the first half of 2014 and an evaluation of the participatory process will be done.

Concerning the agenda of this meeting, Switzerland as other countries, is convinced that the basis for implementing the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 has already been laid. However, in order to adapt to achieving the targets of Strategic plan, we encourage the secretariat to further develop how it can adapt its working mode to the changed situation. We welcome efforts undertaken by the Executive secretary, to start doing so, but we think the next COP should take decisions on further steps in that direction. COP-11 asked for an in-depth review on the functioning of the secretariat and Switzerland can offer to contribute to that endeavor. One idea is to map the existing work programmes of the convention with the Strategic plan in order to harmonize work being done and identify existing gaps. It will be important for WGRI to discuss that matter. Particular focus should be set on collaboration with other biodiversity-related convention as their contribution will be crucial for achieving the Aichi Targets. In general, Switzerland sees great challenges in assessing progress to the Aichi Targets. In that sense, Switzerland supports ideas expressed by the United Kingdom and we are willing to support activities to improve the indicator system, including a potential ATHEG on the subject. We think that the strategic plan, the Aichi biodiversity targets and the indicator system will contribute substantially to the Sustainable Development Goals which are presently developed at global level. and we encourage all parties and institutions to promote this.

Finally, we strongly support Norway's proposals and remarks on the voluntary peer-review. The basis of this exercise has been laid by COP decision 11/2. In addition to what was mentioned by Norway, we can also learn from reviews in the UNFCCC process, e.g. the review of their National Communications typically involves a desk-based study and an in-country visit by an international team of experts.

Statement of Switzerland on document UNEP /CBD/ SBBSTA/ 17/2/add 2.

On Goal B:

Mr Chair,

Switzerland has several remarks concerning document 17/2/add 2., on goal B and its targets 8-10. Generally speaking we agree with the analysis and conclusions made in the document and our opinion is, that sufficient tools, guidelines and methodologies exist to support the parties in addressing the targets.

However, we would like to draw the attention on the fact that concerning Target 8, a major challenge that needs to be addressed and seems to lack in the document put forth for deliberation, is the issue of soil biodiversity. The two aspects of soil as sink of pollutants and soil as a source of biodiversity has not been taken adequately into consideration in the analysis and conclusions. The references in para 3 on international initiatives are not clear for us. Para 5 concerning standards should include **standards on soil** as available in many countries. Para 8 is not taking into account the **experiences of other conventions** concerning this topic.

Target 9,

Switzerland is currently working on its strategy on invasive species and the great challenge remains in finding the appropriate mechanisms to enable financing of eradication of already established IAS. Therefore concerning the gap analysis made in para 112, we consider in subparagraph roman 4, the methodology regarding the cost-benefits analysis of eradicating or controlling IAS should be prioritized and attention should be given to integrate the polluter pays principle.

Concerning target 10,

The document is strongly oriented towards addressing coral ecosystems. We agree that national criteria and assessments should be at the base of defining vulnerability of ecosystems. However, we are of the opinion that mountain ecosystems should be considered particularly. We have enough strong scientific evidence that mountain ecosystems are extremely vulnerable to climate change and as they are important watersheds to huge human population basins, impact directly or indirectly other ecosystems, and have a transboundary character, they need to be considered on a regional to global level and should also be addressed in the document.