United Kingdom speaking notes - Strategic Goals B& C **19**

15ᵗʰ October 2013

Madame Chair – thank you for giving us the floor. We had indicated our desire to speak this morning on Goal B – so, with your indulgence, we will provide brief comments here on both Goal B <u>and</u> Goal C.

We are grateful for the stimulating presentations from sets of panellists both this morning <u>and</u> this afternoon and for the analysis in papers SBSTTA 17.2 Add 2 & 3 prepared by the Secretariat.

Strategic Goal B

1.1 Commenting on goal B first:

1.2 The UK notes that the ability to raise awareness, implement policy tools, judge the effectiveness of measures, populate indicators for targets 5 and 7 and, to some extent, 8 and 10 can be enhanced by more cost effective and frequent quantification of habitat extent and condition.

1.3 We recognise that there is an opportunity to achieve this by exploiting the growing accessibility, spectral and spatial resolution of remote sensing, and the processing techniques now available.

1.4 As a result, we recommend:

- A) continued encouragement of free and open access to publicly funded remote sensing by Parties, and GEO [the Group on Earth Observations], through its co-ordination role,
- B) Parties, with relevant capacity, facilitate better engagement between policy and implementation bodies, remote sensing / mapping institutions and research bodies to develop repeatable applications to contribute towards goal B,
- C) Third that Research funders and GEO BON stimulate the translation of technical innovations into deployable standards for a greater range of habitats, develop protocols for the quantitative aggregation of data, with a particular focus on those vulnerable to climate change.

1.5 Given the diversity of options and the breadth of experience now available, the UK also recommends that research funders should stimulate the review and synthesis of the effectiveness of:

- The range of approaches for addressing habitat loss whilst balancing multiple demands on habitats
- The range of approaches including certification schemes for sustainable agriculture, aquaculture, and forestry.
- How effectiveness varies with scale of deployment ie: whether local, national, regional and global.

Strategic Goal C

Moving on to **Goal C**

1.6 We note some of the gaps and barriers to achievement of the targets identified in SBSTTA 17.2 Add 3. We broadly concur with the conclusions in this paper, however, we also note that some of these identified gaps are potentially being addressed through other forums.

1.7 For example, the paper notes the absence of a global map of wetlands as a limitation to achievement of target 11. We understand the Scientific and Technical Review Panel of the Ramsar Convention has, as its highest priority, a task from 2013-15 to develop a Global Wetland Observing System working with GEOBON and others to, among other things, inform preparation of the *State of the World's Wetlands and their ecosystems services* reporting.

1.8 We also understand that there are a number of difficulties with respect to availability, accuracy and resolution of data to enable Ramsar to achieve this. The Ramsar secretariat I know are here and perhaps can give their perspective on this task but this issue clearly remains a high priority task for target 11 though another Convention is leading on this.

1.9 Likewise we heard at a side event yesterday and from the Panel this afternoon on the work of from the Commission of Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture of the FAO [towards, amongst other things, the State of the World report on biodiversity for Food & Agriculture which, as the SBSTTA paper recognises,] will provide useful information and support to work towards Target 13.

1.10 As the paper notes, other, more species-focused, Conventions are also actively engaged in contributing towards target 12. So, although tools to address pressures associated with illegal wildlife harvest and trade are identified as a gap in the SBSTTA paper there are a number of initiatives actively underway by different Parties and other bodies, including through CITES, to address this issue.

1.11 In this respect, the UK is keen to play its part in global effort to tackle illegal wildlife trade, building on the valuable work already undertaken at international, trans-national, and national levels. We will host a conference in London on 12-13 February 2014 next year, for the highest levels of government, which will build on existing initiatives and, we hope, galvanise the international community into greater and faster action against illegal wildlife trade

1.12 In short, we need to ensure that we are aware of, and engaged with, these initiatives in other forums and so we do not set out to duplicate them

1.13 Overall, whilst we agree the focus should be on using and

implementing the tools we already have rather than developing new ones, we feel some recent innovative approaches merit further consideration and development. These include, in particular, means to support and enhance data recording, capture and flow - such as developments in sampling (e.g. through Earth Observation or DNA/eDNA survey), and developments in data capture techniques (for example, recording species observations online and through 'apps' for mobile phones – and Norway provided an example of their use this morning) - we feel these are valuable tools with scope for much wider application.

1.14 Finally, the UK has already provided in writing some short case studies on tools we are using to support implementation of this goal C and which may be of interest to others. These cover the following topics:

Goal B
- Landscape scale measures – Nature Improvement Areas in England
- Fine spatial scale and detailed habitat class mapping from multi-scale remote sensing – Making Earth Observation work for UK Biodiversity

Goal C
- Volunteer recording of species and habitats – citizen science
- National Biodiversity Network information gateway – making species records data publicly available.
- Research commissioned to develop a method for identifying priorities for species conservation internationally (MAPISCO)
- The identification and designation of Offshore Marine Protected Areas in the waters around GB and Northern Ireland
- Environmental DNA – developing and applying this method to identify the presence of cryptic aquatic species which are otherwise difficult to survey

1.7 Thank you.