

## **Toward a transformative change for biodiversity based on systems transition Discussion Note**

### **CBD Secretariat**

Bogis-Bossey Dialogue for Biodiversity  
Château de Bossey - The Ecumenical Institute, Bogis-Bossey  
12-14 November 2017

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#### **Purpose of this dialogue**

In 2018, the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) will celebrate its 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary. The UN Decade on Biodiversity and the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 will come to a close at the end of 2020.

With three years before the end of the decade, this is an excellent opportunity to reflect on the CBD's numerous achievements, to take stock of shortcomings, and to identify innovative ways to advance implementation of the Biodiversity Convention, in full alignment with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and Sustainable Development Goals.

We need a transformative, systemic change across multiple sectors and actors if we are to avoid the catastrophic biodiversity losses predicted for the near future, to fully achieve the vision of the Sustainable Development Goals of indivisible progress for people, planet and prosperity, and to ensure the healthy functioning of the very ecosystems that underpin human life itself.

This dialogue is the first of several that will be convened by the Secretariat of the Convention to kick-start a transformational process that will contribute to a bold post-2020 global biodiversity framework. The dialogue will bring together experts from a variety of disciplines, and will include a focus on systems-thinking and systems transition, to deliver thoughtful and innovative input into efforts to advance implementation of the Biodiversity Convention and the design of the post-2020 global biodiversity framework. It will aim to identify the system-level transformations necessary to achieve a bold shared vision and to effect impactful change at all levels.

#### **Background and current status**

There has been significant progress in the implementation of the Convention on Biological Diversity in the last two and a half decades since its entry into force in 1993. However, loss of species, degradation of ecosystems and depletion of natural capital continue at alarming rates, posing serious threats to the survival of life on the planet, including human life.

The CBD has a number of key strengths. With 196 Parties, it has near-universal membership among the countries of the world. The Convention has a comprehensive and science-driven mandate, and an international financial support mechanism for national implementation. The CBD community is diverse and active, including not only governments, but also a wide range of UN and other international institutions and a diverse set of stakeholders and partners, with the result that work on biodiversity has broad ownership. Moreover, the Convention is one of the few global instruments designed to promote sustainable development. Its objectives – conservation of biodiversity, sustainable use of the components of biodiversity, and the fair and equitable sharing of benefits arising from the use of genetic resources, underpin

the environmental, social and economic dimensions of biodiversity in the pursuit of development at different levels.

An important milestone in the history of the Convention occurred at COP 10, in Nagoya, Japan in 2010, where Parties adopted the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 and 20 global targets for biodiversity and ecosystems, known as the Aichi Biodiversity Targets. Most of the targets set 2020 as the date for their achievement. The Strategic Plan also includes a long-term vision for “living in harmony with nature”, whereby “*by 2050, biodiversity is valued, conserved, restored and wisely used, maintaining ecosystem services, sustaining a healthy planet and delivering benefits essential for all people.*” The Strategic Plan has been recognized as setting the global framework for biodiversity for the decade 2011-2020, and provides an overarching umbrella for action. Almost all of the other seven biodiversity-related Conventions have adapted their own work programs and strategies to integrate the provisions of the global plan accordingly, thus ensuring coherence between different strains of work. The Strategic Plan 2011-2020 has been endorsed by heads of state in the Rio+20 outcome document “The Future We Want”, and by the UN General Assembly.

While progress has been made on most of the 20 Biodiversity Aichi Targets, the fourth *Global Biodiversity Outlook* (GBO-4) and subsequent assessments indicate that most targets are not on track to be achieved by 2020, and some targets, such as habitat degradation and fragmentation, pollution and the loss of species, have significantly worsened since 2011. Numerous challenges remain, including:

- a.) the failure by decision makers in the public and private sectors to recognize the value of biodiversity for development and economic priorities, leading to the failure to integrate and mainstream biodiversity and ecosystems in a systematic way in government, corporate and societal decision making and planning processes;
- b.) the slow rate of adoption of the essential technological tools required to address the drivers of loss of biodiversity, including spatial data, big data and data modeling and scenario development; and
- c.) inadequate political will and leadership required to catalyze transformational change in implementation of the Convention.

Biodiversity is often treated in a narrow manner, as a fragmented policy sub-sector of the broader environmental agenda, and does not receive the necessary recognition or societal investment as fundamental natural capital which provides the infrastructure for life-supporting systems on Earth and which is the foundation for human development, health, and well-being.

The fourth Global Biodiversity Outlook report (GBO-4) concluded, *inter alia*, that mainstreaming, both across and within sectors, was extremely important for achieving the Strategic Plan. The need to mainstream biodiversity is embedded in the Convention itself as well as the Aichi Biodiversity Targets. At its thirteenth meeting, the Conference of the Parties adopted a decision on the mainstreaming of biodiversity within and across sectors with a particular focus on the agriculture, forestry, fisheries and tourism sectors. In the same decision, the Parties decided to consider at the fourteenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties (COP-14), which will take place in Cairo, Egypt in 2018, the mainstreaming of biodiversity into the sectors of energy and mining, infrastructure, manufacturing and processing, as well as health.

A number of major global developments have occurred since the adoption of the Strategic Plan. These include the adoption in 2015 of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the universal 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), the historic Paris Agreement on Climate Change, the Sendai Framework on Disaster Risk Reduction, the New Urban Agenda, and the Addis Ababa Action Agenda on international financing. These processes provide important context for work under the Convention, including on mainstreaming and the integration of biodiversity within and across sectors.

## **Bogis-Bossey Dialogue**

The goal of the Bogis-Bossey dialogue will be to identify a transformative agenda for action that will engage multi-level systemic change in all sectors and domains that have an impact on, or benefit from, biodiversity, with a view to contributing to discussions on an ambitious, yet pragmatic and innovative post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework.

To this end, we need to:

- 1) Identify the barriers to, and opportunities for, transformational change (including changes in institutions and behaviors) needed to address the drivers of biodiversity loss and to promote the full integration of biodiversity into sustainable development;
- 2) Identify how the Convention (and the wider biodiversity regime with the CBD at its core) can leverage such changes, both in the lead up to COP 14 and COP 15, and through the post-2020 global biodiversity framework;
- 3) Identify the main levers, champions and actors that can play a significant role in this transformational change.

Topics over the two days include:

- Systems thinking, transition management and tools for transformational change
- Leveraging change, disruption and innovation, accelerators and multipliers
- Transformation through corporate policies, markets, and finance
- Transforming implementation through technology, data and accountability
- Changing the game for biodiversity - communicating for transformational change
- Looking ahead: Opportunities for multiplying the discussions
- Gems and gaps: Next steps and commitments for action

## **Expected outcomes**

The main outcome from this first dialogue will be a think-piece compiling innovative, cutting-edge ideas and concepts, and transformative actions that can be taken up by Parties and key actors, that can help accelerate progress towards achieving the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020, and that can be a source of ideas for Parties to the Convention when preparing the draft architecture of the post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework. It can be then used to inform further extensive consultations in 2018 and 2019 with Parties and stakeholders, as well as future dialogues that will be planned for 2018 and possibly beyond. The report of the meeting would be made available as an information note for meetings of the SBSTTA and SBI.