



Webinar

# ***Biodiversity Guidance for Voluntary National Reviews***

*Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity*



**UN Biodiversity Conference**








Investing in Diversity for People and Planet

**COP14-COPMOP9-COPMOP3**

SHARM EL-SHEIKH, EGYPT 2018



# Agenda

-  Welcome Remarks
-  Overview of VNRs and the Secretary General's Common Reporting Guidelines (UNDESA)
-  Introduction to the Biodiversity-specific Guidance for Preparing VNRs
-  Linkages between VNRs and CBD National Reports
-  Country Case Examples (Uruguay; Open Floor)
-  Q&A and Discussion
-  Closing Remarks



## Webinar Participation

- You can pose questions in the chat space. Please identify name and country.*
- Questions addressed as time permits.*
- Outstanding questions addressed by email after webinar.*
- Please have mics on mute when not presenting.*
- If you lose connection and can't re-connect, email: [darren.swanson.consultant@cbd.int](mailto:darren.swanson.consultant@cbd.int)*



25  
YEARS

Convention on  
Biological Diversity

**SAFEGUARDING LIFE ON EARTH**

Welcome &  
Context

**Markus Lehmann**

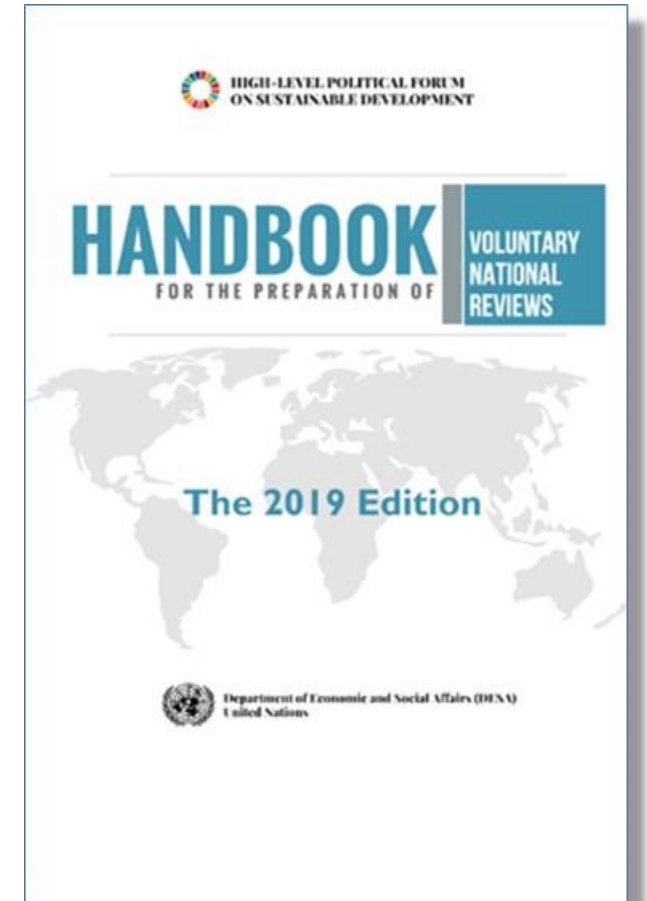
Senior Programme Management Officer and Head  
of Biodiversity Economy Unit, Secretariat of the CBD



# Overview of VNRs and the Secretary General's Common Reporting Guidelines

## Riina Jussila

Sustainable Development Officer, Division for Sustainable Development Goals, UNDESA



# Introduction to the Biodiversity-specific Guidance for Preparing VNRs

**Darren Swanson**

2030 Agenda and SDG Consultant,  
Secretariat of the CBD



# Purpose of the Biodiversity Guide for VNRs

To assist Parties to the Convention with reporting on progress in their VNRs in the context of:

1. Conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity; and
2. Articulating the important cross-cutting role that biodiversity plays in supporting each of the SDGs.



# Organization of the Biodiversity Guide for VNRs

Organized according to the sections of the Secretary General's Voluntary Reporting Guidelines:

1. Opening Statement
  2. Highlights
  3. Introduction
  4. Methodology and Process for Preparation of the Review
  5. Policy and Enabling Environment
  6. Progress on Goals and Targets
  7. Means of Implementation
  8. Next Steps
  9. Conclusion
  10. Annexes
- 
- 5.1 Creating ownership of the SDGs
  - 5.2 Incorporation of SDGs in national frameworks
  - 5.3 Integration of the three dimensions
  - 5.4 Leaving no one behind
  - 5.5 Institutional mechanisms
  - 5.6 Structural issues

# 1. Opening Statement of a VNR

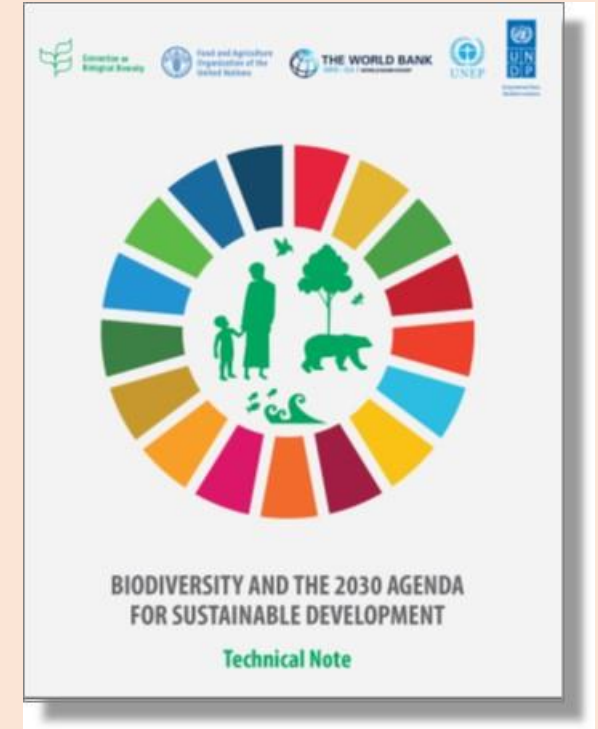
## Secretary General's VNR Guidelines

“...highlight the current status of SDG progress and how the Government is responding to the **transformative** nature of the 2030 Agenda for Development including through its national development plans, strategies, or other relevant documents.”

## Biodiversity-specific Guidance

Opportunity to articulate how biodiversity and healthy ecosystems provide a foundation for achieving all of the SDGs.

## Useful Reference Material



## Good Examples

- Italy 2017 VNR (Foreword section)
- Qatar 2018 VNR (Opening Statement)



# 5. POLICY AND ENABLING ENVIRONMENT

## 5.1 Creating Ownership of the SDGs

### Secretary General's VNR Guidelines

Calls for examples of how the 2030 Agenda and SDGs are being **mainstreamed** into policy and planning by governments, civil society and the private sector.

It also asks “how different groups, particularly women and young people, have been engaged and how direct citizen **engagement** has been facilitated.”

### Biodiversity-specific Guidance

Opportunity to describe efforts toward mainstreaming biodiversity into planning and policy in national and sub-national governments, civil society and the private sector.

Could also include efforts regarding traditional knowledge and engaging community stakeholders, including using citizen science or local crowdsourcing to monitor biodiversity and ecosystem health in the context of SDGs 14, 15.

### Useful Reference Material

- **COP Decision 14/3:** Mainstreaming of biodiversity in the energy and mining, infrastructure, manufacturing and processing sectors
- **COP Decision 14/4:** Health and biodiversity
- **COP Decision 14/5:** Biodiversity and climate change

### Good Examples

Canada 2018 VNR (SDG Progress section)

*“Mainstreaming biodiversity Canada has a long history of supporting the mainstreaming of biodiversity into productive sectors. This includes efforts to incorporate biodiversity considerations into the agricultural, fisheries, forestry and tourism sectors.*

*Canada is working to improve policy coherence by integrating actions for conserving biodiversity with other environmental and socio-economic objectives.*

*For instance, Canada has established a pan-Canadian working group to address issues of climate change and biodiversity loss in a coordinated way, and to promote the integration of biodiversity considerations into climate change decisions.”*

# 5.2 Incorporation of SDGs in national frameworks

## Secretary General's VNR Guidelines

“outline ***critical initiatives*** that the country has undertaken to adapt the SDGs and targets to its national circumstances.”

“countries could consider referring to major efforts undertaken by ***local authorities and non-State actors*** to implement the Goals, the role of science-policy interfaces, and partnerships.”

## Biodiversity-specific Guidance

Parties to the CBD could make reference to their National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans (NBSAPs) and how it is integrated with its broader national development plan.

## Useful Reference Material

- CBD Website: National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans (NBSAPs)
- NBSAPs: Natural Catalysts for Accelerating Action on SDGs (UNDP, 2016)
- UNCBD Website: Subnational Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans (SBSAPs)
- UNCBD Website: Regional Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans (RBSAPs)

## Good Examples

### Ireland's 2018 VNR

“A key commitment under the SDG National Implementation Plan involves mainstreaming the SDGs across national policies, so that when relevant sectoral policies are developed or reviewed, Ireland's commitments under the SDGs will be taken into account.

While this will be an incremental process, national policies which already refer to the SDGs include the National Strategy for Women and Girls, the National Biodiversity Action Plan, the National Plan on Corporate Social Responsibility, the National Planning Framework and the [upcoming] Clean Air Strategy.”

# 5.3 Integration of the three dimensions

## Secretary General's VNR Guidelines

“discuss how the **three dimensions** of sustainable development (economic, social and environmental) are being **integrated** and how sustainable development policies are being designed and implemented to reflect such integration.”

## Biodiversity-specific Guidance

Could elaborate how policy tools for upstream planning, such as strategic environmental assessment (SEA), were used and how this helped advance the SDGs, including the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity.

## Useful Reference Material

- COP 8 Decision VIII/28. Impact assessment: Voluntary guidelines on biodiversity-inclusive impact assessment, CBD
- Brochure with the voluntary guidelines on biodiversity-inclusive impact assessment, Netherlands Commission for Environmental Assessment.

## Good Examples

### Switzerland's 2018 VNR

“Prospective evaluation instruments, such as regulatory impact assessments, sustainability assessments, environmental assessments, energy impact assessments and health impact assessments, are available for analysing the impact of the government's proposed policies and actions.”

### Viet Nam's 2018 VNR (Linkages in SDGs Implementation section)

“Conservation of biodiversity as per SDG 15 will help protect people's health, promote food production and reduce poverty. Therefore, SDG 15 is closely related to others, especially SDGs 1, 2, 3, 13 and 14.”

## 5.4 Leaving no one behind

### Secretary General's VNR Guidelines

“assess how the ***principle of leaving no one behind has been mainstreamed*** in the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals”

“how ***vulnerable groups*** have been identified, including through improved data collection and ***disaggregation***”

“what ***policies and programmes*** are being implemented to address their needs and support their empowerment.”

### Biodiversity-specific Guidance

The importance of biodiversity as a basic human right could be elaborated along with biodiversity's role in poverty alleviation.

#### UN Human Rights Council, 34th Session:

“The full enjoyment of human rights, including the rights to life, health, food and water, depends on the services provided by ecosystems. The provision of ecosystem services depends on the health and sustainability of ecosystems, which in turn depend on biodiversity. The full enjoyment of human rights thus depends on biodiversity, and the degradation and loss of biodiversity undermine the ability of human beings to enjoy their human rights.”

## Useful Reference Material

- CBD Website, Biodiversity for Development
- COP XII/5. Biodiversity for poverty eradication and sustainable development, CBD
- Biodiversity, Development and Poverty Alleviation. Recognizing the Role of Biodiversity for Human Well-being, CBD
- CBD Website, Gender and Biodiversity
- **Technical Note:**



# 7. Means of Implementation

## Secretary General's VNR Guidelines

“discuss how means of implementation are mobilized, what difficulties this process faces, and what additional resources are needed to implement the 2030 Agenda, including in terms of **financing, capacity development and data needs, technology, and partnerships.**”

## Biodiversity-specific Guidance

Could elaborate on experience with various financing sources and mechanisms for the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity,

...as well with associated capacity building and technical support activities, such as through the Biodiversity Finance (BIOFIN) Initiative of the United Nations Development Programme.

## Useful Reference Material

- CBD Website, Financial Mechanism and Resources
- CBD Website, National financing: Africa
- CBD Website, National financing: Asia-Pacific
- CBD Website, National financing: LAC
- CBD Website, National and international financing: Eastern European
- CBD Website, National and international financing: Western European and Others

## Good Examples

Ireland's 2018 VNR

“A national Biodiversity Expenditure Review [2010-2015] will be published in 2018 which examines expenditure from relevant sectors including, Agriculture, Forestry, Marine, Heritage and eNGOs. This review also presents innovative financial mechanisms that could be utilised to mobilise additional resources for the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity. Research will build on this review to undertake a Financial Needs Assessment to determine the resources required to conserve and restore biodiversity.”

# 8. Next Steps

## Secretary General's VNR Guidelines

“outline what steps are planned to **enhance the implementation** of the 2030 Agenda” and also to “indicate how it is planned to **keep the Goals under review** at the national and sub-national levels, including dissemination of reviews and their findings.”

## Biodiversity-specific Guidance

Opportunity to comment on how implementation of the National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (NBSAP) and achievement of related targets align with and contribute to the 2030 Agenda and SDGs.

Can also describe how biodiversity is being reported in the Sixth National Report

## Useful Reference Material

- CBD Website: National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans (NBSAPs)
- CBD Website: Sixth National Report Information Portal

## Good Examples

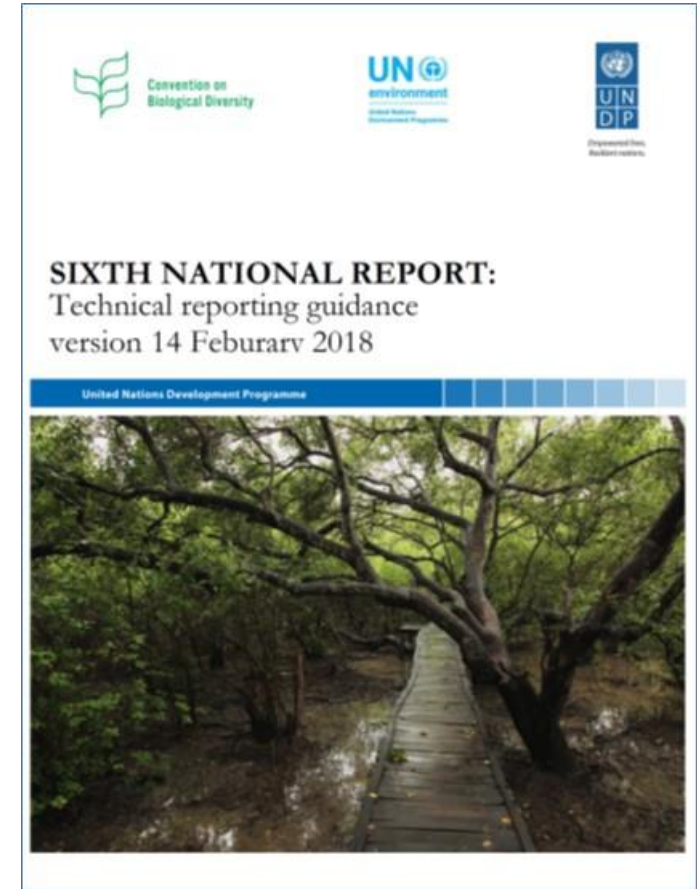
### Bhutan's 2018 VNR

“Because of the centrality of land to other dimensions of development, Bhutan's challenge in achieving SDG 15 will also significantly impede, the achievement of other SDGs – mainly SDG 6, SDG 8, SDG 9 and SDG 11.”

# Linkages Between VNRs and CBD National Reports

**Lijie Cai**

Programme Officer for National Reports,  
Secretariat of the CBD



# 6. Progress on Goals and Targets

## Secretary General's VNR Guidelines

“provide brief information on ***progress and the status*** of all SDGs” and to “describe critical ***difficulties encountered*** in reaching them and how they could be addressed.”

## Biodiversity-specific Guidance

Consider and reflect on the role that biodiversity and healthy ecosystems play in reaching targets, including mention of the relevant Aichi Biodiversity Targets, and how any difficulties encountered could be mitigated or how any successes achieved could be further leveraged for transformative change.

Draw on insights and data from the [Sixth National Report](#)

## Useful Reference Material

- CBD Website: Sixth National Report Information Portal
- Regional Assessment Reports of The Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES)

## Good Examples

### Romania's 2018

VNR includes a comprehensive report on progress for SDG 15

### Ireland's 2018 VNR

In describing progress for SDG 15, Ireland's 2018 VNR includes a detailed overview of its National Biodiversity Action Plan and how this plan supports many facets of Ireland's SDG progress.



# Q&A and Discussion



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## Closing Remarks

