

## NATIONAL PLANNING

### ~ Issue Brief ~

#### Background

Mandated under Article 6 of the Convention, NBSAPs are the main instrument for national implementation of the Convention on Biological Diversity. It is oftentimes also the national implementation instrument for other MEAs. Being strategic instruments for guiding implementation, they are integrally linked to review processes. Their inclusion in the discussions on an enhanced review mechanism was requested in the post 2020 regional consultations and the discussions at the first meeting of the Open-Ended Working Group on the Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework.

To date, 190 of 196 (97%) Parties have prepared *at least one* NBSAP. Since COP-10, 168 Parties have submitted “post-Nagoya” NBSAPs, 154 (92%) of which take the Nagoya outcomes into consideration (albeit to varying degrees). A total of 67 NBSAPs have been adopted as “whole of government” policy instruments as was required by Aichi Biodiversity Target 17.

#### Main issues for discussion

Function of the NBSAP: Much more than a document to be submitted to the Secretariat, the NBSAP is conceived to guide and facilitate implementation of the Convention, in the broadest sense, at the national level. The guidance contained in decision IX/8 equips NBSAPs to be vehicles for mainstreaming, communication and awareness, resource mobilization, knowledge generation and management, and participation. Following the adoption of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2015 and the requirement to adopt national targets within the framework of the Aichi Targets, most Parties submitted national targets within, or alongside, their revised NBSAPs. The language in Aichi Target 17, which requires that NBSAPs be adopted as “policy instruments” furthers the effort to have them serve as “whole of government” mainstreaming instruments.

- How can NBSAPs better reflect Parties’ intentions to address implementation gaps and/or other weaknesses identified in their national reports (or other review)?
- How can NBSAPs be used to increase the level commitment from Parties in the case where a global stock take would identify an ambition gap? Could this be better achieved through an additional instrument such as National Commitments? If so, what would this instrument contain? Would it be voluntary? How often and at what moment in the COP cycle would it be submitted (periodicity)? How and by whom would the information contained therein be analyzed and compiled? How could it address non-state actor commitments? and How would it relate to the NBSAP?
- How can NBSAPs better fulfil their function as national *implementation* instruments?
- How can NBSAPs become more concrete, action-oriented instruments? (national *investment plan*?)
- How can NBSAPs better facilitate/stimulate ownership and action by a broad array of actors (beyond government) at the national level.

Format and Comparability: There is no standard template for NBSAPs under the Convention. However, there is very detailed guidance, in decision IX/8, on their contents, supplemented by decision X/2 which calls for NBSAPs to be adopted as policy instruments. Parties’ adherence to this guidance varies significantly. The forms of national targets that Parties set in line with the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity also varied significantly. While the free-form of NBSAPs allows for the maximum reflection of national realities (hence increasing national ownership), the lack of comparability among NBSAPs makes it difficult to aggregate and analyze the information contained in them (including national targets), and to have transparency on the commitments Parties are making toward global goals and targets.

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- What would be the advantages and disadvantages of having a set of common elements for the adaptation of current NBSAPs to the post 2020 GBF, rather than a free-form revision?
- To what extent have national biodiversity targets been useful for national implementation and monitoring, how should their establishment/revision be approached in the post 2020 period, and how should they be submitted (as part of NBSAP, as an addendum etc.)?
- What would be the advantages and disadvantages of the NBSAP becoming two (or more) separate documents: a national strategy (perhaps developed as and when the country deems necessary), national targets reflecting the global framework, national commitments (perhaps with a common standard format and periodicity), and an implementation plan?

Periodicity for revisions: There is no mandated periodicity for NBSAPs under the Convention. However, Aichi Biodiversity Target 17 required that all NBSAPs be updated in line with the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020, by 2015. This target was achieved by 69 out of 196 Parties.

Parties have taken different approaches to NBSAP revisions with some already having submitted up to five NBSAPs while others having submitted one or two. The duration (expiry date) of updated NBSAPs varies significantly among Parties. Of 167 post Nagoya NBSAPs submitted to date, 7 cover periods between 2015 and 2018, 82 cover periods up to 2020 and 64 others cover periods up to 2030. Fourteen do not specify a timeline.

- How can the adaptation of current NBSAPs to the post 2020 GBF be kept to a minimum in order to save time and resources for continued implementation, while ensuring that these instruments reflect and address national realities and processes?
- How could the adaptation of current NBSAPs (or optionally a part thereof) be timed to line-up with periodic reporting and review? This relates to national targets but also to actions towards achieving them.

Support for revisions:

During the post 2010 period 141 countries accessed funds set aside in GEF-5 and GEF-6 for Biodiversity Enabling Activities (49 through UNDP, 84 through UNEP, 1 through FAO, 1 through the Inter-American Development Bank (IADB), and 6 via Direct Access). The total investment in these revision projects was US\$ 31,231,908 from GEF and US\$ 53,049,355 in co-financing. There may be a continued need for support to countries in adapting their NBSAPs to the post 2020 framework, developing their post-2020 implementation plans, or other planning or commitment instruments.

- How can we ensure that development of NBSAPs are nationally driven and nationally owned?
- How can we ensure that sufficient policy and implementation support is provided to Parties?
- How can we cut the lag time for the provision for these resources to ensure that they are available from the beginning of 2021?
- What can we learn from previous experience and the experience of other countries in this area?

**Key Mandates**

Article 6 of the Convention

- States that each Contracting Party shall, in accordance with its particular conditions and capabilities:
- (a) develop national strategies, plans or programmes for the conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity or adapt for this purpose existing strategies, plans or programmes which shall reflect, inter alia, the measures set out in this Convention relevant to the Contracting Party concerned; and
- (b) integrate, as far as possible and as appropriate, the conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity into relevant sectoral or cross-sectoral plans, programmes and policies.

COP decision IX/8

- Provides detailed guidance on the contents of NBSAPs

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COP decision X/2

- Decision adopting the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020

Aichi Biodiversity Target 17

“By 2015, each Party has developed, adopted as a policy instrument, and has commenced implementing an effective, participatory and updated national biodiversity strategy and action plan.”

**Some documents for further background**

- CDB website on NBSAPs: <https://www.cbd.int/nbsap/>
  - Prip, C; Gross, T; Johnston, S; Vierros, M (2010) Biodiversity Planning: as assessment of national biodiversity strategies and action plans. United Nations University Institute of Advanced Studies, Yokohama, Japan.
  - NBSAP Training Modules <https://www.cbd.int/nbsap/training/>
  - UNEP (2018). Assessment of post-2010 National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans, Nairobi
  - Update on progress in revising/updating and implementing NBSAPs, including national targets [CBD/COP/14/5/Add.1](#)
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