

Statement

Special Virtual Session for SBSTTA 24 and SBI 3 on Biodiversity, One Health and COVID-19 -15-16 December 2020

Greetings to all,

On behalf of the Alliance of Bioversity International and CIAT we thank for this opportunity to provide a short statement at this **SBSTTA 24 and SBI 3 on Biodiversity, One Health and COVID-19.**

We see the CBD post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework as a unique opportunity to address the linkage between humankind and nature, by developing food systems that preserve and positively take advantage of biodiversity.

Recovering from the economic and food crises generated by COVID-19 and building more resilient food systems will require adopting both short-term and long-term approaches.

In the short term: policymakers need to facilitate trade and improve information exchange between food producers and buyers, especially at the local level.

In the longer term is where both the challenges and opportunities reside. We need to promote diverse diets to improve people's health: The Alliance is working with many others to raise awareness on the importance of consuming a diversity of foods to ensure adequate intake of the full range of micro- and macro-nutrient essential to human health.

We are also identifying more nutritious crops that can be introduced into diets to fight malnutrition. Also, strengthening the nutritional content of crops that dominate current diets, particularly those of the poorest populations, by crossbreeding high-nutrient varieties with high-yielding ones. This involves tapping the genetic traits of thousands of varieties preserved in gene banks or available in their places of origin, for which a broader application of the Access and Benefit-Sharing mechanism is crucial.

And of course we need to make agriculture more sustainable. The Alliance as part of CGIAR together with many other organizations at the global and local levels is helping countries to shift towards regenerative production systems that promote biodiversity and improve soil and water quality, reduce greenhouse gas emissions, restore degraded soils, and contribute to climate-change adaptation.

Good luck and have a very fruitful meeting.

Stay safe.

Annex 1: Information on the special virtual session for SBSTTA and SBI on "Biodiversity, One Health and the response to COVID-19"

A special virtual session for SBSTTA and SBI on the theme of "Biodiversity, One Health and the response to COVID-19", will be held on 15-16 December 2020. The special session is being convened with a view to maintaining momentum towards COP 15 and to facilitating preparations for the twenty-fourth meeting of the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice (SBSTTA 24) and the third meeting of the Subsidiary Body on Implementation (SBI 3), which have been postponed to 2021. It will allow Parties and observers to gain further familiarity with the online platform and with the procedures for conducting meetings virtually.

The special session, which will be held from 7:00 a.m. to 9:00 a.m., Montreal time on both days, will also provide opportunities for the presentation of information and for statements by Parties and observers. No decisions or formal recommendations will be made at the special session. Interpretation will be provided in all UN languages. Further information, including the programme, will be available at the special virtual session webpage: <https://www.cbd.int/conferences/sbstta24-sbi3-prep-02>. The Secretariat will be updating this webpage as new information becomes available, including the meeting platform and connection details for the session, and other background documentation.

As per the practice for meetings of the subsidiary bodies, the designation of representatives to participate in the above session should be addressed to the CBD Executive Secretary through an official letter of nomination, to be sent by e-mail to secretariat@cbd.int or by fax at +1 514-288-6588, as soon as possible but no later than 10 December 2020. Early registration is encouraged.

Each delegation will be provided with an opportunity to speak during the two-day special session. In order to ensure the security of the meetings and proper identification of those speaking on behalf of delegations, delegations need to designate their speaker(s) well in advance of the start of the event. Taking into account the technical limitations of the platform, the number of participants designated as speakers will be limited for each day, as follows:

- * Parties and other Governments - will be assigned two (2) microphones each
- * UN organizations and IGOs - will be assigned two (2) microphones each
- * All other delegations - will be assigned one (1) microphone each

Accordingly, when preparing the nomination letter to participate in the special virtual session, delegations should specify their designated speakers. The designated speakers will receive a unique link before the scheduled event; therefore, kindly ensure to provide a unique e-mail address for each designated speaker.

References

ⁱ https://www.biodiversityinternational.org/fileadmin/user_upload/campaigns/CBD/ABS_Post-2020_Feb_2020.pdf