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ONLINE DISCUSSION FORUM ON  
CONSERVATION AND SUSTAINABLE USE OF  
MARINE AND COASTAL BIODIVERSITY IN  
PREPARATION FOR THE FIFTEENTH MEETING  
OF THE CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES

8-15 June 2022

Online

**REPORT OF THE ONLINE DISCUSSION FORUM ON CONSERVATION AND SUSTAINABLE  
USE OF MARINE AND COASTAL BIODIVERSITY IN PREPARATION FOR THE FIFTEENTH  
MEETING OF THE CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES**

## I. INTRODUCTION

1. The Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice (SBSTTA) of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), at its twenty-fourth meeting, adopted recommendation 24/9 on conservation and sustainable use of marine and coastal biodiversity. In this recommendation, the Subsidiary Body noted that the work on this issue was not completed due to the extraordinary circumstances prevailing. In the same recommendation, the Subsidiary Body requested the Executive Secretary, in advance of the fifteenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties, and subject to the availability of financial resources, to facilitate consultations among Parties, other Governments and relevant stakeholders, including indigenous peoples and local communities, women and youth, with a view to advancing discussions on the conservation and sustainable use of marine and coastal biodiversity.
2. Pursuant to this request, an online discussion forum on conservation and sustainable use of marine and coastal biodiversity was convened on 9-10 and 13-14 June 2022 and was preceded by an opening webinar on 8 June 2022 and followed by a closing webinar on 15 June 2022.
3. This online discussion forum aimed to provide an opportunity for discussions and sharing of views on the issues addressed in the annex to SBSTTA [recommendation 24/9](#) to facilitate focused deliberations on these issues at the fifteenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties.
4. Parties, other Governments, and relevant organizations and initiatives were invited in notification 2022-028, dated 17 May 2022, to nominate experts to participate in the online discussion forum, including in the opening and closing webinars. Participants were selected, in consultation with the Bureau of SBSTTA, based on relevant expertise and experience relating to the conservation and sustainable use of marine and coastal biodiversity, taking into account regional representation and gender balance.
5. There were 55 participants from 36 Parties and 19 organizations. Participants were comprised of experts from Algeria, Argentina, Australia, Belgium, Brazil, Cameroon, Canada, China, Costa Rica, Ecuador, Egypt, Federated States of Micronesia, Finland, Germany, Guyana, Jamaica, Japan, Jordan, Kuwait, Mexico, Morocco, Mozambique, Namibia, New Zealand, Norway, Peru, Russia, Saint Lucia, Seychelles, Singapore, South Africa, Spain, Sudan, Thailand, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, Vanuatu, Food and Agriculture Organization, Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission of UNESCO, International Seabed Authority, South East Atlantic Fisheries Organization, UN Division on Ocean Affairs and Law of the Sea, UN Environment Programme World Conservation Monitoring Centre, CoopeSoliDar R.L., Coastal Oceans Research and Development – Indian Ocean, Deep Ocean Stewardship

Initiative, Fisheries Expert Group of the IUCN-CEM, Global Ocean Biodiversity Initiative, International Coral Reef Initiative, International Union for Conservation of Nature, Local Governments for Sustainability (ICLEI), Lyell Centre of the Heriot-Watt University, Mediterranean Protected Areas Network, The Nature Conservancy, Wildlife Conservation Society, and World Wildlife Fund. A full list of participants is included in annex I.

6. The main discussions took place in the online forum on the CBD webpage where participants posted their input and views on a given topic and had the opportunity to respond to posts made by other participants.

7. The online discussion forum and the opening and closing webinars were co-facilitated by Marie-May Muzungaile from Seychelles and Janos Hennicke from Germany.

8. In input to the online discussion forum, participants were provided with document CBD/SBSTTA/24/INF/42 (Proposals submitted by Parties and observers on the conservation and sustainable use of marine and coastal biodiversity under agenda item 6 of the twenty-fourth meeting of the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice) and document CBD/MCB/OM/2022/1/INF/1 (Synthesis of proposals submitted by Parties and observers on the conservation and sustainable use of marine and coastal biodiversity under agenda item 6 of the twenty-fourth meeting of the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice).

## **II. OPENING WEBINAR**

9. The opening webinar was convened on 8 June 2022, from 8 a.m. to 10 a.m. EDT, and provided background and context on the forum, briefing on input materials, instructions for how to engage in the forum, and expected outcomes.

10. Mr. Hesiquio Benitez Diaz, Chair of the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice, delivered the opening remarks and welcomed the participants to the opening webinar. He emphasized the importance of marine and coastal biodiversity in view of the development of the post-2020 global biodiversity framework and with respect to the UN Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development, UN Ocean Conference, and other major developments and ocean-related processes. He noted that this discussion forum has the important task to provide outputs that can help accelerate the discussion on the conservation and sustainable use of marine and coastal biodiversity at the fifteenth Conference of the Parties. He invited the participants to discuss the essential elements of the draft decision and explore the potential areas of agreement.

11. Mr. Janos Hennicke, the co-facilitator of the online discussion forum, was then invited by the CBD Secretariat to provide background and context on the forum as well as the objectives and expected outputs. He introduced the documents to support the online discussion forum, namely the compilation of proposals (CBD/SBSTTA/24/INF/42), and the synthesis of proposals (CBD/MCB/OM/2022/1/INF/1) with respect to the SBSTTA recommendation 24/9. A full list of documents is provided in annex II.

12. Next, Mr. Joseph Appiott from the CBD Secretariat provided a briefing on the logistics of the forum and technical issues. He outlined brief guidance on what the participants may wish to discuss, emphasizing that this online discussion forum is not intended for text negotiations but rather for discussion on the elements that should be included in the recommendations and the rationale, as well as the kind of issues that the Conference of the Parties should consider.

13. Mr. Janos Hennicke then provided an overview of the five forum threads and areas of discussion, reviewing the issues presently addressed in the annex of the SBSTTA recommendation 24/9, and co-facilitated a moderated discussion inviting the participants to share their preliminary views which were to be continued in the online forum following the opening webinar.

14. The opening webinar concluded on 8 June 2022 at 10 a.m. EDT.

## **II. ONLINE DISCUSSION FORUM ON CONSERVATION AND SUSTAINABLE USE OF MARINE AND COASTAL BIODIVERSITY IN PREPARATION FOR THE FIFTEENTH MEETING OF THE CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES**

15. The forum discussions were organized according to specific threads (topics). Participants were invited to post comments and engage in the discussions throughout the four days of the forum (9-10 June and 13-14 June 2022). All threads were active during the forum timeframe.

16. The threads were organized according to specific paragraphs of the annex of SBSTTA recommendation 24/9, as follows:

(a) Cooperation, collaboration and linkages with competent organizations and relevant initiatives (Preambular paras 1-4 of the annex of SBSTTA recommendation 24/9);

(b) Marine and coastal biodiversity in the post-2020 global biodiversity framework and implications for programmes of work (Preambular para. 5 and paras 1-2 of the annex of SBSTTA recommendation 24/9);

(c) Implementing the post-2020 global biodiversity framework in marine and coastal areas (Paras 3-6 of the annex of SBSTTA recommendation 24/9);

(d) Plastics, marine spatial planning and deep-sea mining (Paras 7-9 of the annex of SBSTTA recommendation 24/9);

(e) Mainstreaming, capacity building, partnerships, and synergies (Paras 10-15 of SBSTTA recommendation 24/9).

17. Participants submitted 160 posts in total, with 33 posts in thread #1, 24 posts in thread #2, 44 posts in thread #3, 41 posts in thread #4 and 18 posts in thread #5.

18. A summary of the views raised in the online discussion forum is provided in annex III.

### **CLOSING WEBINAR**

19. The closing webinar was convened on 15 June 2022, from 8 a.m. to 9 a.m. EDT, and provided a summary of the discussion and briefing on the preparation of the forum outcome and input to the fifteenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties.

20. Mr. Hesiquio Benitez Diaz, Chair of the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice, delivered opening remarks at the beginning of the webinar. He thanked all the participants for their strong engagements in the discussions as well as the constructive nature of inputs which provided useful elements to be considered in the draft decision as well as highlighted key areas of differing views that the Conference of the Parties may need to address. He added that the outcome of these discussions will be particularly useful for delegates in the fourth meeting of the Open-ended Working Group on the Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework. He concluded with sincere thanks to the participants for helping to move the discussions forward and providing valuable input that will help provide a strong basis to draft a robust decision at the fifteenth Conference of the Parties.

21. Ms. Marie-May Muzungaile, the co-facilitator of the online discussion forum, followed with an overview of the number of participants and the countries that the participants come from, as well as a reminder of the threads and related paragraphs and the number of posts. She also provided a review of the discussion elements and points that were raised in each thread, in particular key commonalities and unresolved questions, noting that these points are not consensus-based.

22. Ms. Muzungaile then provided an update on the next steps. She noted that this report of the online discussion forum would be prepared and posted prior to the fourth meeting of the Open-ended Working Group on the Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework, which would take place from 21 to 26 June in Nairobi. At that meeting, the SBSTTA Chair would provide a brief report to the meeting plenary to draw the attention of delegates to the forum. She added that this report would also be made available as an information

document for the fifteenth Conference of the Parties. Ms. Muzungaile then noted that an information webinar that will provide a full overview of the forum to bring attention to the discussions would be held on 20 June 2022. She concluded that another online discussion forum would be convened in response to SBSTTA Recommendation 24/10 on ecologically or biologically significant marine areas (EBSAs), which was tentatively planned for late July 2022.

23. The closing webinar concluded on 15 June 2022 at 9 a.m. EDT.

*Annex I*

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*Annex II*

**LIST OF DOCUMENTS**

| <i>Official documents</i>    | <i>Title</i>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
|------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|                              | Concept note                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
| CBD/SBSTTA/REC/24/9          | Recommendation adopted by the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice                                                                                                                                                                |
| <i>Information documents</i> | <i>Title</i>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
| CBD/MCB/OM/2022/1/INF/1      | Synthesis of proposals submitted by Parties and observers on the conservation and sustainable use of marine and coastal biodiversity under agenda item 6 of the twenty-fourth meeting of the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice |
| CBD/SBSTTA/24/INF/42         | Proposals submitted by Parties and observers on the conservation and sustainable use of marine and coastal biodiversity under agenda item 6 of the twenty-fourth meeting of the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice              |

*Annex III*

**SUMMARY OF DISCUSSION**

This annex provides a summary of the views raised in the online discussion forum. This does not reflect points raised verbatim, but rather summarizes the views expressed and also areas where participants expressed differing views.

**General points**

Although there was no specific thread dedicated to general points, a number of views were raised under the various threads that have a broader relevance. The below points summarize views that participants raised as important in the context of deliberations on these issues:

- Focusing on the impact of a decision of the Conference of the Parties and what it can help to achieve, in particular
  - Supporting implementation at all levels (i.e., local, national, regional, global)
  - Strengthening alignments and synergies with other processes and organizations
- Taking a rights-based approach to conservation and sustainable use, recognizing various rights-holders in policymaking and implementation
- Ensuring that the use of traditional knowledge associated with marine and coastal biodiversity that is held by indigenous peoples and local communities is accessed only with the free, prior and informed consent or approval and involvement of these indigenous peoples and local communities
- Avoiding the marginalization of traditional users and the unfair use and distribution of benefits derived from the use of ocean resources
- Facilitate improved coordination and communication between those engaged in conservation and use of marine resources with a view of building improved understanding among differing objectives for the marine environment, in particular the importance of
  - Engaging a range of voices in deliberations on conservation and sustainable use, some of which not often engaged in these discussions such as fishers (both small-scale and industrial) and other economic sectors
- Empowering the use of women's knowledge and inputs to marine and coastal conservation and sustainable use
  - Women are often undervalued in the various value chains of marine resource use and experience unconscious bias, cultural prejudices, stereotyping, and expectations, as well as bullying and sexual harassment.

**Thread #1--Cooperation, collaboration and linkages with competent organizations and relevant initiatives (Preamble paragraphs 1-4 of the annex of SBSTTA recommendation 24/9)**

- Importance of grounding decision-making in sound science, also acknowledging the importance of traditional knowledge, other competent scientific organizations (such as the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission of UNESCO (IOC-UNESCO))
  - Need for the establishment and strengthening of cooperation mechanism to generate, mobilize, standardize and publish biodiversity
- Importance of recognizing the role of regional and competent organisations, both in implementation and in monitoring and reporting on progress with respect to the post-2020 global biodiversity framework. In this regard, participants also highlighted:

- Importance of recognizing and strengthening increased regional-scale collaboration, including through the Sustainable Ocean Initiative Global Dialogue with Regional Seas Organizations and Regional Fishery Bodies
- Importance of strengthening coordination among an increasing number of international legal instruments related to ocean issues, considering that engaging in various intergovernmental processes places a burden on governments, especially where various processes address the same or similar topics
- Importance of the precautionary approach/principle and ecosystem approach, building on significant practice and experience
  - In particular, some highlighted the need to use the term “approach” rather than “principle” when discussing implementation
- There were differing views with respect to preambular paragraphs 2 and 3, whether to refer specifically to marine biodiversity beyond national jurisdiction

**Thread #2--Marine and coastal biodiversity in the post-2020 global biodiversity framework and implications for programmes of work (Preambular paragraph 5 and paragraphs 1-2 of the annex of SBSTTA recommendation 24/9)**

- Importance of marine and coastal biodiversity in the post-2020 global biodiversity framework, and ensuring that the goals, targets and indicators of the framework adequately capture important issues for marine and coastal biodiversity, also taking into account the relevant science-based findings of the IPBES Global Assessment Report on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services, the 5<sup>th</sup> Global Biodiversity Outlook, and the work under the IPCC
  - Post-2020 global biodiversity framework should set at least the same, if not higher, ambition that the Aichi Biodiversity Targets
  - Goals and targets of the post-2020 global biodiversity framework should also align, where relevant, with the frameworks of other relevant multilateral agreements, as well as the targets of the Sustainable Development Goal for the ocean (SDG14).
- The value of the report of the CBD Thematic Workshop on Marine and Coastal Biodiversity for the Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework as a useful resource for the development and implementation of the post-2020 framework
- Importance of seeking alignments with objectives and mandates of different agreements and conventions (CITES, CMS, UNFCCC, etc.) in the implementation of the post-2020 framework
- Importance of updating the programmes of work of the CBD in line with the post-2020 framework in order to best support implementation of the goals and targets and identify synergies, efficiencies and tools for monitoring and reporting. In this respect, participants expressed the following views:
  - Consideration should be given on whether the review of the programmes of work on marine and coastal biodiversity and island biodiversity should be part of a broader review to identify how the CBD will assist in the implementation of the post 2020 framework
  - The review should be based on a collection of views of Parties, Other Governments and relevant stakeholders, including on the current elements of the programmes of work and a strategic review and analysis and review of emerging issues
  - The need to build capacity for decision-making with knowledge gaps, including by recognizing and strengthening cooperation with networks of marine protected area managers
  - The need to ensure that focus on inland fisheries is not lost in CBD work, as this represents an important issue for which more information is needed, particularly regarding biodiversity-related issues
  - The need to give special consideration to the issues affecting small island developing States (SIDS)

**Thread #3--Implementing the post-2020 global biodiversity framework in marine and coastal areas**  
*(Paragraphs 3-6 of the annex of SBSTTA recommendation 24/9)*

- Importance of the acknowledgement of the critical importance of the ocean within the post-2020 global biodiversity framework, and the urgency needed in action to tackle pressures and threats facing marine and coastal biodiversity
- Importance of the goals and targets of the post-2020 global biodiversity framework aligning, where relevant, with the frameworks of other relevant multilateral agreements, as well as the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)
- Need to recognize and emphasize the entities and actors that will play a key role in post-2020 implementation, including various global and regional organizations, indigenous peoples and local communities and other rights-holders, various economic sectors (including global sectoral institutions), and monitoring and observing networks, among others
- Importance of referencing key threats, pressures and issues, but avoid making a long list of issues. In this respect, participants raised the following issues:
  - Key issues such as marine pollution, plastic litter, illegal, unregulated, unreported and unsustainable fishing, overfishing, impacts on target and non-target species and ecosystems, bycatch and entanglement, harmful subsidies and climate change and its related effects (warming, acidification, deoxygenation), extractive industries of non-living resources (e.g., oil and gas, seabed mining, coastal mining), habitat loss, invasive alien species, and of course climate change (warming, acidification, deoxygenation), watershed management), and desalination
  - Having a shorter list by referring to “all relevant” threats and pressures or focusing on focusing on the direct drivers of biodiversity loss as identified in the IPBES Global Assessment
  - Need for a strategic review and analysis to identify key issues
- Importance of a new target on area-based conservation, in particular noting the support of many Parties for a proposed 30% target. In this respect, participants highlighted the following:
  - The value of a numeric target as a clear measurable target that can be a strong political motivator, but the importance also of principles/elements for effectiveness of area-based conservation, including ecological representivity and protection of areas of high biodiversity importance, and effective management
  - Avoiding the singling out of area-based conservation as being of greater importance than other tools and approaches, including those for sustainable use and restoration, as management measures need to be tailored to the status, pressures, and threats in a particular area and systems of different tools are often needed
- Need for implementation to take place in the context of national circumstances, recalling common but differentiated responsibilities
- The possibility of re-organizing paragraphs 5 and 6 in order to more directly link these thematic issues to the post-2020 global biodiversity framework
- Need to strengthen synergies with the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change, with some expressing support for the inclusion of a direct reference to paragraphs 60 and 61 of the Glasgow Climate Pact, also focusing on issues such as nature-based solutions, which was recently given a definition by the UN Environment Assembly
  - Some participants felt that the term “nature-based solutions” should not be included, as it is still under discussion

**Thread #4--Plastics, marine spatial planning and deep-sea mining (Paragraphs 7-9 of the annex of SBSTTA recommendation 24/9)**

- Importance of the transfer of relevant technology, capacity building and partnership development in the context of marine spatial planning
- Importance of referring to specific productive, extractive and economic sectors in the mainstreaming of biodiversity
- Importance of the precautionary approach/principle in addressing impacts of deep-sea mining, including adverse impacts on the marine environment, biodiversity loss, damage to the flora and fauna of the marine environment, degradation of the resilience of marine ecosystems and ecosystem services (including carbon sequestration), and impacts on the ecological integrity of deep sea and open ocean ecosystems
  - Some participants referenced the recent IUCN Resolution 122<sup>1</sup> (“Protection of deep-ocean ecosystems and biodiversity through a moratorium on seabed mining”)
  - Some participants felt that it was preferable to refer to the legal regime on this matter under the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea, including the ongoing deliberations under the International Seabed Authority as well as its scientific and technical work in support of the application of the precautionary approach/principle, as the appropriate process to be discussing this issue
- Importance of addressing the cumulative impacts of various activities and threats and the need for all uses of the ocean to apply the precautionary approach/principle and ecosystem approaches
- Proposal to include text on the need for governments and stakeholders to address anthropogenic underwater noise, including by developing plans and policies to mitigate and minimize impacts on marine biodiversity
- Importance of supporting the development of a new treaty on plastic pollution under the intergovernmental negotiating committee as per UNEA Resolution 5/14<sup>2</sup>, noting also the need to address abandoned, lost or otherwise discarded fishing gear

**Thread #5--Mainstreaming, capacity building, partnerships, and synergies (Paragraphs 10-15 of SBSTTA recommendation 24/9)**

- Need for a synthesis of information on the implementation of other effective area-based conservation measures (OECMs), including their effectiveness
- With respect to OECMs, the importance of the inclusion of indigenous peoples and local communities, women, small-scale fishers and other rightsholders, and also the need to ensure support for indigenous community conserved areas, marine managed areas, local management marine areas and other fisheries, community-based and shared-governance arrangements
- The need to strengthen synergies with the UNFCCC, in particular with regard to nature-based solutions, MPAs and OECMs as critical tools to tackle climate change and biodiversity loss, through protecting and restoring ocean ecosystems
  - Some participants felt that the term “nature-based solutions” should not be included, as it is still under discussion

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<sup>1</sup> [https://portals.iucn.org/library/sites/library/files/resrecfiles/WCC\\_2020\\_RES\\_122\\_EN.pdf](https://portals.iucn.org/library/sites/library/files/resrecfiles/WCC_2020_RES_122_EN.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> [https://wedocs.unep.org/bitstream/handle/20.500.11822/39812/OEWG\\_PP\\_1\\_INF\\_1\\_UNEA%20resolution.pdf?sequence=14&isAllowed=y](https://wedocs.unep.org/bitstream/handle/20.500.11822/39812/OEWG_PP_1_INF_1_UNEA%20resolution.pdf?sequence=14&isAllowed=y)

- The need for further guidance on OECMs, developed with the collaboration of users and all relevant stakeholders, focusing on transparency and policy coherence,
  - With respect to paragraph 13, some expressed the need to identify different kinds of global and regional organizations that could support of the implementation, as well as the need for a reference to IPLCs, women and youth, as well as the possibility to combine paragraphs 13 and 15
  - With respect the deliberations on, and implementation of, a new instrument for marine biodiversity in areas beyond national jurisdiction (BBNJ), there were differing views on whether it was appropriate to include text on synergies with implementation of future BBNJ instrument while it is still under negotiation
  - With respect to capacity building, there is a need for a focus on best practices, capacity-building for sustainable small-scale fishing and protection of local value chains and local market, and to strengthen collaboration with existing mechanisms of capacity development
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