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Convention on Biological Diversity

Ad Hoc Technical Expert Group on Indicators for the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework
Fifth meeting
Online, 29 January 2024

Report of the Ad Hoc Technical Expert Group on Indicators for the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework on its fifth meeting**

Background

1. The Ad Hoc Technical Expert Group on Indicators for the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework was established by the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity through its decision 15/5, and its terms of reference are contained in annex II to the decision. The overall purpose of the Group is to provide technical advice to enable the Conference of the Parties to finalize the monitoring framework for the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework at its sixteenth meeting.[1]

2. The Expert Group held its fifth meeting online on 29 January 2024, from 2 to 5 a.m. (Eastern Standard Time).[2]

Item 1
Opening of the meeting

3. The meeting was opened by the Co-Chairs of the Expert Group.

Item 2
Adoption of the agenda

4. The Co-Chairs presented the proposed agenda for the meeting with the addition of an agenda item on considerations in implementing the monitoring framework with respect to section C of the Framework. With this addition, the agenda was adopted by the Expert Group.

Item 3
Summary of preparations for the sixth meeting

5. The Secretariat provided a brief update on logistics for the sixth meeting of the Ad Hoc Technical Expert Group to be held in Cambridge from 12 to 15 March 2024.

6. The discussion covered logistical aspects, including venue, accommodation and transportation. The need for the development of a detailed agenda and pre-meeting meetings was raised. It was also noted that a meeting on the Biodiversity Indicators Partnership would be held from

** The present document is being issued without formal editing.
[1] See notification No. 2023-40 for further information on the composition of the Expert Group and its background.
[2] See www.cbd.int/conferences/indicators-ahteg/ind-ahteg-2023-01/documents for the working documents and reports of the meetings of the Expert Group.

6 to 8 March 2024 and a meeting on the four traditional knowledge indicators would be held from 8 to 10 March.

Item 4
Stocktaking of the status of indicator metadata

(a) Indicators with chaperones in the Ad Hoc Technical Expert Group on Indicators

7. The participants discussed the status of each headline indicator with a focus on unresolved issues. A summary of discussions on each headline indicator is included below:

(a) For headline indicator A.1, it was noted that the metadata for the Red List Index for Ecosystems had addressed most of the concerns. The main issues involved disaggregating reporting units, determining the actual indicator and handling missing data. Ongoing efforts included developing guidelines for distinguishing real changes in ecosystem risk from changing knowledge. A meeting was to be held in February 2024, to address remaining issues. It is planned to finalize responses through February, update metadata and develop guidance over the next 6 to 12 months;

(b) For headline indicator A.2, it was noted that a group, composed partly of members of the Expert Group and of the Technical Committee on the System of Environmental-Economic Accounting - Ecosystem Accounting of the Committee of Experts on Environmental-Economic Accounting, discussed comments from the third meeting of the Technical Expert Group, held in Montreal from 3 to 6 October 2023. They addressed issues such as the distinction between natural and human-made ecosystems and the disaggregation of the indicator. Progress was made and a revised draft of the metadata, along with a specific indicator proposal, would be shared with the whole Expert Group for feedback;

(c) For headline indicator A.3, It was noted that the indicator was nearly complete and that a preprint paper link would be added. Methods and discussion details would be included in the metadata;

(d) For headline indicator A.4, It was noted that members of the Expert Group had held a joint meeting with experts on genetic diversity from the Group on Earth Observations Biodiversity Observation Network. The main needs identified were to improve species representativeness, provide implementation guidance, estimate effective population size, cover marine and clonal species, and demonstrate feasibility in low-income and small island states;

(e) For headline indicator B.1, it was noted that the indicator focused on ecosystem services. Based on a consultation with Expert Group members and the Technical Committee on the System of Environmental-Economic Accounting - Ecosystem Accounting of the Committee of Experts on Environmental-Economic Accounting, a blended approach, with some services considered mandatory for reporting, while others receive recommendations was suggested. Discussions on aggregation revolved around using an average change in ecosystem services provided in biophysical units. The Expert Group agreed to use the reference list of the System of Environmental-Economic Accounting. It would be necessary to test the methodology with countries. Further meetings were scheduled for 21 February 2024 to continue discussions;

(f) For headline indicators C.1/C.2, it was noted that a study on these indicators was still in progress. The study included interviews conducted with various Expert Group members, countries and stakeholders. The results of the study would be available in March 2024, along with the metadata;

(g) For headline indicator 1.1, a lack of progress on this indicator was noted. Many elements were already included in the binary indicator. It was proposed that only a binary indicator be proposed for national reporting at that time;

(h) For headline indicator 2.1, the discussion covered issues and recommendations related to better definitions of ecosystem degradation, restoration status, reporting categories and restoration activities. The need for reporting at the level of ecosystem functional group (International Union for

Conservation of Nature global ecosystem typology, level 3) was stressed. This would improve the usefulness of the indicator and consistency with other indicators. The Expert Group decided to communicate the importance of collecting the global ecosystem typology at level 3 for both the current status and target status (i.e. the ecosystem functional group expected after effective restoration);

(i) For headline indicator 3.1, it was noted that the indicator was quite complete. Further details were needed for disaggregation by inland waters and effectiveness and there was an ongoing process for developing methods for these aspects;

(j) For headline indicator 5.1, it was noted that the indicator had a fixed methodology which was complete. However, the indicator did not align well with the target and this could be addressed in the gap analysis;

(k) For headline indicator 6.1, it was noted that experts on the Group on Earth Observations Biodiversity Observation Network Essential Biodiversity Variables related to invasive alien species had provided updates on the methodology. There was a need to discuss further with them for further updating and hopefully obtain revised metadata in the next couple of weeks;

(l) For headline indicator 7.2, it was noted that in response to a notification[3] inviting Parties, other Governments, indigenous peoples and local communities and relevant organizations to nominate experts, 23 experts were identified for the expert meeting which was held on 23 and 24 January. The authors of the methodology included in the previous metadata version were part of that group. A summary of discussions and a draft metadata sheet explaining the methodology would be included in the report of the meeting. A simple approach based on the total applied toxicity indicator was proposed and there was also a proposal to collect a global set of toxicity data for specific organisms;

(m) For headline indicators 10.1 and 10.2, at the third meeting of the Expert Group, it was agreed to include all components of the original indicators for the Sustainable Development Goals for indicator 10.1. The metadata sheet would need to be adjusted accordingly to incorporate these changes. Recommendations were made to enhance data collection for sustainable agriculture, which would not change the metadata but the underlying data collection;

(n) For headline indicator 12.1, it was noted that the indicator is the same as Sustainable Development Goal Indicator 11.7.1. A meeting with experts from the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat) was scheduled later in the week to clarify what countries could expect regarding updates and data availability. The current metadata lacked clarity on these aspects and required further discussions;

(o) For headline indicator 21.1, it was noted that the indicator focused aimed to measure the availability of data, information and knowledge for monitoring the Framework and lacked an existing indicator. Its three proposed components were discussed at a meeting held on 13 December 2023, with further discussions planned to clarify the scope of the indicator, assess available data and propose a revised metadata sheet. That work was currently ongoing and would benefit from discussions on traditional knowledge indicators at the sixth meeting of the Expert Group, in March 2024, as traditional knowledge was one of the three components of the indicator;

(p) For headline indicator 7.1, it was noted that the indicator is a component of Sustainable Development Goal Indicator 14.1.1 and the metadata is nearly complete, following the removal of chlorophyll-a dimensions. However, the index of coastal eutrophication potential may not address freshwater pollution or potential pollution, which could affect countries without river mouths leading to oceans. National models for the index of coastal eutrophication potential were planned, but it was unclear if landlocked countries would be included. This could be included in the gap analysis;

[3] Notification No. 2023-123.

(q) For headline indicator 9.1, it was being considered in conjunction with indicator B.1 and updates on its metadata were pending. It was also noted that a component indicator for Target 11 was being considered as a disaggregation of indicator B.1;

(r) For headline indicator 9.2, it was noted that the indicator was also one of the four traditional knowledge indicators. Progress had been made through meetings with various collaborators, including the Working Group on Indicators of the International Indigenous Forum on Biodiversity, the Indigenous Navigator, the University of Michigan and the International Labour Organization. The Indigenous Navigator was using existing data from national and community surveys on traditional occupations, with 300 community surveys from 28 countries currently available. The University of Michigan had agreed on a workplan to develop and monitor the indicator, including the creation of a spreadsheet for collecting case studies, references and data. The proposed methodology included cross-scale linkages of local, national and global indicators. The preparation of the metadata sheet was ongoing and it was expected to be available for the sixth meeting of the Ad Hoc Technical Expert Group on Indicators to be held in March 2024;

(s) For headline indicator 15.1, securing funding for a study on the indicator remained a challenge. The final calculation of binary indicators related to indicator 15 may not accurately reflect a country's efforts. Despite challenges in funding and potential issues in calculation methods, efforts were ongoing to comprehensively assess countries' actions regarding nature-related risk reporting and disclosure, highlighting the importance of accurate assessment methodologies and collaborative efforts.

(b) Indicators that involve other processes, including finance indicators, traditional knowledge indicators and indicators related to access and benefit-sharing

8. The Co-Chairs of the Technical Expert Group on Financial Reporting provided an overview of their mandate, which focused on addressing indicators on Goal D and Targets 18 and 19. The Technical Expert Group on Financial Reporting would advise the Expert Group on Indicators on the metadata for these indicators. Indicators 18.1 and 18.2 concerned positive incentives and harmful subsidies to biodiversity. Subgroups had been established for each indicator to work on metadata sheets and relevant considerations. The work of the Technical Expert Group on Financial Reporting focused on utilizing the Policy Instruments for the Environment (PINE) database of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development for collecting data on positive incentives for biodiversity. Regarding subsidies, the Expert Group in Financial Reporting was proposing additional sources of information in order to support a comprehensive assessment. The Group was also considering recommending a binary indicator, as a quantitative indicator was not available. For Target 19 indicators related to international funding, public funding and private funding for biodiversity, the work on international funding was fairly well developed and the subgroup was reviewing existing methodologies for capturing public funding flows and private expenditures. Challenges included defining biodiversity-related expenditures and standardizing reporting across countries. They were also exploring methodologies to capture private flows. Participants discussed the work of the Technical Expert Group on Financial Reporting and provided feedback.

9. The Technical Expert Group on Financial Reporting was planning to have a final meeting at the end of February 2024. During that meeting, metadata sheets would be completed and the shared with the Technical Expert Group on Indicators. The Co-Chairs of the Technical Expert Group on Financial Reporting will attend meetings of the Ad Hoc Technical Expert Group on Indicators.

10. The Expert Group members who are leading the work to link with the traditional knowledge indicator work provided an update on the various traditional knowledge indicators. The efforts to move forward these indicators included commissioning a review paper, planning the expert workshop in March 2024 (mentioned under agenda item 3) and formulating metadata sheets. There had been developments in the indicators on linguistic diversity, tracking trends in land-use change and land tenure in traditional territories, with proposed methodologies and pilot projects underway. Plans for measuring indigenous participation involved revising binary indicator questions and

exploring community-based monitoring. The advancements on the indicator on traditional occupations were mentioned in the update under agenda item 4 (a) above.

Item 5
Update on work on binary indicators

11. The Secretariat provided an update on work to produce explanatory information for the binary indicators. The key tasks included providing advice on wording, compiling metadata and creating a glossary. As a glossary is relevant for all indicators, definitions from all metadata (not only for the binary indicators) were being pulled together. That information would be provided for countries to consider in their implementation of the indicators. The metadata on the binary indicators would be based on inputs from Expert Group members and from the groups involved in supporting the development of the wording of the binary indicator (including the Informal Advisory Group on Technical and Scientific Cooperation for Target 20 and the Liaison Group of Biodiversity-related Conventions for Target 17). The Secretariat would coordinate the drafting of the metadata for the binary indicators.

12. The Expert Group noted that the glossary would need a thorough review from the Group to ensure that the best advice is provided. The Expert Group was asked to provide feedback on how to arrive at a single definition of each term, using definitions which had already been agreed.

Item 6
Update on work on the gap analysis

13. The Expert Group discussed progress towards conducting a comprehensive gap analysis of the coverage of different elements of the goals and targets of the Framework by indicators in the monitoring framework (including headline, binary, component and complementary indicators). A draft document in which each goal and target had been broken into elements had been produced and circulated to the Expert Group for comments. The next step would be to conduct a survey on the extent to which each element was addressed by the indicators (including the headline, binary, component and complementary indicators). This would provide the basis for drafting a gap analysis which could be included in the report on the work of the Expert Group for consideration by the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice at its twenty-sixth meeting. The analysis would also provide information which can be used to review the component and complementary indicators. The Expert Group would also make suggestions on how gaps identified in the gap analysis could be filled moving forward. This may include inviting the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services to consider the results of the analysis or preparing specific recommendations which the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice could consider at its twenty-sixth meeting.

Item 7
Update on the capacity-building survey

14. An update was provided by the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) World Conservation Monitoring Centre on the development of a survey to assess capacity requirements for implementing headline indicators in the monitoring framework. The Expert Group had previously requested the Secretariat to conduct the survey. The survey would be conducted by UNEP World Conservation Monitoring Centre, as they were providing technical support to the Expert Group and a notification inviting Parties to participate would be issued by the Secretariat. The survey would run until March 2024, with an option for late submissions. The quality of the survey may be affected by a lack of updated metadata for some indicators. The survey would provide a basis for the Expert Group to provide advice to the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice on capacity gaps.

Item 8

Considerations in implementing the monitoring framework with respect to section C of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework

15. The Expert Group discussed the need to develop overarching guidance on aligning monitoring activities with section C of the Framework. The Group also discussed the need to potentially embed information within specific metadata sheets, for example, how the indicator could be disaggregated by indigenous peoples and local communities, gender or other groups. The need for integrating gender perspectives into monitoring processes and the need for collaborative input to ensure effective guidance delivery was highlighted. The Expert Group agreed to produce a document which would include overarching guidance in addition to integrating section C within specific metadata, where relevant.

Item 9
Other matters

16. The Secretariat informed the participants of the plan to organize a workshop in Nairobi on 11 May 2024, to share the results of the work of the Ad Expert Group with the participants attending the twenty-sixth meeting of the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice. The workshop would also include how the Expert Group on Indicators has worked with the Technical Expert Group on Financial Reporting which was formally established to support the Expert Group on Indicators with respect to the finance indicators. Participants requested that the workshop be hybrid if possible, to maximize participation.

Item 10
Closure of the meeting

17. In closing the meeting, the Co-Chairs expressed appreciation for the progress made to date, while recognizing that much work remained to be done.