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Item 3 of the provisional agenda*

REVIEW OF PROGRESS IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE CONVENTION AND THE STRATEGIC PLAN FOR BIODIVERSITY 2011-2020

Note by the Executive Secretary

BACKGROUND

1. In decision [X/2](#) the Conference of the Parties decided that, at its future meetings, it would review progress in the implementation of the [Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020](#) (para. 14) and requested the Executive Secretary to prepare an analysis/synthesis of national, regional and other actions, including targets as appropriate, established in accordance with the Strategic Plan (para. 17(b)), to enable the Conference of the Parties to assess the contribution of such national and regional targets to the global targets. In response to this decision and related subsequent decisions,¹ the Conference of the Parties at each of its meetings since its tenth meeting has reviewed progress in the implementation the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 on the basis, among other things, of the national reports and national biodiversity strategies and action plans (NBSAPs).²
2. In decision [14/1](#), the Conference of the Parties encouraged Parties to submit the sixth national report in a timely manner, and requested the Executive Secretary to continue to update the analysis of progress towards the implementation of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity-2011-2020 on the basis of information contained in the sixth national reports, which should be submitted by 31 December 2018, and to make the updated analysis available for consideration by the Subsidiary Body on Implementation at its third meeting. Further, in decision [14/18](#), the Conference of the Parties requested the Executive Secretary to undertake a review of the implementation of the 2015-2020 Gender Plan of Action in order to identify gaps, best practices and lessons learned.
3. The present document provides an assessment of progress towards the implementation of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 and towards the achievement of the Aichi Biodiversity Targets in line with the above decisions. It also provides an assessment of the progress made in implementing 2015-2020 Gender Plan of Action. It is primarily based on information contained in the revised and updated

* [CBD/SBI/3/1](#).

¹ For example in decision [XII/31](#), the Conference of the Parties reaffirmed that it should review progress in the implementation of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 at each of its meetings to 2020, and that the development of further guidance for policy development and to support implementation should be based on this review as well as on information available in national reports and on other information that may become available, including through scientific assessments. Further, according to the list of issues contained in the annex to this decision, the Conference of the Parties at its thirteenth meeting was to undertake, among other things, an interim review of progress towards the implementation of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 and the achievement of the Aichi Biodiversity Targets, and related means of implementation.

² See decisions XI/3, XII/1, XIII/1 and 14/1.

NBSAPs as well as the sixth national reports received by 26 March 2020. It is complimented by the following addendums:

- (a) Update on progress in revising/updating and implementing national biodiversity strategies and action plans, including national targets (CBD/SBI/3/2/Add.1);
- (b) Analysis of the contribution of targets established by Parties and progress towards the Aichi Biodiversity Targets (CBD/SBI/3/2/Add.2);
- (c) Review of implementation of the 2015-2020 Gender Plan of Action (CBD/SBI/3/2/Add.3);
- (d) Progress towards Aichi Biodiversity Target 18 on traditional knowledge and customary sustainable use of biodiversity (CBD/SBI/3/2/Add.4).

4. The documents prepared for this agenda item, in particular CBD/SBI/3/2/Add.1 and Add.2, are also relevant to agenda item 9 (mechanisms for reporting, assessment and review of implementation). This document is also complemented by the fifth edition of the *Global Biodiversity Outlook*, which will be considered by the Subsidiary Body on Scientific Technical and Technological Advice at its twenty-fourth meeting.

I. REVIEW OF IMPLEMENTATION

A. Updating national biodiversity strategies and action plans and setting national targets

5. NBSAPs are the principal instrument for implementing the Convention at the national level. Since 1993, 191 Parties have developed at least one NBSAP. In decision X/2, the Conference of the Parties urged Parties to review, revise and update, as appropriate, their NBSAPs in line with the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020. Parties also committed to establishing national targets, using the Strategic Plan and its Aichi Biodiversity Targets as a flexible framework. Further, Aichi Biodiversity Target 17, which had a deadline of 2015, calls on Parties to develop, adopt as a policy instrument, and commence implementing an effective, participatory and updated NBSAP. A total of 69 Parties met the 2015 deadline set out in Aichi Biodiversity Target 17, and 101 others submitted their NBSAPs by 16 March 2020, making a total of 170.³ This represents more than 85 per cent of the Parties to the Convention. Support and resources for the development and revision/update of the NBSAPs was provided by several organizations, including the Global Environment Facility, the United Nations Development Programme, the United Nations Environment Programme, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations and the Inter-American Development Bank. A number of Parties, including Japan, through the Japan Biodiversity Fund, also provided support for NBSAP revisions and implementation processes, and for the voluntary peer review of NBSAP implementation. A number of non-governmental organizations, including the ASEAN Centre for Biodiversity, Birdlife, the International Union for Conservation of Nature, the United Nations University Institute for the Advanced Study of Sustainability and the World Wildlife Fund (WWF), have also provided support to Parties in the development and revision/update of NBSAPs.

6. The updated analysis of NBSAPs presented in document CBD/SBI/3/2/Add.1 summarizes progress in preparing or revising NBSAPs and analyses the contents of the post-Nagoya NBSAPs submitted by 16 March 2020. This analysis is based on the criteria from decision [IX/8](#) which provides detailed guidance on the process, contents and components of NBSAPs. The analysis suggests improvement, particularly with regard to the range of stakeholders involved in the NBSAP process, over the first generation of NBSAPs as reflected in the global assessment undertaken in 2010.⁴ However, it also points to areas where further progress is needed.

³ The subsequent analysis is based on the 167 NBSAPs that were submitted in one of the official languages of the United Nations.

⁴ [Prip, C.; Gross, T.; Johnston, S.; Vierros, M \(2010\). *Biodiversity Planning: An Assessment of National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans*. United Nations University Institute of Advanced Studies, Yokohama, Japan.](#)

7. The analysis found that 69 revised NBSAPs have been adopted as “whole-of-government” instruments and another 8 NBSAPs have been adopted as instruments applying to the environmental sector. However, 72 Parties (37 per cent) do not provide sufficient evidence to know if their NBSAPs have been adopted as a policy instrument or not. The analysis also shows that few NBSAPs contain resource mobilization strategies (25 Parties), communication and public awareness strategies (38 Parties), or capacity development strategies (97 Parties) as the NBSAP guidance recommends. Further, only a few NBSAPs demonstrate that biodiversity is being mainstreamed significantly into cross-sectoral plans and policies, poverty eradication policies, or into sustainable development plans. NBSAPs prepared since the adoption of the current Strategic Plan for Biodiversity contain little evidence of the use of valuation studies to encourage mainstreaming in countries. These findings contrast significantly with the aspirations communicated in the NBSAPs which indicate that many Parties have either set targets or otherwise stated an intent to implement actions on resource mobilization, valuation, the establishment of a national clearing-house mechanism, communication and public awareness, capacity development, and development of subnational biodiversity plans, among other topics.

8. The majority of NBSAPs prepared or revised since the tenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties contain targets related to the Aichi Biodiversity Targets, though, for some Aichi Targets, such as Targets 3, 6, 10, and 14, there are many NBSAPs (over 30 per cent) without associated national targets or commitments. Aichi Biodiversity Targets 1, 9, 16, 17, 19 and 20 were the Aichi Targets with the greatest number of broadly similar national targets or commitments. However, even in these cases, the number of NBSAPs with targets having a similar scope and level of ambition as the Aichi Targets was on average just over a fifth (22 per cent) (ranging from 19 per cent for Aichi Targets 16 and 17 to 28 per cent for Aichi Biodiversity Target 1). Overall, the majority of national targets and/or commitments contained in the NBSAPs were lower than the Aichi Targets or did not address all of the elements of the Aichi Target. These conclusions are consistent with the analysis made available during the first and second meetings of the Subsidiary Body on Implementation⁵ and the thirteenth and fourteenth meetings of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity.⁶ They suggest that the national and regional targets, which have been adopted do not collectively add up to the level of ambition set out in the Aichi Biodiversity Targets. Further information on the progress made in developing, revising and updating NBSAPs and setting national targets is contained in documents CBD/SBI/3/2/Add.1 and Add.2.

B. Progress in implementing the Strategic Plan – information from national reports

9. The national reports are a main source of information for assessing implementation of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity. A total of 23 per cent of Parties submitted their sixth national reports before or by the deadline of 31 December 2018 agreed by the Conference of the Parties. Six months after the deadline, 49 per cent of Parties had submitted their reports. By 26 March 2020, 156 sixth national reports had been received. The assessment of the information submitted in the sixth national reports indicates that the majority of Parties have made progress towards the Aichi Targets but not at a rate that has allowed them to be met.

10. On average, more than a third of all national targets are on track to be met (34 per cent) or exceeded (3 per cent). However, only a tenth (10 per cent) of the national target that are similar to an Aichi Biodiversity Target are on track to be met. On average, for about half of the national targets (51 per cent) progress is being made but not at a rate that will allow them to be met. Further, on average, about a tenth of national targets have no significant progress (11 per cent) or are moving in the wrong direction (1 per cent). Most progress appears to have been made towards the national targets related to Aichi Biodiversity Targets 1, 11, 16, 17 and 19. By comparison much less progress appears to have been made towards the national targets related to Aichi Biodiversity Targets 5, 8, 9, 10, 13, 14 and 20.

⁵ See [UNEP/CBD/SBI/1/2/Add.2](#) and [UNEP/CBD/SBI/2/2/Add.2](#).

⁶ [UNEP/CBD/COP/13/8/Add.2/Rev.1](#) and [CBD/COP/14/5/Add.2](#).

11. This assessment is consistent with that presented in the fourth edition of the *Global Biodiversity Outlook*, which concluded that, while progress was being made towards the achievement of all targets, it was not sufficient to achieve the Aichi Biodiversity Targets. It is also consistent with the *Global Assessment Report on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services* of the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services, which observed that “the implementation of policy responses and actions to conserve nature and manage it more sustainably has progressed, yielding positive outcomes relative to scenarios of no intervention, but progress is not sufficient to stem the direct and indirect drivers of nature deterioration. It is therefore likely that most of the Aichi Biodiversity Targets for 2020 will be missed.” Further information on the progress made towards the Aichi Biodiversity Targets, as presented in the national reports, is contained in document CBD/SBI/2/2/Add.2 as well as in the fifth edition of the *Global Biodiversity Outlook*.

C. Progress in implementing the Gender Plan of Action

12. In decision [XII/7](#), the Conference of Parties welcomed the 2015-2020 Gender Plan of Action under the Convention on Biological Diversity, and requested the Executive Secretary to support its implementation and requested Parties to report on actions taken in this regard. The review of implementation of the Gender Plan of Action presented in document CBD/SBI/3/2/Add.3, was undertaken in response to decision [XIV/18](#), and assesses actions undertaken by Parties and the Secretariat, and identifies best practices, lessons learned and gaps. The review is based on assessment of the sixth national reports⁷ received by the Secretariat, and results of two global surveys, one for government representatives, and one for other relevant organizations.⁸

13. The review suggests that there is an enhanced awareness and understanding among Parties of gender and biodiversity linkages and the relevant steps that need to be taken to enable a more gender-responsive implementation of actions to halt biodiversity loss. However, the efforts of Parties need to be maintained and strengthened, including in areas of women’s full and effective engagement in implementation and mainstreaming of gender issues in biodiversity-related actions, better coordination with women’s organizations and ministries and local partners, as well as awareness-raising and capacity-building for different actors, among other areas to ensure stronger and sustained outcomes for gender and biodiversity going forward.

14. Best practices identified in the implementation of the Gender Plan of Action include specific actions to integrate gender considerations more effectively in biodiversity policy frameworks, identifying links between, and making use of, data and statistics available from different processes, to overcome gender gaps in biodiversity-related sectors, and approaches to raise awareness, build capacity and share learning to support equitable engagement of women in biodiversity-related sectors. Lessons learned point to the value of the Gender Plan of Action as a policy/advocacy tool, the need for clear, actionable and measurable gender-biodiversity objectives to support implementation, long-term investment and concerted action, and the need to build on project results to strengthen action at larger scales. The review identified a number of gaps, or areas requiring further attention, related to enhancing national implementation of the plan. These include the need for further capacity development, the collection and analysis of sex-disaggregated data, as well as adequate financing and reporting.

15. Overall the review suggests that a new gender plan of action or strategy, along with measurable targets and appropriate indicators, will be needed to support the implementation of a gender-responsive post-2020 global biodiversity framework. Findings also indicate that the development of a post-2020 gender plan of action or strategy should follow a consultative and participatory process, which engages Parties and relevant organizations and stakeholders. The review also found that gender-responsive

⁷ Sixth national reports received by the Secretariat up to and including 8 November 2019 were considered in this assessment. A total of 126 reports were reviewed.

⁸ “Other relevant organizations” refers to international organizations, civil society organizations and other relevant organizations working to achieve the objectives of the Convention, at international, regional, national and local scales.

implementation in the post-2020 period will require gender to be fully mainstreamed in NBSAPs, integrated in the post-2020 review process, and addressed in national reporting.

D. Progress towards Aichi Biodiversity Target 18

16. In decision 14/1, the Conference of the Parties welcomed the updated analysis of progress⁹ in the implementation of the Convention and the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 and towards the achievement of the Aichi Biodiversity Targets. Specifically, with regard to Target 18, the Conference of the Parties urged Parties, in accordance with national circumstances and as appropriate, to increase efforts in the protection of and respect for traditional knowledge. Some progress has been made in implementing Article 8(j) of the Convention and in raising awareness about the role of traditional knowledge, customary sustainable use and indigenous peoples and local communities in the context of Aichi Biodiversity Target 18 during the current biennium. However, increased awareness has not been translated into action and not all aspects of the target have been met (a detailed analysis of progress towards Aichi Biodiversity Target 18 is contained in document CBD/SBI/3/2/Add.4 and in the fifth edition of the *Global Biodiversity Outlook*).

17. In comparison with the fifth national reports, the sixth national reports show a significant increase in information about the implementation of Aichi Target 18 and the contribution of traditional knowledge and collective actions of indigenous peoples and local communities to the achievement of other targets. Only 27 per cent of the fifth national reports mentioned indigenous peoples and local communities, whereas about 60 per cent of the sixth national reports did so.¹⁰ This represents a more than threefold increase in reporting on the collective actions of indigenous peoples and local communities, including traditional knowledge, customary sustainable use and traditional agriculture, through the national reports. There is also ample evidence that capacity-building programmes with a focus on traditional knowledge, bringing together Parties with indigenous peoples and local communities, have contributed to raising awareness about the contribution of indigenous peoples and local communities and assisted in the implementation of Aichi Target 18 at the national and local levels. However, only 16 Parties (10 per cent) mention the engagement of indigenous peoples and local communities in NBSAP processes. An additional challenge to assessing the implementation of Target 18 is that very few Parties have addressed all elements of the target in their national targets. Furthermore, Parties have not adopted or made use of national indicators commensurate with the four traditional knowledge indicators noted in decision XIII/28,¹¹ in order to measure progress.

II. CONCLUSION

18. The review of progress undertaken in the present document and its addendums constitutes the last opportunity for the Subsidiary Body on Implementation to assess these issues in the period covered by the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020. The formats, information included, and the timing of submissions of the NBSAPs have made their assessment challenging. Parties have taken different approaches with regard to the establishment of their national targets as well as how they have reported against them. These different approaches have limited the ability to aggregate and compare the information received. Further, the delays in submitting national reports and NBSAPs to the Secretariat has reduced the time available for their review and reflection in relevant documentation. Parties may wish to give further consideration to these issues during their discussions under agenda item 9 (mechanisms for reporting, assessment and review of implementation).

⁹ CBD/COP/14/5, Add.1 and Add.2.

¹⁰ This analysis is based on information from 150 sixth national reports.

¹¹ Indicators: (a) [Trends of linguistic diversity and numbers of speakers of indigenous languages](#); (b) [Trends in land-use change and land tenure in the traditional territories of indigenous and local communities](#); (c) [Trends in the practice of traditional occupations](#); and (d) [Trends in degree to which traditional knowledge and practices are respected through: full integration, participation and safeguards in national implementation of the Strategic Plan](#).

19. The NBSAPs and the national reports, two complementary sources of information, indicate that efforts have been made to translate the Aichi Biodiversity Targets into national commitments, and national actions have been taken to reach the Aichi Targets. However, the assessment of these indicates that in the aggregate, gaps exist in relation to the level of ambition of the national targets set to reach the Aichi Biodiversity Targets, as well as in the efforts to reach them. This assessment is consistent with earlier assessments, including the fourth and fifth editions of the *Global Biodiversity Outlook* and the IPBES *Global Assessment on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services*, as well as previous reviews by the Conference of the Parties, which concluded that, while progress was being made towards the achievement of all targets, it would not be sufficient to achieve the Aichi Biodiversity Targets by 2020.

20. The assessment of sixth national reports suggests an increased focus on gender and women's issues in implementing the Convention as compared to the fifth national reports. However, the assessment also indicates that persistent challenges remain for addressing gender issues effectively. These include a lack of sex-disaggregated data, the limited availability of financing and insufficient capacity to address, monitor and report on gender-responsive measures to halt biodiversity loss. The review of the 2015-2020 Gender Plan of Action indicates that, for a future global plan of action, particular attention may be needed to translate it into action at the national level. Similarly, enhanced efforts may be needed to strengthen capacity development, reporting and coordination with Parties and partners to increase gender-responsive implementation and the impact of activities. The review of the Gender Plan of Action also suggests that, for the post-2020 global biodiversity framework, gender should be integrated across the framework, similar to the way it is treated in the Sustainable Development Goals.

21. There has been progress towards reaching Aichi Biodiversity Target 18 and in better taking into account issues related to indigenous peoples and local communities in the implementation of the Convention. However additional efforts are required. Indigenous peoples and local communities and their collective knowledge and actions for the objectives of the Convention, remain a great but largely untapped resource for many Parties. The development and implementation of the post-2020 biodiversity framework provides an opportunity for realizing the full potential indigenous peoples and local communities as partners in the implementation of the Convention.

22. Over the implementation period of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020, a number of lessons have been identified in relation to the NBSAPs, the national reports, capacity-building, resource mobilization, the review of implementation and the implementation of the Convention generally. These lessons should be taken into account in the development of the post-2020 global biodiversity and its associated processes and mechanisms. Parties may wish to further reflect on these lessons during their consideration of agenda item 9. They include:¹²

- (a) The need to keep attention and actions focused on implementation;
- (b) The need to strengthen NBSAPs and associated planning processes, including by making them whole-of-government policy instruments;
- (c) The need to ensure that the targets, commitments or ambitions set by Parties at the national level are commensurate with global frameworks;
- (d) The need to reduce time lags in planning and account for time lags in implementation so as not to delay action on implementation;
- (e) The need for more effective, comprehensive and actionable reviews of implementation;
- (f) The need for sustained and targeted support to Parties and a more concerted effort to facilitate implementation through support networks at the regional and subregional levels;

¹² These points have been previously identified in documents CBD/SBSTTA/23/2 and Add.2 and noted in recommendation 23/1 of the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice.

(g) Making greater use of available guidance materials and resources and to adapt them to specific national circumstances;

(h) The need for greater efforts to address the direct and indirect drivers of biodiversity loss in a more integrated and holistic manner, including by implementing packages of actions composed of legal or policy frameworks, socioeconomic incentives, public and stakeholder engagement, monitoring and enforcement, and avoiding addressing related issues in isolation of one another;

(i) The need to broaden political and general support for implementation to ensure that all levels of government and stakeholders across society are aware of the multiple values of biodiversity and related ecosystem services;

(j) The need for partnerships at all levels to leverage broad-scale actions to garner the ownership necessary to ensure the mainstreaming of biodiversity across sectors of government, society and the economy and to enable synergies in the national implementation of the various multilateral environmental agreements;

(k) The need for greater support of technical and scientific cooperation among Parties and capacity-building;

(l) An overall substantial increase in total biodiversity-related funding.

III. SUGGESTED RECOMMENDATIONS

23. The Subsidiary Body on Implementation may wish to adopt a recommendation along the following lines:

The Subsidiary Body on Implementation

1. *Notes* the analysis contained in the note by the Executive Secretary¹³ and its addendums and requests the Co-Chairs of the Open-ended Working Group on the Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework to take this information into account when preparing documentation related to the post-2020 global biodiversity framework;

2. *Welcomes* the efforts made by Parties to reflect the Aichi Biodiversity Targets in their national biodiversity strategies and action plans and the efforts made to reflect indigenous peoples and local communities, traditional knowledge, customary sustainable use and gender issues therein;

3. *Also welcomes* the efforts by Parties to implement their national biodiversity strategies and action plans since the adoption of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 and to better reflect indigenous peoples and local communities and gender issues in the national implementation of the Convention;

4. *Notes with concern* that the national targets and commitments set by Parties through their national biodiversity strategies and action plans are collectively not commensurate with the level of ambition set out in the Aichi Biodiversity Targets and that, while there has been encouraging progress towards the Aichi Biodiversity Targets, progress on the whole has been limited;

5. *Also notes with concern* that the 2015-2020 Gender Plan of Action has not been fully implemented and that, while awareness and understanding of biodiversity and gender issues has increased, gender is not adequately reflected in the implementation of the Convention or in national biodiversity strategies and action plans;

6. *Further notes with concern* that, despite encouraging progress, indigenous peoples and local communities and traditional knowledge and customary sustainable use are not adequately reflected in the implementation of the Convention or in national biodiversity strategies and action plans.

¹³ CBD/SBI/3/3.

24. The Subsidiary Body on Implementation may wish to recommend that the Conference of the Parties at its fifteenth meeting adopt a decision along the following lines:

The Conference of the Parties

A. Review of national biodiversity strategies and action plans and national reports

1. *Takes note* of the updated analysis of national biodiversity strategies and action plans and of the national reports;

2. *Welcomes* the efforts made by Parties to reflect the Aichi Biodiversity Targets in their national biodiversity strategies and action plans and the efforts made to reflect indigenous peoples and local communities, traditional knowledge, customary sustainable use and gender issues therein;

3. *Also welcomes* the efforts by Parties to implement their national biodiversity strategies and action plans since the adoption of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 and to better reflect indigenous peoples and local communities and gender issues in the national implementation of the Convention;

4. *Notes with concern* that the national targets and commitments set by Parties through their national biodiversity strategies and action plans are collectively not commensurate with the level of ambition set out in the Aichi Biodiversity Targets and that, while there has been encouraging progress towards the Aichi Biodiversity Targets, progress on the whole has been limited;

5. *Also notes with concern* that the 2015-2020 Gender Plan of Action has not been fully implemented and that, while awareness and understanding of biodiversity and gender issues has increased, gender is not adequately reflected in the implementation of the Convention or in national biodiversity strategies and action plans;

6. *Further notes with concern* that, despite encouraging progress, indigenous peoples and local communities and traditional knowledge and customary sustainable use are not adequately reflected in the implementation of the Convention or in national biodiversity strategies and action plans.
