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Item 6 of the provisional agenda*

MARINE AND COASTAL BIODIVERSITY

Note by the Executive Secretary

I. PROGRESS REPORT ON ECOLOGICALLY OR BIOLOGICALLY SIGNIFICANT MARINE AREAS

A. Identifying options for modifying descriptions of ecologically or biologically significant marine areas and for describing new areas

1. Pursuant to the request by the Conference of the Parties in decision [14/9](#), and with financial support from the Governments of Belgium and Germany, the Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity organized the Expert Workshop to Identify Options for Modifying the Description of Ecologically or Biologically Significant Marine Areas and Describing New Areas.¹ The workshop was hosted by the Government of Belgium and held in Brussels from 3 to 5 February 2020. This workshop focused on identifying modalities for the modification of the descriptions of ecologically or biologically significant marine areas (EBSAs) and modalities for the description of new EBSAs. Experts from a total of 32 Parties and 9 organizations participated in the workshop.

2. The report on the workshop is being provided as an information document for the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice.² The results of the workshop informed the development of the draft recommendations and of annexes I to XIV below, which are provided for consideration by the Subsidiary Body.

B. Informal Advisory Group on Ecologically or Biologically Significant Marine Areas

3. In decision [XIII/12](#), the Conference of the Parties requested the Executive Secretary to establish, following the guidance on expert groups contained in the consolidated modus operandi of the Subsidiary Body (decision [VIII/10](#), annex III (h)), an informal advisory group for ecologically or biologically significant marine areas, in accordance with the terms of reference provided in annex III to the decision.

4. Pursuant to this request, the Executive Secretary established the informal advisory group in 2018 based on nominations submitted by Parties, relevant organizations, and indigenous peoples and local communities in response to notification [2017-058](#), dated 21 June 2017. The selection process took place in line with the criteria outlined in the above-referenced notification, in consultation with the Bureau of the

* CBD/SBSTTA/24/1.

¹ <https://www.cbd.int/meetings/EBSA-WS-2020-01>.

² CBD/EBSA/WS/2020/1/2.

Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice, taking into account the need to ensure geographical distribution and gender balance.³

5. As per decision [XIII/12](#), the Informal Advisory Group was established for a two-year period, and may be renewed by a decision of the Conference of the Parties. The members of the Group were selected for a two-year period.

6. Two meetings of the Informal Advisory Group were convened, as follows:

(a) First meeting: Montreal, Canada, 30 June – 1 July 2018;⁴

(b) Second meeting: videoconference, 1 August 2019.⁵

7. Through these meetings, the Informal Advisory Group provided the Executive Secretary with advice in respect of:

(a) Improving scientific guidance on the application of the EBSA criteria;

(b) Revising and further developing training manuals on the application of the EBSA criteria;^{6,7,8}

(c) Improving the functionality of the EBSA repository and the information-sharing mechanism;

(d) Reviewing the ecological and biological coverage of areas described through the Convention's regional EBSA workshop process, and related considerations regarding additional workshops at the appropriate scale.⁹

8. The Subsidiary Body may wish to consider the extension of the term of the Informal Advisory Group on Ecologically or Biologically Significant Marine Areas. The Subsidiary Body is also invited to consider including in the terms of reference of the Informal Advisory Group the tasks and responsibilities for the “relevant expert advisory body” in the context of modalities for modifying descriptions of ecologically or biologically significant marine areas and for describing new areas, as outlined in the annexes below.

II. PROGRESS REPORT ON OTHER MATTERS

A. Support for the development of the post-2020 global biodiversity framework

9. In decision 14/34, the Conference of the Parties agreed on a comprehensive and participatory process for the preparation of the post-2020 global biodiversity framework, and requested the Executive Secretary to facilitate the implementation of this process.

10. Pursuant to the above request and with financial support from the Governments of the Republic of Korea and Sweden, the Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity convened the Thematic Workshop on Marine and Coastal Biodiversity for the Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework, in Montreal, Canada, from 13 to 15 November 2019,¹⁰ as part of the 2020 Ocean Pathways Week (11-15 November 2019).

³ <https://www.cbd.int/doc/notifications/2018/ntf-2018-056-marine-ebbsa-en.pdf>.

⁴ <https://www.cbd.int/meetings/EBSA-OM-2018-01>.

⁵ <https://www.cbd.int/meetings/EBSA-OM-2019-01>.

⁶ [UNEP/CBD/SBSTTA/16/INF/9](#).

⁷ [UNEP/CBD/SBSTTA/16/INF/10](#).

⁸ [UNEP/CBD/SBSTTA/20/INF/21](#).

⁹ [CBD/EBSA/WS/2020/1/INF/2](#).

¹⁰ <https://www.cbd.int/meetings/POST2020-WS-2019-10>.

11. The workshop focused on eliciting views on elements related to the conservation and sustainable use of marine and coastal biodiversity for possible inclusion in the post-2020 global biodiversity framework. The workshop aimed at producing concrete proposals to be considered in the development of the post-2020 global biodiversity framework. The outputs of the workshop were intended to contribute to the discussions of the Open-ended Working Group on the Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework. A compilation of background briefs on various issues related to marine and coastal biodiversity was developed to support the deliberations of the workshop.¹¹ The workshop outcomes were made available to the Co-Chairs of the Open-ended Working Group on the Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework to support the production of the zero draft of the post-2020 global biodiversity framework, and were issued for the second meeting of the Open-ended Working Group to support deliberations on the post-2020 global biodiversity framework. The report on the workshop is being issued as an information document for the Subsidiary Body.¹² The Subsidiary Body may also wish to refer to the report on the workshop to inform deliberations under agenda item 3 on the post-2020 global biodiversity framework.

B. Addressing impacts of anthropogenic underwater noise on marine and coastal biodiversity

12. Pursuant to decision 14/10, paragraph 5, the Executive Secretary prepared a draft CBD Technical Series report on the impacts of anthropogenic underwater noise on marine and coastal biodiversity and habitats and tools and approaches to minimize and mitigate these impacts.¹³ This report builds on the “scientific synthesis of the impacts of underwater noise on marine and coastal biodiversity and habitats”¹⁴ and background materials prepared for the Expert Workshop on Underwater Noise and its Impacts on Marine and Coastal Biodiversity (London, 25-27 February 2014), as well as on the compilation of submissions on experiences in the use of measures to avoid, minimize and mitigate the significant adverse impacts of anthropogenic underwater noise on marine and coastal biodiversity (CBD/SBSTTA/22/INF/13). The report will be issued as an information document for the Subsidiary Body.

13. The information in the report addresses different aspects of anthropogenic underwater noise, including:

- (a) Characteristics and trends of anthropogenic underwater noise;
- (b) Sources and types of anthropogenic underwater noise;
- (c) Known and potential impacts of anthropogenic underwater noise;
- (d) Mitigation and management of anthropogenic underwater noise;
- (e) Future research needs.

C. Marine spatial planning

14. Pursuant to decision 14/10, the Executive Secretary issued a notification¹⁵ requesting information on subnational, national or regional experiences in the implementation of marine spatial planning. The submissions received are compiled in a document¹⁶ that describes various activities related to marine spatial planning. This document is made available as an information document for the meeting.

15. Pursuant to decisions XI/18, XII/23, XIII/9 and 14/10, the Executive Secretary convened various capacity-building activities within the framework of the Sustainable Ocean Initiative (SOI) focused on sharing experiences and expertise on, and enhancing capacity for, marine spatial planning. These efforts are referred to in section F (1) below.

¹¹ <https://www.cbd.int/doc/c/1b59/0a19/1d447fccabe334c397cd1c04/mcb-om-2019-01-ocean-pathways-briefs-compilation-master-current-en.pdf>.

¹² [CBD/POST2020/WS/2019/10/2](#).

¹³ CBD/SBSTTA/24/INF/5.

¹⁴ UNEP/CBD/SBSTTA/20/INF/8.

¹⁵ Ref. No. 2019-113, dated 9 December 2019.

¹⁶ CBD/SBSTTA/24/INF/1.

D. Progress in the implementation of the Priority Actions to Achieve Aichi Biodiversity Target 10 for Coral Reefs and Closely Associated Ecosystems

16. In decision XII/23, the Conference of the Parties adopted the Priority Actions to Achieve Aichi Biodiversity Target 10 for Coral Reefs and Closely Associated Ecosystems (as annexed to the decision) and urged Parties and invited other Governments and relevant organizations to implement the activities contained therein, where applicable and in accordance with national capacity and circumstances, for enhanced implementation towards achieving Aichi Biodiversity Target 10.

17. In the same decision, the Conference of the Parties requested the Executive Secretary to facilitate strengthening of international and regional cooperation in support of national implementation of the priority actions, and to develop a global coral reef portal¹⁷ linked to the website of the Convention and existing global (for example, the International Coral Reef Initiative) and regional initiatives (for example, the Coral Triangle Initiative on Coral Reefs and Fisheries and Food Security) to facilitate technical collaboration and voluntary information-sharing on all aspects of sustainable management of coral reefs and related ecosystems.

18. Pursuant to the above-referenced decision, the Executive Secretary issued a notification¹⁸ requesting information on the implementation of the Priority Actions to Achieve Aichi Biodiversity Target 10 for Coral Reefs and Closely Associated Ecosystems, or activities that are in line with the Priority Actions.

19. On the basis of input received in response to the notification, the Secretariat prepared an information document containing a Synthesis of Experiences to Achieve Aichi Biodiversity Target 10 for Coral Reefs and Closely Associated Ecosystems.¹⁹

E. Progress in the implementation of the Voluntary Specific Workplan on Biodiversity in Cold-water Areas with the Jurisdictional Scope of the Convention

20. In decision XIII/11, the Conference of the Parties adopted the Voluntary Specific Workplan on Biodiversity in Cold-water Areas within the Jurisdictional Scope of the Convention (as contained in annex II to the decision), and encouraged Parties, other Governments and competent intergovernmental organizations, where applicable, within their respective jurisdictions and mandates and in accordance with national circumstances, to implement the activities contained in the Workplan. In the same decision, the Conference of the Parties requested the Executive Secretary, in collaboration with Parties, other Governments and relevant organizations, to facilitate, promote and support the implementation of the Workplan and the sharing of information on experiences and lessons learned from the implementation of the Workplan.

21. Pursuant to the above-referenced decision, the Executive Secretary issued a notification²⁰ requesting information on the implementation of the Voluntary Specific Workplan on Biodiversity in Cold-water Areas within the Jurisdictional Scope of the Convention, or activities that are in line with the Workplan.

22. On the basis of input received in response to the notification, the Secretariat prepared the synthesis of submissions on experiences for the implementation of the Voluntary Specific Workplan on Biodiversity in Cold-water Areas within the Jurisdictional Scope of the Convention.²¹ This document is made available as an information document for the meeting.

¹⁷ <https://www.cbd.int/coral-reefs/>.

¹⁸ Ref. No. 2018-080, dated 27 September 2018.

¹⁹ CBD/SBSTTA/24/INF/2.

²⁰ Ref. No. 2018-080, dated 27 September 2018.

²¹ CBD/SBSTTA/24/INF/3.

F. Progress in the implementation of the Voluntary Practical Guidance on Preventing and Mitigating the Impacts of Marine Debris on Marine and Coastal Biodiversity and Habitats

23. In decision XIII/10, the Conference of the Parties took note of the Voluntary Practical Guidance on Preventing and Mitigating the Impacts of Marine Debris on Marine and Coastal Biodiversity and Habitats (as contained in the annex to the decision), and urged Parties and encouraged other Governments, relevant organizations, industries, other relevant stakeholders, and indigenous peoples and local communities, to take appropriate measures, in accordance with national and international law and within their competencies, to prevent and mitigate the potential adverse impacts of marine debris on marine and coastal biodiversity and habitats, taking into account the voluntary practical guidance.

24. In the same decision, the Conference of the Parties requested the Executive Secretary to facilitate collaboration among Parties, other Governments and relevant organizations on the application of measures within the respective jurisdictions of Parties and other Governments and the mandates of intergovernmental organizations, to prevent and mitigate the impacts of marine debris on marine and coastal biodiversity and habitats, including those in the voluntary practical guidance, by facilitating the sharing of experiences, information, toolkits and best practices.

25. Pursuant to the above-referenced decision, the Executive Secretary issued a notification²² requesting information on the implementation of the Voluntary Practical Guidance on Preventing and Mitigating the Impacts of Marine Debris on Marine and Coastal Biodiversity and Habitats, or activities that are in line with the Guidance.

26. On the basis of input received in response to the notification, and building on previous work under the Convention, the Secretariat prepared a technical paper updating the information contained in CBD Technical Series No. 83 (Marine Debris: Understanding, Preventing and Mitigating the Significant Adverse Impacts on Marine and Coastal Biodiversity) with regard to new developments and knowledge that have emerged since its publication.²³ The document is made available as an information document for the meeting.

G. Addressing biodiversity concerns in fisheries

27. For the twenty-second meeting of the Subsidiary Body, in 2018, an information document was issued focusing on synthesizing and compiling information on experiences in mainstreaming biodiversity in marine fisheries (CBD/SBSTTA/22/INF/15).

28. Building on this information, the Secretariat and the Fisheries Expert Group of the Commission on Ecosystem Management of the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN), in collaboration with the European Bureau for Conservation and Development, developed a draft scientific assessment of progress towards the achievement of Aichi Biodiversity Target 6 (CBD/SBSTTA/22/INF/28).

29. This document was subsequently prepared as a draft *CBD Technical Series* report and made available for peer review.²⁴

30. Following the incorporation of the input received through peer review, as appropriate, the report was finalized as [CBD Technical Series No. 87: Assessing Progress towards Aichi Biodiversity Target 6 on Sustainable Marine Fisheries](#), which is also being issued as an information document for the Subsidiary Body.

31. In decision 14/8, the Conference of the Parties adopted the definition of “other effective area-based conservation measures” and welcomed scientific and technical advice on other effective area-based conservation measures, as contained in annex III to the decision, to be applied in a flexible way and on a case-by-case basis.

²² Ref. No. 2018-080, dated 27 September 2018.

²³ CBD/SBSTTA/24/INF/4.

²⁴ Ref. No. 2019-047, dated 17 May 2019.

32. In the same decision, the Conference of the Parties invited IUCN, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), and other expert bodies to continue to assist Parties in identifying other effective area-based conservation measures and in applying the scientific and technical advice.

33. Pursuant to this request, FAO, the Fisheries Expert Group of the Commission on Ecosystem Management of IUCN, and the European Bureau for Conservation and Development, in collaboration with the Secretariat, organized an expert meeting on other effective area-based conservation measures in the marine capture fishery sector (Rome, 7-10 May 2019). The outcomes of this meeting are informing further efforts on the identification of other effective area-based conservation measures and in applying the scientific and technical advice contained in decision 14/8 in the marine fishery sector. The report on the meeting is being issued as an information document.²⁵

H. Capacity-building and partnership activities through the Sustainable Ocean Initiative

1. Regional, subregional and national capacity-building workshops

34. SOI is a global platform for building partnerships and enhancing the capacity of developing country Parties to achieve the Aichi Biodiversity Targets related to marine and coastal biodiversity in a holistic manner by (a) facilitating the exchange of knowledge, experience and best practices, (b) creating partnerships that can provide targeted capacity-building, (c) enhancing communication among relevant stakeholders and (d) enhancing dialogue and coordination among various sectors to achieve a balance between the conservation and sustainable use of marine biodiversity. The implementation of SOI training and partnership activities has been coordinated by the Secretariat, in collaboration with various international partners, and financially supported by the Governments of Japan (through the Japan Biodiversity Fund), France (through the French Biodiversity Agency), Republic of Korea (through the Ministry of Oceans and Fisheries) and Sweden (through the Ministry of the Environment and Energy), and by the European Union.

35. Since the twenty-second meeting of the Subsidiary Body, the Executive Secretary has continued the capacity-building work under SOI at the regional, subregional and national levels, in particular through the following:

(a) Subregional Capacity-building Workshop for the Coral Triangle (Jakarta, 31 July – 3 August 2018);²⁶

(b) Regional Capacity-building Workshop for Northern Africa and the Mediterranean (Tangier, Morocco, 15-19 October 2018);²⁷

(c) National Capacity Development Workshop for the Maldives (Dhiffushi, Maldives, 17-19 June 2019);²⁸

(d) Training of Trainers Workshop (Seocheon, Republic of Korea, 14-18 October 2019).²⁹

2. SOI Global Dialogue with Regional Seas Organizations and Regional Fishery Bodies

36. In September 2016, the Secretariat, in collaboration with the United Nations Environment Programme and FAO and with the financial support of the Governments of Japan (through the Japan Biodiversity Fund) and the Republic of Korea and the European Union, initiated a global process to facilitate dialogue and cooperation among regional seas organizations and regional fishery bodies around the world by convening the first meeting of the Sustainable Ocean Initiative Global Dialogue with Regional Seas Organizations and Regional Fisheries Bodies on Accelerating Progress towards the Aichi Biodiversity

²⁵ CBD/SBSTTA/24/INF/10.

²⁶ <https://www.cbd.int/meetings/SOI-WS-2018-02>.

²⁷ <https://www.cbd.int/meetings/SOI-WS-2018-03>.

²⁸ <https://www.cbd.int/meetings/SOI-WS-2019-01>.

²⁹ <https://www.cbd.int/meetings/SOI-OM-2019-01>.

Targets, hosted by the Government of Republic of Korea.³⁰ The second meeting of the Sustainable Ocean Initiative Global Dialogue with Regional Seas Organizations and Regional Fisheries Bodies on Accelerating Progress towards the Aichi Biodiversity Targets and Sustainable Development Goals was convened by the Secretariat in Seoul from 10 to 13 April 2018 with financial support provided by the Government of the Republic of Korea (through the Ministry of Oceans and Fisheries, the National Marine Biodiversity Institute of Korea, the Korea Maritime Institute and the Korea Marine Environment Management Corporation), the Government of Japan (through the Japan Biodiversity Fund), the Government of Sweden, and the European Union.³¹

37. Through these meetings, the SOI Global Dialogue has enabled the exchange of experiences and lessons among regional organizations, identified tangible means and opportunities to improve cross-sectoral collaboration (both within and between regions) in addressing issues related to fisheries management and the conservation and sustainable use of marine biodiversity, and outlined the roles of regional organizations in supporting the implementation and monitoring of progress towards global commitments for fisheries, environment, biodiversity and sustainable development.

38. The third meeting of the SOI Global Dialogue with Regional Seas Organizations and Regional Fishery Bodies is planned to be held in 2020 or 2021 (dates to be determined) in collaboration with FAO, the United Nations Environment Programme, the Ministry of Oceans and Fisheries of the Republic of Korea and the National Marine Biodiversity Institute of Korea. The organization of this meeting is financially supported by the Governments of the Republic of Korea, the Government of France and the Government of Japan (through the Japan Biodiversity Fund). This meeting will build on the results of the first two meetings, and will aim to (a) enhance mutual understanding of the roles, mandates and work of regional seas organizations and regional fishery bodies, (b) share lessons and experiences on areas of mutual interest to regional seas organizations and regional fishery bodies both within and across regions, (c) report on progress in regional-scale cross-sectoral collaboration, (d) identify tangible opportunities to advance regional-scale collaboration (including sources of support for such collaboration), and (e) outline the roles of regional organizations in achieving global goals and targets for the ocean, including the post-2020 global biodiversity framework.

III. SUGGESTED RECOMMENDATIONS

39. The Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice may wish to recommend the following:

Requests the Executive Secretary to prepare draft terms of reference for a “relevant expert advisory group” in the context of modalities for modifying descriptions of ecologically or biologically significant marine areas and describing new areas, as outlined in the annexes to this recommendation, and to submit the draft for the consideration of the Conference of the Parties at its fifteenth meeting.

40. The Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice may also 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. Ecologically or biologically significant marine areas

Reaffirming Article 22 of the Convention as well as decisions X/29, XI/17, XII/22, XIII/12 (in particular paragraph 3) and 14/9 of the Conference of the Parties on ecologically or biologically significant marine areas,

1. *Expresses its appreciation* to the Governments of Belgium and Germany for supporting the organization of the Expert Workshop to Identify Options for Modifying the Description of Ecologically or

³⁰ <https://www.cbd.int/meetings/SOIOM-2016-01>.

³¹ <https://www.cbd.int/meetings/SOI-OM-2018-01>.

Biologically Significant Marine Areas and Describing New Areas, and *welcomes* the report of the workshop;³²

2. *Endorses* annexes I to XIV to the present decision addressing modalities for modifying descriptions of ecologically or biologically significant marine areas (EBSAs) and for describing new areas, and *requests* the Executive Secretary to facilitate the implementation of these modalities;^{33,34}

3. *Decides* to extend the term of the Informal Advisory Group on Ecologically or Biologically Significant Marine Areas and *also decides* to include in the terms of reference of the Informal Advisory Group the tasks and responsibilities of a “relevant expert advisory body” in the context of modalities for modifying the descriptions of ecologically or biologically significant marine areas and describing of new areas, as outlined in the annexes to the present decision;

4. *Requests* the Executive Secretary to develop voluntary guidelines on peer-review processes for the identification of areas meeting the EBSA criteria and other relevant compatible and complementary scientific criteria, for the consideration of the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice and the Conference of the Parties;

B. Other matters

5. *Welcomes* the report of the Thematic Workshop on Marine and Coastal Biodiversity for the Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework, and *requests* the Executive Secretary to conduct a strategic review and analysis of the programme of work on marine and coastal biodiversity in the context of the implementation of the post-2020 global biodiversity framework, also considering the outcomes of the above-referenced workshop, and to submit the results of this review and analysis for consideration by the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice and the Conference of the Parties;

6. *Requests* the Executive Secretary develop a strategic review and analysis of the programme of work on island biodiversity in the context of the implementation of the post-2020 global biodiversity framework, in collaboration with the Global Islands Partnership and building on other relevant efforts to review progress towards global commitments and goals for island biodiversity, and to submit the results of this review and analysis for consideration by the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice and the Conference of the Parties;

7. *Takes note* of the work of the Executive Secretary on the compilation and synthesis of information on:

(a) Impacts of anthropogenic underwater noise on marine and coastal biodiversity and means to minimize and mitigate these impacts;

(b) Impacts of marine debris on marine and coastal biodiversity and habitats and means to minimize and mitigate these impacts;

(c) Experiences with the application of marine spatial planning;

(d) Efforts to implement the Priority Actions to Achieve Aichi Biodiversity Target 10 for Coral Reefs and Closely Associated Ecosystems;

(e) Efforts to implement the Voluntary Specific Workplan on Biodiversity in Cold-water Areas within the Jurisdictional Scope of the Convention;

8. *Encourages* Parties and *invites* other Governments and relevant organizations to use the information referred to in paragraph 7 above in their efforts to conserve and sustainably use marine and

³² CBD/EBSA/WS/2020/1/2.

³³ No action or activity taken on the basis of this document shall be interpreted or considered as prejudicing the position of State Parties on a land or maritime sovereignty dispute or a dispute concerning the delimitation of maritime areas.

³⁴ Nothing in this document can be interpreted as prejudicing developments under the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea.

coastal biodiversity, and *requests* the Executive Secretary to facilitate the compilation, synthesis and sharing of information on efforts to implement the post-2020 global biodiversity framework with respect to various thematic issues related to marine and coastal biodiversity;

9. *Welcomes* the cooperation between the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, the International Union for Conservation of Nature and the Executive Secretary to support efforts to mainstream biodiversity considerations in fisheries, and *requests* the Executive Secretary to continue this cooperation;

10. *Welcomes* the capacity-building and partnership activities being facilitated by the Executive Secretary through the Sustainable Ocean Initiative at the national, regional and global levels in collaboration with Parties, other Governments and relevant organizations, *expresses its gratitude* to donor countries and many other partners for providing financial and technical support for the implementation of activities under the Sustainable Ocean Initiative, and *requests* the Executive Secretary to continue to facilitate capacity-building activities under the Sustainable Ocean Initiative in order to facilitate implementation of the post-2020 global biodiversity framework with respect to marine, coastal and island biodiversity;

11. *Also welcomes* the collaborative efforts among the Secretariat, the United Nations Environment Programme, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, the Regional Seas Conventions and Action Plans, regional fishery bodies, large marine ecosystem projects/programmes and other relevant regional initiatives to strengthen cross-sectoral cooperation at the regional scale in order to accelerate progress to achieve the Aichi Biodiversity Targets and the Sustainable Development Goals, including through the Sustainable Ocean Initiative Global Dialogue with Regional Seas Organizations and Regional Fishery Bodies, and *requests* the Executive Secretary to continue this collaboration in the context of the implementation of the post-2020 global biodiversity framework.

Annex I

**GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS IN THE MODIFICATION OF DESCRIPTIONS OF
ECOLOGICALLY OR BIOLOGICALLY SIGNIFICANT MARINE AREAS AND THE
DESCRIPTION OF NEW AREAS**

1. Those who develop and submit proposals for the modification of EBSA descriptions and the description of new EBSAs are encouraged to consider:

- (a) Collaboration with relevant experts and knowledge holders, including holders of traditional knowledge;
- (b) The importance of transparency as well as a strong scientific basis;
- (c) Regional dimensions of marine and coastal ecosystems and their ecological and biological features, including regional differences in data availability, as well as collaboration across regions.

*Annex II***REPOSITORY AND INFORMATION-SHARING MECHANISM FOR ECOLOGICALLY OR BIOLOGICALLY SIGNIFICANT MARINE AREAS**

1. The EBSA repository is to contain:
 - (a) Descriptions of areas meeting the EBSA criteria that were considered by the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice and the Conference of the Parties, and which the Conference of the Parties has requested the Executive Secretary to include in the repository and transmit to the United Nations General Assembly and its relevant processes as well as relevant international organizations.
2. The EBSA information-sharing mechanism is to contain:
 - (a) Links to national processes and information pertaining to areas meeting the EBSA criteria and other relevant compatible and complementary nationally agreed scientific criteria within national jurisdiction that were provided as information for the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice and the Conference of the Parties;
 - (b) Reports of the CBD regional workshops to facilitate the description of EBSAs;
 - (c) Guidance related to the application of the EBSA criteria and the use of EBSA information;
 - (d) Other relevant scientific and technical information and other forms of knowledge related to areas described as meeting the EBSA criteria;
 - (e) Information and experience relating to the application of other relevant and complementary intergovernmentally agreed scientific criteria.

Annex III

**REASONS FOR MODIFICATION OF DESCRIPTIONS OF ECOLOGICALLY OR
BIOLOGICALLY SIGNIFICANT MARINE AREAS**

1. Reasons for the modification of an EBSA description (which can entail a modification to the textual description of the EBSA, a modification to the ranking of the area against the EBSA criteria and/or a change in the shape of the EBSA) are:

- (a) Newly available/accessible knowledge, including scientific and traditional knowledge, on features associated with an EBSA;
- (b) Change in the information that was used to describe an EBSA;
- (c) Change in the ecological or biological feature(s) of an EBSA;
- (d) Scientific error(s) identified in an EBSA description;
- (e) Modification(s) to the EBSA criteria, to guidance in the application of the EBSA criteria or to the template³⁵ used to describe EBSAs;
- (f) Editorial errors in an EBSA description.

³⁵ <http://www.cbd.int/doc/meetings/mar/ebsaws-2015-01/other/ebsaws-2015-01-template-en.dot>.

*Annex IV***PROPONENTS OF THE MODIFICATION OF DESCRIPTIONS OF ECOLOGICALLY OR BIOLOGICALLY SIGNIFICANT MARINE AREAS**

1. For reasons (a) through (f), the following can submit a proposal³⁶ for the modification of an EBSA description:
 - (a) Within national jurisdiction: the State(s) within whose jurisdiction(s) the modification is proposed;
 - (b) In areas beyond national jurisdiction: any State and/or competent intergovernmental organization;
 - (c) In areas straddling within and beyond national jurisdiction: the State(s) within whose jurisdiction(s) the proposed area is partially located.
2. For reason (f), the Secretariat may propose the modification of an EBSA description.
3. Holders of relevant knowledge may collaborate with the proponents in the development of proposals for modification.

³⁶ A proposal for modification is comprised of a submission explaining the elements of the EBSA description in potential need of modification and why.

Annex V

**MODIFICATION OF DESCRIPTIONS OF ECOLOGICALLY OR BIOLOGICALLY
SIGNIFICANT MARINE AREAS FOR EDITORIAL REASONS**

1. In the case of editorial errors in a previous EBSA description:
 - (a) The Secretariat disseminates a notification regarding the proposed modification;
 - (b) The Secretariat implements the proposed modification within three months of issuance of the above notification;
 - (c) A report on modifications made for reason (f) is made available to the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice and to the Conference of the Parties for information.

Annex VI

**MODIFICATION OF DESCRIPTIONS OF ECOLOGICALLY OR BIOLOGICALLY
SIGNIFICANT MARINE AREAS WITHIN NATIONAL JURISDICTION**

1. For reasons (a) through (e) and inclusion in the EBSA repository:
 - (a) The proposal for modification of an EBSA description is submitted to the Secretariat, together with information on the scientifically sound nationally agreed peer-review process³⁷ or other appropriate validation process that produced the proposed modification;
 - (b) The Secretariat disseminates information about the proposed modification through a CBD notification with a period of three months for public comment on the proposed modification. The proponent will then have three months to adjust the proposal in response to the comments, as appropriate, and/or to issue a response to any of the comments, if they wish. The comments and responses related to the proposed modification will be posted on the EBSA website;
 - (c) The Secretariat also issues notifications biannually regarding proposals for modifications received by the Secretariat;
 - (d) The Secretariat compiles a report, including comments received, to be made available to the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice and the Conference of the Parties for consideration with a view to inclusion of the modification in the repository. In compiling the report, the Secretariat may seek the advice of a relevant expert advisory body mandated by the Conference of the Parties;
 - (e) The previous EBSA description, and the modality by which it was included in the repository, will remain available in the repository.
2. For reasons (a) through (e) and inclusion in the EBSA information-sharing mechanism:
 - (a) The proposal for modification of an EBSA description is submitted to the Secretariat, together with information on the scientifically sound nationally agreed peer-review process or other appropriate validation process that produced the proposed modification;
 - (b) The Secretariat disseminates information about the proposed modification through a CBD notification;
 - (c) The Secretariat also issues notifications biannually regarding proposals for modifications received by the Secretariat;
 - (d) The Secretariat compiles a report to be made available to the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice and the Conference of the Parties for information, and links to information on the modification are included in the information-sharing mechanism.

³⁷ Voluntary guidelines on peer-review processes to be developed by the Executive Secretary for the consideration of the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice and the Conference of the Parties.

Annex VII

MODIFICATION OF DESCRIPTIONS OF ECOLOGICALLY OR BIOLOGICALLY SIGNIFICANT MARINE AREAS IN AREAS BEYOND NATIONAL JURISDICTION

1. For reasons (a) through (e) and inclusion in the EBSA repository:
 - (a) The proposal for a modification of an EBSA description is submitted to the Secretariat, together with information on the process that produced the proposal for modification;
 - (b) The Secretariat posts information about the proposed modification on the EBSA website and issues notifications biannually regarding proposals for modifications received by the Secretariat;
 - (c) The Secretariat prepares a report on the proposal that is disseminated through a CBD notification with a period of three months for public comment. The proponent will then have three months to adjust the proposal in response to the comments, as appropriate, and/or to issue a response to any of the comments, if they wish. A revised report on modifications, including comments received, is prepared by the Secretariat and submitted to the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice and to the Conference of the Parties for consideration. Experts who participated in the workshop at which the EBSA was originally described as well as a relevant expert advisory body mandated by the Conference of the Parties may provide advice in the preparation of this report;
 - (d) On the basis of the revised report, the Conference of the Parties decides on one of the following:
 - (i) Request inclusion of the modification in the repository;
 - (ii) If further analysis and review of the proposal is required, request the Secretariat to convene an expert workshop, subject to the availability of resources, to review the proposed modifications. The Secretariat may seek the advice of a relevant expert advisory body mandated by the Conference of the Parties to provide advice in the planning of the workshop. Experts who participated in the workshop at which the EBSA were originally described will be alerted. The output of the workshop is submitted to the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice and the Conference of the Parties for consideration;
 - (e) The previous EBSA description, and the modality by which it was included in the repository, will remain available in the repository.

Annex VIII

**MODIFICATION OF DESCRIPTIONS OF ECOLOGICALLY OR BIOLOGICALLY
SIGNIFICANT MARINE AREAS STRADDLING MULTIPLE NATIONAL JURISDICTIONS**

1. For reasons (a) through (e) and inclusion in the EBSA repository:
 - (a) The proposal for modification of an EBSA description is submitted to the Secretariat, together with information on the scientifically sound nationally agreed peer-review process³⁸ or other appropriate validation process that produced the proposed modification;
 - (b) The Secretariat disseminates information about the proposed modification through a CBD notification with a period of three months for public comment on the proposed modification. The proponent will then have three months to adjust the proposal in response to the comments, as appropriate, and/or to issue a response to any of the comments, if they wish. The comments and responses related to the proposed modification will be posted on the EBSA website;
 - (c) The Secretariat also issues notifications biannually regarding proposals for modifications received by the Secretariat;
 - (d) The Secretariat compiles a report, including comments received, to be made available to the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice and the Conference of the Parties for consideration with a view to inclusion of the modification in the repository. In compiling the report, the Secretariat may seek the advice of a relevant expert advisory body mandated by the Conference of the Parties;
 - (e) The previous EBSA description, and the modality by which it was included in the repository, will remain available in the repository.
2. For reasons (a) through (e) and inclusion in the EBSA information-sharing mechanism:
 - (a) The proposal for modification of an EBSA description is submitted to the Secretariat, together with information on the scientifically sound nationally agreed peer-review process or other appropriate validation process that produced the proposed modification;
 - (b) The Secretariat disseminates information about the proposed modification through a CBD notification;
 - (c) The Secretariat also issues notifications biannually regarding proposals for modifications received by the Secretariat;
 - (d) The Secretariat compiles a report to be made available to the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice and the Conference of the Parties for information, and links to information on the modification are included in the information-sharing mechanism.

³⁸ Voluntary guidelines on peer-review processes to be developed by the Executive Secretary for the consideration of the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice and the Conference of the Parties.

Annex IX

**MODIFICATION OF DESCRIPTIONS OF ECOLOGICALLY OR BIOLOGICALLY
SIGNIFICANT MARINE AREAS STRADDLING AREAS WITHIN AND BEYOND
NATIONAL JURISDICTION**

1. For reasons (a) through (e) and inclusion in the EBSA repository:
 - (a) The proposal for a modification of an EBSA description is submitted to the Secretariat, together with information on the process that produced the proposal for modification;
 - (b) The Secretariat posts information about the proposed modification on the EBSA website and issues notifications biannually regarding proposals for modifications received by the Secretariat;
 - (c) On the basis of those proposals, Secretariat prepares a report on the proposals that is disseminated through a CBD notification with a period of three months for public comment. The proponent(s) will then have three months to adjust the proposal in response to the comments, as appropriate. A revised report on modifications, including comments received, is prepared by the Secretariat and submitted to the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice and to the Conference of the Parties for consideration. Experts who participated in the workshop at which the EBSAs were originally described as well as a relevant expert advisory body mandated by the Conference of the Parties may provide advice in the preparation of this report;
 - (d) On the basis of the revised report, the Conference of the Parties decides on one of the following:
 - (i) Request inclusion of the modification(s) in the repository;
 - (ii) If further analysis and review of the proposals is required, request the Secretariat to convene an expert workshop, subject to the availability of resources, to review the proposed modifications. The Secretariat may seek the advice of a relevant expert advisory body mandated by the Conference of the Parties to provide advice in the planning of the workshop. Experts who participated in the workshop at which the EBSAs were originally described will be alerted. The output of the workshop is submitted to the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice and the Conference of the Parties for consideration;
 - (e) The previous EBSA description(s), and the modality by which it was included in the repository, will remain available in the repository.

*Annex X***PROPOSERS FOR THE DESCRIPTION OF ECOLOGICALLY OR BIOLOGICALLY
SIGNIFICANT MARINE AREAS**

1. The following can submit a proposal for the description of an EBSA:
 - (a) Within national jurisdiction: the State(s) within whose jurisdiction(s) the area is proposed;
 - (b) In areas beyond national jurisdiction: any State and/or competent intergovernmental organization;
 - (c) In areas straddling within and beyond national jurisdiction: the State(s) within whose jurisdiction(s) the proposed area is partially located.
2. The proponents are encouraged to collaborate with holders of relevant knowledge in the development of proposals.

Annex XI

**DESCRIPTION OF ECOLOGICALLY OR BIOLOGICALLY SIGNIFICANT MARINE AREAS
WITHIN NATIONAL JURISDICTION**

1. For inclusion in the EBSA repository:
 - (a) The proposal is submitted to the Secretariat, using the EBSA template, together with information on the scientifically sound nationally agreed peer-review process³⁹ or other appropriate validation process that produced the proposal;
 - (b) The Secretariat disseminates the proposal through a CBD notification with a period of three months for public comment on the proposal. The proponent will then have three months to adjust the proposal in response to the comments, as appropriate, and/or to issue a response to any of the comments, if they wish. The comments and responses related to the proposal will be posted on the EBSA website;
 - (c) The Secretariat also issues notifications biannually regarding proposals for new areas received by the Secretariat;
 - (d) The Secretariat compiles a report, including comments received, to be made available to the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice and to the Conference of the Parties, for consideration with a view to inclusion of the proposed description in the repository. In compiling the report, the Secretariat may seek the advice of a relevant expert advisory body mandated by the Conference of the Parties;
 - (e) Alternately, and in line with decision X/29, paragraph 36, new EBSAs may be described through a regional workshop convened by the Secretariat, subject to the availability of resources, the outputs of which are submitted for consideration by the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice and by the Conference of the Parties.
2. For inclusion in the EBSA information-sharing mechanism:
 - (a) The proposal is submitted to the Secretariat, together with information on the scientifically sound nationally agreed peer-review process⁴⁰ or other appropriate validation process that produced the proposal;
 - (b) The Secretariat disseminates the proposal through a CBD notification;
 - (c) The Secretariat also issues notifications biannually regarding proposals for new areas received by the Secretariat;
 - (d) The Secretariat compiles a report to be made available to the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice and the Conference of the Parties for information. Subsequently, links to information on the description are included in the information-sharing mechanism.

³⁹ Voluntary guidelines on peer-review processes to be developed by the Executive Secretary for the consideration of the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice and the Conference of the Parties.

⁴⁰ Ibid.

*Annex XII***DESCRIPTION OF ECOLOGICALLY OR BIOLOGICALLY SIGNIFICANT MARINE AREAS
IN AREAS BEYOND NATIONAL JURISDICTION**

1. For inclusion in the EBSA repository:
 - (a) The proposal for an EBSA description is submitted to the Secretariat, using the EBSA template, together with information on the process that produced the proposal;
 - (b) The Secretariat posts information about the proposal on the EBSA website;
 - (c) The Secretariat also issues notifications biannually regarding proposals for new areas received by the Secretariat;
 - (d) On the basis of those proposals, the Secretariat submits a report to the Conference of the Parties, which decides on one of the following two approaches:
 - (i) Request the Secretariat to convene an expert workshop, subject to the availability of resources, to review the proposals. The Secretariat may seek the advice of a relevant expert advisory body mandated by the Conference of the Parties to provide advice in the planning of the workshop. The output of the workshop is submitted to the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice and to the Conference of the Parties for their consideration;
 - (ii) Request the Secretariat to disseminate the report through CBD notification with a period of three months for public comment. The proponent will then have three months to adjust the proposal in response to the comments, as appropriate. A report on the proposals is prepared by the Secretariat and submitted to the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice and to the Conference of the Parties for consideration;
 - (e) Alternately, and in line with decision X/29, paragraph 36, new EBSAs may be described through a regional workshop convened by the Secretariat, subject to the availability of resources, the outputs of which are submitted for consideration by the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice and by the Conference of the Parties.

Annex XIII

DESCRIPTION OF ECOLOGICALLY OR BIOLOGICALLY SIGNIFICANT MARINE AREAS STRADDLING MULTIPLE NATIONAL JURISDICTIONS

1. For inclusion in the EBSA repository:

(a) The proposal is submitted to the Secretariat, using the EBSA template, together with information on the scientifically sound nationally agreed peer-review process⁴¹ that produced the proposal;

(b) The Secretariat disseminates the proposal through a CBD notification with a period of three months for public comment on the proposal. The proponents will then have three months to issue a response to any of the comments, if they wish, and the comments and responses related to the proposal will be posted on the EBSA website;

(c) The Secretariat also issues notifications biannually regarding proposals for new areas received by the Secretariat;

(d) The Secretariat compiles a report, including comments received, to be made available to the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice and to the Conference of the Parties, for consideration with a view to inclusion in the repository. In compiling the report, the Secretariat may seek the advice of a relevant expert advisory body mandated by the Conference of the Parties;

(e) Alternately, and in line with decision X/29, paragraph 36, new EBSAs may be described through a regional workshop convened by the Secretariat, subject to the availability of resources, the outputs of which are submitted for consideration by the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice and by the Conference of the Parties.

2. For inclusion in the EBSA information-sharing mechanism:

(a) The proposal is submitted to the Secretariat, together with information on the scientifically sound nationally agreed peer-review process⁴² or other appropriate validation process that produced the proposal;

(b) The Secretariat disseminates the proposal through a CBD notification;

(c) The Secretariat also issues notifications biannually regarding proposals for proposals for new areas received by the Secretariat;

(d) The Secretariat compiles a report to be made available to the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice and the Conference of the Parties for information. Subsequently, links to the information on the description are included in the information-sharing mechanism.

⁴¹ Voluntary guidelines on peer-review processes to be developed by the Executive Secretary for the consideration of the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice and the Conference of the Parties.

⁴² Ibid.

Annex XIV

**DESCRIPTION OF ECOLOGICALLY OR BIOLOGICALLY SIGNIFICANT MARINE AREAS
STRADDLING AREAS BOTH WITHIN AND BEYOND NATIONAL JURISDICTION**

1. For inclusion in the EBSA repository:
 - (a) The proposal for an EBSA description is submitted to the Secretariat, using the EBSA template, together with information on the process that produced the proposal;
 - (b) The Secretariat posts information about the proposal on the EBSA website;
 - (c) The Secretariat also issues notifications biannually regarding proposals for new areas received by the Secretariat;
 - (d) On the basis of those proposals, the Secretariat submits a report to the Conference of the Parties, which decides on one of the following two approaches:
 - (i) Request the Secretariat to convene an expert workshop, subject to the availability of resources, to review the proposals. The Secretariat may seek the advice of a relevant expert advisory body mandated by the Conference of the Parties to provide advice in the planning of the workshop. The output of the workshop is submitted to the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice and to the Conference of the Parties for their consideration;
 - (ii) Request the Secretariat to disseminate the report through CBD notification with a period of three months for public comment. The proponent will then have three months to adjust the proposal in response to the comments, as appropriate. A report on the proposals is prepared by the Secretariat and submitted to the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice and to the Conference of the Parties for consideration;
 - (e) Alternately, and in line with decision X/29, paragraph 36, new EBSAs may be described through a regional workshop convened by the Secretariat, subject to the availability of resources, the outputs of which are submitted for consideration by the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice and by the Conference of the Parties.
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