



Convention on Biological Diversity

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**Subsidiary Body on Scientific,
Technical and Technological Advice**
Twenty-sixth meeting
Nairobi, 13–18 May 2024
Item 8 (b) of the provisional agenda*
Marine and coastal biodiversity

Conservation and sustainable use of marine and coastal biodiversity

Note by the Secretariat

I. Introduction

1. At its fifteenth meeting, the Conference of the Parties considered various issues under the topic of marine and coastal biodiversity and adopted the following decisions:

- (a) Decision [15/24](#) on the conservation and sustainable use of marine and coastal biodiversity;
- (b) Decision [15/25](#) on ecologically or biologically significant marine areas in the North-East Atlantic Ocean and adjacent areas;
- (c) Decision [15/26](#) on ecologically or biologically significant marine areas: further work.

2. In decision [15/24](#), the Conference of the Parties recognized the importance of marine and coastal biodiversity as one of the key cross-cutting elements of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework and as critical to achieving the 2050 vision for biodiversity.

3. In the same decision, the Conference of the Parties addressed a wide range of issues with regard to the conservation and sustainable use of marine and coastal biodiversity, including (a) marine, coastal and island biodiversity in the context of the Framework; (b) collaboration with various international organizations and initiatives, including cooperation with regard to the instrument that has since been adopted as the Agreement under the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea on the Conservation and Sustainable Use of Marine Biological Diversity of Areas Beyond National Jurisdiction; and (c) capacity-building and partnerships. The present document contains a summary of the work undertaken in response to decision [15/24](#) across those various areas.

4. Further to decision [15/25](#), the Secretariat included the descriptions of 17 areas meeting the criteria for ecologically or biologically significant marine areas (EBSAs) in the North-East Atlantic Ocean and adjacent areas in the EBSA repository, and the summary reports for those areas were transmitted to the General Assembly of the United Nations and to relevant international organizations, in line with the purpose and procedures set out in decisions [X/29](#), XI/17, XII/22, XIII/12 and 14/9.

* CBD/SBSTTA/26/1.

5. Work undertaken with regard to decision [15/26](#) is described in document CBD/SBSTTA/26/7/Add.1, which also contains a draft decision on further work on EBSAs.

II. Strategic review and analysis of the programme of work on marine and coastal biodiversity and the programme of work on island biodiversity

6. The programme of work on marine and coastal biological diversity was adopted by the Conference of the Parties at its fourth meeting, in 1998 (decision IV/5, annex). The Conference of the Parties endorsed an elaborated programme of work at its seventh meeting, in 2004 (decision VII/5, annex I). At its tenth meeting, in 2010, the Conference of the Parties, having considered the results of an in-depth review of the progress made in the implementation of the elaborated programme of work, reaffirmed that the programme of work still corresponded to global priorities and endorsed guidance for its implementation (decision [X/29](#)).

7. The programme of work on island biodiversity was adopted by the Conference of the Parties at its eighth meeting, in 2006 (decision VIII/1, annex). At its eleventh meeting, in 2012, the Conference of the Parties, having considered the results of an in-depth review of the programme of work, urged Parties, and invited other Governments, financial institutions and other relevant organizations, to strengthen the implementation of the programme of work, reiterating the need for increased international, regional and national support for islands, in particular small island developing States, to implement the programme of work (decision XI/15).

8. Although the two programmes of work have not undergone any further reviews, the Conference of the Parties has adopted decisions on marine and coastal biodiversity at each of its meetings since 2010, thereby providing additional and critically important guidance on the implementation of the Convention. As such, the programmes of work should be considered to comprise, in addition to the original programmes, the full set of guidance contained in those decisions, for example, in relation to work on EBSAs, the preparation of guidance documents, and capacity-building and cooperation activities, including through the Sustainable Ocean Initiative.

9. In its decision [15/24](#), the Conference of the Parties requested the Executive Secretary to develop strategic reviews and analyses of both the programme of work on marine and coastal biodiversity and the programme of work on island biodiversity, in the context of supporting the implementation of the Framework, and to prepare draft updates to those programmes on that basis.

10. In November 2023, pursuant to recommendation 25/3 of the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice, the Acting Executive Secretary issued notification No. [2023-120](#) to invite Parties, other Governments, indigenous peoples and local communities, women and youth, the secretariats of other multilateral environmental agreements and relevant intergovernmental bodies, organizations and stakeholders to submit: (a) information on existing tools and guidance to enhance those identified under each target;¹ (b) views regarding gaps and redundancies; and (c) views regarding the adjustment of work undertaken under the Convention, including its programmes of work. The Secretariat received 49 responses to the notification, 10 from Parties² and 39 from relevant organizations and stakeholders; however, only a small number contained specific views regarding updates to the programmes of work.

11. With the support of expert consultants, the Secretariat has undertaken strategic reviews and analyses of the programmes of work on marine and coastal biodiversity and on island biodiversity, respectively, on the basis of responses to the aforementioned notification and additional information available from other sources. The reviews and analyses covered the programmes of work, as well as subsequent relevant decisions of the Conference of the Parties in the context of the targets of the Framework, and were also conducted taking into consideration key priorities identified for marine,

¹ See www.cbd.int/gbf/targets/ for detail.

² Australia, Belarus, Canada, European Union, Finland, Gabon, Japan, State of Palestine, Sweden and United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.

coastal and island biodiversity in other global multilateral forums and by other competent intergovernmental organizations.

12. Specifically, the strategic reviews and analyses of the programmes of work on marine and coastal biodiversity and on island biodiversity were conducted to assess the extent to which the elements of the programmes (including other relevant decisions of the Conference of the Parties) addressed the targets of the Framework and whether there were important gaps that should be addressed to provide the guidance necessary for the full implementation of the Framework with regard to marine, coastal and island biodiversity. Those gaps were also considered in the context of the work conducted under other relevant global intergovernmental processes, where appropriate, as well as other work undertaken under the Convention. Draft updates, in the form of additional points of focus to the programmes of work in relation to areas in potential need of further work to implement the Framework with regard to marine, coastal and island biodiversity, have been developed on the basis of the analyses and are contained in the annex to the draft decision (see sect. VI). The strategic reviews and analyses are provided as information documents CBD/SBSTTA/26/INF/9 and CBD/SBSTTA/26/INF/10.

13. The work done builds on the rapid analysis of programmes of work established under the Convention with regard to the targets of the Framework,³ the results of which were provided for consideration to the Subsidiary Body at its twenty-fifth meeting in document CBD/SBSTTA/25/4.

14. The strategic reviews and analyses of the programmes of work on marine and coastal biodiversity and on island biodiversity contain the following overarching conclusions, in addition to specific areas identified as in need of additional focus to ensure alignment with the targets of the Framework:

(a) The Conference of the Parties has provided valuable guidance on a wide range of issues that is essential to the implementation of the Convention and the achievement of the 2050 vision for biodiversity, and that guidance should continue to be referred to in efforts to implement the Framework;

(b) Valuable complementary guidance also emerges from the work of other competent intergovernmental organizations and should be used by Parties, other Governments and relevant organizations in their efforts to implement the Framework;

(c) Although there was no request to assess the level of implementation, it is clear that many aspects of the programmes of work have not been fully implemented, and robust efforts are needed to implement existing guidance effectively;

(d) It is important to be strategic in identifying where further guidance is needed. The targets of the Framework are crafted to be generic and applicable to all biomes, and differ in that respect from the Aichi Biodiversity Targets, which included several targets that focused on specific biomes. In addition, all, or nearly all, the targets of the Framework are applicable in all biomes, even though some of the targets and issues are of heightened importance for certain biomes;

(e) There are a limited number of elements of the Framework targets that are not addressed in the programmes of work but are essential to the implementation of the Framework in the respective biomes, including:

- (i) Issues for which some aspects of the topic have been addressed but need to be expanded to include additional considerations (e.g. different types of pollution or priority sites for invasive alien species);
- (ii) Issues that have either recently emerged or gained increasing attention in recent years and that are not reflected in the programmes of work and previous decisions, or are reflected in an insufficient manner (e.g. gender or blue carbon ecosystems);

³ CBD/SBSTTA/25/INF/1.

- (iii) The need for the robust engagement of a broader range of stakeholders in the implementation of the Framework (e.g. biodiversity mainstreaming or engaging relevant sectors in area-based conservation).

15. It is also important to consider the findings of the strategic reviews and analyses as complementary to the findings of the analysis provided in relation to agenda item 4, on scientific and technical needs to support the implementation of the Framework, as summarized in document CBD/SBSTTA/26/3. In particular, it is noted in that document that the thematic programmes of work and related guidance of the Conference of the Parties largely remain relevant and can serve an important role in providing greater clarity as to which elements or targets of the Framework may be of comparatively greater importance for a given biome and where more focused supplementary guidance and activities are needed. Given this, and also taking resource constraints into account (including those of Parties, the Secretariat and partners), a further in-depth review, in particular of the thematic programmes of work, may not be a priority. Other options to address any gaps and needs include the adoption of new decisions, including on further tools or guidance, as needed.

16. The Subsidiary Body is invited to consider areas in need of additional focus in the programmes of work, as listed in the annex to the draft decision, on the basis of the results of the strategic reviews and analyses.

III. Scientific and technical support for the implementation of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework through cooperation and collaboration with global and regional organizations and initiatives

17. In its decision [15/24](#), the Conference of the Parties stressed the importance of cooperation and collaboration with relevant global and regional organizations and initiatives and requested the Executive Secretary to undertake various activities in support of such cooperation and collaboration in the implementation of the Framework, such as: (a) mainstreaming the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity in fisheries and aquaculture (para. 17); (b) various thematic issues related to marine and coastal biodiversity in support of the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (para. 21); and (c) climate change and marine and coastal biodiversity (para. 22). Considering the broad nature of the goals and targets of the Framework requiring strong robust action by stakeholders across many different sectors and disciplines, such cooperation and collaboration are essential to the implementation of the Framework.

18. Cooperation and collaboration with relevant global and regional organizations and initiatives with regard to marine and coastal biodiversity have been facilitated in various areas of work under the Convention over many years, including through the provision of scientific information by relevant organizations to facilitate the description of EBSAs, the synthesis of experiences and guidance with regard to key thematic issues conducted with relevant organizations (e.g. with regard to anthropogenic underwater noise, in collaboration with the International Maritime Organization and the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals) and capacity-building work focused on cross-sectoral cooperation. Especially noteworthy, in this regard, is the Sustainable Ocean Initiative Global Dialogue with Regional Seas Organizations and Regional Fishery Bodies. In addition, the Secretariat has continued to engage in various international processes related to marine and coastal biodiversity, with recent examples including robust engagement in the 2022 United Nations Conference to Support the Implementation of Sustainable Development Goal 14: Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development; participating in a panel during the Ocean and Climate Change Dialogue 2023 convened by the Chair of the Subsidiary Body for Scientific and Technological Advice of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change; and the Acting Executive Secretary co-chairing the high-level round table of the fifth International Marine Protected Areas Congress, in 2023.

19. The Secretariat is also coordinating with various partners to support the implementation of Target 3 of the Framework in marine and coastal areas, including the World Commission on Protected Areas of the International Union for Conservation of Nature and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations. The collaboration for Target 3 in terms of marine and coastal areas is aimed at, among other objectives, facilitating the synthesis and sharing of experiences in efforts to implement Target 3, thereby responding to the request of the Conference of the Parties in paragraph 18 of decision [15/24](#).

IV. Potential options for modalities for collaboration and cooperation with relevant global and regional organizations in the context of the Agreement under the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea on the Conservation and Sustainable Use of Marine Biological Diversity of Areas beyond National Jurisdiction

20. In decision [15/24](#), the Conference of the Parties recognized the need to strengthen cooperation and collaboration with competent intergovernmental organizations, including organizations with competence in areas beyond national jurisdiction, in support of the conservation and sustainable use of marine and coastal biodiversity, applying the ecosystem approach and the precautionary approach, and using the best available science and traditional knowledge of indigenous peoples and local communities, with their free, prior and informed consent, within the jurisdictional scope of the Convention and its Protocols. In paragraph 12 of the same decision, the Conference of the Parties requested the Executive Secretary, upon the adoption of an international legally binding instrument under the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea on the conservation and sustainable use of marine biodiversity of areas beyond national jurisdiction, to identify potential options for modalities for collaboration and cooperation with relevant global and regional organizations in the context of the instrument.

21. The Agreement under the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea on the Conservation and Sustainable Use of Marine Biological Diversity of Areas Beyond National Jurisdiction was adopted on 19 June 2023, during the further resumed fifth session of the intergovernmental conference on an international legally binding instrument under the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea on the conservation and sustainable use of marine biological diversity of areas beyond national jurisdiction, convened under the auspices of the United Nations. The Agreement is open for signature from 20 September 2023 to 20 September 2025 and shall enter into force 120 days after the date of deposit of the sixtieth instrument of ratification, approval, acceptance or accession.

22. Pursuant to the request in decision [15/24](#), the Secretariat has issued document CBD/SBSTTA/26/INF/8, which contains background information on various areas of work under the Convention on Biological Diversity relevant to the implementation of the Agreement and puts forth potential areas of focus and options for modalities for collaboration and cooperation with relevant global and regional organizations in the context of the Agreement (see paras. 26 and 27).

23. The Conference of the Parties has reiterated in many decisions the central role of the General Assembly in addressing issues relating to the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity in marine areas beyond national jurisdiction. In paragraph 24 of its decision [X/29](#), it recognized that the Convention on Biological Diversity had a key role in supporting the work of the Assembly by focusing on the provision of scientific and, as appropriate, technical information and advice relating to marine biological diversity, the application of the ecosystem approach and the precautionary approach.

24. In line with that guidance, the Secretariat has been actively engaged in the deliberations on biodiversity in marine areas beyond national jurisdiction that culminated in the adoption of the Agreement. In addition, through years of Party-led implementation of the Convention, many of the

experiences that have emerged can be useful to the effective functioning of the Agreement, in terms of both the implementation of their responsibilities by Parties, with regard to their activities in areas beyond national jurisdiction, and relevant efforts to be made within national jurisdiction, including with regard to certain types of species and ecosystems that can be found in areas within and beyond national jurisdiction. The Conference of the Parties has also previously discussed various issues of central relevance to marine biodiversity in areas beyond national jurisdiction (e.g. biodiversity mainstreaming, specific pressures on marine biodiversity and EBSAs), leading to the adoption of numerous related decisions, in addition to increased political awareness and understanding of key biodiversity topics. Numerous efforts and initiatives led by the Secretariat also provide valuable opportunities to get more directly engaged in issues related to biodiversity in areas beyond national jurisdiction and to facilitate effective implementation of the Agreement.

25. Through those experiences, a strong “community of practice” has emerged under the auspices of the Convention, comprised of expert scientists, managers and policymakers. It is likely that some of those practitioners may also eventually become engaged in some form or other in the implementation of the Agreement. Lastly, the Conference of the Parties is well-placed to explore new areas of work that could complement discussions in meetings of the future Conference of the Parties to the Agreement and support the implementation of the Agreement.

26. Several areas of work under the Convention are related to the main elements of the Agreement and could be used to provide informative lessons and experiences in its implementation, as outlined below:

- (a) Marine genetic resources, including the fair and equitable sharing of benefits (Agreement, part II):
 - (i) Experiences on access and benefit-sharing under the Nagoya Protocol on Access to Genetic Resources and the Fair and Equitable Sharing of Benefits Arising from their Utilization to the Convention on Biological Diversity could inform approaches taken under the Agreement;
 - (ii) The multilateral mechanism for benefit-sharing from the use of digital sequence information on genetic resources established by the Conference of the Parties in its decision [15/9](#) and endorsed by the Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Nagoya Protocol in its decision [NP-4/6](#), as well as work to develop and operationalize the mechanism, could be taken into account in the further development of modalities for sharing monetary benefits from the utilization of marine genetic resources and digital sequence information on marine genetic resources of areas beyond national jurisdiction;
- (b) Measures such as area-based management tools, including marine protected areas (Agreement, part III):
 - (i) Some areas described as meeting the scientific criteria for EBSAs could be a source of scientific information for the development of proposals for the designation of area-based management tools;
 - (ii) Information contained in specific EBSA descriptions (regarding the ecological or biological significance of the features of a given area) could be used to inform the development of the parameters of area-based management tools (e.g. which activities are to be managed or restricted);
 - (iii) Experiences in applying the criteria for EBSAs through the EBSA process, including for certain types of features in the deep-sea and open ocean, could be used in the development of proposals for the designation of area-based management tools;
 - (iv) Various forms of guidance produced under the Convention could be used to inform the development of proposals for the designation and implementation of area-based

management tools, including with regard to effectiveness, equitability, representativity and connectivity;

- (c) Environmental impact assessments (Agreement, part IV):
 - (i) Areas described as meeting the criteria for EBSAs could be considered as areas that would potentially require an environmental impact assessment, depending on the activity in question and the ecological or biological features present in the area;
 - (ii) The voluntary guidelines on biodiversity-inclusive impact assessment,⁴ which were subsequently annotated for specific considerations for the deep-sea and open ocean, are a valuable resource for the standards and guidelines to be developed by the future Scientific and Technical Body of the Conference of the Parties to the Agreement (as referred to in article 38 of the Agreement);
 - (iii) Guidance produced under the Convention on mainstreaming biodiversity into various sectors⁵ could be used to inform specific sectoral measures to minimize or mitigate impacts on biodiversity in the context of environmental impact assessments;
 - (iv) Guidance produced under the Convention in relation to various pressures (e.g. underwater noise, marine debris, ocean acidification and invasive alien species) could inform sectoral and cross-sectoral measures to minimize or mitigate impacts on biodiversity in the context of environmental impact assessments;
- (d) Capacity-building and the transfer of marine technology (Part V of the Agreement):
 - (i) Capacity-building efforts under the Sustainable Ocean Initiative, which is coordinated by the Secretariat, address a range of issues that are relevant to the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity in areas beyond national jurisdiction, and future activities under the initiative could focus more on those issues;
 - (ii) Efforts to implement the long-term strategic framework for capacity-building and development⁶ could be focused on synergies to address capacity needs that would also support effective implementation in areas beyond national jurisdiction;
 - (iii) The significant experience gained by the Secretariat in running three clearing-house mechanisms (the Clearing-House Mechanism, the Access and Benefit-sharing Clearing-House and the Biosafety Clearing-House), each with unique objectives and functioning, could be highly instructive to the development and functioning of the Clearing-House Mechanism established under article 51 of the Agreement.

27. There are numerous means to operationalize collaboration and cooperation with relevant global and regional organizations in the context of the Agreement, including:

(a) In cooperation with the secretariat established under the Agreement and, until it commences its functions, with the Division for Ocean Affairs and the Law of the Sea, co-organizing joint expert workshops and establishing joint expert groups with other relevant global and regional organizations on issues relevant to the Agreement;

(b) Including specific issues relevant to the Agreement on the agenda of the Sustainable Ocean Initiative Global Dialogue with Regional Seas Organizations and Regional Fishery Bodies;

(c) Exploring possible areas of collaboration among the Secretariat of the Convention, the secretariat established under the Agreement and, until it commences its functions, with the Division for Ocean Affairs and the Law of the Sea, and the secretariats of other relevant biodiversity

⁴ [UNEP/CBD/COP/8/27/Add.2.](#)

⁵ E.g. decision [XIII/3](#), decision [14/3](#), the [Cancun Declaration on Mainstreaming the Conservation and Sustainable Use of Biodiversity for Well-Being](#) and [CBD Technical Series No. 87](#).

⁶ Decision 15/8, annex I.

conventions on thematic issues relevant to the Agreement at meetings of the Liaison Group of Biodiversity-related Conventions and the in the Bern Process (a process to facilitate cooperation among Parties to the relevant biodiversity-related conventions);

(d) Including matters relevant to both the Convention and the Agreement as a standing agenda item to be considered at each meeting of the Subsidiary Body and the Conference of the Parties to the Convention where there is an item on marine and coastal biodiversity;

(e) Increasing collaboration and coordination with relevant global and regional organizations on issues relevant to the Agreement to contribute to the work of the Regular Process for Global Reporting and Assessment of the State of the Marine Environment, including Socioeconomic Aspects;

(f) Contributing to increasing coordination and cooperation with relevant global and regional organizations on activities linked to issues relevant to the Agreement by regularly sharing information, including through UN-Oceans;

(g) Contributing to the work undertaken under the Agreement, including by providing information and sharing expertise, in accordance with the procedures established thereunder, as well as any processes on cooperation and coordination with and among relevant legal instruments and frameworks and relevant global, regional, subregional and sectoral bodies that may be established by the Conference of the Parties to the Agreement;

(h) Delivering joint capacity-building activities with the secretariat established under the Agreement and, until it commences its functions, with the Division for Ocean Affairs and the Law of the Sea, as well as with relevant global and regional organizations, in the context of the long-term strategic framework for capacity-building and development, to promote a better understanding of the Agreement and the implementation of the Framework.

V. Capacity-building and partnership activities in support of the implementation of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework, including through the Sustainable Ocean Initiative

28. In decision [15/24](#), the Conference of the Parties welcomed the capacity-building, experience-sharing and partnership activities being facilitated by the Executive Secretary, notably through the Sustainable Ocean Initiative,⁷ at the national, regional and global levels, as well as the collaborative efforts of the Secretariat and other relevant organizations to strengthen cross-sectoral cooperation on a regional and global scale, including through the Sustainable Ocean Initiative Global Dialogue with Regional Seas Organizations and Regional Fishery Bodies. In the same decision, the Conference of the Parties requested that, with regard to capacity-building and partnership activities, the Executive Secretary:

(a) Support the implementation of marine spatial planning and integrated coastal zone management, including through capacity-building, technical assistance, technology transfer and partnership activities under, inter alia, the Sustainable Ocean Initiative and other relevant initiatives (decision [15/24](#), para. 15);

(b) Continue to facilitate capacity-building activities under the Sustainable Ocean Initiative in order to support the implementation of the Framework, including its monitoring framework, with regard to marine, coastal and island biodiversity (*ibid.*, para. 19);

(c) Continue efforts to strengthen cross-sectoral cooperation on a regional and global scale, including through the Sustainable Ocean Initiative Global Dialogue with Regional Seas Organizations and Regional Fishery Bodies (*ibid.*, para. 20).

⁷ Further information on the Sustainable Ocean Initiative is available at www.cbd.int/soi.

29. Pursuant to the requests summarized in paragraph 28, the Secretariat has convened the following capacity-building workshops since the twenty-fourth meeting of the Subsidiary Body:

(a) Sustainable Ocean Initiative capacity-building workshop for the Wider Caribbean and Central America on other effective area-based conservation measures in the marine fishery sector (online, 20, 21, 27 and 28 April 2022);⁸

(b) Sustainable Ocean Initiative national capacity-building workshop for Thailand (Bangkok, 24 and 25 November 2022);⁹

(c) Sustainable Ocean Initiative global partnership meeting (Montreal, Canada, 1 and 2 December 2022);¹⁰

(d) Sustainable Ocean Initiative national workshop for Jamaica on other effective area-based conservation measures in the marine fishery sector (Kingston, 17–19 May);¹¹

(e) Sustainable Ocean Initiative Workshop on Ocean-related Capacity-building Needs for the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (online, 5–9 June 2023);¹²

(f) Sustainable Ocean Initiative regional capacity-building workshop for East, South and South-East Asia (Seoul, 5–8 September 2023);¹³

(g) Sustainable Ocean Initiative national workshop for Oman (Muscat, 1 October 2023).

30. In addition, the Secretariat has advanced its work on the Sustainable Ocean Initiative Global Dialogue with Regional Seas Organizations and Regional Fishery Bodies, in collaboration with the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations and the United Nations Environment Programme. The Global Dialogue was formed in 2016 to provide a platform to facilitate enhanced cross-sectoral collaboration, with a view to further strengthening the complementary roles of regional seas organizations and regional fishery bodies in supporting national implementation towards achieving the global biodiversity targets and the relevant Sustainable Development Goals. The Global Dialogue is based on the important role that regional organizations play in meeting global goals and targets and the urgent need to facilitate enhanced cooperation and collaboration across sectors by providing a regular platform to strengthen the exchange of information and lessons learned, explore shared objectives and address issues of common interest. In order to facilitate continued discussion and strategic planning for meetings of the Global Dialogue, various intersessional workshops are convened between formal meetings, which are usually held every two years. Meetings of the Global Dialogue were held in Seoul in September 2016, in Seoul in April 2018 and in Busan in October 2022, with financial support from 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. The fourth meeting is planned for June 2024, in the Republic of Korea.

⁸ See www.cbd.int/meetings/SOI-WS-2022-01.

⁹ See www.cbd.int/meetings/SOI-WS-2022-02.

¹⁰ See www.cbd.int/meetings/SOI-OM-2022-02.

¹¹ See www.cbd.int/meetings/SOI-WS-2023-02.

¹² See www.cbd.int/meetings/SOI-WS-2023-01.

¹³ See www.cbd.int/meetings/SOI-WS-2023-03.

VI. Recommendations

31. The Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice recommends that the Conference of the Parties adopt a decision along the following lines:

The Conference of the Parties,

Recognizing the importance of marine and coastal biodiversity as one of the key cross-cutting elements of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework¹ and as critical to achieving the 2050 vision for biodiversity,

Recalling paragraph 8 of its decision [15/4](#) of 19 December 2022, in which it decided that the Framework should be used as a strategic plan for the implementation of the Convention on Biological Diversity² and its Protocols, its bodies and its Secretariat over the period 2022–2030,

Recalling also its decisions [IX/20](#) of 30 May 2008, [X/29](#) of 29 October 2010, [XI/18](#) of 19 October 2012, [XII/23](#) of 14 October 2014, [XIII/9](#) of 17 December 2016, [XIII/10](#) and [XIII/11](#) of 13 December 2016, [XIII/12](#) of 17 December 2016, [14/8](#) of 29 November 2018, [14/10](#) and [14/30](#) of 29 December 2018 and [15/24](#) of 19 December 2022 with regard to cooperation and collaboration with relevant global and regional organizations and initiatives,

Recognizing the need to strengthen cooperation and collaboration with competent intergovernmental organizations, including organizations with competence in areas beyond national jurisdiction, in support of the conservation and sustainable use of marine and coastal biodiversity, applying the ecosystem approach and the precautionary approach,³ and using the best available science and traditional knowledge of indigenous peoples and local communities, with their free, prior and informed consent,⁴ within the jurisdictional scope of the Convention and its Protocols,

Acknowledging the importance of science for decision-making, and welcoming the work undertaken under the United Nations Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development and the United Nations Decade on Ecosystem Restoration,

Acknowledging also that, through the programmes of work on marine and coastal biodiversity and on island biodiversity, the Conference of the Parties has provided valuable guidance on a wide range of issues that is essential to the implementation of the Convention and the achievement of the 2050 vision for biodiversity, and that the guidance should continue to be referred to in efforts to implement the Framework,

Considering that valuable guidance also emerges from the work of other competent intergovernmental organizations, which complements guidance provided by the Conference of the Parties and should be used by Parties, other Governments and relevant organizations in their efforts to implement the Framework,

Welcoming the capacity-building, experience-sharing and partnership activities facilitated by the Secretariat to support the implementation of the Framework, including through the Sustainable Ocean Initiative, at the national, regional and global levels, in collaboration with Parties, other Governments, subnational governments, indigenous peoples and local communities, and women, youth and other relevant organizations, and expressing its gratitude to donor countries and many other partners for providing financial and technical support for the implementation of activities under the Initiative,

Welcoming also the collaborative efforts of the Secretariat, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, the United Nations Environment Programme, the Division for Ocean Affairs and the Law of the Sea, the International Maritime Organization, the International

¹ Decision 15/4, annex.

² United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 1760, No. 30619.

³ Principle 15 of the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development.

⁴ “Free, prior and informed consent” refers to the tripartite terminology of “prior and informed consent”, “free, prior and informed consent” and “approval and involvement”.

Seabed Authority, regional seas conventions and action plans, regional fishery bodies, large marine ecosystem projects and programmes and other relevant United Nations bodies, international organizations and regional initiatives to strengthen cross-sectoral cooperation on a regional and global scale in order to accelerate progress towards the Framework and the Sustainable Development Goals, including through the Sustainable Ocean Initiative Global Dialogue with Regional Seas Organizations and Regional Fishery Bodies,

1. *Welcomes* the adoption of the Agreement under the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea on the Conservation and Sustainable Use of Marine Biological Diversity of Areas beyond National Jurisdiction;⁵

2. *Recognizes* that the programmes of work on marine and coastal biodiversity and on island biodiversity, together with relevant decisions of the Conference of the Parties, still correspond to global priorities and contain guidance that provide essential support for the implementation of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework;

3. *Notes* that there are certain elements of the targets of the Framework for which there is limited guidance available under the programmes of work on marine and coastal biodiversity and on island biodiversity and which may require enhanced action and attention to implement the Framework, as listed in the annex to the present decision, and that such work may take the form of new guidance, where needed, the synthesis of best practices and experiences, capacity-building and development on the areas concerned and an invitation to competent organizations to expand their work in those areas;

4. *Stresses* that there are many areas of the programmes of work on marine and coastal biodiversity and on island biodiversity that have not been fully implemented and for which enhanced capacity-building and development, in particular for least developed countries and small island developing States, are needed;

5. *Invites* relevant global and regional organizations to enhance their work on the issues listed in the annex to the present decision, in support of the implementation of the Framework, recognizing that many other organizations have mandates and are conducting work on issues relevant to the implementation of the Framework;

6. *Requests* that the Executive Secretary, with regard to the issues listed in the annex to the present decision, in collaboration with competent international organizations, and subject to the availability of resources:

(a) Enhance cooperation and collaboration with intergovernmental organizations and processes with competence related to those issues;

(b) Compile and make available relevant guidance and experiences on those issues from Parties, other Governments and relevant organizations and stakeholders;

(c) Integrate those issues, as appropriate, into relevant capacity-building and development efforts undertaken under the Convention, including through the Sustainable Ocean Initiative;

7. *Notes* the areas of work conducted under the Convention outlined in document CBD/SBSTTA/26/INF/8 and summarized in paragraph 26 of document CBD/SBSTTA/26/7 that may be used to support the planning and implementation of the Agreement, and requests that the Executive Secretary continue the cooperation with the Division for Ocean Affairs and the Law of the Sea, and competent organizations, as appropriate and subject to the availability of resources;

8. *Requests* that the Executive Secretary, subject to the availability of resources, convene an expert workshop, in collaboration with relevant global and regional organizations, on opportunities for scientific and technical work conducted under the Convention to inform the implementation of the Agreement, noting the modalities for collaboration and cooperation with

⁵ A/CONF.232/2023/4.

relevant global and regional organizations in the context of the Agreement that are contained in document CBD/SBSTTA/26/INF/8 and summarized in paragraph 27 of document CBD/SBSTTA/26/7, and provide the results of the workshop for consideration by the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice before the seventeenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties;

9. *Also requests* that the Executive Secretary:

(a) Continue to facilitate capacity-building and partnership activities under the Sustainable Ocean Initiative in order to support the implementation of the Framework, including its monitoring framework, with regard to marine, coastal and island biodiversity;

(b) Continue to collaborate with the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, the United Nations Environment Programme, the Division for Ocean Affairs and the Law of the Sea, the International Maritime Organization, the International Seabed Authority, regional seas conventions and action plans, regional fishery bodies, large marine ecosystem projects and programmes and other relevant United Nations bodies, international organizations and regional initiatives to strengthen cross-sectoral cooperation on a regional and global scale in support of the implementation of the Framework, including through the Sustainable Ocean Initiative Global Dialogue with Regional Seas Organizations and Regional Fishery Bodies;

(c) Enhance cooperation and synergies with other multilateral environmental agreements, global and regional organizations, indigenous peoples and local communities as rights holders, in accordance with the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples⁶ and international human rights law, women, youth and other relevant stakeholders with regard to various thematic issues related to marine and coastal biodiversity in support of the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development⁷ and the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals.

Annex

Gaps and areas in need of additional focus under the Convention on Biological Diversity to support the implementation of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework with regard to marine, coastal and island biodiversity

1. With regard to marine and coastal biodiversity, further efforts are needed:

(a) To enhance ecological restoration in marine and coastal areas, building on experiences across various ecosystems and sectors and on different scales (most relevant to Target 2 of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework);

(b) To improve the use of area-based conservation measures, in particular other effective area-based conservation measures in various sectors active in marine and coastal areas, ensuring that such measures deliver tangible outcomes beneficial for biodiversity (most relevant to Target 3);

(c) To minimize human-wildlife conflict in marine and coastal areas, in particular with regard to threatened, endangered and vulnerable species (most relevant to Target 4);

(d) To monitor the genetic diversity of marine and coastal species (most relevant to Target 4);

(e) To improve understanding of marine and coastal biodiversity in mesopelagic systems, including with regard to linkages across benthic and pelagic ecosystems, in support of the

⁶ General Assembly resolution 61/295, annex.

⁷ General Assembly resolution 70/1.

conservation and sustainable use of marine biodiversity in mesopelagic areas (most relevant to Targets 3, 4 and 5);

(f) To assess and minimize the cumulative impacts of various types of pollution when they co-occur in marine and coastal areas (most relevant to Target 7);

(g) To assess and minimize the impacts of light pollution on deep-sea ecosystems (most relevant to Target 7);

(h) To manage blue carbon ecosystems effectively in order to enhance their role in climate change mitigation and adaptation without undermining the range of other ecosystems services that they provide (most relevant to Target 8);

(i) To conserve and use sustainably biodiversity in sea ice ecosystems, and improve understanding of the impacts of changing sea ice extent on marine ecosystems (most relevant to Targets 2, 3, 4 and 8);

(j) To manage aquaculture in marine and coastal areas sustainably, with a focus on minimizing impacts on habitats and ecologically-important species (most relevant to Target 10);

(k) To improve understanding of the contribution of marine and coastal blue spaces to healthy functioning ecosystems and to human health and well-being, and to use blue spaces to support inclusive and sustainable urbanization and coastal development (most relevant to Target 12);

(l) To mainstream biodiversity into emerging marine economic sectors that have not been referred to under previous decisions, while also addressing collaboration across relevant intergovernmental processes (most relevant to Target 14);

(m) To understand and avoid the negative impacts that harmful subsidies in fisheries and other sectors have on marine and coastal ecosystems (most relevant to Target 18);

(n) To integrate gender considerations in the conservation and sustainable use of marine and coastal biodiversity, including through the implementation of the Gender Plan of Action (2023–2030)⁸ in the context of specific marine sectors and ecosystems (most relevant to Target 23);

2. With regard to island biodiversity, further efforts are needed:

(a) To increase levels of ambition in terms of the percentage of degraded terrestrial, inland water and marine and coastal ecosystems under effective restoration and the percentage of terrestrial and inland water areas and of marine and coastal areas to be conserved by 2030 (most relevant to Targets 2 and 3);

(b) To promote ecological restoration in island ecosystems, focusing on ecosystems that can contribute to disaster risk reduction and resilience to various pressures (most relevant to Target 2);

(c) To engage various sectors and stakeholders in area-based conservation, ensuring that any sustainable use is consistent with conservation objectives (most relevant to Target 3);

(d) To identify islands and certain sites within island ecosystems as priority sites and areas for eradicating or controlling invasive alien species (most relevant to Target 6);

(e) To improve understanding of pollution risks on islands and levels of pollution that are harmful to island biodiversity and ecosystem functions and services, taking into account food security and livelihoods (most relevant to Target 7);

(f) To assess and minimize the cumulative impacts of various types of pollution when they co-occur in island ecosystems (most relevant to Target 7);

⁸ Decision 15/11, annex.

(g) To improve understanding of the impacts of ocean acidification on island ecosystems and enhance the resilience of ecosystems that are highly vulnerable to those impacts (most relevant to Target 8);

(h) To enhance the use of nature-based solutions and/or ecosystem-based approaches across a variety of ecosystem-types and consider the full range of potential impacts of climate change (most relevant to Target 8);

(i) To enhance the use of sustainable intensification, agroecological and other innovative approaches in the agriculture sector, thereby contributing to food security and avoiding negative impacts on ecosystems (most relevant to Target 10);

(j) To mainstream biodiversity into sectors that have not been explicitly referred to in the programme of work and decisions related to island biodiversity (most relevant to Target 14);

(k) To improve understanding of multiple values of biodiversity across islands, in particular with regard to indigenous peoples and local communities, and integrate those values into planning and decision-making (most relevant to Targets 14 and 21);

(l) To integrate gender considerations in the conservation and sustainable use of island biodiversity, including through the implementation of the Gender Plan of Action (2023–2030) (most relevant to Target 23).
