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ad hoc technical expert group on digital sequence information on genetic resources

Montreal, Canada, 17-20 March 2020

**Annotated provisional agenda**

# Introduction

1. The Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity adopted, at its fourteenth meeting, decision [14/20](https://www.cbd.int/doc/decisions/cop-14/cop-14-dec-20-en.pdf) on digital sequence information on genetic resources, in which it decided to establish a science- and policy-based process, including the establishment of an extended Ad Hoc Technical Expert Group (AHTEG). In paragraph 9 of the decision, the Conference of the Parties invited Parties, other Governments, indigenous peoples and local communities, relevant stakeholders and organizations to submit their views and information:

(a) To clarify the concept, including relevant terminology and scope, of digital sequence information on genetic resources and if and how domestic measures on access and benefit-sharing consider digital sequence information on genetic resources;

(b) On benefit-sharing arrangements from commercial and non-commercial use of digital sequence information on genetic resources.

1. The Conference of the Parties also invited Parties, other Governments and indigenous peoples and local communities to submit information on their capacity-building needs regarding the access, use, generation and analysis of digital sequence information on genetic resources, in particular for the three objectives of the Convention (decision 14/20, para. 10).
2. The Conference of the Parties decided to establish an extended Ad Hoc Technical Expert Group, involving participation from representatives of indigenous peoples and local communities, and requested the Executive Secretary:

(a) To compile and synthesize the views and information referred to above;

(b) To commission a science-based peer-reviewed fact-finding study on the concept and scope of digital sequence information on genetic resources and how digital sequence information on genetic resources is currently used building on the existing fact-finding and scoping study;

(c) To commission a peer-reviewed study on ongoing developments in the field of traceability of digital information, including how traceability is addressed by databases, and how these could inform discussions on digital sequence information on genetic resources;

(d) To commission a peer reviewed study on public and, to the extent possible, private databases of digital sequence information on genetic resources, including the terms and conditions on which access is granted or controlled, the biological scope and the size of the databases, numbers of accessions and their origin, governing policies, and the providers and users of the digital sequence information on genetic resources, and encouraged the owners of private databases to provide the necessary information;

(e) To commission a peer-reviewed study on how domestic measures address benefit-sharing arising from commercial and non-commercial use of digital sequence information on genetic resources and address the use of digital sequence information on genetic resources for research and development, taking into account the submissions provided by Parties, other Governments, indigenous peoples and local communities, relevant stakeholders and organizations;

(f) To convene a meeting of the extended Ad Hoc Technical Expert Group to:

(i) Consider the compilation and synthesis of views and information and the peer-reviewed studies referred to above;

(ii) Develop options for operational terms and their implications to provide conceptual clarity on digital sequence information on genetic resources, considering in particular the study referred to in paragraph 3(b) above.

1. The outcomes of the meeting of the Ad Hoc Technical Expert Group are required to be submitted to the Open-ended Working Group on the Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework established by the Conference of the Parties under its decision [14/34](https://www.cbd.int/doc/decisions/cop-14/cop-14-dec-34-en.pdf). The Working Group was requested to consider the outcomes and to make recommendations to the Conference of the Parties at its fifteenth meeting on how to address digital sequence information on genetic resources in the context of the post-2020 global biodiversity framework.
2. The Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Nagoya Protocol adopted, at its third meeting, decision [NP-3/12](https://www.cbd.int/doc/decisions/np-mop-03/np-mop-03-dec-12-en.pdf) on digital sequence information on genetic resources. In their decision, the Parties to the Nagoya Protocol welcomed decision 14/34 and decision 14/20 of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention. They requested the Working Group on the Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework to submit the outcome of its deliberations for the consideration of the Parties to the Nagoya Protocol at their fourth meeting.
3. Accordingly, the meeting of the Ad Hoc Technical Expert Group will be held in Montreal, Canada, from 17 to 20 March 2020 at the premises of the Secretariat. The meeting is made possible with the generous financial support of the European Union. The documents for the meeting as well as an information note containing details regarding logistical arrangements for the meeting, including registration, information on travel, visa requirements, accommodation and other matters will be available at: <https://www.cbd.int/meetings/DSI-AHTEG-2020-01>.

# Item 1. Opening of the meeting

1. The meeting will be opened by the Executive Secretary or her representative at 9.30 am on Tuesday, 17 March 2020.

# Item 2. Organizational matters

1. The Ad Hoc Technical Expert Group will be invited to elect co-chairs for its meeting.
2. It will also be invited to adopt the agenda for the meeting on the basis of the provisional agenda prepared by the Executive Secretary (CBD/DSI/AHTEG/2020/1/1). The experts may wish to consider the proposed organization of work as contained in annex I below. The meeting will be conducted in English.
3. A list of documents for the meeting is contained in annex II below. The documents will be made available on the Secretariat’s website at: <https://www.cbd.int/meetings/DSI-AHTEG-2020-01>.

Item 3. ConsiderATION OF the compilation and synthesis of views and information and peer-reviewed studies

**A. Views and information**

1. As indicated in paragraph 3(a) above, the Executive Secretary was requested to prepare a compilation and synthesis of the views and information submitted pursuant to paragraphs 9 and 10 of decision 14/20 of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention. The synthesis will be made available as document CBD/DSI/AHTEG/2020/1/2 and the compilation of the full text of the submissions will be made available as document CBD/DSI/AHTEG/2020/1/INF/1.

**B. Peer-reviewed studies**

1. With financial support from Norway and the European Union, the Executive Secretary also commissioned the studies listed in paragraph 3(b) to (e) above. The drafts of all the studies were made available online for peer review as requested by the Conference of the Parties in its decision 14/20, paragraph 11.
2. The studies were finalized by the respective authors, taking into account the comments received within the timeframe allocated for the peer review of each study. The studies will be made available for the consideration of the Ad Hoc Technical Expert Group as follows:

(a) The study on concept and scope (CBD/AHTEG/DSI/2020/1/3);

(b) The studies on traceability and databases (CBD/AHTEG/DSI/2020/1/4);

(c) The study on domestic measures (CBD/AHTEG/DSI/2020/1/5).

1. The full text of the peer-review comments received is made available online at <https://www.cbd.int/dsi-gr/2019-2020/studies/>.
2. Under this agenda item, the experts will be invited to consider the synthesis of views and information as well as the peer-reviewed studies, taking also into account the commitment of the Parties to the Convention, as expressed in paragraph 6 of decision 14/20, to working towards resolving the divergence of views regarding benefit-sharing from the use of digital sequence information with the aim of strengthening the fulfilment of the third objective of the Convention and Article 15, paragraph 7, without prejudice to the circumstances to which the article applies.

## ITEM 4. DEVELOPMENT OF OPTIONS FOR OPERATIONAL TERMS AND THEIR IMPLICATIONS FOR THE PURPOSE OF PROVIDING CONCEPTUAL CLARITY ON DIGITAL SEQUENCE INFORMATION ON GENETIC RESOURCES

1. Under this agenda item, the Ad Hoc Technical Expert Group is expected to consider the technical and scientific scope of terms related to digital sequence information on genetic resources and develop options for operational terms and their implications to provide conceptual clarity.
2. In developing options for operational terms and their implications, the Ad Hoc Technical Expert Group will be invited to consider document CBD/AHTEG/DSI/2020/1/6, which outlines some salient points that may facilitate the deliberations of the Group, particularly on items 4 and 5 of the provisional agenda. As much of the content of this document is derived from the peer-reviewed studies, particularly the study on concept and scope contained in document CBD/AHTEG/DSI/2020/1/3, as well as the synthesis of views and information that is made available to the Group as document CBD/DSI/AHTEG/2020/1/2, experts are encouraged to review these documents as well while considering this item.

# ITEM 5. IDENTIFICATION OF KEY AREAS FOR CAPACITY-BUILDING

1. The Conference of the Parties to the Convention recognized, in decision 14/20, paragraph 3, that further capacity to access, use, generate and analyse digital sequence information on genetic resources was needed, and encouraged Parties and other Governments and relevant international organizations to support capacity-building and technology transfer, as appropriate, to assist in the access, use, generation and analysis of digital sequence information on genetic resources for the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity and benefit-sharing.
2. Under this item, the Ad Hoc Technical Expert Group is expected to identify key areas for capacity-building based on the information submitted, in accordance with paragraph 10 of decision 14/20, by Parties, other Governments, indigenous peoples and local communities on their capacity-building needs regarding the access, use, generation and analysis of digital sequence information on genetic resources, in particular for the three objectives of the Convention.
3. In identifying key areas for capacity-building, the Ad Hoc Technical Expert Group will be invited to consider the relevant part of document CBD/DSI/AHTEG/2020/1/6, which highlights some elements or points that have been drawn from the synthesis of views and information contained in document CBD/DSI/AHTEG/2020/1/2.

# ITEM 6. Other matters

1. Under this item, experts may raise any other matter relevant to the meeting.

# Item 7. Adoption of the report

1. The experts will be invited to consider and adopt their report, which will be made available for consideration by the Open-ended Working Group on the Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework at its third meeting, to be held in July 2020.

# Item 8. Closure of the meeting

1. The meeting of the AHTEG is expected to close at 5.30 p.m. on Friday, 20 March 2020.

Annex I

# Proposed organization of work

| *Date/time* | *Agenda item* |
| --- | --- |
| **Tuesday, 17 March 2020** | |
| 9.30 a.m. to 12.30 p.m. | Item 1. Opening of the meeting  Item 2. Organizational matters  Item 3. Consideration of the compilation and synthesis of views and information and the peer-reviewed studies |
| 2.00 to 5.30 p.m. | Item 3. *Continued* |
| **Wednesday, 18 March 2020** | |
| 9.30 a.m. to 12.30 p.m. | Item 4. Development of options for operational terms and their implications for the purpose of providing conceptual clarity on digital sequence information on genetic resources |
| 2.00 to 5.30 p.m. | Item 4. *Continued* |
| **Thursday, 15 February 2018** | |
| 9.30 a.m. to 12.30 p.m. | Item 5. Identification of key areas for capacity-building |
| 2.00 to 5.30 p.m. | Items 3, 4, and 5 *(Continued, review of draft outcomes)* |
| **Friday, 16 February 2018** | |
| 9.30 a.m. to 12.30 p.m. | Item 6. Other matters  Item 7. Adoption of the report |
| 2.30 to 5.30 p.m. | Item 7. *Continued*  Item 8. Closure of the meeting. |

Annex II

**list of documents**

*Symbol Title*

CBD/DSI/AHTEG/2020/1/1Provisional agenda

CBD/DSI/AHTEG/2020/1/1/Add.1 Annotated provisional agenda

CBD/DSI/AHTEG/2020/1/2 Synthesis of views and information

CBD/DSI/AHTEG/2020/1/3 Study on the concept and scope of digital sequence information on genetic resources and how digital sequence information is currently used (Concept and scope)

CBD/DSI/AHTEG/2020/1/4 Study on ongoing developments in the field of traceability of digital information and on databases of digital sequence information on genetic resources (Traceability and databases)

CBD/DSI/AHTEG/2020/1/5 Study on how domestic measures address benefit-sharing arising from commercial and non-commercial use of digital sequence information on genetic resources, and address the use of digital sequence information on genetic resources for research and development (Domestic measures)

CBD/DSI/AHTEG/2020/1/6 Salient points that may facilitate deliberations by the Ad Hoc Technical Expert Group on Digital Sequence Information on Genetic Resources

CBD/DSI/AHTEG/2020/1/INF/1 Compilation of the full text of the submissions of views and information

Follow this [link](https://www.cbd.int/dsi-gr/2019-2020/studies/) for the full text of the peer-review comments received.

**Additional document of interest**

CBD/DSI/AHTEG/2018/1/3 Fact-finding and Scoping Study on Digital Sequence Information on Genetic Resources in the Context of the Convention on Biological Diversity and the Nagoya Protocol

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