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MECHANISMS TO FACILITATE REVIEW OF IMPLEMENTATION

Note by the Executive Secretary

I. MANDATE

1. In accordance with paragraph 4 of Article 23 of the Convention, the Conference of the Parties shall keep under review the implementation of the Convention and is mandated to do so through a number of processes and mechanisms. These include inter alia the review of scientific, technical and technological advice provided by the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice, advice from other subsidiary bodies that might be established, experiences of other conventions and any additional action that may be required for the achievement of the purposes of the Convention.

2. In decision [X/2](#), the Conference of the Parties, decided that, at its future meetings, it would review progress in the implementation of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020, and requested the Executive Secretary to prepare an analysis/synthesis of national, regional and other actions, including targets as appropriate, established in accordance with the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020, to enable the Conference of Parties to assess the contribution of such national and regional targets to the global targets.

3. Through decision [XII/26](#), the Conference of the Parties established the Subsidiary Body on Implementation (SBI) to replace the Ad Hoc Open-ended Working Group on Review of Implementation of the Convention, and requested it to support the Conference of the Parties in reviewing progress in the implementation of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 and achievement of the Aichi Biodiversity Targets. The SBI was mandated to, inter alia, review relevant information on progress in the implementation of the Convention, including in the provision of support for the implementation of the Convention, as well as of any strategic plans and other relevant decisions adopted by the Conference of the Parties, and on progress in the achievement of targets established under the Convention.

4. In decision [XIII/25](#) the Conference of the Parties established the modus operandi of the Subsidiary Body on Implementation which lists among its areas of work inter alia the review of progress in implementation (section B, para. 1). More specifically, the review of progress in implementation covers review of progress by individual Parties, including progress in the setting and achievement of national targets and actions as well as the outcomes of these actions, and the contribution of the national targets towards the objectives of the Convention. This review should take into account scientific assessments,

* [CBD/SBI/2/1](#).

recommendations and advice provided by the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice (SBSTTA).

5. The review of support provided to strengthen means of implementation includes items related to resource mobilization, the financial mechanism, and the general and strategic aspects and institutional mechanisms for technical and scientific cooperation, the clearing-house mechanism, capacity-building, technology transfer and communication, education and public awareness.

6. In addition to the provisions arising from the Convention, the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 and the Subsidiary Body on Implementation, additional elements facilitating the review of implementation include the voluntary peer-review mechanism, being further tested through a pilot phase (decision XIII/25, para. 2) and the decision-tracking tool under development in accordance with paragraph 5 of decision XIII/25. In the same decision, Parties are being invited to develop, enhance and make use of national processes to review the measures that they have taken for the implementation of the Convention and related strategic plans and to identify obstacles that may exist to such implementation, and to share this information through the clearing-house mechanism (decision XIII/25, para. 3).

7. With these mandates in mind, the present document provides brief background on the different dimensions of review (section II) and considers progress in applying existing elements of a review mechanism (section III). Section IV discusses possible next steps in light of the development of a post 2020 global biodiversity framework. Section V provides suggested recommendations.

II. DIMENSIONS OF REVIEW OF IMPLEMENTATION

8. It is being increasingly recognized that implementation by Parties and underlying commitments need to be strengthened to bring the global community on a path towards achieving the 2050 vision laid out in the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020. In this context, it is opportune to consider whether and how review mechanisms under the Convention could be enhanced to strengthen implementation. In addition, the process for discussing a post-2020 global biodiversity framework, laid out in a separate note,¹ should allow for further reflections on, and perhaps testing of, elements of a review mechanism to strengthen implementation.

9. At its first meeting, the Subsidiary Body on Implementation considered this topic in the context of its *modus operandi*. The documentation prepared for that meeting on the basis of analysis of and experiences with existing review mechanisms, both within the Convention and its Protocols and in other relevant fora is still relevant.²

10. It may be useful to consider the different dimensions of review mechanisms. These are presented in pairs, noting that there may be a sliding scale between extremes and that several elements could usefully complement each other. Mechanisms of review can cover a number of dimensions and approaches including:

- (a)
 - (i) An aggregated perspective of progress in implementation achieved globally, drawing primarily on the analysis of information provided by Parties primarily through their national reports and national biodiversity strategies and action plans (NBSAPs); *versus*
 - (ii) A country-by-country review of progress in implementation. Such reviews are currently undertaken on selected topics, such as protected areas or restoration. Detailed reviews of progress in implementation and obstacles encountered as well as

¹ CBD/SBI/2/17.

² See UNEP/CBD/SBI/1/10/Add.3 for details. This document is also being made available for the information of the Subsidiary Body on Implementation at its second meeting.

recommendations to address these are conducted on a pilot basis through the voluntary peer review;

- (b) (i) The review of scientific, technical and technological information from multiple sources focusing on the status and trends, underlying drivers of change, and threats to biodiversity at a range of scales; *versus*
 - (ii) A review of commitments and activities of Parties to implement the Convention, the review of obstacles encountered by decision-makers at all levels and the development of options to overcome these, and a review of the means of implementation to do so;
- (c) (i) A review of effectiveness of types of measures taken in accordance with the objectives of the Convention; *versus*
 - (ii) A review if the effectiveness of particular measures taken by Parties;
- (d) (i) Compliance-based mechanisms as established under the Cartagena and Nagoya Protocols and many other multilateral environmental agreements to enforce implementation; *versus*
 - (ii) Mechanisms focusing on sharing experiences, joint learning and the appropriate design and use of support mechanisms to facilitate implementation.

11. With respect to the mandates of the two permanent subsidiary bodies, the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice has a comparative advantage in addressing the review of scientific, technical and technological information ((a)(i)) and the effectiveness of types of measures ((b)(i)), while the Subsidiary Body on Implementation has a primary role in carrying out or overseeing the other approaches.

12. Recent progress in further developing existing review mechanisms under the Convention is outlined in section III.

13. Consideration of approaches to review implementation can also usefully draw upon the experiences made by other relevant bodies. These have been reviewed in some detail in documentation of the first meeting of the Subsidiary Body on Implementation. Since the first meeting of the Subsidiary Body on Implementation developments have occurred under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals (CMS). These are noted in the annex to the present document.

14. In addition, the processes and outcomes of some of the review mechanisms of other bodies may be useful to draw upon to support review of implementation under the Convention. For example, the following may provide information concerning implementation of measures under the Convention:

- (a) The reviews of biodiversity of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development and other relevant sectoral or thematic reviews;
- (b) Voluntary National Reviews of implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development under the auspices of the High-level Political Forum;
- (c) National audit processes (see section III);
- (d) Reviews of progress in implementation by non-State actors.

III. PROGRESS IN MECHANISMS FOR REVIEW OF IMPLEMENTATION

15. This section discusses how adjustments in the national reporting format and advances in the analysis of national reports and the visualization contributed to strengthening the Convention's review mechanism. It also reviews progress in implementing the pilot phase of the voluntary peer review and the

use of the decision-tracking tool to facilitate the review of implementation of decisions. Beyond these mechanisms under the Convention, additional approaches assessing the effectiveness of measures are taken on the basis of audits. Recent advances in this regard are also addressed in this section.

National reports

16. National reports under the Convention represent the primary mechanism to enable the Conference of the Parties and its subsidiary bodies to review progress in implementation. They are based on reviews of legal and institutional frameworks, progress made towards established objectives, and obstacles encountered and enable statements on the extent to which the country's national biodiversity strategy and action plan has been implemented.

17. In decision XIII/27, the Conference of the Parties adopted the guide lines, including the reporting templates, for the sixth national report. The sixth national report is focused on self-assessments of progress – in terms of outcomes – towards national targets and national contributions to the achievement of global biodiversity targets, supported by technical evidence including the use of indicators, a review of the key measures taken in pursuing achievement of national targets and strategies and an assessment of the effectiveness of these measures in achieving the desired outcomes as well as identification of obstacles and needs for support.

18. With regard to national reports as a basis for strengthening elements of a review mechanism, the following developments are particularly noteworthy:

(a) Parties are asked to review the effectiveness of key measures taken in implementing their NBSAPs and obstacles encountered;

(b) Parties are asked to rate the progress made towards the achievement of national targets;

(c) Parties are asked to report on the indicators or other approaches used to assess progress;

(d) Parties are asked to assess how progress made at the national level contributes to the achievement of globally agreed targets;

(e) The information by Parties is made accessible through colour-coded maps, thereby providing a quick view of what is being reported by each Party and facilitating reactions from experts and civil society;

(f) While information submitted formally as the sixth national report will be captured and archived, Parties can subsequently update information previously entered at any point in time, including in response to feedback from review by peers or civil society.

19. These developments ensure that assessments are made by Parties rather than through interpretation of narrative text by the Secretariat. However, there is no mechanism for peer review or other form of verification with regard to the assessment of progress being reported. Moreover, Parties have selected different national targets and therefore progress statements cannot be easily aggregated. Also, the information on obstacles would need to be complemented by a more systematic analysis of the specific underlying issues related to resource mobilization, the financial mechanism, and the general and strategic aspects and institutional mechanisms for technical and scientific cooperation, the clearing-house mechanism, capacity-building, technology transfer and communication, education and public awareness. In advancing the Convention's review mechanism these gaps or limitations should be addressed.

Voluntary peer review

20. The voluntary peer review process seeks to help Parties improve their individual and collective capacities to more effectively implement the Convention by:

(a) Assessing the development and implementation of national biodiversity strategies and action plans in the context of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 and produce specific recommendations for the Parties under review;

(b) Providing opportunities for peer learning for Parties directly involved and other Parties;

(c) Enhancing transparency and accountability for the development and implementation of national biodiversity strategies and action plans to the public and other Parties.

21. The voluntary peer review focuses on the overall biodiversity policy process, in particular as laid down in the NBSAP, and consists of an in-depth analysis of a limited number of key policy areas and issues.

22. In its decision XIII/25, the Conference of the Parties took note of the progress made in the development of a voluntary peer-review mechanism, especially the development of a draft methodology for the review developed in response to paragraph 3 of decision XII/29, and requested the Executive Secretary, subject to the availability of resources, to facilitate the further testing, and development of the methodology,³ including its application through a pilot phase, and to report on progress, including information on the cost of the pilot phase, to the Subsidiary Body on Implementation at its second meeting.

23. In response to the two notifications, six Parties expressed interest in being reviewed,⁴ eleven Parties nominated reviewers,⁵ and no Party expressed willingness to provide additional resources for the pilot phase. The pilot phase is being funded with resources provided initially by Switzerland and Norway for the testing phase, Japan (through the Japan Biodiversity Fund), and the Secretariat in the form of staff time allotted for this purpose.

24. Following exchanges with potential reviewers and reviewees, Montenegro and Sri Lanka were selected as the first two countries to be reviewed during the pilot phase. This selection was guided by the following criteria, as well as practical implications, language and geographical range:

(a) Evidence of high-level government support for the voluntary peer-review process;

(b) Latest national report submitted;

(c) Latest NBSAP adopted as a policy document; or advanced draft of an NBSAP, or policy equivalents, under revision;

(d) Willingness to contribute to in-country costs of the review.

25. Following the assembly of the peer review team and desk study, a country visit to Montenegro was carried out in November 2017. A draft report, prepared by the review team, was sent for fact-checking and a corrected version for commentary by the Party under review.

26. Both the review team and representatives from the Party under review expressed satisfaction with the process and its outcomes and considered the approach and methodology of the voluntary peer review as effective. Further details of the voluntary peer review of implementation of the Convention by Montenegro are contained in an information note.⁶ The voluntary peer review for Sri Lanka has been initiated.

³ The methodology in use is accessible from <https://www.cbd.int/nbsap/vpr/default.shtml>

⁴ Iraq, Mali, Montenegro, Sri Lanka, Togo, Uganda – an incomplete expression of interest was received from Guyana.

⁵ Antigua and Barbuda, European Union, Finland, Japan, Madagascar, Norway, Philippines, Sri Lanka, Togo, Uganda, Zimbabwe

⁶ CBD/SBI/2/INF/27.

27. The direct cost of the peer review of implementation of the Convention by Montenegro amounted to approximately US\$ 24,000.⁷ This figure includes the costs for travel and daily subsistence allowance for SCBD staff and reviewers from developing countries. It does not include the participation of reviewers from developed countries or the cost borne by the host in initiating and participating in the peer review and supporting the review team during the in-country visit. Neither does it include Secretariat staff time for the peer review, which has largely been borne by the Japan Biodiversity Fund. The Montenegro review required approximately one month of time from one professional staff and one programme assistant. The staff time of the reviewers has been contributed by their respective institutions.

28. In conclusion, the voluntary peer review is the only established mechanism through which the implementation of an individual Party is being reviewed. It focuses on peer-to-peer exchanges and mutual learning. Recommendations emanating from the voluntary peer review as a formalized process carry a certain weight which can provide the necessary support for the institutions responsible for national implementation to see them addressed. It would therefore be desirable to pursue and complete the pilot phase of the voluntary peer review and to fully establish this process as part of a review mechanism under the Convention.

Decision tracking tool

29. In decision XIII/25, paragraph 5, the Conference of the Parties requested the Executive Secretary to further develop the decision-tracking tool, and to continue reviewing the decisions of the Conference of the Parties taken from the first to the seventh meetings, in addition to those of the tenth and eleventh meetings. Accordingly, the Secretariat developed a preview version of the decision-tracking tool, accessible at <https://www.cbd.int/decisions/tracking/>.⁸ It includes review information on all decisions up to and including the twelfth meeting of the Conference of the Parties. For the decisions of the thirteenth meeting the texts have been uploaded in order to allow adding information or links to any relevant information that might be available in due course.

30. The review of the decisions was conducted according to the criteria set out in the annex to decision XII/28, as well as taking into account the experiences gained from the implementation of the pilot phase. It is recalled that the decisions of the Conference of the Parties from the first to the seventh meetings, were already reviewed in the past by the Secretariat in order to facilitate the retirement of decisions following the commencement of retiring decisions in 2002.⁹ As the retirement of decisions was discontinued (decision XII/28), those retired decisions have consequently been tagged on the tool with the same status (retired, elapsed, superseded, implemented, active) as indicated in the review documents prepared and submitted by the Secretariat at the time. Therefore, there will be no viewable “retired” tag in the tool and, instead, a note indicating the historical fact that the decision had been retired previously has been added.

31. Additional functionalities and tags were added to the tool covering appropriate subject matters under the Convention as well as the Aichi Biodiversity Targets, with a view to provide additional filters for the search function.¹⁰

32. The maintenance of the decision-tracking tool is an ongoing task, as the status and other elements of a particular decision can change over time.¹¹ In addition, it is envisaged that all future notifications and

⁷ Due to visa problems, an additional ticket needed to be purchased, which increased the costs.

⁸ Support for the activities to further develop the decision-tracking tool was provided by the Japan Biodiversity Fund.

⁹ See documents UNEP/CBD/COP/6/INF/17, UNEP/CBD/COP/7/INF/16, UNEP/CBD/COP/8/INF/2 and UNEP/CBD/COP/11/INF/1.

¹⁰ The Secretariat will organize a side event at the second meeting of the Subsidiary Body on Implementation to demonstrate the decision-tracking tool as further developed.

relevant documentation will be incorporated onto the decision-tracking tool in relation to the appropriate decision or element of a decision as soon as such notifications are issued or documents are made available.

33. Once the development of the decision-tracking tool is complete with search and filter functions enabled it will provide a complete picture of the status of implementation of decisions taken globally and enable Parties use it as a checklist of the status of decisions that require certain actions on their part. This will facilitate information on which decisions have been addressed and which ones are pending.

National processes: Performance audits of biodiversity commitments

34. The Working Group on Environmental Auditing of the International Organization of Supreme Audit Institutions prepared a guidance document for supreme audit institutions on auditing biodiversity.¹² Under the lead of the Supreme Audit Institutions of Indonesia and Lesotho and with the support of the Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity, the document, published in 2007, will be updated with a view to adopting an updated document at the 19th Assembly of the Working Group on Environmental Auditing in September 2019. The guide provides multiple examples of the use of performance audits and explains the role that national supreme audit institutions can play in assessing the extent to which biodiversity actions planned at national level have been implemented, the cost effectiveness of such actions and the degree to which desired outcomes from these actions have been achieved. Many of the examples described in the guidance document focus on the audit of a specific thematic issue.

35. One example of a broader audit is the mandate provided by Parliament to the Office of the Auditor General of Canada to undertake a performance audit of several of the 2020 biodiversity goals and targets for Canada.¹³ The audit seeks to elucidate the role of the Ministry of the Environment and Climate Change of Canada in providing leadership and coordination in progressing towards established targets and how effectively other federal departments and agencies are contributing to this process. It also reviews the effectiveness of the Ministry in reporting on progress and the risks arising from insufficient progress made towards these targets.¹⁴

36. Typically mandated by Parliament or equivalent legislative body, biodiversity audits can make significant contributions to mainstreaming the biodiversity agenda and advancing policy coherence at the national level by analysing and highlighting how policy interactions across various domains facilitate or impede the achievement of biodiversity outcomes and in some cases by offering alternative options or more effective avenues towards achieving the planned outcomes. It could therefore be in the interest of national institutions responsible for implementation of the biodiversity agenda to promote collaboration with the supreme audit institution in the country to assess the suitability of the political and economic frameworks in enabling a country to achieve its biodiversity objectives.¹⁵

37. The terms of reference for the audit are decisive factors in the potential to achieve positive outcomes for biodiversity. They can be enabling and promoting biodiversity mainstreaming, policy coherence and a whole-of-government approach in decision-making and should ideally go beyond a focus

¹¹ UNEP/CBD/SBI/1/10/Add.2.

¹² http://icisa.cag.gov.in/resource_files/87ca71601d696fd5b6baf378182c0603.pdf

¹³ <https://www.cbd.int/countries/targets/?country=ca>

¹⁴ A representative of the Office of the Auditor-General of Canada made a presentation on auditing approaches at a workshop on the preparation of the sixth national report (Montreal, Canada, 9 December 2017) – see <https://www.cbd.int/doc/c/a7a0/180e/98bc80349a363a973049a4fc/nrws-2017-01-presentation-04-en.pdf>

¹⁵ See also paragraph 14 of CBD/SBSTTA/21/7 for examples of auditing approaches used for reviews of biodiversity policies and their implementation.

on the use of financial resources. Because audit institutions have established methodologies to assess the effectiveness of actions in the light of broader plans and strategies and institutions in the country they can propose approaches that reduce inconsistencies and conflicts across different parts of government and thereby lead to achieving better outcomes with fewer resources.

IV. POTENTIAL NEXT STEPS

38. The previous sections highlight some of the areas in which the existing elements of a review mechanism under the Convention could be strengthened or complemented, including by drawing from lessons from other conventions. Annex II provides an overview of possible elements of a multi-dimensional review mechanism, including ways in which existing components might be strengthened.

39. The Conference of the Parties, in paragraph 34 of decision XIII/1 on the follow-up to the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020, noted that work to develop the post 2020 framework should include options for fostering commitments and strengthened implementation. In this context, several Parties and observers, in their submissions concerning the preparation of the post-2020 global biodiversity framework,¹⁶ noted that developing a process analogous to, or informed by, the Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC) process under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change or the Land Degradation Neutrality Targets¹⁷ under the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification, could be useful in building ownership for the successful implementation of the post-2020 global biodiversity framework. Reference was also made to the voluntary commitments put forward by both state and non-state actors.¹⁸ Some submissions further suggested that international and non-governmental organizations, civil society organizations, the private sector, local authorities (subnational governments) and other stakeholders could be encouraged to develop biodiversity related commitments which could contribute to the national and global overall objective of safeguarding biodiversity.

40. In the documentation of the first meeting of the Subsidiary Body on Implementation, potential elements of a Party-led review process were set out (SBI/1/10/Add.3, section III B) complementing existing approaches. The Subsidiary Body on Implementation, at its second meeting,, may wish to review these elements including the idea of establishing an open-ended forum under the Subsidiary Body on Implementation, to further support the review of implementation aimed at facilitating the exchange of information and experience among Parties. Such an approach could be tested at the third meeting of the Subsidiary Body on Implementation on the basis of Parties volunteering to share their experience in implementing the Convention and the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020. The Executive Secretary could be requested to prepare guidance for the voluntary delivery of such review reports.

41. The Subsidiary Body on Implementation could also encourage further consultations on options for strengthening the review mechanism as part of the process for developing the post-2020 global biodiversity framework. Parties and observers could be invited to submit views and information in this regard, and the Executive Secretary could be requested to further develop options, in consultation with the Bureau and regional groups, and in light of the ongoing consultations foreseen as part of the process for developing the post-2020 global biodiversity framework.

¹⁶ All of the submissions on this issue are accessible from <https://www.cbd.int/post2020/submissions.shtml>

¹⁷ <http://www2.unccd.int/actions/ldn-target-setting-programme>

¹⁸ For example, commitments for achieving Sustainable Development Goal 14 - <https://oceanconference.un.org/commitments/>

VII. DRAFT RECOMMENDATION

42. The Subsidiary Body on Implementation may wish to consider adopting a recommendation along the following lines:

The Subsidiary Body on Implementation

1. *Invites* Parties and relevant organizations to provide further views and information with regard to possible approaches to enhancing review mechanisms with a view to strengthening implementation of the Convention;

2. *Requests* the Executive Secretary:

(a) To compile and analyse the views and information provided pursuant to paragraph 1 above;

(b) To identify and/or develop options to enhance review mechanisms with a view to strengthening implementation of the Convention, taking into account the views and information submitted by Parties and observers as well as information contained in the notes by the Executive Secretary;¹⁹

(c) To make this available to Parties and observers through the clearing-house mechanism;

3. *Recommends* that the Conference of the Parties, in its consideration of the process for the development of the post-2020 global biodiversity framework, request the Executive Secretary to consult with interested Parties in order to explore possible modalities for applying approaches to enhancing review of implementation at the third meeting of the Subsidiary Body on Implementation.

¹⁹ CBD/SBI/1/10/Add.3 and CBD/SBI/2/11.

*Annex I***UPDATED INFORMATION ON REVIEW MECHANISMS ESTABLISHED UNDER RELEVANT INTERGOVERNMENTAL PROCESSES²⁰***United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC)*

1. The Paris Agreement on climate change²¹ requires each Party to prepare, communicate and maintain successive nationally determined contributions that it intends to achieve. Successive nationally determined contributions need to represent a progression beyond the Party's then current nationally determined contribution and reflect its highest possible ambition (the "ratchet mechanism"). This mechanism lays out a process to continue strengthening action in a regular and timely way every five years, starting before 2020.

2. Each Party shall regularly prepare a national inventory report of anthropogenic emissions and provide the information necessary to track progress made in implementing and achieving its nationally determined contribution. In addition, developed country Parties are required to provide information on financial, technology transfer and capacity-building support provided to developing country Parties. This information undergoes a technical expert review which serves to identify areas of improvement for the Party under review.

3. The Paris Agreement also establishes a periodic global stocktake of implementation on mitigation, adaptation and finance. It serves, among other things, to review the adequacy and effectiveness of adaptation and support provided for adaptation as well as the collective progress made in achieving the global goal on adaptation every five years. Submissions of updated nationally determined contributions from each country every five years are informed by the global stocktake.

4. In addition, the Paris Agreement provides for a mechanism to facilitate implementation of and promote compliance with the provisions of the Agreement which is expert-based and facilitative in nature and function in a manner that is transparent, non-adversarial and non-punitive.

5. The Conference of the Parties to UNFCCC, at its twenty-first meeting, decided to convene a facilitative dialogue among Parties in 2018 to take stock of the collective efforts of Parties in relation to progress towards the long-term goal referred to in Article 4, paragraph 1, of the Paris Agreement and to inform the preparation of nationally determined contributions. At the twenty-third meeting of the Conference of the Parties, the Talanoa Dialogue was launched, to start in January 2018, as a series of facilitative dialogues focusing on the efforts of Parties and non-Party stakeholders in relation to action and support in the pre-2020 period.

Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals (CMS)

6. At its twelfth meeting, the Conference of the Parties to CMS established a review mechanism for specific implementation matters as well as a national legislation programme. The review mechanism is supportive, non-adversarial and facilitative in nature. It is based on a triennial review of national reports by the Secretariat or on specific information made available to the Secretariat when implementation matters arise which can also come from international or accredited national non-governmental agencies or bodies. Following handling and screening of the information and a decision on its admissibility, the concerned Party is informed and given the opportunity to comment and/or address the matter. A failure to address the matter within a reasonable time is brought to the attention of the Standing Committee which

²⁰ This annex contains an update of review mechanisms established since the review contained in UNEP/CBD/SBI/1/10/Add.3.

²¹ United Nations, *Treaty Series*, Registration No. I-54113.

acts as the review body and can take a number of measures aimed at enabling the concerned Party to address the matter.

7. The national legislation programme seeks to ensure, in a supportive, non-adversarial and facilitative way, the compliance with the obligations of each Range States of a migratory species listed in Appendix I through appropriate national legislation. The programme envisages the provision, among other things, of guidance materials, model laws, technical assistance and capacity-building workshops to enable non-compliant Parties to meet their obligations.

Voluntary National Reviews of implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development

8. As part of follow-up and review for the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, member States of the United Nations are encouraged to “conduct regular and inclusive reviews of progress at the national and sub-national levels, which are country-led and country-driven” (para. 79). These Voluntary National Reviews (VNRs) are conducted annually in New York under the auspices of the High-level Political Forum (HLPF). Reviews are to be voluntary, State-led, undertaken by both developed and developing countries, and involve multiple stakeholders. A Handbook²² and voluntary Guidelines²³ have been prepared by the Department of Economic and Social Affairs to assist Member States in the preparation of their VNRs.

9. The VNRs aim to facilitate the sharing of experiences, including successes, challenges and lessons learned, with a view to accelerating the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. This includes statements on how the Government is responding to the transformative nature of the 2030 Agenda for Development through, among other things, its national development plans, strategies, or other relevant documents. The VNRs also seek to strengthen policies and institutions of governments and to mobilize multi-stakeholder support and partnerships for the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goal. 22 and 43 countries participated in the VNR in 2016 and 2017, respectively, and 47 are scheduled to submit a VNR in 2018.

10. Given the integrated and indivisible nature of the goals and targets of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, VNRs should recognize the fundamental importance of biodiversity to achieving the 2030 Agenda and Sustainable Development Goals. A note providing guidance on the preparation of VNRs from a biodiversity perspective is being made available.²⁴

²² https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/17354VNR_handbook_2018.pdf

²³ https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/17346Updated_Voluntary_Guidelines.pdf

²⁴ CBD/SBI/2/INF/27.

Annex II

POSSIBLE ELEMENTS OF A MULTIDIMENSIONAL REVIEW MECHANISM UNDER THE CONVENTION

(possible) Element	Example	Periodicity	Limitations	Options for enhancement
Review of progress made by Parties collectively and the contribution of aggregate national targets towards global targets	GBO-4, CBD/SBI/2/2/Add.2 on the basis of NBSAPs and national reports	Update suggested to be continuous as new information is received (rec in SBI/2/2)	Aggregation is problematic. No mechanism to “ratchet up” progress	Voluntary individual pledges
Review of progress by Parties in achieving their national targets and actions	Visualization of information from national reports	Approximately every 4 years	No verification mechanism	Soft verification through dialogue session or open-ended forum
Review of NBSAPs	Voluntary peer review	Ad hoc	Small number of volunteers to date; time-consuming and relatively expensive process	Soft verification through dialogue and country visits
Review of compliance with procedural and institutional requirements under the Convention	Credentials; Review of financial contributions Decision-tracking tool	Every two years	Reviewing status of implementation of decisions mainly undertaken by SCBD	Inputs to be sought from Parties for reviewing status of implementation of decisions
Party-led review process	A body with limited membership from both developing and developed countries could be established under SBI to review information provided by Parties on voluntary basis The review can examine national targets set in line with the global targets, actions taken to implement them	Intersessionally The cycle for all Parties to undertake review and present review is long	Voluntary in nature Scope and subject of the review to be determined by Parties	Support (technical and/or financial) might need to be provided for the preparation of the review, in connection with the reporting cycles under the Convention

(possible) Element	Example	Periodicity	Limitations	Options for enhancement
	The reviewed Parties could present an overview of such review at meetings of SBI and other relevant meetings under the Convention			
