



Convention on Biological Diversity

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**Subregional dialogue on national biodiversity
strategies and action plans for States
members of the Association of Southeast
Asian Nations and Timor-Leste**
Manila, 14–17 August 2023

Report of the subregional dialogue on national biodiversity strategies and action plans for States members of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations and Timor-Leste

Introduction

1. The subregional dialogue on national biodiversity strategies and action plans (NBSAPs) for States members of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) and Timor-Leste was held in Manila, from 14 to 17 August 2023, with the support of the ASEAN Centre for Biodiversity. The dialogue was the first in a series of regional or subregional dialogues on NBSAPs organized by the Secretariat in collaboration with relevant partners further to decision 15/6 and related decisions adopted by the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity at its fifteenth meeting, the Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety at its tenth meeting and the Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to 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 at its fourth meeting, with generous funding from the Government of Japan, provided through the Japan Biodiversity Fund, and from the Department of Environment, Food and Rural Affairs of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the European Union.

2. The dialogue provided an opportunity for participating countries to share experiences and lessons learned in the revision or updating of NBSAPs, including the setting of national targets, in alignment with the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework, address challenges that they had encountered and identify possible opportunities and ways and means to enhance the development and implementation of NBSAPs. The dialogue included breakout sessions on capacity-building and development and national biodiversity financing.

Item 1

Opening of the meeting

3. The dialogue was opened on 14 August 2023 by the Acting Executive Secretary of the Convention on Biological Diversity, David Cooper, through a recorded video speech. He thanked the ASEAN Centre for Biodiversity and other partners for their support in organizing the dialogue. He urged all Parties to fast-track the revision or updating of their NBSAPs, including by revising or setting their national targets with the level of ambition matching that of the goals and targets of the Framework, and to submit them to the Conference of the Parties for consideration at its sixteenth meeting. He also highlighted the importance of including the necessary means of implementation, such as capacity-building, development and resource mobilization, in the updated NBSAPs, as well as linkages with the Sustainable Development Goals and synergies with relevant multilateral environmental agreements.

4. The Assistant Secretary and concurrent Director of the Biodiversity Management Bureau, Department of Environment and Natural Resources of the Philippines, Marcial Amaro, delivered opening remarks on behalf of the host country Government. He welcomed all participants and informed them that the Philippines and, probably, other ASEAN member States had started revising or updating their NBSAPs following the guidance adopted at the fifteenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties. He also said that the first leg of a series of local consultations was being held with subnational governments, civil society organizations and the private sector. He underlined the importance of involving all levels of government, indigenous peoples and local communities and relevant stakeholders in the updating and implementation of NBSAPs.

5. In his opening remarks, the United Nations Resident Coordinator in the Philippines, Gustavo González, noted the timeliness of adopting the Framework, and underlined the importance of revising or updating NBSAPs. He stressed that NBSAPs and national targets needed to be aligned with the Framework and linked with the Goals and national priorities, such as food security, climate change and health. To that end, he noted the importance of applying a whole-of-government and whole-of-society approach in the development and implementation of NBSAPs. In concluding, he quoted the Secretary General's remarks at the opening of the fifteenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties that "without nature, we have nothing, and without nature, we are nothing", and called upon all countries in the region to mainstream biodiversity into their national development plans and programmes.

6. The Programmes Department Director of the ASEAN Centre for Biodiversity, Clarissa Arida, delivered opening remarks on behalf of the Executive Director of the Centre. She underlined the importance of fighting climate change and biodiversity loss for the region, as it was particularly vulnerable to climate change and natural disasters, which continually affected its economic potential. She highlighted the collective initiatives taken by ASEAN in that regard, such as recovery plans and climate resiliency frameworks that took biodiversity into account. She recalled the support of the Centre for the implementation of the Aichi Biodiversity Targets and said that it would continue to support ASEAN member States in the revision or updating of their NBSAPs and the implementation of the Framework and the Sustainable Development Goals, including by addressing such challenges as capacity development and financing, the integration of the Protocols and the promotion of synergies with the Rio conventions and relevant multilateral environmental agreements. She concluded by saying that there would be a one-day consultation after the dialogue about a draft subregional strategy to contribute to the implementation of the Framework.

Item 2

Overview of the objectives and programme of the dialogue

7. A representative of the Secretariat presented the objectives and programme of the dialogue, which was aimed at achieving three objectives: (a) to provide countries with an opportunity to exchange experiences and lessons learned in the revision or updating of NBSAPs; (b) to address common challenges faced by countries and identify possible solutions and opportunities; and (c) to contribute to the continued piloting of an open-ended forum for voluntary country-by-country reviews of implementation under the Subsidiary Body on Implementation. He then presented the organization of work contained in annex I to the annotated provisional agenda.¹

Item 3

Background introduction

8. The representative of the Secretariat made a presentation on decisions of relevance to the dialogue that the Conference of the Parties to the Convention, the Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Cartagena Protocol and the Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Nagoya Protocol had adopted at their latest meetings. He highlighted decision 15/6, by which the Conference of the Parties to the Convention had adopted an enhanced planning, monitoring, review and reporting mechanism.

¹ CBD/NBSAP/OM/2023/1/1/Add.1.

9. Another representative of the Secretariat gave an introduction to the Framework, including its goals and targets, as well as to other major outcomes of the fifteenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties, to contextualize the dialogue.

Item 4

Experiences and lessons learned in revising or updating national biodiversity strategies and action plans, including national target revision or setting

10. The representatives of countries shared national experiences and lessons learned in revising or updating NBSAPs, including when revising or setting national targets in alignment with the goals and targets of the Framework. The presentations and discussions were centred around the following five topics:

- (a) The whole-of-government and whole-of-society approach;
- (b) National target revision or setting;
- (c) The integration of the provisions of the Protocols into NBSAPs;
- (d) The development of a national monitoring plan;
- (e) Challenges and opportunities for the overall revision or updating of NBSAPs.

11. The representatives of organizations and of indigenous peoples and local communities, women and youth also contributed their perspectives on some of the topics. Presentations were followed by question-and-answer sessions and facilitated plenary or group discussions on common issues and challenges and possible opportunities and solutions, as summarized below.

(a) Whole-of-government and whole-of-society approach

12. The representatives of three countries (Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia and Timor-Leste) made presentations on the institutional arrangements or mechanisms established for revising or updating NBSAPs, the approaches employed for mainstreaming and integrating the provisions of other multilateral environmental agreements and for engaging relevant ministries, sectors, indigenous peoples and local communities and relevant stakeholders, and the challenges encountered. They all noted the importance of engaging indigenous peoples and local communities and various stakeholders, including women, young people and the private sector, in activities.

13. The representative of Brunei Darussalam highlighted the use of the whole-of-nation approach for reviewing her country's NBSAP and addressing its environmental and biodiversity-related challenges. Environmental and biodiversity-related issues, scientific studies and national priorities were the main considerations for formal institutional arrangements for developing and implementing the NBSAP. NBSAP-related issues were addressed by a committee on climate change within the Prime Minister's office or a in a designated ministry.

14. The representative of Cambodia said that the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment and the National Council for Sustainable Development were the main entities responsible for the development and implementation of the NBSAP, as well as related policy development. They were supported by several technical working groups on related issues. The country was revising its NBSAP in line with the Framework, and related ministries and stakeholders, including from the private sector, were involved. The main challenges related to coordination with other relevant ministries, data and information collection and the financial resources needed for implementation.

15. The representative of Timor-Leste said that the National Directorate of Biodiversity under the Ministry of Tourism and Environment was the main entity responsible for addressing biodiversity-related matters. The country was in the process of reviewing its existing national biodiversity targets and creating new ones. The process was however slow, owing to financial constraints and limited human and technical resources.

16. Representatives of non-governmental organizations and of indigenous peoples and local communities also made presentations. The representative of the CBD Alliance, a network of civil society organizations serving as a bridge between those involved in on-the-ground work on biodiversity and the international processes on biodiversity issues, reported that his organization had issued a statement to the national focal points of the Convention in May 2023 in which it had called for inclusive participation in the process of

NBSAP development. It had also highlighted in the same statement the crucial roles played by indigenous peoples and local communities, women and young people and noted that inclusive participation ensured that NBSAPs were robust, effective and truly representative. A concern was raised about the use of international consultants in the revision or updating of NBSAPs. A representative of indigenous peoples and local communities emphasized the need to recognize indigenous peoples and local communities as custodians of biodiversity and collaborative partners for the conservation, restoration and sustainable use of biodiversity while implementing the Framework. Also important was respect for certain principles, such as free, prior and informed consent, a rights-based approach and gender equality.

17. Challenges to the whole-of-government and whole-of-society approach included inadequate legal frameworks, political support and institutional mechanisms for addressing biodiversity issues, as well as a lack of mainstreaming of biodiversity into relevant sectors and planning processes at various levels. Possible solutions identified included targeted and strategic communication with various stakeholders, establishing or using existing coordination mechanisms and getting buy-ins from relevant ministries, sectors and stakeholders.

(b) National target revision or setting

18. A representative of the Secretariat made an introductory presentation on the guidance for updating NBSAPs contained in annex I to decision 15/6. All updated NBSAPs should contain the following three elements: (a) national targets aligned with the Framework; (b) actions or programmes developed to implement the national targets; and (c) monitoring and evaluation of implementation of the NBSAP, including the use of headline indicators. He also highlighted key steps in NBSAP development, including stakeholder engagement, assessment, target setting, implementation and monitoring and evaluation, emphasizing the importance of the participation of all relevant stakeholders, and especially outliers, in the development process. He also emphasized that the revised or updated NBSAPs needed to be adopted as a policy or legal instrument to ensure their implementation by all actors, and that the revision or updating process should not interrupt the NBSAP implementation.

19. The representatives of three countries (Indonesia, Malaysia and Philippines) shared the progress made to date in revising or setting national targets and identified the gaps in ambition, the process followed, the challenges encountered and the support needed.

20. The representative of Indonesia said that his country was considering aligning the updated Indonesian Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan with the Framework, other relevant multilateral environmental agreements, the Sustainable Development Goals and climate change goals and including an innovative and sustainable resource mobilization strategy, a national biodiversity financing plan, an enhanced biodiversity mainstreaming and communication strategy and a stakeholder engagement strategy. The updated Strategy and Action Plan was also designed to be legally binding and aimed at enhancing technical support, sustainable funding and integrated monitoring and evaluation. The main challenges to updating the Strategy and Action Plan included difficulties in collecting and managing large amounts of biodiversity data and information, inadequate funding for biodiversity research and ineffective coordination and cooperation among relevant ministries and agencies to achieve national targets.

21. The representative of Malaysia presented the main findings from the review of the country's National Policy on Biological Diversity and noted that the policy was geared towards empowering stakeholders, reducing direct and indirect pressures on biodiversity, ensuring benefit-sharing from the use of genetic resources and enhancing capacity and knowledge. Following the adoption of the Framework, Malaysia had recognized the need to revise the National Policy in order to enhance its earlier goals, targets and actions while aligning it with the Framework and other global biodiversity goals and targets. Some of the main challenges encountered included limited public awareness, legal instruments and financial and human resources, as well as limited implementation at various levels and a lack of participation by relevant stakeholder.

22. The representative of the Philippines reported on the updating of the Philippine Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan and shared the country's road map for biodiversity conservation, the aim of which was for biodiversity to be restored, rehabilitated, valued, managed effectively and secured while maintaining ecosystem services to sustain healthy and resilient communities and delivering benefits to all. The Strategy

and Action Plan was being updated to align it with the targets of the Framework and include a national biodiversity financing plan. The range of challenges faced by the Philippines included a lack of funding, capacity, awareness, technology, indicators and policy support.

23. In the question-and-answer session that followed, questions were raised concerning how to identify and engage various stakeholders or actors in NBSAP development and implementation. The representative of Indonesia said that he focused more on stakeholders with direct impacts on the environment and biodiversity, while the representative of the Philippines invited to consultations stakeholders included in a roster of experts engaged in relevant sectors. The representative of Malaysia shared a set of criteria to be considered in identifying and engaging various stakeholders. With regard to non-State actors, the three countries involved non-governmental organizations, indigenous peoples and local communities and relevant stakeholders in the process of NBSAP development; while, with regard to the integration of other relevant conventions and agreements, they took relevant multilateral environmental agreements into account in their NBSAPs, as well as gender and other sectoral issues. The main challenge was a lack of baseline and other data and information needed for setting or revising targets. The possible solutions identified included getting inputs or data from relevant ministries, sectors and stakeholders.

(c) Integration of the Protocols into national biodiversity strategies and action plans

24. The representatives of the Secretariat made a presentation on the integration of the Protocols into NBSAPs and another on the integration of relevant multilateral environmental agreements into NBSAPs. They highlighted that the decision-making bodies of the Convention and its Protocols called for an integrated implementation, as the objectives of the instruments were the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity. He noted that the benefits of integration included cost savings and increased efficiency and that mainstreaming access and benefit-sharing and biosafety at the national level generally followed a process consisting of at least three main steps: first, priority areas and objectives for mainstreaming needed to be established within the various national policy objectives; second, stakeholders and partners needed to be engaged, and entry points for integration needed to be identified; And third, a specific strategy was necessary to give effect to mainstreaming. It was up to Parties to use various building blocks for developing their access and benefit-sharing and biosafety mainstreaming strategy to guide the integration process.

25. The representatives of the Secretariat also highlighted that revising or updating NBSAPs provided a strategic opportunity for integrating the Protocols and relevant multilateral environmental agreements and promoting synergies in their implementation, in particular the biodiversity-related conventions and the Rio conventions. They recommended that, while revising or updating NBSAPs, countries hold national dialogues on the best way to foster the integrated implementation of the Protocols and relevant multilateral environmental agreements, as the revision should be seen as the relevant process for promoting synergies and mutual support among relevant multilateral environmental agreements. They also stressed the importance of establishing institutional mechanisms conducive to synergies in the implementation of NBSAPs and relevant multilateral environmental agreements.

26. Representatives of Malaysia and Viet Nam made presentations on their respective countries' experience. The representative of Malaysia shared his country's experience in integrating the Cartagena Protocol into its national biodiversity policy. He noted that the enactment of the Biosafety Act in 2007 and the establishment of the Biosafety Department within the Ministry of Natural Resources, Environment and Climate Change in 2010 had been conducive to integrating biosafety into the national biodiversity policy. He also underlined challenges in that regard, including difficulties in incorporating socioeconomic and sociocultural considerations into relevant decision-making, a lack of provisions in the Biosafety Act concerning liability for damage and a lack of human resources for biosafety management. He said that Malaysia was considering including a specific target on biosafety in its revised national biodiversity policy and another target on capacity-building aimed at increasing resources and capacities for biosafety management. The representative of Viet Nam shared experiences and lessons learned in updating her country's NBSAP, in alignment with the Framework, including when addressing issues related to the Cartagena Protocol and the Nagoya Protocol. She outlined a few steps for NBSAP implementation, including developing guidance for implementation, setting up monitoring and reporting systems and reviewing progress in the achievement of national targets.

27. Participants broke into three groups and held group discussions using a few guiding questions. With regard to ways and means to integrate the Protocols into NBSAPs and biosafety issues into relevant sectoral policies, participants noted the need to: (a) increase awareness and collect more information on biosafety and access and benefit-sharing issues; (b) establish interministerial mechanisms and adopt relevant laws or regulations; (c) involve relevant stakeholders, including national focal points for the Protocols; and (d) set up a monitoring system to cover the implementation of both the Convention and its Protocols. For the possible entry points and priorities, participants suggested: (a) fostering a common understanding among various ministries or agencies on biosafety and access and benefit-sharing issues; (b) undertaking gap analyses; and (c) establishing related administrative, policy and legal frameworks and coordination mechanisms, including by enhancing existing mechanisms. With regard to possible opportunities for the integration of the Protocols into NBSAPs, participants identified a few channels for raising awareness, engaging stakeholders, carrying out capacity-building activities, increasing resources and information (e.g. through the use of social media), reaching out to relevant stakeholders, developing a communication, education and public awareness capacity-development plan based on capacity needs, and increasing efficiency by enhancing synergies and continuous monitoring. Some country representatives also shared their countries' good practices in the integration of the Protocols and relevant multilateral environmental agreements into the NBSAP. For example, in order to communicate issues related to access and benefit-sharing, Thailand had brought academics and local communities together, raising awareness of benefits from the utilization of genetic resources. Singapore had established biodiversity and environment database system (Biome), which provided information on the country's biodiversity, including research on genetic resources.

(d) Development of a national monitoring plan

28. The representative of the United Nations Environment Programme World Conservation Monitoring Centre, also speaking on behalf of the Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific of the United Nations Environment Programme, shared information on two initiatives supporting the national monitoring of the implementation of NBSAPs and the Framework, namely, the Biodiversity Indicators Partnership and the Global Environment Facility Early Action Support project. She noted that those initiatives would support countries in assessing national monitoring needs, developing national monitoring plans (as part of the updated NBSAPs), using headline and other indicators in the updated NBSAPs and using approaches and tools for monitoring the implementation of NBSAPs. In the question-and-answer session that followed, a few countries highlighted the need for capacity development and further support for the use of headline and other indicators, as well as for analysing baseline data.

29. Representatives from the Lao People's Democratic Republic, Singapore and Thailand made presentations on their countries' experience. The representative of Thailand informed participants that her country was assessing its monitoring needs while updating its fifth NBSAP, and that the implementation of the NBSAP was reviewed mainly through surveys and expert meetings. In addition, Thailand had developed a monitoring and evaluation system to document progress in various national projects. She also shared the use by Thailand of indicators for reviewing the implementation of the NBSAP. Thailand had also established a national biodiversity information facility for biodiversity data. The representative of Singapore outlined the biodiversity monitoring approaches that his country employed, indicating that its biodiversity monitoring was carried out by agencies responsible for specific areas. Inter-agency consultations or consultations with relevant stakeholders were conducted to address gaps in data and information. The representative of the Lao People's Democratic Republic shared his country's plan for updating the NBSAP, including setting up a national clearing-house mechanism to monitor implementation. In the question-and-answer session that followed, the need to develop a national monitoring and evaluation plan for the NBSAP concurrently with the revision or updating of the NBSAP was noted.

30. A representative of indigenous peoples and local communities shared other forms of knowledge and the contributions of indigenous peoples and local communities to the monitoring of implementation at the national level. While noting that other forms of knowledge could contribute to or have co-benefits for biodiversity and that indigenous peoples and local communities had their own monitoring initiatives, such as the Indigenous Navigator and community-based monitoring information systems, she provided a few recommendations related to monitoring.

31. Following the presentations, participants broke out in three groups to discuss steps and challenges in the development of a monitoring plan, including by identifying monitoring needs, challenges and possible means or solutions. With regard to monitoring needs, the groups identified the following key needs: (a) identification of indicators for relevant targets; (b) identification of baseline data; (c) data needed for some indicators; (d) development and full operationalization of a national platform for monitoring and evaluation, such as a clearing-house mechanism; (e) setting up of an institutional structure for monitoring, including mechanisms for coordination and collaboration with various sectors and stakeholders; and (f) support for monitoring specific targets, such as those on invasive alien species.

(e) Challenges and opportunities for the overall revision or updating of national biodiversity strategies and action plans

32. A representative of Conservation International made a presentation on tools available to support the revision or updating of NBSAPs, including tools for spatial planning. In terms of the latter, he specifically mentioned tools on irrecoverable carbon and irreplaceable biodiversity, wildlife insights and key biodiversity area data and the ASEAN Biodiversity Dashboard. Participants also discussed challenges that might be encountered in the revision or updating of NBSAPs and identified possible solutions or opportunities to address them.

Item 5

Breakout sessions on capacity-building and development and national biodiversity financing

33. Breakout sessions were held on national biodiversity financing, in response to decision 15/7 on resource mobilization, and capacity-building and development, in response to decision 15/8 on capacity-building and development and technical and scientific cooperation. The decisions are of equal standing to the Framework and include invitations to Parties to develop biodiversity finance plans and capacity-building and development action plans to accompany NBSAPs. Each breakout session comprised introductory presentations, facilitated group discussions and group exercises on the assessment of capacity and financing needs and the development of national capacity-development plans or national biodiversity financing plans.

(a) Breakout session on national biodiversity financing

34. Four subsessions were held under the present topic: (a) an overview of biodiversity financing policy and institutional frameworks; (b) assessing financing needs and estimating biodiversity expenditure; (c) preparing a national biodiversity financing plan; and (d) implementing financing solutions. All sessions were facilitated by representatives of the United Nations Development Programme Biofin team in the Philippines.

Session 1: overview of biodiversity financing policy and institutional frameworks

35. A representative of the Secretariat shared the main outcomes of the fifteenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties regarding resource mobilization (decision 15/7) and the financial mechanism (decision 15/15). He also highlighted Target 19, on financing, as well as the decision to establish a global biodiversity framework fund, which was to be considered for approval at the Seventh Assembly of the Global Environment Facility, in August 2023. The representative of the Biofin team stressed that all 23 targets of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework required financing for implementation and that Targets 15, 16, 18 and 19 had links to biodiversity financing. She provided an overview of the Biofin project, in particular its methodology, which comprised the following steps: (a) policy and institutional review; (b) biodiversity expenditure review; (c) financial needs assessment; (d) biodiversity finance planning; and (e) implementation.

36. Following the presentations, group discussions were held on two questions. Participants first looked at the question of biodiversity financing from the public sector, from the perspectives of prioritization, addressing root causes, the need for innovative solutions, systemic and institutional challenges, marketing and perception management, mainstreaming biodiversity financing into all sectors, advocacy and adopting a whole-of-government and whole-of-society approach. Many participants were of the view that biodiversity was not identified as a priority in budgeting, financing and investment policies, owing to insufficient financial resources, harmful incentives and subsidies, low political commitment and the competing interests of relevant

sectors. The challenges could be addressed by convincing decision makers, raising awareness of the value of biodiversity and of possible investments needed in future to address biodiversity loss, increasing stakeholder participation and demonstrating the impacts of actions taken.

37. Participants then identified the following policy initiatives to promote more innovative financing: (a) payment for ecosystem services; (b) legal and policy measures; (c) trust funds; (d) nature-based resource mobilization; (e) innovative financing; (f) private sector investment; (g) non-State actor participation; (h) determining the feasibility, suitability and viability of measures; and (i) institutional arrangements.

Session 2: assessing financing needs and estimating biodiversity expenditure

38. Representatives of the Biofin team in the Philippines shared information on the steps taken to cost the Philippine Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan, including a financial needs assessment, and the issues encountered during that exercise. They indicated that the costing process had taken six months. The main challenges that had been encountered were linked to: (a) a lack of numerical equivalent for most targets and indicators; (b) the precision of costing assumptions for the targets and indicators; (c) the duplication of activities included in the Philippine Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan; and (d) the tendency of overestimating or underestimating costs.

39. A representative of Indonesia shared her country's NBSAP innovative and sustainable biodiversity financing strategy, implemented with the support of Biofin, which included: (a) unlocking *sukuk*² for biodiversity project financing; (b) leveraging faith-based funds for biodiversity; (c) debt-for-nature swaps; (d) ecological fiscal transfer; (e) biodiversity offset; and (f) developing a system of nature-related disclosure. She also said that Indonesia was implementing a biodiversity budget tracking system in key ministries and institutions and she shared the initial results of biodiversity expenditure tracking in the State budget. She concluded with a few recommendations, including: (a) leveraging technology; (b) capacity development for personnel involved in budget tracking; (c) budget tracking; (d) integrating planning/budgeting and monitoring/evaluation for more effective budgeting; (e) linking biodiversity budgeting with other related thematic budgeting, such as climate finance and sustainable development financing; and (f) developing a budget tracking mechanism for subnational governments in the long term.

40. Participants held group discussions on two questions. With regard to the essential features of updated NBSAPs to facilitate better cost estimates, participants suggested conducting baseline assessments of current status, including specific actions and indicators, clearly identifying costs and available funding, using relevant reports and references and obtaining inputs from relevant stakeholders. For actions and indicators to be included in NBSAPs, participants said that the actions needed to be specific, quantitative, well defined, realistic and prioritized, and that the indicators needed to be quantitative and measurable. Participants noted that the following biodiversity expenditure review practices were used in the public sector: (a) annual budget allocations to biodiversity; (b) budget tagging; (c) partnership or project development for biodiversity; (d) auditing; (e) standard financial simulation; and (f) assessing the financial implications of implementing multilateral environmental agreements. They also noted that information concerning the private sector spending on biodiversity could be obtained through: (a) the corporate social responsibility report; (b) the sustainability report; (c) the centralized body for coordinating private spending; (d) analysing private sector spending by categories; and (e) the results of relevant statistical surveys. Participants further noted the need to pilot and track public and private sector expenditure at various levels.

Session 3: preparing a national biodiversity financing plan

41. In her introductory presentation, the representative of the Biofin team said that the objectives of a biodiversity financing plan needed to have: (a) a comprehensive list of potential financing solutions; (b) detailed technical proposals to implement financing solutions; (c) a rigorous prioritization setting of financing solutions; (d) a clear investment case for each prioritized financing solution; and (e) clear financial targets, priorities, milestones, budget and responsibilities. She also said that the financing plan needed to address the following: (a) how to generate revenues; (b) how to realign expenditure; (c) how to deliver better; and (d) how to avoid future expenditure. She also outlined the steps that needed to be taken for the development of a national biodiversity financing plan, including preparations, gathering information, creating

² A sharia-compliant bond-like instrument used in Islamic finance.

a comprehensive list of potential financing solutions, rapid screening and developing technical proposals for priority financing solutions.

42. During the question-and-answer session that followed, it was suggested with regard to the identification of sources of potential financing solutions that countries could look at existing policies and plans that supported financing solutions for biodiversity and analyse how they could be maximized for biodiversity. Countries could also advocate or develop new policies and legal frameworks for additional financing sources or address systemic leakages and inefficiencies. A few participants noted the usefulness of the Biofin Catalogue of Finance Solutions, where countries could search solutions adapted to their projects and look at relevant case studies. Countries were encouraged to look at some innovative financing solutions, such as debt-for-nature swaps, improving business supply chain management, earmarking revenues for biodiversity, the carbon market and carbon offset credit. The importance of policy readiness or of having enabling policies in place before financing solutions were developed was noted.

Session 4: implementing financing solutions

43. Examples of biodiversity financing strategies or plans implemented at the national level and information on the ongoing implementation of the results-based budgeting on biodiversity for local organizations were shared. The latter were aimed at enabling local organizations to plan their activities more effectively, in particular in the budget preparation stage. The representative of Thailand shared the success story of the Koh Tao model in Thailand, whereby tourist fees were collected and earmarked for biodiversity conservation and other environmental protection purposes, with projected revenues in the range of \$200,000 to \$300,000 based on the number of tourist arrivals on the island. The representative of Indonesia shared information on the allocation of *sukuk* to biodiversity projects, such as a \$2.8 million investment for a parrot conservation facility in Maluku for rescuing poached birds and improving the capacity of local communities towards conservation. The results of a study on harmful subsidies and on repurposing options were also presented.

44. Participants heard examples of repurposing subsidies in the environmental and agricultural sectors, as well as the methodologies that could be used for such subsidies. The recently launched Finance Resource Database for Biodiversity was also presented.

(b) Breakout session on capacity-building and development

45. A representative of the Secretariat made an introductory presentation on capacity-building and development assessment, planning, monitoring and evaluation. He provided an overview of related outcomes of the fifteenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties, specifically decision 15/8 and decision 15/16, on knowledge management and the clearing-house mechanism. He elaborated on Target 20 of the Framework and on key elements of the long-term strategic framework for capacity-building and development and of the technical and scientific cooperation mechanism.

46. Following the presentation, participants worked in three groups and undertook two group exercises, one on country-led capacity assessments and the other on stakeholder analysis in the development of capacity for specific targets of the Framework. During the first part of the breakout session, each of the three groups engaged in the capacity assessment exercise, which included taking stock of existing capacities and identifying capacity needs and priorities for various targets of the Framework that the groups selected. The assessments covered the three levels of capacity, namely, enabling environment capacities, institutional capacities and individual capacities. In terms of enabling environment capacities, participants looked at governance and leadership, policy and legal frameworks, incentives, accountability frameworks and budget allocation. In terms of institutional capacities, they looked at institutional mandates, structures, processes, resources availability, communication, knowledge management system and coordination mechanisms. In terms of individual capacities, they looked at knowledge, expertise, skills and competences.

47. A representative of the Secretariat introduced the matrix for stakeholder analysis and mapping to help countries to identify relevant stakeholders, including their interests, roles and responsibilities and the resources that they could make available in the capacity-development process. Participants selected three targets (Targets 8, 10 and 16) for the group exercise.

48. In the discussions that followed the group exercises, the participants identified the media and the general public as other important stakeholders for all the targets, in particular Targets 8, 10 and 16. It was noted that the media could play an important role in communicating relevant issues, raising public awareness and sharing relevant information. Trade groups were also identified as important stakeholders, as trade had an important impact on the environment and the sustainable use of natural resources. Hotel and restaurant owners could also contribute to sustainable consumption by reducing food waste. A few examples of relevant programmes, such as the programme on trade in forest products of the European Union, were noted.

Development of a national plan for capacity-building and development

49. Country participants worked together in preparing a draft national capacity-building and development plan, focusing on one or two of the targets of the Framework. Participants from organizations and stakeholder groups were asked to use results of the capacity assessment and the stakeholder analysis that had been conducted in the previous sessions.

Item 6

Conclusions of the dialogue

50. Participants discussed and provided key recommendations from the dialogue, which are contained in the annex. Country representatives were also invited to share their plans for their next steps, and most indicated that they would aim to complete the NBSAP revision or updating process and submit the national targets and the revised or updated NBSAP before the sixteenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties. With regard to the support needed, participants highlighted the need for support for developing a national monitoring plan, including the development and use of headline and other indicators, among other issues related to monitoring.

Item 7

Closure of the meeting

51. Following closing remarks from the representatives of the ASEAN Centre for Biodiversity and the Secretariat, the dialogue was closed at 5 p.m. on 17 August 2023.

Annex

Key recommendations from the dialogue

1. Process for revising or updating national biodiversity strategies and action plans

1. The following opportunities will add value to the process:

(a) Documenting and sharing lessons learned from the last round of revision or updating of the national biodiversity strategies and action plans (NBSAPs) carried out in line with the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011–2020, including its Aichi Biodiversity Targets, and completing the process of revising or updating the NBSAPs in alignment with the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework as early as possible, so as to give more time for implementation;

(b) Adopting a whole-of-government and whole-of-society approach while revising or updating the NBSAPs in alignment with the Framework, by engaging relevant ministries, sectors, indigenous peoples and local communities and relevant stakeholders in the process and consulting them when needed. This step is very important to ensure ownership and buy-in among all relevant actors in the development and implementation of the NBSAPs;

(c) Setting up a coordination or consultation mechanism for revising or updating NBSAPs by involving relevant government departments, subnational governments, indigenous peoples and local communities and relevant stakeholders;

(d) Circulating the Framework to all relevant actors and translating the global goals and targets into national ambitions and actions;

(e) Continuing the implementation of existing NBSAPs without interruptions while the new NBSAPs are being revised or updated.

2. Whole-of-government and whole-of-society approach

2. The whole-of-government and whole-of-society approach can be strengthened by:

(a) Mapping stakeholders to be involved in the revision or updating of NBSAPs, including in revising or setting national targets in alignment with the global goals and targets, identifying means of implementation and setting up a monitoring and evaluation system;

(b) Ensuring more effective communication between relevant government agencies and stakeholders.

3. National target revision or setting

3. There is a need to:

(a) Promote strategic communication for transformative change, that is, awareness that leads to a change of behaviour;

(b) Secure buy-in and ownership among stakeholders;

(c) Communicate on biodiversity beyond the environmental sector, so that all relevant stakeholders recognize the value of biodiversity in their own sectors, which may then lead to their integration of biodiversity issues.

4. Integration of the Protocols and relevant multilateral environmental agreements into national biodiversity strategies and action plans

4. The following steps can increase synergies and coherence:

(a) Identifying concrete steps to strengthen coherence between the Convention, the Protocols and other multilateral environmental agreements at the national, regional and international levels;

(b) Systematically integrating access and benefit-sharing, biosafety and other multilateral environmental agreement issues into NBSAPs (and identifying and pursuing appropriate entry points for integration);

(c) Making the national implementation frameworks for the Protocols and the multilateral environmental agreements an integral component of NBSAPs;

(d) Sharing information on experiences and lessons learned in integrating biosafety, access and benefit-sharing and other multilateral environmental agreements into NBSAPs and other sectoral and cross-sectoral policies, plans and programmes (through the clearing-house mechanism and the Biosafety Clearing-House);

(e) Maximizing the use of existing tools and guidelines.

5. Capacity-building and development (national capacity needs assessment and development of a national plan for capacity development)

5. There is a need to improve capacity at all levels by:

(a) Defining capacity-development objectives within the NBSAP results framework and creating effective strategies for capacity development;

(b) Forging strategic partnerships and clearly outlining the roles of various national bodies, partners and stakeholders.

6. National biodiversity financing (assessment of financial needs and development of a national biodiversity financing plan)

6. Finance is critical to the implementation of NBSAP and can be enhanced by

(a) Checking and assessing all the potential channels to anchor the financial plans in national policies, such as policies on taxation and royalties;

(b) Conducting capacity development on biodiversity resources valuation and in assessing potential financing solutions;

(c) Integrating environment and climate financing and natural resources auditing into academic curricula;

(d) Reforming the environmental legal system to take into account environmental and social justice, including to capacitate judges in environmental and social justice as it applies to environmental crimes and potential fines;

(e) Exchanging experiences on different financing solutions for biodiversity financing and the implementation of multilateral environmental agreements at the international level.

7. The dialogue provided an excellent opportunity for countries in the region to exchange experiences and lessons learned in revising or updating NBSAPs in alignment with the Framework. The dialogue is an effective way to promote mutual learning among countries and enhance the implementation of the Convention and the Framework at the national level, which is the objective of the open-ended forum for voluntary country-by-country reviews of implementation under the Subsidiary Body on Implementation. The Subsidiary Body may wish to take into account the experiences from the present dialogue, including in its development of the modus operandi of the open-ended forum for voluntary country-by-country review.
