

**Convention on
Biological Diversity**

Distr.
GENERAL

UNEP/CBD/COP/13/INF/21
25 November 2016

ENGLISH ONLY

CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES TO THE
CONVENTION ON BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY
Thirteenth meeting
Cancun, Mexico, 4-17 December 2016
Item 12 of the provisional agenda*

**BIO-BRIDGE INITIATIVE ACTION PLAN 2017-2020 AND REPORT ON PROGRESS
TOWARDS THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE INITIATIVE**

Note by the Executive Secretary

1. The Conference of the Parties, in paragraph 9 of decision XII/2 B, requested the Executive Secretary to enhance technical and scientific cooperation (TSC) and technology transfer under the Convention, and report on progress to the Subsidiary Body on Implementation at its first meeting. Pursuant to that decision, the Executive Secretary presented to the Subsidiary Body on Implementation a summary progress report in section III of document UNEP/CBD/SBI/1/6 and a detailed report in document UNEP/CBD/SBI/1/INF/19. The report provided details about the progress made on the development and implementation of the Bio-Bridge Initiative (BBI),¹ which was established by the Government of the Republic of Korea at the twelfth meeting of the Conference of the Parties as an important contribution to the enhancement of technical and scientific cooperation for the effective implementation of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 and achievement of the Aichi Biodiversity Targets.²
2. The present note provides a brief update on further progress made with regard to the development and implementation of the Bio-Bridge Initiative since the first meeting of the Subsidiary Body on Implementation and conveys for the information of the Conference of the Parties the BBI Action Plan 2017-2020, annexed hereto. The Action Plan was developed by the Secretariat with the support of its external partners, the Quebec Centre for Biodiversity Science (QCBS) and the United Nations Environment Programme World Conservation Monitoring Centre (UNEP-WCMC).
3. The main activities implemented since the first meeting of the Subsidiary Body on Implementation are summarized below.

A. Development of the draft BBI Action Plan 2017-2020

4. The Secretariat, with the support of the QCBS and UNEP-WCMC, continued the process of preparing the draft BBI Action Plan for the period 2017-2020. In order to inform this process, QCBS and UNEP-WCMC

* UNEP/CBD/COP/13/1/

¹ UNEP/CBD/COP/12/INF/33.

² Decision XII/2 B, paragraph 13 and decision XII/3, paragraph 5.

carried out a stocktaking exercise³ analysing, among other things, previous TSC work under the Convention and its Protocols including previous COP and COP-MOP decisions. The exercise also involved an analysis of the technical and scientific needs expressed by Parties in their national biodiversity strategies and action plans (NBSAPs) and the fifth national reports, a review of relevant TSC activities included in partnership agreements and collaborative initiatives between the CBD Secretariat and various organizations and institutions, a review of relevant TSC initiatives under other institutions, and an examination of ongoing cooperation among countries as described in reports and documents prepared by the Secretariat. The summary report of the stocktaking exercise has been made available as an information document (UNEP/CBD/COP/13/INF/22).

5. The first draft of the Action Plan developed by QCBS and UNEP-WCMC was sent for comments to Parties, indigenous peoples and local communities and relevant organizations through notification 2016-097 of 29 July 2016. In response, a total of 6 Parties (Australia, Iran, Mexico, Netherlands, Panama and Republic of Korea) and 6 organizations submitted their comments.⁴ In parallel, consultations on the draft Action Plan were carried out during the four regional joint preparatory meetings for the seventeenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES CoP 17) and the thirteenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD COP 13) and the associated meetings of the Parties to its Protocols, which were held in Asia (Bangkok, 1-5 August 2016), Africa (Addis Ababa, 8-12 August 2016), Pacific (Apia, 15-19 August 2016) and Latin America and the Caribbean (Antigua, Guatemala 22-26 August 2016).⁵

6. QCBS and UNEP-WCMC incorporated the comments and input received from the above consultative process and submitted a revised draft of the Action Plan 2017-2020 to the Secretariat and the Government of the Republic of Korea in October 2016 for a final review. The final draft Action Plan is presented in the annex hereto for the information of delegates at the thirteenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties and will be launched during the side events to be held in the margins of the meeting.

B. BBI Pilot Projects

7. During the last five months of the development phase of BBI, the Secretariat has launched a few pilot projects to test various technical and scientific cooperation approaches and generate some lessons to inform the further development and implementation of BBI. The pilot projects were also intended to draw attention to ongoing and potential TSC initiatives, engage key stakeholders and generate interest in TSC.

8. A Project Selection Committee (PSC)⁶ was established to review the pilot project proposals submitted by Parties and other stakeholders, and make recommendations on proposals to be considered for seed funding support and possible matchmaking through BBI. During the first round, the Committee reviewed a total of 17 proposals and recommended the following 4 pilot projects for funding support:

(a) “Cooperation for the Development of Ecosystem - Natural Capital Accounts in Francophone African Developing Countries”, facilitated by Centre de Coopération Internationale en Recherche Agronomique pour le Développement (CIRAD) and Université du Québec à Montréal (UQAM). The project aims to develop a cooperation project on the development of economic valuation tools for biodiversity and national ecosystem-based accounting systems involving Burkina-Faso, Guinea-Conakry, Morocco, Niger, Senegal and Tunisia.

³ A detailed report of the stocktaking exercise will be made available on the BBI website: <https://www.cbd.int/biobridge>.

⁴ Comments were received from the following organizations: Central African Forests Commission (COMIFAC), Climate Technology Centre and Network (CTCN), Future Earth, Palawan Council for Sustainable Development, UNDP Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services Network (BES-Net), and United Nations Environment Programme Division of Technology, Industry and Economics (UNEP-DTIE).

⁵ Details about the regional meetings are available at: Asia (<https://www.cbd.int/doc/?meeting=PREPCOP-2016-01>); Africa (<https://www.cbd.int/doc/?meeting=PREPCOP-2016-02>); Pacific (<https://www.cbd.int/doc/?meeting=PREPCOP-2016-03>); and GRULAC (<https://www.cbd.int/doc/?meeting=PREPCOP-2016-04>).

⁶ The Project Selection Committee comprised of five members including: a representative of the Ministry of Environment, Government of the Republic of Korea; the Chair of the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice (SBSTTA); the Chair of the Informal Advisory Committee of the Clearing-House (CHM-IAC); a representative of the Consortium of Scientific Partners on Biodiversity (CSP); and a representative of the Global Environment Facility (GEF).

(b) “Sustainable management of ASEAN Heritage Parks through valuing and improving eco-tourism”, facilitated by Korea Environment Institute (KEI). The project aims to promote an innovative modeling approach using social big-data to examine the current status of management, and support the development of related management strategies encouraging eco-tourism that enhances cultural services.

(c) “Transfer of DNA bar-coding analysis technology for biodiversity monitoring”, facilitated by National Institute of Biological Resources of Korea (NIBR). The project aims to facilitate transfer of the DNA bar-coding analysis technology for biodiversity monitoring to a few Asian countries.

(d) “Development of policies for tourist concessions within Southern African national parks systems”, facilitated by the Tourism and Parks Specialist Group (TAPAS) of International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN). The project aims to facilitate cooperation among the participating countries to undertake feasibility studies and pilot cases and develop their policies and systems for tourism concessions in protected areas.

9. With the exception of the last project by IUCN-TAPAS which will be implemented shortly,⁷ all three projects are under implementation and will present their preliminary results and lessons learned during the three BBI side events to be held on 6, 7 and 8 December 2016 during COP 13.

10. A call for requests for assistance under the Bio-Bridge Initiative was issued through notification 2016-126 of 19 October 2016. The deadline for submitting the requests was extended from 18 November to 30 November 2016.

C. BBI Communication and Outreach Activities

11. During the last five months, the Secretariat with the support of QCBS and UNEP-WCMC has undertaken various communication and outreach activities to publicize and catalyze support for BBI and TSC among Parties and develop new partnerships. Some of the main activities carried out include the following:

(a) Further discussions and consultations were held with various organizations, including the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES) the UNDP Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services Network (BES-Net), the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change Climate Technology Centre and Network (CTCN), the NBSAP Forum, the Sustainable Development Goals Technology Facilitation Mechanism (SDG TFM) and the Standards and Trade Development Facility (STDF). These activities were aimed at exploring further opportunities for cooperation and partnerships with relevant initiatives and fostering synergies to avoid duplications of efforts;

(b) A workshop/side event on “Technical and Scientific Cooperation for the Conservation and Sustainable Use of Biological Diversity and the Bio-Bridge Initiative” was organised at the IUCN World Conservation Congress on 5 September 2016 in Hawaii.⁸ It featured presentations on the draft BBI Action Plan 2017-2020, one pilot project, and a panel discussion on the emerging TSC experiences from relevant initiatives: UNDP's BES-Net, IPBES Matchmaking Facility, the Climate Technology Centre and Network (CTCN) and IUCN's science and knowledge networks;

(c) The Secretariat attended the second meeting of the IPBES Capacity-building Forum that was held 23 September 2016 in New York and shared with the participants, among other things, the ongoing BBI activities and potential areas of collaboration with other initiatives;

(d) An online survey to identify potential partner organizations with relevant experience and capacity that may be interested in providing technical assistance to developing country Parties and Parties with economies in transition upon request was launched through notification 2016-137 of 15 November 2016;

⁷ The funding agreement for this project has been signed by the Secretariat and IUCN and implementation will start by the end of November 2016.

⁸ See details at: <https://portals.iucn.org/congress/session/16324>

Relevant organizations, including research and academic institutions as well as private sector entities, interested in becoming a BBI partner, were invited to complete the survey by 5 December 2016;⁹

(e) Two BBI banners and 2,000 copies of the BBI brochure were designed and printed to be disseminated during COP 13.

D. Establishment of BBI institutional structures, tools and mechanisms

12. During the last five months, the Secretariat continued to establish and strengthen the necessary institutional structures, tools and mechanisms to support and facilitate technical and scientific cooperation. It embarked on the process of recruiting a P-4 BBI Programme Officer and a G-6 Programme Assistant, which is expected to be completed by the end of 2017. In the interim period, a BBI Individual Contractor and a Consultant were engaged to support the operations of BBI.

13. Some of the tools developed include the following:

(a) The BBI website¹⁰ was launched in September 2016 to provide relevant information about BBI and its operational framework and activities, and to inform Parties and relevant organizations on how they can participate in and support BBI either as recipients or providers of technical assistance;

(b) A prototype of the BBI web platform was developed in November 2016 to facilitate TSC by allowing countries, partners and relevant stakeholders to submit and access relevant information online, including requests for assistance, offers of assistance and relevant tools and resources, in an interactive, systematic and user-friendly manner. The Secretariat developed three common formats to facilitate the submission of “requests for assistance”, registration of “providers of technical assistance” and submission of information on available “technical assistance and capacity-building opportunities”. The platform will facilitate matchmaking, foster user-driven exchange of resources including replicable good practices and lessons-learned, and stimulate a dialogue between communities of experts, policymakers, scientists and practitioners.

E. Planned activities

14. Some of the activities planned for the next few months include the following:

(a) Organization of a panel discussion on “The Role of Technical and Scientific Cooperation in Facilitating Biodiversity Mainstreaming” during the third Science for Biodiversity Forum (Cancun, Mexico, 1-2 December 2016);

(b) Launch of the BBI Action Plan 2017-2020 and the BBI operational phase during COP 13.

(c) Organization of a press conference and four side events on BBI during COP 13, from 5 to 8 December 2016 to promote awareness of BBI, share the results of the BBI pilot projects, and facilitate the sharing of emerging experiences and lessons learned by other relevant TSC initiatives and programmes, as well as exchange of views, information and perspectives regarding the promotion of technical and scientific cooperation for the conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity;

(d) Launch of the central help desk in January 2017 to assist Parties to articulate their needs or elaborate their requests for assistance, and to facilitate the matching of the expressed needs with available support (expertise, data and knowledge, technologies and other resources) to meet those needs through mutual partnerships; and

(e) Organization of regional outreach meetings and roundtables in early 2017 to promote awareness of BBI and its operations, and encourage Parties, relevant organizations and donors to actively participate in and support BBI activities and processes.

⁹ The survey can be accessed at: https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSet87hm3d90AyUe30P1xuh-9HodH6o3Ujd3XBmEosma_JHyMQ/viewform

¹⁰ <https://www.cbd.int/biobridge>

Bio-Bridge Initiative

ACTION PLAN (2017-2020)

This Action Plan has been prepared by the Secretariat with the support of the Quebec Centre for Biodiversity Science (QCBS) and the UNEP World Conservation Monitoring Centre (UNEP-WCMC). It will be launched at the thirteenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity (COP 13) in December 2016 in Cancun.

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Abbreviations and Acronyms

ABT	Aichi Biodiversity Targets
BBI	Bio-Bridge Initiative
BES-Net	Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services Network
CBD	Convention on Biological Diversity
COP	Conference of the Parties
CHM	Clearing-house Mechanism
CTCN	Climate Technology Centre and Network
GEF	Global Environment Facility
LDCs	Least developed countries
MEA	Multilateral Environmental Agreement
IPBES	Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services
NBSAP	National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan
NGO	Non-governmental organization
QCBS	Quebec Centre for Biodiversity Science
SBI	Subsidiary Body on Implementation
SBSTTA	Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice
SIDS	Small Island Developing States
TSC	Technical and Scientific Cooperation
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
UNEP-WCMC	UNEP World Conservation Monitoring Centre

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Context

The Bio-Bridge Initiative (BBI) was developed to serve as the overarching programme focused on catalyzing and facilitating technical and scientific cooperation (TSC) and technology transfer (TT) under the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) and its Protocols. TSC is defined in the context of the CBD and its Protocols as a process whereby two or more countries pursue their individual or collective biodiversity-related goals through cooperative exchanges of knowledge, skills, data, resources and technologies.¹¹ TSC contributes to the attainment of biodiversity targets by allowing all Parties to the Convention and to the Protocols to share knowledge, tools, data, good practices, expertise, technologies and other resources with each other in a consistent, coherent and sustainable manner. BBI will facilitate TSC among Parties by:

- linking Parties that have specific technical and scientific needs with Parties or organizations that are able to provide the necessary technical support and resources to meet those needs through mutual partnerships; and
- providing a space for countries and institutions to share knowledge, good practices and lessons learned with each other.

BBI was established at COP 12 by the Government of the Republic of Korea to contribute to the implementation of the *Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020* and achievement of the Aichi Biodiversity Targets as well as national biodiversity strategies and action plans through enhancing technical and scientific cooperation.

BBI's long-term **Vision** is significantly scaling up TSC among Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity and to its Protocols through regional and global partnerships and networks in order to achieve their national biodiversity targets and contribute to the achievement of the Aichi targets. Realising this vision requires the support and participation of all Parties and stakeholders and adoption of a flexible and adaptive approach that will help ensure that TSC-focused activities continue to meet the needs of Parties in the long term.

The **Mission** of BBI is to foster and facilitate TSC among countries and institutions in order to halt the loss of biodiversity and ensure that ecosystems are resilient and continue to provide essential services.

The development of this Action Plan has taken full account of the Parties' priorities and experiences, as well as lessons learned by other similar mechanisms. It has also taken account of feedback from Parties and potential partner organizations.

The Action Plan assumes that Parties will mobilize resources to meet their TSC obligations under the Convention and its Protocols. It also assumes that partners in a position to offer technical assistance will do so, and that voluntary funding for BBI will be made available by Parties and donors. Because it is likely to take some time to mobilize the necessary resources to implement the full TSC programme as presented, BBI will be implemented in a phased manner, beginning with basic services in 2017 (see Section 6). Successful implementation of this Action Plan and the promotion of TSC in general can only occur with the full support of Parties and relevant stakeholders.

¹¹ UNEP/CBD/SBI/1/6, paragraph 3

To ensure transparency and consistency during the implementation of BBI, a series of criteria, standard operating procedures, common templates and other tools will be developed. BBI will be demand-driven, flexible and accessible to all Parties though the needs of developing country Parties and Parties with economies in transition will be prioritized. BBI will also emphasize regional cooperation, and work in synergy with existing programmes and mechanisms. In addition, BBI will develop guidance and resources to be used to encourage and support Parties to build institutional capacity and long-term cooperative relationships with each other. BBI services will be tested and evaluated during the first two years and operating procedures will evolve based on these evaluations.

Infrastructure and activities

BBI will offer various types of tools and services for promoting and facilitating TSC and TT to enable Parties to meet identified technical and scientific needs. BBI's main tools will include a help desk, a web platform and stakeholder meetings/roundtables. Any web resources will be developed with consideration of the clearing-house mechanism (CHM) and will link to relevant databases, case studies and other resources housed there. An active network of partners will be critical to successful implementation, and will underpin all BBI activities.

BBI will provide a help desk service, which will support Parties in:

- articulating their needs so that opportunities for support through TSC and TT can be identified and assistance requested;
- identifying appropriate technical assistance (TA) providers (including countries or institutions) that can either provide the required support, or work with the Party to plan for accessing that support; and
- facilitating new cooperation partnerships and early stages of development of TSC projects.

BBI will also provide opportunities for broader communication and partnership building among Parties and institutions through:

- communication and outreach activities to promote TSC as an approach to achieving biodiversity targets, including through regional and thematic meetings, roundtables and/or online forums;
- bringing partners together to co-develop TSC project proposals or plans.

BBI will, subject to availability of funding, provide seed grants to:

- provide catalytic support for establishing new cooperation relationships among Parties;
- facilitate the development of proposals for TSC projects to address specific Parties' requests for assistance.

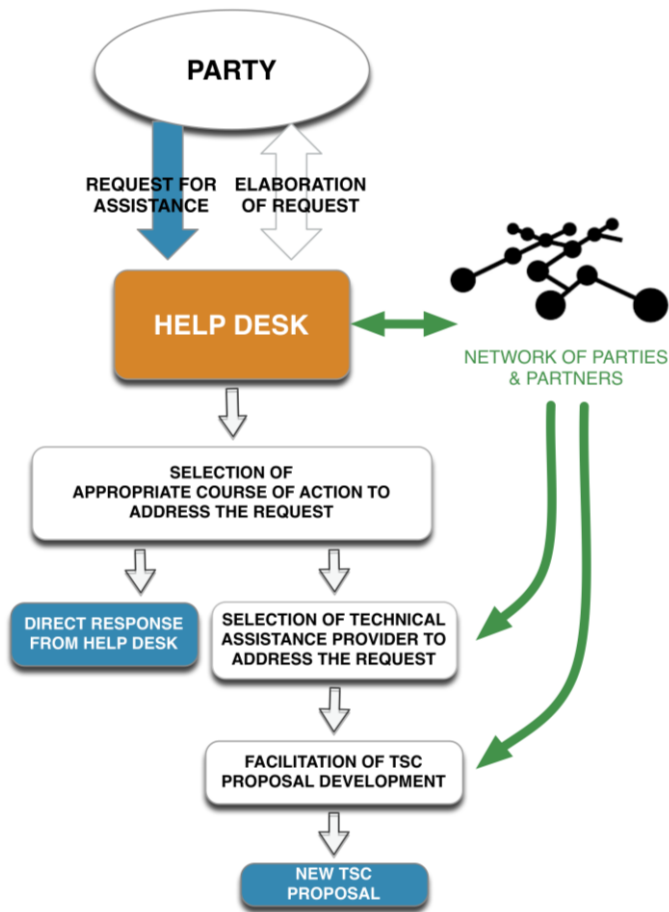
Furthermore, BBI will facilitate access to key resources and expertise available online by:

- developing a web platform to facilitate access to relevant resources (including data, case studies/bright spots on proven technical solutions, good practices and other tools that could be used to address biodiversity-related issues through TSC);

- providing examples of successful TSC projects to communicate benefits of TSC and encourage use of BBI; and
- providing links to other TSC and capacity development initiatives and tools.

In practice, BBI will operate as follows (see figure):

1. Parties requiring support will complete and submit a request for assistance form to the BBI help desk through the BBI web platform, or via non-electronic means if necessary.
2. If necessary, the help desk will work with Parties to clarify and articulate the need for which assistance is required, and identify options of how it might be addressed through TSC.
3. The help desk will then determine what course of action is most appropriate, including directly responding to the Party for simple requests, identifying and providing relevant case studies or other tools to learn from, identifying and linking up the Party with other relevant programmes that might help, or facilitating the development of a specific TSC project proposal to meet the need.



4. To develop a proposal for a new TSC project, the help desk will work with a database of technical assistance (TA) providers and a network of partners to identify a suitable institutional partner to match with the country requesting assistance¹². The institution will be selected based on relevant experience and expertise. The help desk will facilitate the match and where appropriate support the development of a joint proposal with small grants for this purpose.
5. The process will result in a developed project concept note or full project proposal that can be used to seek funding for the proposed TSC project.

¹² Further details regarding the selection of TA providers are included in the main text of this Action Plan.

BBI Governance and Operational structure

The governance and operations of BBI will be overseen by a Steering Committee established for this purpose, under the overall strategic oversight by the Bureau of the Subsidiary Body on Implementation (SBI)¹³ on behalf of the Conference of the Parties and with advice from an advisory committee. The Steering Committee will be the decision-making body responsible for providing management oversight to the implementation of BBI within the context of the direction established by the COP and COP-MOP decisions. The Advisory Committee will advise the Steering Committee and the CBD Executive Secretary on all aspects related to the implementation of BBI, including on building and maintaining strategic partnerships with technical assistance providers, regional network hubs, international networks of biodiversity scientists and educators, and partner mechanisms engaged in TSC and capacity development.

A BBI core team within the CBD Secretariat will coordinate and administer the implementation of BBI, including overseeing and reporting on implementation of the BBI Action Plan, and delivering the help desk functions. Subject to the availability of funding, the help desk could be enhanced by outsourcing some or all its operations to an external partner organization or organizations, selected through a competitive bidding process. Help desk nodes within regions may also be established to further augment the capacity of the Secretariat and help desk by focusing on regional needs and opportunities, and communication of BBI within the regions.

Implementation

BBI activities and infrastructure will be established in stages as resources are mobilized. The help desk and the BBI web platform will be operational and open to receiving requests for assistance in early 2017. The first two years of BBI operations (Phase I) will be used to test and further develop the help desk services, expand the network of BBI partners, and to refine strategies for communication, outreach and implementation. Phase II will scale up operations based on lessons learned during Phase I, increasing the regional presence of BBI, developing additional web resources as needed and increasing support for strategic fundraising for TSC initiatives. Increasing resources for BBI will be essential for broadening TSC among Parties in various regions, and to ensuring long-term support for TSC projects under the Convention and its Protocols. A BBI monitoring and evaluation framework with clear indicators and targets will be developed to track and improve the performance of BBI operations over time, and to ensure that the BBI meets the needs of Parties.

¹³ Pending decision of the COP on this matter (draft decision included in document UNEP/CBD/COP/13/2). The draft modus operandi of the Subsidiary Body on Implementation was approved by SBI at its first meeting, and submitted for consideration of COP 13 (SBI Recommendation 1/9).

1 CONTEXT

Globally, there is a wide range of technical and scientific resources, knowledge, expertise, and technologies that could be drawn upon to enhance the conservation of biological diversity, the sustainable use of its components and the fair and equitable sharing of benefits arising from the utilization of genetic resources. Many governments, organizations and networks with a wide array of knowledge, tools and expertise relevant to achieving the Aichi Biodiversity Targets are willing to cooperate with Parties that need support. Nevertheless, many countries needing assistance are finding it challenging to gain access to, and benefit from, such opportunities for technical and scientific cooperation (TSC) to meet their needs.

This challenge is recognised in various provisions of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) and of its Protocols.¹⁴ The CBD Conference of the Parties (COP) recognises that technology transfer and TSC are essential elements for the implementation of the Convention.¹⁵ TSC, as envisaged in Article 18 of the CBD, encompasses these elements, plus institutional strengthening and development, cooperation in training of personnel and exchange of experts, joint research programmes and joint ventures for development of technologies relevant to the objectives of the Convention, among others¹⁶. At COP 11 and COP 12, Parties reaffirmed the need to develop a coherent, consistent and coordinated approach to promoting and facilitating TSC as a priority, noting that there was a gap in TSC facilitation under the Convention.¹⁷

The Bio-Bridge Initiative (BBI) was established at COP 12 to serve as an overarching programme to catalyze and facilitate TSC among Parties to the Convention and its Protocols. Building on initial support provided by the Government of the Republic of Korea,¹⁸ BBI will support Parties in their efforts to effectively implement Article 18 and other related provisions of the Convention and of its Protocols regarding TSC and access to and transfer of technology and know-how relevant to the achievement of the objectives of the Convention and of its Protocols.

BBI aims to contribute to the enhancement of TSC with a view to supporting the effective implementation of the *Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020* and its Aichi Biodiversity Targets as well as the revised and updated national biodiversity strategies and action plans.¹⁹ In doing so it will also support the implementation of the *2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development* and achievement of its Sustainable Development Goals. BBI will aim to provide services that can support all Parties, but consistent with COP decisions XI/2 and XII/2, it will in particular focus on developing country Parties and Parties with economies in transition. Table 1 presents some examples of TSC initiatives driven by Parties, representing types of cooperation that BBI could catalyze and facilitate in the future.

¹⁴ Articles 16, 17, 18, and 19 of the Convention on Biological Diversity; Articles 22 and 23 of the Nagoya Protocol and Article 22 of the Cartagena Protocol Biosafety

¹⁵ CBD, COP decision VII/29, preamble

¹⁶ TSC is interpreted within the context of the CBD and its Protocols as a process whereby two or more countries pursue their individual or collective goals through cooperative exchanges of scientific knowledge, skills, resources and technical know-how (technologies). Although COP decisions refer to TSC and technology transfer (TT) separately, TT in the context of the BBI Action Plan is considered to be an integral component of TSC.

¹⁷ CBD COP decision XI/2, paragraph 15.

¹⁸ UNEP/CBD/COP/12/INF/33

¹⁹ CBD COP decision XII/2B, paragraph 9

Much can be learned from the experience of similar initiatives and mechanisms already in operation, such as the Climate Technology Centre and Network (focused on TSC in the context of climate change mitigation and adaptation), as well as those under development such as the IPBES matchmaking facility and the Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services Network (BES-Net). This Action Plan draws on lessons learned from these and other programmes and initiatives²⁰, and promotes an adaptive, learning-by-doing approach. It will be implemented under the CBD's clearing-house mechanism (CHM), taking into account the web strategy for the Convention and its Protocols.²¹

The Action Plan will be evaluated and updated regularly to ensure that BBI activities are aligned with the needs of Parties and that resources are allocated to TSC activities and approaches likely to lead to concrete results and measurable impacts. The success of BBI will depend on the active participation and collaboration of Parties and relevant institutions, both in identifying and clearly articulating needs and how to respond to them, and in building the partnerships that will result in effective transfer of skills and knowledge.

Table 1. Examples of types of TSC projects that BBI could facilitate in the future

Cooperation partners	Purpose of project	Outcome(s)	Resultant long-term cooperation
SANBI (South Africa) has cooperated with various institutions in Mozambique on conservation planning since 2014 ²²	To cooperate on conservation assessments for plants of Northern Mozambique	Bursaries, technical advice and supervision for conducting conservation planning for threatened plants of Mozambique provided	Follow-up workshops involving both countries took place in 2015 and 2016 to complete assessment of all endemic Mozambican plants.
Since 1998 the Royal Belgian Institute for Natural Sciences (RBINS) has cooperated with multiple countries to support the development of national clearing-house mechanisms ²³	To share technical approaches to developing operational biodiversity information networks that will contribute to increased information sharing and use in policy-making, communication, education and public awareness and generate TSC for biodiversity	E-learning modules created, over 21 CHM websites developed, the majority are regularly updated	Cooperation has been ongoing. One of the countries involved, Morocco, is now cooperating to support other countries to develop national CHMs.
INBio in Costa Rica has cooperated with institutions in Benin and Bhutan on the management of non-timber forest products, financed by the Netherlands (2012) ²⁴	To share knowledge and experience with Benin and Bhutan on research, gathering, domestication, cultivation and marketing of high valued non-timber forest products (mushrooms, insects) as part of climate change adaptation and food security strategies.	Bhutan developed and exchanged data and gene banks on relevant species and established a biodiversity information system. Benin is implementing its own platform	None on this project, but INBio regularly collaborates with many Parties to the CBD

²⁰ A stocktaking exercise that analyzes gaps and opportunities related to other TSC and capacity building mechanisms for biodiversity will be made available on the BBI website.

²¹ UNEP/CBD/COP/13/14/Add.1

²² UNEP/CBD/COP/12/INF/39/Add.1

²³ UNEP/CBD/COP/10/INF/6

²⁴ UNEP/CBD/WGRI/5/INF/2

2 VISION, MISSION AND OUTCOMES

2.1 Vision

The vision of the Bio-Bridge Initiative is:

Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity and to its Protocols are cooperating and sharing knowledge, tools, technologies, expertise and other resources through regional and global partnerships and networks to achieve their national biodiversity targets, and to contribute to meeting other biodiversity-related goals and targets at the global level.

2.2 Mission and objectives

To achieve this vision, the mission of the Bio-Bridge Initiative is:

To foster and facilitate technical and scientific cooperation among countries and institutions in order to halt the loss of biodiversity and ensure that ecosystems are resilient and continue to provide essential services.

This mission will be achieved through three interlinked objectives, which will together aid Parties in implementing the Convention and its Protocols, and the *Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020* and achieving the Aichi Biodiversity Targets, as well as contributing to the implementation of the biodiversity-related conventions, as applicable:

- *To facilitate the identification and articulation by Parties of technical and scientific needs that can be addressed through TSC*
- *To increase access to biodiversity-related technical assistance and other opportunities for TSC through active matchmaking support and web-based tools*
- *To encourage and support Parties and partner organizations to engage more in TSC to meet biodiversity objectives and share good practices and success stories to inspire TSC initiatives.*

2.3 BBI Outcomes

The desired outcomes of BBI can be summarised as follows:

- *Parties are seeking and finding opportunities and partners for biodiversity-related TSC*
- *Parties and other stakeholders are proactively sharing available biodiversity-related solutions, good practices and success stories with each other*
- *Available tools, resources and programmes are easily accessible and being used to identify and uptake appropriate solutions*
- *Parties have the necessary know-how and tools to meet their national biodiversity targets*
- *TSC, facilitated through BBI, contributes to implementation of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 and progress on achieving the Aichi Biodiversity Targets at the national level*

3 OPERATIONAL FRAMEWORK

A simple **operational framework** will be used to guide BBI activities and promote the transparency of its operations, based on the priorities for a TSC programme identified by Parties (Table 2). Parties' needs and priorities for TSC were identified from various decisions of the Conference of the Parties²⁵, programmes of work and action plans²⁶ and the programme of work on technology transfer and technological and scientific cooperation²⁷.

BBI priorities are expected to evolve as user needs are identified and articulated, as BBI tools are tested, as more BBI partners are engaged, and as additional resources become available. The BBI operational framework will thus progress through multiple iterations, building on emerging experience and lessons learned. Section 6 describes how BBI services will be phased to enable a flexible and adaptive implementation that promotes and takes into consideration feedback and lessons learned from regular evaluations.

Table 2. BBI Characteristics (presented in no particular order)

Characteristics	Examples of associated implementation approaches
1. A simple and easily accessible programme designed to address TSC needs expressed by Parties ²⁸	Multilingual web platform to facilitate and support cooperation complemented by other forms of access that are not internet-based . Requests for assistance related to all biodiversity targets will be accommodated, with priority themes emerging over time as needed.
2. A catalytic programme intended to inspire long-term TSC among Parties	An operational framework based on the identification of good TSC practices to guide BBI activities
3. A systematic articulation of Parties' needs/requests for assistance and matchmaking with available support	Coordination with other programmes and mechanisms, including an effective web platform and associated 'help desk' functions, designed to support cooperation in a systematic manner
4. A client-oriented approach to facilitating and supporting TSC initiative through a BBI help-desk service	An approach to design of services (both web platform and help desk functions) based on/responding to identified needs
5. Decentralized support mechanisms through regional hubs and networks, maintained by partner institutions	The most effective means of developing strong regional cooperation will be explored, including through possible help desk nodes in different regions, and/or partnerships with key institutions that serve as regional network hubs

²⁵ CBD COP decisions XI/2 and XII/2

²⁶ Relevant plans include: the Multi-Year Plan of Action for South-South Cooperation on Biodiversity for Development (decision X/23) and the Short-Term Action Plan (2017-2020) to Enhance and Support Capacity-Building for the Implementation of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 and its Aichi Biodiversity Targets (UNEP/CBD/COP/13/13).

²⁷ COP decision VII/29

²⁸ While BBI will address all Aichi Biodiversity Targets during its initial phase of implementation, early evaluations may help to determine whether a thematic focus would be desirable.

6. A focus on developing countries and countries with economies in transition	BBI services will be principally designed to respond to the needs of developing countries and countries with economies in transition, and this will be embedded in BBI protocols
7. Synergy and complementarity with other programmes, initiatives and mechanisms, building on their experience and filling identified gaps	Continuous liaison and partnership building with other relevant mechanisms and programmes ²⁹

4 INFRASTRUCTURE AND ACTIVITIES TO DELIVER THE VISION

This section describes the strategies and activities that will deliver BBI’s vision and mission, and achieve its objectives, as well as the infrastructure proposed for supporting those activities. Figure 1 presents how BBI activities will contribute to achieving the mission and vision. BBI will be implemented in a phased approach as resources are secured (Section 6 presents the roadmap for BBI establishment and implementation). The phased roll-out of activities and services will allow for careful testing and evaluation of the proposed approaches, and corrections to these based on early learning.

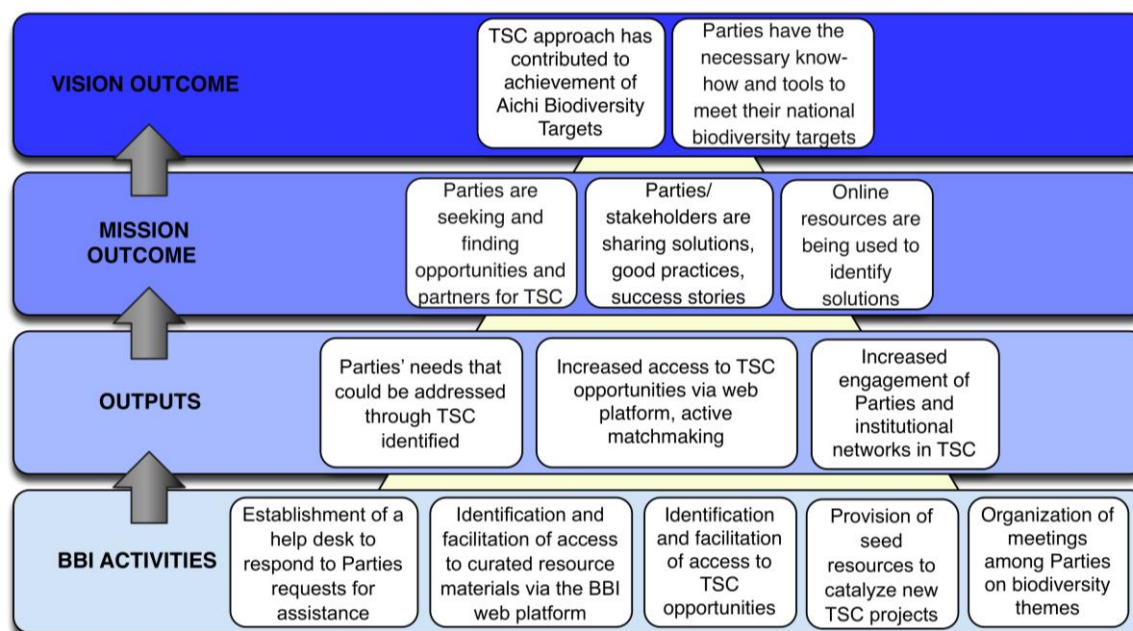


Figure 1. Logical flow of activities designed to achieve BBI objectives

²⁹ There is strong potential for BBI to work collaboratively with several TSC mechanisms, including the Climate Technology Centre and Network (CTCN), BES-Net, IPBES matchmaking facility and the NBSAP Forum. Potential approaches to collaboration include the sharing of expert networks, joint organization of regional or thematic meetings, the sharing of forms for applying for assistance, and cooperating on the development of responses to requests for assistance. Certain thematic streams could be designated as shared, for example on ecosystem-based adaptation to climate change with CTCN.

4.1 Overview of strategies and activities addressing the three objectives

Table 3 provides a summary of how specific strategies and activities will contribute to achieving the BBI core objectives. Drawing on this, Section 4.2 elaborates on the infrastructure that will underpin all BBI activities, and Section 4.3 provides further description of some of the main activities and services of BBI.

Table 3: Summary of strategies and activities for achieving BBI objectives

Objective	Strategies	Rationale	Activities for CBD Secretariat and partners
<p>1. To facilitate the identification and articulation of the Parties' technical and scientific needs that can be addressed through TSC</p>	<p>Provide advice and, where necessary, technical support</p>	<p>Parties have expressed interest in a systematized, accessible support system for TSC. The need for assistance in articulating precise needs has been highlighted by multiple sources³⁰.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish BBI help desk(s) to support Parties requesting assistance in articulating their needs and priorities • Provide guidance on effective approaches and methodology for identifying specific needs to be addressed through TSC • Receive and compile information on technical assistance needs through a common form • Develop and implement help desk services to assist Parties in the articulation of their needs and elaboration of requests • Develop examples of the types of requests for assistance that BBI will respond to • Develop examples of TSC projects for dissemination through the BBI website • to build awareness of BBI services and activities
<p>2. To increase access to biodiversity-related technical assistance through active matchmaking support and the BBI web platform</p>	<p>Facilitate access to existing resources, tools and knowledge</p>	<p>Parties need facilitated access to resources useful for meeting their national biodiversity targets. Resources found useful for other capacity development and TSC initiatives include exemplar case studies, and links to other mechanisms and tools.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish a BBI web platform as part of the CHM to facilitate access to all BBI-relevant resources • Develop a knowledge base of resources relevant to supporting TSC to address Parties' needs • Provide links to existing resources and develop new material where necessary • Develop working relationships with other relevant initiatives (e.g. CTCN), to share and build on their experience

³⁰ For example, see CBD COP decisions XI/2 and XII/2

Objective	Strategies	Rationale	Activities for CBD Secretariat and partners
	Provide matchmaking services to increase uptake of TSC opportunities	Parties have expressed a need for an easily accessible help desk to provide assistance to facilitate TSC. In addition to needs articulation, support will be offered for early stage project development, identification of partners for TSC, identification of relevant existing resources.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support the identification of the most appropriate response to requests for assistance • Support the identification of potential partners for responding to TSC needs • Develop a rolling database of needs and opportunities to support this work, drawing on other activities • Where appropriate, support development of proposals for new TSC projects • Where appropriate, provide advice and support in seeking funding to address proposals • Where appropriate, support applications to partner mechanisms engaged in TSC or capacity development
3. To encourage Parties and harness expert and institutional networks to engage more in TSC activities	Implement a communication and outreach strategy to increase understanding of the value and importance of TSC	Outreach and communication are necessary to publicize BBI and encourage TSC as a means of meeting biodiversity targets. It is also of critical importance to long-term sustainability of BBI. For TSC to have a far-reaching impact, institutions and expert networks of many different types and at different scales need to be mobilized.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop and implement a communication and outreach strategy to inform major stakeholders about BBI and inspire their support • Develop and implement a web strategy to effectively manage knowledge and facilitate cooperation • Mobilize networks of organizations and other stakeholders that will support BBI in the delivery of TSC • Make presentations on BBI at appropriate meetings, including at CBD COP, SBI and SBSTTA

Objective	Strategies	Rationale	Activities for CBD Secretariat and partners
	Organize regional and thematic meetings and roundtables to facilitate cooperation and networking	Meetings are important for developing new relationships and opportunities. As needed, regional meetings may be organized on specific themes to showcase expertise and needs, and facilitate cooperation. Parties and institutions will be encouraged to host or contribute to these activities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider when meetings would be a useful means in developing opportunities for TSC • Periodically call for offers to host meetings focused on increasing TSC in particular areas and themes • Plan and support meetings, focusing in particular on regional and thematic opportunities for increasing TSC • Ensure that meeting outcomes are communicated broadly, so as to spread messages further
	Provide seed grants for TSC projects	In addition to facilitating the identification of experts to meet the Parties' identified needs BBI will provide some seed funding to bring partners together and support the development of TSC proposals.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop communication messaging that makes clear that BBI is not a funding mechanism • Develop clear criteria that identify when and how BBI can provide seed funding • Provide seed funding for development of BBI-related projects/activities • Mobilise additional resources so that more projects can be provided start-up or seed funding

4.2 Infrastructure to support TSC delivery

There are two key components of BBI's infrastructure that underpin many of the initiative's activities: a web platform, and a help desk. These are described below.

4.2.1 Web Platform for TSC

A BBI web platform is being developed and will be maintained as a vehicle for promoting and facilitating TSC. The platform is developed as part of CBD's clearing-house mechanism (CHM), and will be integrated with other online capacity development tools and aligned with the Web Strategy for the Convention and its Protocols³¹, and any policies and procedures for managing the CBD website. The CHM will remain the repository for any databases and case studies of relevance to the implementation of the Convention and its Protocols. The BBI web platform will link to these resources, providing a list of curated resources that are specifically relevant to TSC.

The BBI web platform will provide a number of functions, including:

- communication and awareness raising
- access to a wide knowledge base and resources
- online forum for knowledge exchange (to be developed at a later stage)

An up-to-date online archive of resources relevant to BBI operations and requests for assistance from Parties, as well as links to other TSC mechanisms, tools, funding sources, technical assistance experts, etc.), will be accessible through the web platform. BBI will not duplicate resources that already exist on other websites and databases, but will instead provide short descriptions about them (metadata) and links to the respective websites. At a later stage, BBI will explore the potential for making the web platform interactive to promote a user-driven exchange and sharing of resources, with reduced oversight by BBI (see Text Box 1).

Box 1: Interactive BBI web platform

BBI will consider making the web portal an interactive tool for Parties and partners to share data, case studies and other tools. The platform will allow institutions to directly update information regarding their expertise and resources. A dialogue section would allow for informal sharing of knowledge. An existing model for such a platform is ResearchGate, which has been successful at developing an online research community actively engaged in cooperation.

4.2.2 Help Desk

A BBI help desk will offer assistance for needs articulation and facilitation of matchmaking needs with available support (see section 4.3.1 below). The help desk services, to be delivered by the BBI team within the CBD Secretariat, will provide active support to Parties, complementing information that will be accessible directly through the BBI web platform. The level and scope of the help desk services will depend on the funding available and the offers of technical support by Parties and partner organizations.

Subject to the availability of funding, and as the volume of requests for assistance increases:

³¹ Pending decision from the COP on this matter (draft decision included in document UNEP/CBD/COP/13/2). The SBI at its first meeting took note of the draft Web Strategy, and submitted it for consideration of COP 13 (SBI Recommendation 1/5).

- a) **Help desk support** provided by the BBI team within the CBD Secretariat may be enhanced by outsourcing some or all its services to an external partner organization or organizations, selected through a competitive bidding process. The external partner could assist the central help desk to, inter alia, handle requests for assistance, identify matchmaking opportunities, coordinate the development of TSC plans and proposals, where applicable, and facilitate links to expert networks, communities of practice, and other related initiatives. While there are advantages to establishing a help desk within an external institution that has technical expertise and networks, the sustainability of an external help desk will be a deciding factor in how and where it is established.
- b) **Regional help desk nodes** may be established in different regions to further augment the help desk support services by focusing on identification and mobilization of regional opportunities, and publicizing BBI within the respective regions. Such regional support will be crucial to the realization of BBI's vision. However, it will require additional financial resources and may need to be established incrementally. Potential benefits of regional nodes include better adaptation of BBI services in terms of language, better understanding of the local context, improved regional networking and a greater potential for lasting cooperation. BBI will also rely on support from regional networks of institutions that are already networked across CBD Parties and other relevant institutions, and already engaged in TSC and capacity development.

4.3 Main activities and services

4.3.1 Needs articulation and matchmaking through help desk

Technical assistance for needs articulation

The help desk will play a key role in assisting Parties to articulate their technical and scientific needs, and to elaborate and refine their requests for assistance, including descriptions of how the identified needs relate to the national biodiversity goals and targets as defined in the national biodiversity strategies and action plans (NBSAPs). This will build upon guidance to be provided through the web platform. The help desk service will be key to transforming general nationally-identified needs or barriers as outlined in NBSAPs and other strategy documents into more precise needs that can be addressed through TSC.

Parties and stakeholders will be asked to submit their requests for assistance using a common form (to be submitted online through the BBI web platform or in hardcopy). The form is designed as a simple and straightforward tool to ease the submission of requests by Parties and to accommodate diverse types of requests for assistance. Criteria and guidelines for requesting assistance, including who can apply and what types of projects will be accommodated, will be posted on the BBI website.

During the first stages of BBI implementation, requests for assistance related to all issues under the Convention and its Protocol (including all Aichi Biodiversity Targets) will be accommodated. Based on the volume of requests received and following an assessment of early submissions of needs by Parties, and taking into account themes identified from COP decisions, thematic priorities may be established, as appropriate, during the subsequent phases of BBI implementation. This may be necessary in order to focus the help desk support services and the limited resources available (see Section 5 for a description of the different phases of BBI implementation). A transparent process for the selection of thematic priorities will be developed and posted on the BBI website.

Match countries' needs with appropriate available support

A central activity of the BBI help desk will be to facilitate matchmaking between countries in need of assistance and countries or institutions able to provide the required support. The matchmaking activities may include the identification and facilitation of access to existing resources, expertise, case studies and programmes relevant to a particular request for assistance, and the coordination of responses from BBI partners to support Parties requesting assistance. Some of this may be done directly through the web platform, but in other cases direct support from the help desk may be more appropriate.

The help desk will respond to requests for assistance using the most appropriate courses of action, ranging from simple responses to complex solutions.³² This is explained further in Table 4 below. Clear guidelines to enable the help desk to select the most appropriate course of action will be developed. The guidelines will emphasize simplicity, cost-effectiveness, timeliness, appropriateness for the respective country/regional contexts, the feasibility of various courses of action within the region, the biodiversity impact, among others. In all cases, matchmaking will be conducted by the help desk, with the support of a network of partner organizations (see Section 5.4) that will help to identify the most appropriate available technical support to be matched with the Party's need. Matches will only be made with the approval of all parties concerned. While BBI will not fund project implementation, small grants may be available in some cases to facilitate the development of proposals for new TSC projects (response option 5 in Table 4). In addition, the help desk may facilitate contacts between donors and the concerned Parties or institutions to raise funding for specific TSC projects and may scale up this fundraising support as needed during Phase II of BBI's implementation.

³² The types of response options are expected to change as BBI matures and some options may be more emphasized than others.

Table 4: BBI Response Options


	Response Option	Description	Examples
<p>SIMPLE</p>  <p>COMPLEX</p>	<p>1. Quick response directly from help desk identifying relevant expertise, resources</p>	<p>In the simplest of cases, Parties may be looking for a specific expert to undertake a short-term task, or an expert that can speak a specific language or may need to hire specialised equipment for a specific task (e.g. aerial surveillance of wildlife movements). BBI may help to identify a suitable candidate or equipment and provide an introduction where possible.</p>	<p>The help desk provides an introduction to an expert or institution who may be willing to assist a Party with planning for management of alien invasive species.</p>
	<p>2. Match with existing programmes, working groups, mechanisms within the CBD that can provide an appropriate response</p>	<p>In some cases, other existing programmes operated by CBD Secretariat may best meet requests for assistance. The BBI help desk will connect these requests to those programmes.</p>	<p>The help desk refers a Party seeking assistance on protected area management to a relevant workshop being planned by a unit within the CBD Secretariat.</p>
	<p>3. Match with existing programmes, working groups, mechanisms external to CBD for specific topics</p>	<p>The BBI help desk will coordinate with MEAs and their capacity development and TSC mechanisms to respond to requests for assistance of relevance to multiple mechanisms.</p>	<p>The help desk refers a request for assistance on ecosystem-based solutions to climate change to the Climate Technology Centre and Network for support.</p>
	<p>4. Identification of exemplars that could be replicated, with support from institutions involved in case study or with similar knowledge and experience</p>	<p>Exemplars are a source of inspiration for countries seeking solutions to biodiversity challenges. BBI will identify case studies that could provide a methodological template for the Party seeking assistance and support Parties in their uptake and adaptation of any approaches identified (with the help of external partners).</p>	<p>The help desk identifies a case study that is relevant to a request for assistance on reforestation in arid regions and identifies a regional institution willing to support the adaptation of the approach used in the case study for use by the Party requesting assistance.</p>
	<p>5. Development of proposals for new TSC projects, matching need with a relevant institution with required expertise and experience</p>	<p>The process to develop new TSC projects will involve identifying a Party/institution to co-develop a plan or project proposal with the Party in need. The TSC proposal is an elaborated robust and well-articulated proposal that identifies all project partners, a timeline, a budget and the expected outcomes. This proposal can then be used to seek funding.</p>	<p>The help desk requests suggestions from partner networks or appropriate institutions that are available to co-develop a proposal with a Party requesting assistance for the development of its access and benefit-sharing (ABS) framework. Seed funding may be granted to catalyze cooperation between the TA provider and the Party requesting assistance.</p>

Figure 2 presents the key steps involved in responding to requests for assistance:

1. Parties requiring support will complete and submit a request for assistance form to the BBI help desk through the BBI web platform, or via non-electronic means if necessary.
2. If necessary, the help desk will work with Parties to clarify and articulate the need for which assistance is required, and identify options of how it might be addressed through TSC.
3. The help desk will then determine what course of action is most appropriate, including directly responding to the Party for simple requests, identifying and providing relevant case studies and other tools to learn from, identifying and linking up the Party with other relevant initiatives and programmes that might help, or facilitating the development of a specific TSC project proposal to meet the need.
4. To develop a proposal for a new TSC project, the help desk will work with a network of partners and a database of technical assistance (TA) providers to identify a suitable institutional partner to match with the country requesting assistance³³. The institution will be selected based on relevant experience and expertise. The help desk will facilitate the match and where appropriate support the development of a joint proposal with small grants for this purpose.
5. The process will result in a developed project concept note or full project proposal that can be used to seek funding for the proposed TSC project.

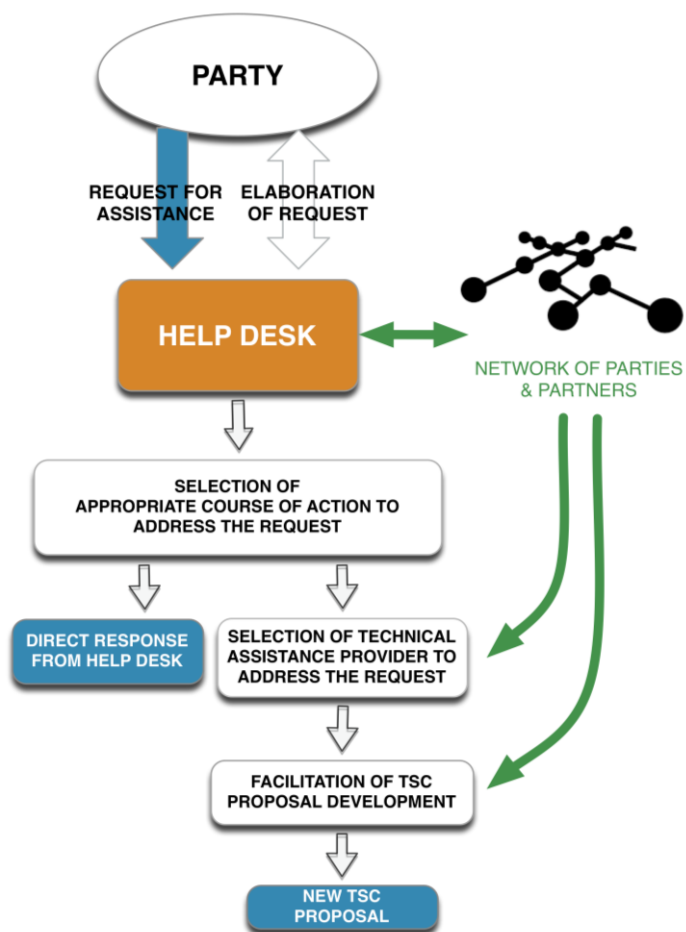


Figure 2. Responding to requests for assistance

³³ The selection of technical assistance (TA) providers will follow established criteria and guidelines to promote transparency and ensure uptake of good practices in TSC. The criteria and guidelines will be approved by the BBI Steering Committee and then posted online for transparency. To select a TA provider, the help desk will (a) search the BBI database of TA providers, and if necessary (b) solicit nominations of additional TA providers from the partner network. These institutions will then be asked to supply a brief note detailing their relevant area of expertise, experience on the subject and the person who will conduct the work. The help desk will then identify the best match based on this information, following established criteria (e.g. prioritizing, as appropriate, South-South and triangular cooperation, institutional capacity-building, lasting cooperation among countries, etc.). The establishment of the network of partners to support BBI activities such as matchmaking is presented in Section 5.4.

4.3.2 Encouraging TSC among Parties and partners

BBI will encourage Parties and partner organizations to engage more in TSC to meet biodiversity objectives. BBI will do this through: communication and outreach; regional and thematic meetings; and provision of seed grants to catalyze TSC projects.

Communication and Outreach

Communication and outreach are critical to developing new TSC partnerships and projects in all regions and to fostering long-term sustainability and impact of BBI activities. Outreach and communication are also necessary to publicize BBI and catalyze support for TSC among Parties. Furthermore, they are critical to ensuring access to technical support for countries yet to be engaged in TSC, and communicating BBI success stories to inspire further cooperation. Work is ongoing to develop a committed and active network of partners in all regions that can support BBI activities, including the identification of appropriate sources of technical assistance to match with Parties requesting assistance. This network will be key to the success of BBI activities and will continue to be developed through outreach activities to ensure that a diversity of institutions and regions are represented.

The BBI communication and outreach strategy will include the following components:

- An outreach plan to ensure that BBI services are widely publicized and used by Parties, and that key stakeholders are actively engaged in BBI activities. The communication strategy will take into account differences in language, access to technology and other factors across regions.
- Mechanisms to foster the sharing of success stories and good practice case studies to inspire TSC initiatives. For example, links to existing collections of 'bright spot' success stories on conservation and TSC will be highlighted on the BBI web platform, and stories and videos of BBI projects and activities will be made accessible through an interactive map interface.
- A communication plan to promote transparency of BBI operations and provide a simple mechanism to allow feedback from Parties. This will include a plan to regularly report on BBI implementation and TSC achievements.
- The identification of opportunities to promote TSC through BBI networks (side events at all major CBD meetings to showcase TSC in action, regional and thematic meetings to encourage new cooperation).
- A strategy to ensure that funders are aware of BBI and its objectives
- Strategies and priorities for mobilizing networks of organizations that will support BBI in delivery of TSC.

Regional and thematic meetings and roundtables

As needed, regional and thematic meetings or roundtables will be organised to communicate Parties' needs and showcase potential solutions that may be of interest across various countries or groups of countries facing similar challenges in achieving their national biodiversity targets. Many countries and organizations have a wide array of knowledge, experiences and lessons learned they may wish to share. Regional meetings (or BBI sessions as part of other meetings) will serve to catalyze alliances among countries focused on knowledge-sharing and identification of solutions to Parties' needs. In some cases global and regional stakeholders may be brought in to share specific tools or approaches with interested institutions. Parties and institutions will be encouraged to host or contribute to these activities. Regional meetings/roundtables will be piloted during Phase I.

Seed grants

BBI will establish a small grants facility to assist in catalyzing TSC projects. This service will involve the development and implementation of a transparent process for providing small grants to support the development of concept notes or full proposals for TSC projects or to provide catalytic support for quick responses to small specific requests for assistance. Criteria for accessing these grants will be developed and external funding for proposal development from the Parties will be encouraged. The small grants programme will be piloted in 2017 to refine the criteria for accessing these funds.

5 BBI GOVERNANCE AND OPERATIONAL STRUCTURE

BBI will adopt a flexible and adaptive governance and operational approach to ensure that the needs and expectations of various stakeholders are met.

5.1 BBI Steering Committee

The governance and operations of BBI will be overseen by a Steering Committee established for this purpose, under the overall strategic oversight by the Bureau of the Subsidiary Body on Implementation (SBI)³⁴ on behalf of the Conference of the Parties and with advice from an advisory committee.

The Steering Committee will be the decision-making body responsible for providing management oversight to the implementation of BBI, under the overall policy guidance provided by the SBI Bureau³⁵ and within the context of the direction established by the COP and COP-MOP decisions. The roles and responsibilities of committee will include the following:

- Prioritization of activities based on COP and COP-MOP decisions (and where relevant SBI and SBSTTA recommendations)
- Consideration of the BBI operational arrangements
- Review and approval of the annual work plans and budgets
- Setting performance targets and outcomes
- Providing guidance on fundraising options
- Periodic review of progress in achieving the BBI mission and objectives, and
- Reporting to the SBI, COP and COP-MOPs through the respective Bureaus.

The CBD Secretariat will provide support for the work of the Committee, including the necessary logistics and secretarial services.

The Steering Committee shall be composed of:

- Five government representatives (one per regional group),
- A representative per donor country/organization providing funding support to BBI,

³⁴ Pending decision from the COP on this matter (draft decision included in document UNEP/CBD/COP/13/2). The draft modus operandi of the Subsidiary Body on Implementation was approved by SBI at its first meeting, and submitted for consideration of COP 13 (SBI Recommendation 1/9).

³⁵ The SBI Bureau will discuss BBI-related matters as part of its regular meetings. During those meetings, the Bureau may, as appropriate, invite the Chairs of the BBI Steering Committee and the Advisory Committee and relevant resource persons to support its deliberations on BBI.

- A representative from the Secretariat of the Global Environment Facility, and
- Chair of the Subsidiary Body on Implementation or his/her designated representative from the Bureau.

A senior representative of the CBD Executive Secretary will participate in an ex-officio capacity, and serve as Secretary to the Committee.

Members of the Steering Committee will be selected by the CBD Executive Secretary in consultation with the SBI Bureau based on nominations made by Parties and relevant organizations. The selection will take into account the expertise and experience of the nominated officials regarding technical and scientific cooperation under the Convention and its Protocols and will give due regard to balanced geographical representation and gender. Committee members will serve for a term of two years, with a possibility of renewal for one more term. The Committee may, as appropriate, also invite resource persons to support its deliberations on BBI.

A Chair will be selected by its members to direct the meetings and operations of the Committee and work in consultation with the Secretariat to develop the meeting agendas and maintain communication among its members.

In the interim until the Steering Committee is established, a Project Selection Committee³⁶ that was convened in mid-2016 to provide a transparent assessment of candidate BBI pilot projects will play the role of Steering Committee. The Project Selection Committee will be discontinued once the Steering Committee is established.

More detailed terms of reference and rules of procedure for the Steering Committee will be developed separately and made available on the BBI website.

5.2 BBI Advisory Committee

An informal Advisory Committee will be established to advise the Steering Committee and the Executive Secretary on all aspects related to the implementation of BBI within the context of the overall direction provided in COP and COP-MOP decisions (and where relevant SBI and SBSTTA recommendations).

Drawing on experience gained from the implementation of BBI and similar initiatives elsewhere, the Committee will provide advice on matters relating to:

- Best means for implementation of the BBI Action Plan
- Building and maintaining strategic partnerships with technical assistance providers, regional network hubs, international networks of biodiversity scientists and educators, and partner mechanisms engaged in TSC and capacity development
- Approaches for fostering the alignment of BBI with related initiatives
- Increasing uptake of BBI support in all regions
- Strategies for increasing the impact of BBI activities
- Opportunities for developing new technical and scientific initiatives and partnerships

³⁶ The Project Selection Committee is composed of representatives from a representative of the Ministry of Environment of the Government of the Republic of Korea, a representative of the Global Environment Facility, a representative of the Consortium of Scientific Partners on Biodiversity, and the chairs of SBSTTA and the Informal Advisory Committee of the Clearing-House.

- Implementation of the help desk(s), and
- Evaluation of proposed BBI activities.

The CBD Secretariat will provide support for the work of the Committee.

The Advisory Committee shall be composed of:

- Two representatives nominated by the CBD's Consortium of Scientific Partners on Biodiversity (one from an organization in a developed country and one from a developing country),
- Chair of the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice (SBSTTA),
- Chair of the Informal Advisory Committee of the Clearing-House Mechanism,
- Chair of the Compliance Committee under the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety,
- Chair of the Compliance Committee under the Nagoya Protocol on Access to Genetic Resources and the Fair and Equitable Sharing of Benefits Arising from their Utilization, and
- A representative of Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities.

The Advisory Committee may, as appropriate, also invite resource persons to support its deliberations on specific subject matters.

A Chair will be selected by its members to direct the meetings and operations of the Committee and maintain communication among its members.

More detailed terms of reference and rules of procedure for the Advisory Committee will be developed separately and made available on the BBI website.

5.3 Secretariat

Implementation of BBI will be coordinated and administered by the CBD Secretariat. The CBD Secretariat will:

- Oversee and report on the implementation of the BBI Action Plan
- Manage the BBI budgets
- Deliver/coordinate the help desk functions
- Engage with Parties, partner organizations and networks to encourage their involvement in TSC within and across regions
- Support for the BBI governance and advisory processes
- Manage BBI communications and outreach work, including management of the BBI website, and
- Carry out other work requested by the BBI Steering and Advisory Committees.

5.4 Stakeholders and partners

The main BBI beneficiaries are Parties to the Convention and to its Protocols. Priority for assistance will be given to developing country Parties, in particular the least developed countries (LDCs) and small island developing States (SIDS) among them, and Parties with economies in transition. Indigenous peoples and local communities will also be priority beneficiaries.

BBI activities will promote the active involvement of all relevant stakeholders, including national public sector institutions, non-governmental organizations, academic and research institutions and the private sector.

Table 5 presents the different types of potential partners and stakeholders of BBI (noting that there is some overlap between the different categories).

Table 5. Types of partners for BBI with examples of partner institutions

Type of Partner	Potential role(s)	Examples
Potential applicants for BBI support	Request assistance through BBI, share expertise, experience with other Parties	Parties, indigenous peoples and local communities and their related institutions at national and sub-national scales
Technical assistance providers	Provide expertise and other forms of technical assistance, support development of project proposals, support responses to requests for assistance from Parties	Regional and international organizations, academic and research institutions, private sector partners
Help desk nodes in different regions ³⁷	Support BBI activities in regions, coordinate and support the development of BBI initiatives in the region, prioritization of needs	UNEP or UNDP regional offices, regionally-active biodiversity institutions
Relevant initiatives and networks	Coordinate with BBI to develop synergies and joint TSC approaches, prevent duplication of services, increase accessibility of services to Parties and improve net outcomes	Climate Technology Centre and Network, NBSAP Forum, BES-Net, Sub-Global Assessment Network, Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services
BBI advisors	Evaluate outcomes, provide feedback on direction, help build credibility and relevance of BBI, support communication and outreach	CBD partner organizations and networks
BBI donors	Provide funding for TSC initiatives and specific BBI activities (e.g. regional meetings)	GEF, development assistance agencies, foundations, relevant United Nations bodies

6 IMPLEMENTATION

6.1 Roadmap for establishing BBI

BBI will be implemented in a phased manner. The initial implementation phase of BBI will be critical to ensuring its long-term sustainability. Table 6 presents a summary of activities to be completed to begin

³⁷ The establishment of regional and sub-regional nodes of the help desk will be subject to the availability of funding and will follow a rigorous and transparent selection process. Guidelines for the establishment of any form of BBI nodes will be developed in a transparent manner as BBI is implemented.

implementing the BBI action plan during the initial stage of Phase I. Some of the activities listed in Q1 were initiated in 2016 and will be continued in 2017. BBI tools will come online and the help desk will be open to receiving requests for assistance starting in 2017. Implementation of BBI will continue until 2020 (and beyond, if additional funding is secured) based on the infrastructure established and tested during Phase I.

During Phase I (2017-2018), BBI help desk services will be tested and evaluated in order to refine the criteria, procedures and approaches to facilitating TSC. The first phase will also allow the BBI team to monitor the volume of requests for assistance submitted, the provenance and subject matter of these requests and the ability of the help desk team to respond to them. The help desk may close for a month or two during 2017 if any important changes need to be made to the BBI infrastructure or services. The help desk will be open year-round in subsequent years.

The main activities for Phase I (2017-2018) will include:

- Developing basic web infrastructure
- Establishing help desk and launching the first phase of help desk services
 - Hiring of staff
 - Developing criteria and protocols for providing assistance
 - Developing initial database of technical assistance providers
 - Developing and testing approaches to prioritization of assistance
 - Monitoring and evaluation of early requests for assistance
 - Identification and prioritization of theme(s) for 2018
 - Further testing the help desk services with recurrent evaluation and adaptation of services
- Communication and outreach
 - Developing descriptions of demonstration projects to exemplify successful TSC under the Convention
 - Formalizing initial network of partners to support BBI activities
 - Piloting one regional roundtable in order to develop and refine approach for selecting host, region, participants and subject matter

Activities for Phase II (post-2017) may include:

- Establishing help desk nodes in different regions
- Developing interactive aspects of web platform
- Developing additional web resources as necessary
- Further developing interoperability with other TSC and capacity development mechanisms
- Scaling up support for fundraising for TSC projects (e.g. approaching donors)

Table 6. Roadmap for BBI establishment

Activities				
	2017			
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
Develop web platform				
Further develop resources on BBI website				
Design and create web platform based on web strategy				
Establish help desk				
Define details of help desk (location, who will operate it, TOR and operating protocols)				
Establish help desk(s)				
Define details of regional or sub-regional help desk nodes (location, who will operate them, TOR and operating protocols)				
Implement a communication and outreach strategy to increase understanding of the value and importance of TSC				
Develop communication strategy to reach all CBD Parties and partners				
Design web strategy to align with communication strategy				
Build collaboration and alignment with potential partner institutions				
Formalize initial network of partners that will support BBI activities				
Explore opportunities for engaging partners at regional level in promoting and facilitating access to TSC				
Communication and outreach with Parties and partners to publicize BBI and encourage TSC				
Organize regional and thematic meetings to encourage new cooperation				
Develop process for identifying opportunities and organize pilot regional meeting				
Develop seed grant programme				
Develop criteria and focus for seed grants				
Develop evaluation and selection process for seed grants				
Provide seed grants to projects that qualify				
Provide technical assistance to Parties via help desk for the precise expression of needs and TSC requests				
Develop and test draft form and process for providing assistance				
Refine and finalize form and process				
Finalize criteria related to eligibility and prioritization of requests for assistance				
Launch the first phase of help desk services				
Provide matchmaking service to Parties via help desk				
Develop process for identifying TSC partners to provide technical assistance				
Develop criteria for eligibility of partners to co-develop proposals				
Develop, test and finalize proposal development process				
Launch the first phase of matchmaking				
Evaluation of BBI performance				
Finalize initial indicators and performance targets related to impact				
Develop evaluation process (timetable, deliverables, participation)				
Receive feedback on BBI activities and priorities based on the first phase				
Revise indicators and performance targets related to impact				
Governance bodies				
Develop governance process for BBI and its TOR				
Develop TOR for advisory process				
Identify potential members of governance and advisory processes				
Convene advisory process				
BBI Staff				

Activities				
	2017			
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
Hire BBI programme officer				
Hire CBD Secretariat support staff				
Hire help desk staff				
Budget				
Propose budget for 2017-2020				
Receive feedback on budget, identify shortfalls and need for fundraising				
Finalize budget and develop fundraising strategy				
Financial sustainability				
Identify fundraising goals and approaches				
Identify and liaise with potential donors				
Hold regular discussions on strategies for financial sustainability				

6.2 Financial sustainability

The Republic of Korea has provided the initial funding to support the development of BBI. This funding will mainly cover salaries of BBI staff who will administer and coordinate the help desk service, as well as some, but not all, BBI activities and services. In order to ensure its long-term sustainability, BBI will need to raise additional financial resources from various sources, including voluntary contributions by other Parties and partners³⁸. In the future, the COP may need to consider incorporating the BBI budget into the regular budget of the Convention.

Fundraising is also essential in the short term, in order to scale up BBI activities and to develop significantly BBI's presence in various regions through the establishment of BBI nodes within regions. Parties, partner organizations and foundations can contribute to BBI operations through a number of mechanisms, including direct funding through the Secretariat, secondments of experts to support the help desk and its regional nodes, twinning arrangements, hosting meetings, and provision of fellowships and travel funds, among others. A fundraising strategy will be developed to during the first four years to ensure BBI sustainability into the future.

6.3 Monitoring and evaluation

A monitoring and evaluation framework will be developed to measure progress and report regularly on BBI's performance and outcomes, using indicators and targets to be developed during the first phase of BBI³⁹. Fundamentally the purpose of evaluation is to improve performance over time, and to ensure that the BBI meets, and continues to meet, the needs of Parties. The framework will focus on completed activities, as well as other key performance indicators.

A simple mechanism will also be developed to facilitate easy and timely feedback from Parties on BBI activities. Feedback will be solicited especially during the first two years to evaluate the relevance and effectiveness of BBI activities and services and of the TSC projects facilitated through BBI. The evaluation will also determine the extent to which BBI activities are responding to the evolving needs

³⁸ Consultations have suggested a budget of USD5M/year is needed to implement all proposed BBI activities across regions.

³⁹ BBI indicators and targets will be developed in 2017. Once approved by the Steering Committee they will be made available on the BBI website.

of Parties and the decisions of Parties to the Convention and its Protocols. Monitoring of requests submitted by Parties will additionally enable BBI to revise its priority activities based on needs. Yearly revisions based on feedback and performance indicators will be completed to support an adaptive approach to programme management that is responsive to Party needs. The evaluation process for BBI should not be overly time-consuming, and this will be taken into account in planning the evaluation process.

Furthermore, consideration will be given to the degree to which BBI is achieving the identified outcomes (see section 2.3). This may be inherently more subjective as there will be multiple influences. However this might be addressed through a survey early on in implementation for establishing a baseline, and then a follow up survey three years later. Consideration of this will be scheduled into the early implementation of BBI.

Overall responsibility for assessing BBI performance will rest with the BBI Steering Committee. The governance process will consider both efficiency of the operational structure, and the effectiveness of support being provided.

As indicated above, the BBI Steering Committee will also review, as appropriate, the indicators and targets used for assessing BBI performance, based on advice from the Advisory Committee. It is expected that the targets and indicators may need to be recalibrated after the first year of implementation for the reasons given earlier. In-depth evaluations of BBI performance will occur every four years to update the action plan, with the first in 2020 with the aim of demonstrating the level of achievement of the established objectives, and to inform the future of the initiative after 2020.
