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Item 9 of the provisional agenda*

NATIONAL REPORTING UNDER THE CONVENTION

Note by the Executive Secretary

I. INTRODUCTION

1. In decision [XIII/27](#), the Conference of the Parties encouraged Parties to submit their sixth national reports by 31 December 2018.
2. In decision [14/27](#), paragraph 1, the Conference of the Parties decided to commence with synchronized reporting cycles for the Convention, the Cartagena Protocol and the Nagoya Protocol in 2023. The Conference of the Parties serving as the meetings of the Parties to the Cartagena Protocol and to the Nagoya Protocol, in decisions [CP-9/5](#) and [NP-3/4](#) respectively, accepted the invitation from the Conference of the Parties and decided to have a synchronized reporting cycle commencing in 2023.
3. Also, in decision 14/27, paragraph 3, the Conference of the Parties requested the Executive Secretary to report to the Subsidiary Body on Implementation at its third meeting on progress in the work undertaken intersessionally, including:
 - (a) Assessing the cost implications of the synchronized reporting cycles for the Convention, the Cartagena Protocol and the Nagoya Protocol starting in 2023 in order to inform the Global Environment Facility in connection with the preparation for the replenishment of the Trust Fund for the 2022-2026 cycle;
 - (b) Efforts to improve and harmonize the user interface and the design of national reporting, including the online reporting tool, under the Convention and its Protocols;
 - (c) Identifying concrete actions to advance synergies in reporting to the biodiversity-related conventions and the Rio conventions, and contributing to the monitoring process for the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development;¹
 - (d) Evaluating the use by Parties of online reporting tools for the sixth national report, the interim national report for the Nagoya Protocol and the national report for the Cartagena Protocol, to explore harmonization with the reporting systems used by related convention secretariats.
4. In its decision [14/34](#), the Conference of the Parties requested the Subsidiary Body on Implementation at its third meeting to contribute to the development of the post-2020 global biodiversity framework and to complement it with elements related to means to support and review implementation.

*CBD/SBI/3/1.

¹ See General Assembly resolution 70/1.

5. Section II below summarizes the experiences and lessons learned from the preparation of the sixth national reports to the Convention. Section III provides a summary of responses to some of the requests contained in decision 14/27, paragraph 3. Section IV presents a synthesis of views and suggestions on future national reporting under the Convention emanating from the first and second meetings of the Working Group on the Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework, the Thematic Consultation on Transparent Implementation, Monitoring, Reporting and Review for the Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework, and the twenty-third meeting of the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice, as well as the views expressed in relevant regional and thematic consultations and through submissions related to the post-2020 global biodiversity framework.

6. Section V presents considerations and principles for the development of the draft template for the seventh national report. Annex I presents proposed elements for the draft template for the seventh national report. Annex II contains a list of countries that have submitted their sixth national report.

II. EXPERIENCES AND LESSONS LEARNED FROM THE SIXTH NATIONAL REPORTING CYCLE

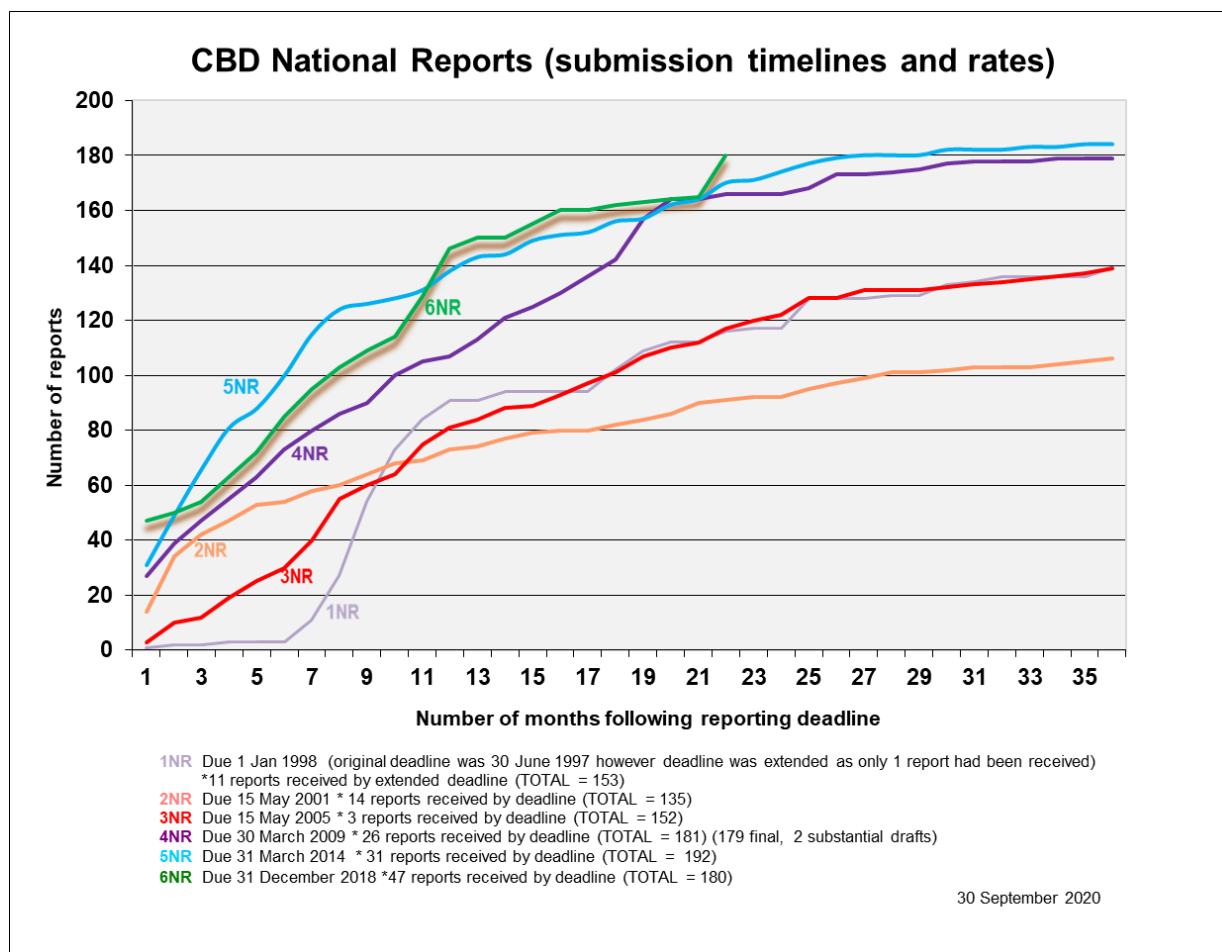
A. Rate of submission of the sixth national report

7. As of 30 September 2020, a total of 180 countries have submitted their sixth national report (see annex II). Of these, 91 reports had been prepared using the online reporting tool and 89 had been prepared offline. Those countries which submitted offline largely followed the reporting templates contained in the annex to decision [XIII/27](#). A total of 20 Parties have submitted both an online and offline version of their report. Reports submitted online are available on the clearing-house mechanism² and those submitted offline on the Convention's website.³

8. A total of 47 reports were received before or by the deadline of 31 December 2018. As at 30 September 2020, which constitutes 21 months following the submission deadline, the rate of submission of the sixth national report has surpassed that of the fourth national reports by 11 points and that of the fifth national reports by 7 points. It should be noted that the COVID-19 pandemic has slowed down the submission rate of the sixth national report as many countries could not finalize or approve the report as planned. The figure below provides an overview of submission trends in relation to all six rounds of national reporting conducted to date.

² https://chm.cbd.int/database?schema_s=nationalReport6

³ <https://www.cbd.int/reports/>



9. As shown in the figure above, the submission rate of the sixth national reports was initially higher than for previous rounds of national reporting. Despite progress made, these results reveal that Parties are still facing challenges in submitting their national reports by the deadline.

B. Support provided for the preparation of the sixth national reports

10. Parties have been provided with support of various types by the Secretariat and its partners in relation to the preparation of the sixth national report. This includes:

(a) Early access by eligible countries to funding from the Global Environment Facility, and an increase in the amount provided;

(b) Global and regional workshops organized by the Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), together with other partners, to support the preparation of the sixth national report (a global workshop was held prior to the twenty-first meeting of the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice, in December 2017, and six capacity-development workshops for the regions of Western Africa, Eastern and Southern Africa, Middle East, Pacific, Central and Eastern Europe, Central America and the Caribbean have also been held);

(c) Support to subregional workshops for member States of Association of Southeast Asian Nations and the Gulf Cooperation Council;

(d) Support to several national workshops to facilitate domestic consultation processes and report preparation;

(e) The organization of side events and help desks on the sixth national report in the margins of major meetings under the Convention (Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice: twenty-first, twenty-second, twenty-third and twenty-fourth meetings; Subsidiary Body on Implementation: second meeting; Conference of the Parties: fourteenth meeting; Working Group on the Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework: first meeting);

(f) The development of technical support materials, such as guidance on stakeholder engagement, the use of indicators, gender and the use of spatial data;

(g) The organization of more than a dozen webinars on various issues related to the preparation of the sixth national reports, such as stakeholder engagement, gender, use of spatial data, use of indicators, and reviewing implementation of national biodiversity strategies and action plans (NBSAPs);

(h) Provision of review comments and suggestions on draft reports, as requested by Parties;

(i) Training and support provided on the use of the online reporting tool;

(j) Technical support provided through the United Nations Biodiversity Lab, developed by UNDP, in collaboration with relevant partners, such as MapX and UNEP-WCMC, on the use of spatial data.⁴

C. Challenges encountered by Parties in preparing the sixth national reports

11. Through various meetings and consultations, Parties have identified both general and specific limitations with the format of the sixth national reports. Generally, many Parties felt that, in the future, the format should be shortened and more streamlined and should only focus on information which is essential in assessing progress towards the implementation of the Convention and its Strategic Plan for Biodiversity. Some countries have also noted overlaps and duplications among the different sections of the report, particularly in regard to sections II, III and IV. This was especially the case for those countries that had either adopted the Aichi Biodiversity Targets as national targets or reported progress against the global targets rather than their national targets. Parties have also provided a number of more specific comments on the different sections of the sixth national report:

Section I – No option was provided for those countries that had adopted national targets but chosen to report against global targets (Such an option was added later on in the online reporting tool);

Section II – Many countries found it particularly challenging to assess the effectiveness of measures taken for implementation in this section, due in part to a lack of assessment tools or approaches, and many countries did not provide information about tools or approaches used for such analyses (however, sources of data or information were provided). Some countries also felt that the description of considerable detail about measures taken could reduce the focus on outcomes of actions;

Section IV – The analysis of national contributions to the global biodiversity targets requested in section IV was also challenging as many countries felt that, while they could measure their own progress at the national level, it was difficult to determine what this contributed towards the achievement of the global targets.

D. Challenges encountered by the Secretariat in analysing the information in the sixth national reports

12. The format of the sixth national reports was relatively flexible in that it allowed Parties to report on their national targets and/or the Aichi Biodiversity Targets. Further, while Parties were required to assess progress towards their national or Aichi Biodiversity Targets, how they did so was up to them, with consideration given to national circumstances. Similarly, the process for setting national targets or related

⁴ An analysis undertaken by UNDP in this regard revealed that Parties had used more spatial data for reporting on the effectiveness of NBSAP implementation, as well as on the achievement of national targets and Aichi Biodiversity Targets, in particular Aichi Biodiversity Targets 3, 5, 10, 11, 12, 14, 15, 16, 17 and 20. The analysis also shows that the use of spatial data had increased significantly in the sixth national reports relative to the fifth national reports.

commitments in NBSAPs was also flexible and largely left to the discretion of the Parties. This flexibility facilitates the reporting process by making it easier for Parties to report in accordance with national circumstances. However, this flexibility and the different approaches Parties have used as a result have made it challenging for the Secretariat to assess the information in the national reports in a comprehensive and consistent manner. For example, some Parties have set process-related targets, some have set outcome-oriented targets, and some have used a combination of both. This has necessitated different approaches at the national level in evaluating progress. These varying national approaches are not necessarily comparable. Further, in their national reports, Parties have mapped their national targets to the Aichi Biodiversity Targets in different ways and based on different information. For example, some have established one national target for each of the Aichi Biodiversity Targets, while others have set multiple national targets for one Aichi Biodiversity Target. Similarly, some countries have set national targets which relate to multiple Aichi Biodiversity Targets. An additional challenge is that some Parties have not included national targets in their NBSAPs but referenced them in their national reports, while other Parties have assessed progress in their national reports against national targets which are different from those in their NBSAPs. Further, some Parties have chosen to report against the Aichi Biodiversity Targets rather than towards their national biodiversity targets and some have reported against the Aichi Biodiversity Targets as they have not developed distinct national targets. In future rounds of national reporting, Parties may wish to take into account the trade-offs that exist between having a flexible reporting process and the need for comparable national information and approaches which can be aggregated at the global level.

III. RESPONSES TO REQUESTS CONTAINED IN DECISION 14/27

A. Assessment of cost implications of the synchronized reporting cycles of the Convention and its Protocols to inform the eighth replenishment of the Global Environment Facility (2022-2026)

13. According to decision [14/27](#), paragraph 1, Parties to the Convention and its Protocols are expected to submit their next national reports in 2023 (the year when the synchronized reporting cycle commences). Therefore, funds to support this round of reporting should be allocated from the seventh replenishment of the Global Environment Facility (GEF-7). It is unlikely that there will be any major changes in the amount of resources required to prepare each of the reports in a synchronized manner, as the amount of work required for the preparation of these reports will be largely unchanged. That being said, the resources required will need to take into consideration the increase in the number of Parties to, in particular, the Nagoya Protocol since the interim national reports were submitted in 2017.

14. There will likely be changes, however, in the timeframe in which resources are required. Having to prepare three reports at the same time will necessitate that all resources (human and financial) be made available at the same time. Previously, preparing the different reports in accordance with different timeframes meant that resource needs could be staggered. This is likely to be a challenge, particularly for countries where the reports for the Convention and the Protocols are prepared by the same teams of people. As a result of the different timeframes for preparation and submission, distinct projects were created for the provision of GEF funding to support national reporting under the three instruments (the Convention and the Protocols). Having separate projects also ensured that funds were provided for reporting under each instrument. The synchronization of reporting cycles will make it possible to have a single project for the provision of funding to support the preparation of the reports. Having a single project will reduce the administrative burden and transaction costs and hopefully reduce delays in the disbursement of funds. There may be opportunities for some cost savings as domestic consultation processes for preparing these reports may be streamlined. However, adequate funds need to be allocated and earmarked to support the reporting obligations under the different instruments.

B. Increasing synergies in reporting to the biodiversity-related conventions, Rio Conventions and in relation to the Sustainable Development Goals

15. In response to the request contained in decision 14/27, paragraph 3(e), the UNEP World Conservation Monitoring Centre (UNEP-WCMC), with the support of UNEP and the Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity and in consultation with relevant convention secretariats as well as the Biodiversity Liaison Group and the Joint Liaison Group, has identified options for concrete actions to advance synergies in reporting among the biodiversity-related conventions and the Rio conventions, which are contained in document CBD/SBI/3/11/Add.2. In addition, the Secretariat has undertaken a number of actions to increase and promote synergies among different reporting processes. For example, as requested in paragraph 3(g) of decision 14/27, the Secretariat has contributed to the development, testing and promotion of the Data and Reporting Tool (DaRT) being developed by UNEP. Furthermore, in response to paragraph 3(f) of the same decision, the Secretariat has explored with the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs the possibility of enhancing synergies among voluntary national reviews for the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and post-2020 national reporting under the Convention, including through promoting coordination among the national focal points for the Sustainable Development Goals and the national focal points of the Convention on Biological Diversity, as well as the possibility of organizing joint training workshops on the preparation of voluntary new reviews and national reports under the Convention.

C. Evaluation of the use of the online reporting tools of the Convention and its Protocols

16. Of the 180 Parties that have submitted a sixth national report, 91 (51 per cent) did so using the online reporting tool developed in response to decision XIII/29. In late 2019, the Secretariat prepared a survey to evaluate the use of the online reporting tool by Parties.⁵ The survey results highlight the need to improve the robustness and functionality of the online reporting tool, including by making it more streamlined and flexible to accommodate variations in reporting. Various challenges have contributed to making the process of preparing and submitting the sixth national report online cumbersome and time-consuming. The need for further capacity-building for users of the tool and the constraints posed by the tool being dependent on a reliable Internet connection were also noted.

17. With regard to the use of the online reporting tools for the Protocols, on the basis of feedback provided to date by Parties, it seems that Parties have had positive user experiences.

18. The online reporting tool for the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety received positive feedback from Parties. Most Parties managed to complete the online submission of the fourth national report using the new reporting tool independently, and some informed the Secretariat that they had had a positive experience with the new platform and that they found it user-friendly. A few Parties raised some technical issues during the online submission process. These issues have been resolved. Some Parties made suggestions on improving the platform, such as having the possibility of printing the draft of the report or exporting it to portable document format (PDF), which would assist Parties during the final consultations with stakeholders and decision makers. The Secretariat intends to implement the suggested features once the migration of the Biosafety Clearing-House (BCH) to its new platform is completed. Out of the 108 Parties that have to date submitted their fourth national report online, 11 Parties encountered difficulty and requested assistance from the Secretariat in this regard.

19. The online reporting tool for the Nagoya Protocol has also received very positive feedback by countries. Out of the 99 countries that had submitted the interim report,⁶ only 9 countries requested targeted assistance from the Secretariat to submit the report online. A few Parties raised some technical issues related to the online submission of the interim national report, such as including functions for

⁵ A detailed report on the survey results is contained in [CBD/SBI/3/INF/3](#).

⁶ A total of 91 reports were submitted by Parties to the Nagoya Protocol (out of 100 Parties to the Protocol that had the obligation to submit a national report) and 8 were submitted by non-Parties at the time of submission.

automatic saving of drafts or establishing functions to link existing reference records or contacts. All these are being addressed in the further development of the tool.

D. Improving the design of national reporting, including the online reporting tools

20. In response to the challenges identified by Parties in using the online reporting tool for the sixth national report, the Secretariat has been making efforts to improve the online reporting tool, including by:

(a) Allowing Parties to share draft records without a login to the SCBD system. This feature also supports link expiration and link revoking;

(b) Enabling Parties to automatically publish the sub-records (national targets and assessments) when the sixth national report is published;

(c) Allowing Parties to perform “soft saves” of drafts (i.e. the system saves a copy of the draft report every 10 minutes in the background when in “edit” mode. This feature helps in recovering information lost during editing. The draft copies are deleted once the record is published);

(d) The ability to see information in all languages submitted in a same view. This same feature can be used to generate PDF files for all languages together or separately;

(e) An integrated, easy-to-use PDF viewer, including an option to see thumbnails of pages, and a “find” feature, among other things;

(f) Options to generate PDFs from draft records;

(g) Creating a new option in section I for countries that have adopted national targets but wish to report against Aichi Biodiversity Targets.

21. In addition, the Secretariat also made improvements to the online reporting tools for the Protocols and in line with the joint modalities of operation for the clearing-house mechanism of the Convention, the Biosafety Clearing-House and the Access and Benefit-sharing Clearing-House (decision [14/25](#) annex).

22. The Secretariat initiated the migration of the BCH to its new platform. The Secretariat also made available the format for the fourth national report for the Cartagena Protocol through the online preview version of the new BCH platform, on which the report analyser tool was also made available, in all six official languages of the United Nations. The Secretariat also updated and created a number of tools to support Parties in submitting their national report online: (a) it established a Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) page which provides step-by-step guidance on submitting the national report in all six official languages of the United Nations; (b) it set up a discussion forum entitled “BCH on BCH Forum” to facilitate communication among Cartagena Protocol national focal points, BCH focal points, and national authorized users concerning the use of the online reporting tool; and (c) it created an online help service. In addition, the online reporting tool provides the option for users to view the answers provided in the previous national report. Changes were also introduced to make it possible to compare among reports submitted over years to facilitate tracking of trends and comparability.

23. Similar to the BCH, the ABS Clearing-House hosts a report analyser tool that provides an interface for exploring the breakdown of the information submitted for each question of the interim national report on the implementation of the Nagoya Protocol. This tool allows users to select sections or questions of interest, compare results by region or country and visualize the number of responses and averages. The analyser allows the interim national report to be compared with future national reports on the implementation of the Nagoya Protocol in order to gauge and visualize progress. The Secretariat provided countries with assistance in the submission of the report, including through the outreach and

engagement activities and help desk of the ABS Clearing-House, and by developing an FAQ page⁷ and a step-by-step guide.⁸

IV. VIEWS ON NATIONAL REPORTING UNDER THE CONVENTION IN THE CONTEXT OF MONITORING AND REPORTING ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE POST-2020 GLOBAL BIODIVERSITY FRAMEWORK

24. Through various processes, in particular the Thematic Consultation on Transparent Implementation, Monitoring, Reporting and Review for the Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework and the second meeting of the Working Group on the Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework, held in Rome in February 2020, Parties, organizations and observers have provided views on the future national reporting in the context of monitoring the implementation of the post-2020 global biodiversity framework,⁹ including:

(a) National reports should continue to be the main instrument for monitoring and reviewing the implementation of the Convention and the post-2020 global biodiversity framework at national and global levels. However, more effective, robust and transparent national reporting is required;

(b) Future rounds of national reporting should focus on key issues necessary to monitor the implementation of the post-2020 global biodiversity framework, while allowing the flexibility to reflect national circumstances and needs. To avoid repetition and overlaps, it was suggested that some sections of the national report should be mandatory while others could be voluntary;

(c) National reports should focus more on outcomes/impacts of actions and identifying gaps in commitments and implementation, including challenges encountered;

(d) National reporting should complement and add value to any global assessments and/or stocktaking by helping to identify capacity and implementation gaps, scaling up action for implementation and improving transparency;

(e) With regard to the periodicity of national reports, most Parties suggested that the current interval of two national reports in a 10-year period should be maintained. Others suggested that voluntary update review reports could be prepared every two years to allow meetings of the Subsidiary Body on Implementation and of the Conference of the Parties to have more up-to-date information for reviewing and decision-making. It was also suggested that shorter reports could be prepared every two years while more comprehensive reports could be prepared every four or five years;

(f) The online reporting tool should be made easier to use;

(g) Parties should engage indigenous peoples and local communities as well as relevant stakeholders in the preparation of the national report and reflect their inputs in the national report;

(h) The use of indicators in national reports should be encouraged in order to ensure effective monitoring and assessment of progress in implementation. Some suggested that a core set of headline indicators could be developed against which each Party would need to report. Furthermore, some

⁷ <https://absch.cbd.int/about/interimReport>

⁸ <https://absch.cbd.int/about/guides/NR>

⁹ For example, Parties have provided their perspectives through various submissions related to the post-2020 global biodiversity framework. These submissions are accessible from <https://www.cbd.int/conferences/post2020/submissions>. Further, the regional and thematic consultations related to the post-2020 global biodiversity framework have also addressed national reporting to a certain extent. In particular, the Thematic Consultation on Transparent Implementation, Monitoring, Reporting and Review for the Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework held detailed discussions on national reporting and provided inputs to the development of the monitoring, reporting and reviewing framework for the post-2020 global biodiversity framework. In addition, the first and second meetings of the Working Group on the Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework, as well as the twenty-third meeting of the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice and the eleventh meeting of the Working Group on Article 8(j), addressed to a certain extent issues generally related to monitoring, reporting and review of the post-2020 global biodiversity framework which have implications for national reporting.

countries indicated that both national and global indicators should be used and noted that many countries have long established indicators and data sets that will continue to be used;

(i) Synergies among related reporting processes, in terms of both periodicity and content, should be enhanced, in particular the alignment of reporting under the Convention and its Protocols and synergies in reporting under biodiversity-related conventions and Rio conventions and in relation to the Sustainable Development Goals. To this end, modular reporting and the use of Data and Reporting Tool (DaRT) developed by UNEP could be explored;

(j) Adequate resources and capacity, including the development of additional tools to support national reporting, are essential for the timely preparation and submission of national reports;

(k) The possibility of having national reports reviewed, either by the Secretariat or by external experts or bodies before they are submitted, was noted;

(l) National planning and reporting processes should be aligned;

(m) The changes to the format of the national reports should be minimized to allow for comparability between reporting cycles and better tracking of progress.

V. CONSIDERATIONS FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE TEMPLATE OF THE SEVENTH NATIONAL REPORTS

25. The format of national reports, adopted by the Conference of the Parties, has been modified for each cycle based on the experiences and lessons learned in the previous cycles. Based on the views and suggestions above, it is proposed that the development of the template for the seventh national reports should take into account the following principles:

(a) The template for the seventh national report should build on that of the sixth national report. The format should make use of both multiple-choice questions to allow for the aggregation of information, as well as provide space for narrative responses;

(b) The content of the seventh national report should be aligned with the elements of the monitoring framework for the post-2020 global biodiversity framework;

(c) Sections in the report and questions asked therein should focus on information that will be used for the global review or stocktaking of progress in the implementation of the post-2020 global biodiversity framework;

(d) The report should be as short as possible and focus on progress in the implementation of the post-2020 global biodiversity framework, in particular the outcomes of actions taken, challenges encountered and further actions needed;

(e) The template for the seventh national report should be designed to allow indigenous peoples and local communities and other stakeholders to provide inputs to it;

(f) The use of headline indicators agreed by Parties should be mandatory in preparing the seventh national report to allow for global analysis and aggregation of information contained in the report. Parties could also use relevant national and other indicators where appropriate;

(g) Synergies between the national reports under the Convention and other related reporting processes, in particular those under the Protocols, the biodiversity-related conventions and the Rio conventions and in relation to the Sustainable Development Goals, should be encouraged;

(h) In accordance with decision 14/27, the seventh national report should be submitted in 2023 (synchronized with the submission of national reports under the Protocol); however, due to the postponement of the fifteenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties, it is proposed that the seventh national report be submitted in 2024;

(i) The online reporting tool will be further developed as needed to allow Parties to submit the seventh national report online.

26. Proposed key elements of a draft template for the seventh national report are presented in annex I for consideration by the Subsidiary Body on Implementation at its third meeting. The draft template for the seventh national report will be further developed on the basis of views received from the third meeting of the Subsidiary Body on Implementation and the third meeting of the Working Group on the Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework. The revised template will go through a global peer-review process before it is presented for adoption by the Conference of the Parties at its fifteenth meeting. The proposed key elements of a draft template for the seventh national report are aimed at providing a way forward for developing a template which will allow Parties to: (a) report on the status of updating or revising NBSAPs in the light of the post-2020 global biodiversity framework, including the status of adoption of the NBSAP as a policy instrument and on the main elements of the NBSAP; and (b) report on progress towards the 2050 goals, 2030 milestones and targets contained in the post-2020 global biodiversity framework, using the headline indicators, including key actions taken and challenges encountered. The draft template for the seventh national report also takes into consideration the principles outlined above and the experiences and lessons learned from the sixth national report process.

*Annex I***PROPOSED ELEMENTS OF A DRAFT TEMPLATE FOR THE SEVENTH NATIONAL REPORT**

1. Parties are required by Article 26 of the Convention to submit national reports to the Conference of the Parties on measures taken for the implementation of the Convention and their effectiveness in meeting the objectives of the Convention. The seventh national reports are due by **30 June 2024** (decisions 14/27 and 15/--). Given the time required to prepare, approve and submit a national report, Parties are encouraged to start preparing their seventh national report well before the deadline.

2. The seventh national reports should provide an initial assessment of progress in the implementation of the post-2020 global biodiversity framework, in particular outcomes of actions taken, drawing upon information concerning the implementation of national biodiversity strategies and action plans and other actions taken to implement the Convention. To enable global aggregation and analysis of progress, Parties should use a core set of headline indicators contained in the monitoring framework for the goals and targets in the post-2020 global biodiversity framework in assessing their progress at the national level.

3. Considering that the seventh national report will cover a period straddling the end of the implementation timeframe for the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 and the first few years of the post-2020 global biodiversity framework, the contents of the report could provide an update on actions and achievements under both the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 and the post-2020 global biodiversity framework (i.e. since the sixth national report, which was submitted in December 2018).

4. The seventh national report should be concise, using the most up-to-date data and information from as many sources as possible, including global and regional data sets, as well as the most recent reviews of national implementation and other national assessments.

5. Parties are encouraged to involve relevant stakeholders in the preparation of their seventh national report. The actions taken by these stakeholders, including the voluntary commitments made by them, will contribute to implementation of national and global targets and, therefore, should be reflected in the national report. This includes representatives of indigenous peoples and local communities, subnational governments, representatives of relevant sectors, business, academia, non-governmental organizations and civil society organizations. Parties are also encouraged to involve the national focal points of the biodiversity-related conventions and the Rio conventions, in addition to the national focal points for the Sustainable Development Goals and other relevant international and regional conventions. In addition, further to decision 14/17, in which the Conference of the Parties decided that the submission of the next reports under the Convention and its Protocols would be synchronized, Parties should involve the respective national focal points for the Cartagena and Nagoya Protocols (if different from the CBD primary national focal point) in the preparation of the seventh national report.

Structure and format of the seventh national report and use of the report

6. The seventh national report contains five sections:

Section I	Brief overview of the process of preparation of the report
Section II	Status of the updated national biodiversity strategy and action plan (NBSAP) in the light of the post-2020 global biodiversity framework
Section III	Initial assessment of progress towards the 2050 goals
Section IV	Initial assessment of progress towards the 2030 milestones and action targets
Section V	Executive summary of the report (updated biodiversity country profile)

7. To facilitate the preparation of the seventh national report, each section of the report will use a standardized template that contains specific questions with a choice of possible answers. Space to provide narrative information to further substantiate the answers given is also provided. In addition, Parties are encouraged to provide links to relevant websites and documents where additional information may be found, eliminating the need to include this information directly in the national report.

8. A resource manual will be prepared to provide further guidance and explanation on the use of the template and contain links to potential sources of information for the preparation of the seventh national report. Other supporting materials will be developed as needed to support the preparation of the report.

9. The information contained in the seventh national report will be used:

(a) To undertake a mid-term review of the implementation of the post-2020 global biodiversity framework by the Conference of the Parties;

(b) To contribute to the first Global Biodiversity Commitment Gap Report, which will likely be due in 2024 or 2025;

(c) To undertake the first global stocktaking by the Conference of the Parties, most likely in 2025;

(d) To develop the sixth edition of the *Global Biodiversity Outlook*;

(e) To contribute to the review of the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, including the Sustainable Development Goals and associated targets;

(f) To contribute to the review of the implementation of the strategic plans of related conventions and processes.

Use of a core set of headline indicators for monitoring and reporting

10. To enable global aggregation and analysis of progress, the use of a core set of headline indicators, agreed in the monitoring framework of the post-2020 global biodiversity framework, is proposed as a mandatory component of national reports. National report templates could be pre-populated with available national data and disaggregated from global data sets or national data that is publicly available. Parties would then have the option to use the available data, to propose an alternative data set or to report “no data”/“not relevant”.

Enhancing synergies in reporting under the biodiversity-related conventions and the Rio conventions and in relation to the Sustainable Development Goals

11. As indicated above, Parties are encouraged to involve the national focal points of the biodiversity-related conventions and the Rio conventions, in addition to the national focal points for the Sustainable Development Goals, when preparing the seventh national report. Parties are also encouraged to use the Data and Reporting Tool for Multilateral Environmental Agreements (DaRT) developed by UNEP. DaRT is the first tool developed to support Parties in making effective use of synergies in the field of knowledge and information management for national reporting under the biodiversity-related conventions and was endorsed by the InforMEA Initiative (<https://dart.informea.org>). Parties are also encouraged to take actions in this regard, as indicated in decision 15/--.

Submission of the report

12. To facilitate the preparation and submission of the seventh national report, an online reporting tool will be developed for use by Parties. The online reporting tool will be accessible on the clearing-house mechanism¹⁰ of the Convention and allow multiple nationally authorized users to draft elements of the national report and submit them for review and internal approval before formal submission by a national publishing authority. The tool also allows Parties to submit parts of the national report as they are

¹⁰ <https://chm.cbd.int>

finalized or submit the entire report once all of the sections are completed. For those Parties with limited Internet access or which prefer to submit their national reports in document form, an offline version of the reporting templates will be made available. If the national report is submitted in document form, it should be accompanied by an official letter or an email message from the national focal point for the Convention or a senior government official responsible for the implementation of the Convention. Parties not using the online reporting tool may send their seventh national report to the Secretariat's main email address (secretariat@cbd.int).

Draft template for the seventh national report

Section I. Brief overview of the process of preparation of the report

<p>Please briefly describe the process undertaken for the preparation of this report by highlighting the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stakeholders engaged and involved; • Coordination mechanisms employed (if applicable); • Consultations undertaken at various levels for preparing this report; • Plan for using the report for communication and outreach activities as well as national planning process if needed.

Section II. Status of the updated or revised NBSAP in the light of the post-2020 global biodiversity framework

<p>Has your country updated or revised its NBSAP or Biodiversity Action Plan in the light of the post-2020 global biodiversity framework?</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> No</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> In process (please indicate the anticipated date of completion)</p>
<p>Does your country's updated NBSAP or Biodiversity Action Plan include the following elements?</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Strategies for mainstreaming</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Capacity development plan</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Resource mobilization plan</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Monitoring, reporting and evaluation mechanism</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Communication and education plan</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Implementation plan (subnational level)</p>

	<input type="checkbox"/> [To be added]
<p>Has your country's updated NBSAP or Biodiversity Action Plan been adopted as a policy instrument?</p>	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> In process
<p>If you answered "yes" above, please indicate the type of policy instrument your country's updated NBSAP or Biodiversity Action Plan has been adopted as.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/> Whole-of-Government <input type="checkbox"/> For the environment sector only <input type="checkbox"/> Legally binding document or law <input type="checkbox"/> Guiding framework <input type="checkbox"/> Integrated into the poverty reduction strategy, sustainable development strategy, national development plan, and other related strategies or plans

Section III. Initial assessment of progress towards the 2050 goals of the post-2020 global biodiversity framework

Please provide below an initial assessment of progress towards the achievement of the 2050 goals of the post-2020 global biodiversity framework, using relevant headline indicators.

2050 Goals	Value of Headline Indicators (to be pre-filled or pre-populated if any such data are available from relevant regional/global datasets)	Please provide the source of data related to the headline indicator(s).
Goal 1		
Goal 2		
Goal 3		
Goal 4		

Section IV. Progress towards the 2030 milestones and action targets

Please use the following template to report on progress in the implementation of each milestone and action target for 2030 included in the post-2020 global biodiversity framework by replicating templates for all milestones and targets. It should be noted that all countries will report progress against the 2030 milestones and targets, drawing on information related to implementation of the Convention, the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 and NBSAPs, as well as actions taken by relevant sectors and stakeholders to implement voluntary commitments.

2030 Milestone/Action Target 1	
Has your country developed and submitted through CHM national commitments corresponding to this milestone/target?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> In process
If you answered yes, do you think your national ambition level (national target(s) in addition to relevant commitments of stakeholders) is adequate to achieve this global milestone/target?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No If you answered “no” and have identified gaps, please briefly describe the steps to be taken to enhance ambition below:

Please provide the value of the headline indicator(s) related to this milestone/target.	(To be pre-filled or pre-populated from relevant regional/global data sets, if such data are available)
Please provide the source of data related to the headline indicator(s).	
Based on the value of the headline indicator(s) provided above, please indicate the current level of national progress that has been made towards this milestone/target:	<input type="checkbox"/> On track to achieve milestone/target <input type="checkbox"/> Progress towards milestone/target but at an insufficient rate <input type="checkbox"/> No significant change <input type="checkbox"/> Moving away from milestone/target <input type="checkbox"/> Unknown
If your country has used other indicators or tools to assess progress, indicated above, please provide details here.	
Please briefly describe main actions to implement this milestone/target:	
For each of the actions described above, if your country has performed an analysis of their effectiveness or impacts, please indicate which action is effective, which is partially effective and which is not effective. For actions assessed as not effective, please elaborate on reasons for this.	
Please share success stories of implementation of this milestone/target, if any, and links to relevant websites and documents.	
Please select key challenges encountered in the implementation of this milestone/target from the list provided in the appendix below (other specific challenges not included in the list can be added). Please also elaborate on the key challenges encountered.	

Section V. Executive summary of the seventh national report (updated country profile)

Please provide an executive summary of the report by highlighting key findings. This will serve as communication material as well as an updated country profile to be made available on the CBD clearing-house mechanism.

<p>Summary of progress towards the 2050 goals and 2030 milestones and action targets</p>	
<p>Changes observed in the status and trends of biodiversity as a result of actions taken or progress made</p>	
<p>Commitment gaps, key challenges encountered in implementation and steps to be taken to enhance ambition and actions</p>	

Appendix

**OBSTACLES TO THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE CONVENTION ON
BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY**

(contained in the appendix to [decision VI/26](#))

1. Political/societal obstacles:
 - (a) Lack of political will and support to implement the Convention on Biological Diversity;
 - (b) Limited public participation and stakeholder involvement;
 - (c) Lack of mainstreaming and integration of biodiversity issues into other sectors, including use of tools such as environmental impact assessments.
 - (d) Political instability;
 - (e) Lack of precautionary and proactive measures, causing reactive policies.
2. Institutional, technical and capacity-related obstacles:
 - (a) Inadequate capacity to act, caused by institutional weaknesses;
 - (b) Lack of human resources;
 - (c) Lack of transfer of technology and expertise;
 - (d) Loss of traditional knowledge;
 - (e) Lack of adequate scientific research capacities to support all the objectives.
3. Lack of accessible knowledge/information:
 - (a) Loss of biodiversity and the corresponding goods and services it provides not properly understood and documented;
 - (b) Existing scientific and traditional knowledge not fully utilized;
 - (c) Dissemination of information on international and national level not efficient;
 - (d) Lack of public education and awareness at all levels.
4. Economic policy and financial resources:
 - (a) Lack of financial and human resources;
 - (b) Fragmentation of GEF financing;
 - (c) Lack of economic incentive measures;
 - (d) Lack of benefit-sharing.
5. Collaboration/cooperation:
 - (a) Lack of synergies at the national and international levels;
 - (b) Lack of horizontal cooperation among stakeholders;
 - (c) Lack of effective partnerships;
 - (d) Lack of engagement of scientific community.
6. Legal/judicial impediments:

- (a) Lack of appropriate policies and laws.
7. Socio-economic factors:
- (a) Poverty;
 - (b) Population pressure;
 - (c) Unsustainable consumption and production patterns;
 - (d) Lack of capacities for local communities.
8. Natural phenomena and environmental change:
- (a) Climate change;
 - (b) Natural disasters.

*Annex II***COUNTRIES THAT HAVE SUBMITTED THE SIXTH NATIONAL REPORT
(AS OF 30 SEPTEMBER 2020)**

1.	Afghanistan	49.	Ecuador
2.	Albania	50.	Egypt
3.	Algeria	51.	El Salvador
4.	Andorra	52.	Equatorial Guinea
5.	Angola	53.	Eritrea
6.	Antigua and Barbuda	54.	Estonia
7.	Argentina	55.	Eswatini
8.	Armenia	56.	Ethiopia
9.	Australia	57.	European Union
10.	Austria	58.	Fiji
11.	Azerbaijan	59.	Finland
12.	Bahamas	60.	France
13.	Bangladesh	61.	Gabon
14.	Barbados	62.	Gambia (the)
15.	Belarus	63.	Georgia
16.	Belgium	64.	Germany
17.	Belize	65.	Ghana
18.	Benin	66.	Greece
19.	Bhutan	67.	Guatemala
20.	Bolivia (Plurinational State of)	68.	Guinea
21.	Bosnia and Herzegovina	69.	Guinea-Bissau
22.	Botswana	70.	Guyana
23.	Brazil	71.	Haiti
24.	Brunei Darussalam	72.	Honduras
25.	Bulgaria	73.	Hungary
26.	Burkina Faso	74.	India
27.	Burundi	75.	Indonesia
28.	Cabo Verde	76.	Iran (Islamic Republic of)
29.	Cambodia	77.	Iraq
30.	Cameroon	78.	Ireland
31.	Canada	79.	Israel
32.	Central African Republic	80.	Italy
33.	Chad	81.	Jamaica
34.	Chile	82.	Japan
35.	China	83.	Jordan
36.	Colombia	84.	Kazakhstan
37.	Comoros	85.	Kenya
38.	Cook Islands	86.	Kiribati
39.	Costa Rica	87.	Kuwait
40.	Côte d'Ivoire	88.	Kyrgyzstan
41.	Croatia	89.	Lao People's Democratic Republic
42.	Cuba	90.	Latvia
43.	Czechia	91.	Lebanon
44.	Democratic Republic of the Congo	92.	Lesotho
45.	Denmark	93.	Liberia
46.	Djibouti	94.	Liechtenstein
47.	Dominica	95.	Luxembourg
48.	Dominican Republic	96.	Madagascar

97. Malawi
 98. Malaysia
 99. Maldives
 100. Malta
 101. Mali
 102. Marshall Islands
 103. Mauritania
 104. Mauritius
 105. Mexico
 106. Micronesia (Federated States of)
 107. Mongolia
 108. Montenegro
 109. Morocco
 110. Mozambique
 111. Myanmar
 112. Namibia
 113. Nauru
 114. Nepal
 115. Netherlands
 116. New Zealand
 117. Nicaragua
 118. Niger
 119. Nigeria
 120. Niue
 121. Norway
 122. Pakistan
 123. Palau
 124. Panama
 125. Papua New Guinea
 126. Paraguay
 127. Peru
 128. Philippines
 129. Poland
 130. Portugal
 131. Qatar
 132. Republic of the Congo
 133. Republic of Korea
 134. Republic of Moldova
 135. Rwanda
 136. Saint Kitts and Nevis
 137. Saint Lucia
 138. Saint Vincent and the Grenadines
 139. Samoa
 140. Sao Tome and Principe
 141. Saudi Arabia
 142. Senegal
 143. Serbia
 144. Seychelles
 145. Sierra Leone
 146. Singapore
 147. Slovakia
 148. Slovenia
 149. Solomon Islands
 150. Somalia
 151. South Africa
 152. South Sudan
 153. Spain
 154. Sri Lanka
 155. Sudan
 156. Suriname
 157. Sweden
 158. Switzerland
 159. Tajikistan
 160. Thailand
 161. Timor-Leste
 162. Togo
 163. Trinidad and Tobago
 164. Tunisia
 165. Turkey
 166. Turkmenistan
 167. Tuvalu
 168. Uganda
 169. Ukraine
 170. United Arab Emirates
 171. United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland
 172. United Republic of Tanzania
 173. Uruguay
 174. Uzbekistan
 175. Vanuatu
 176. Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of)
 177. Viet Nam
 178. Yemen
 179. Zambia
 180. Zimbabwe
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