



## Convention on Biological Diversity

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### Subsidiary Body on Implementation

#### Fourth meeting

Nairobi, 21–29 May 2024

Item 2 of the provisional agenda\*

#### **Review of implementation: progress in national target setting and the updating of national biodiversity strategies and action plans**

### **Review of implementation: progress in the preparation of revised and updated national biodiversity strategies and action plans and the establishment of national targets in alignment with the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework**

Note by the Secretariat

## **I. Introduction**

1. By its decision 15/4, the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity adopted the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework and noted that its implementation would be supported by a number of other decisions, including its decision 15/6, in which the Conference of the Parties adopted an enhanced multidimensional approach to planning, monitoring, reporting and review. Elements of the multidimensional approach include the national biodiversity strategies and action plans as the main instrument for implementation of the Framework, including national targets communicated in a standardized format, and a global analysis of the information in national biodiversity strategies and action plans, including national targets, to assess their contribution towards the Framework, to be considered by the Conference of the Parties at its sixteenth meeting and at each subsequent meeting. In the same decision (para. 19), the Conference of the Parties decided that, at its future meetings, it would consider progress in implementation of the Framework and provide additional recommendations, as necessary, with a view to achieving the goals and targets of the Framework.

2. In decision 15/6 (para. 6), the Conference of the Parties requested Parties to revise and update their national biodiversity strategies and action plans, following the guidance provided in annex I to that decision, aligned with the Framework and its goals and targets, including those related to means of implementation, and to submit them through the clearing-house mechanism by the sixteenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties. In the same decision (para. 7), the Conference of the Parties requested Parties not in a position to submit their revised national biodiversity strategies and action plans by that time to communicate national targets reflecting, as applicable, all the goals and targets of the Framework, including those related to all means of implementation, in accordance with the

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\* CBD/SBI/4/1.

reporting template provided in annex I to the decision, as a stand-alone submission, in advance of the full submission of the national biodiversity strategy and action plan.

3. The present note includes a report on the submission of national biodiversity strategies and action plans, including national targets, aligned with the goals and targets of the Framework (sect. II.A). It provides an overview of the regional and subregional dialogues on national biodiversity strategies and action plans held between August 2023 and March 2024 (sect. II.B) and sets out a recommendation suggested for adoption by the Subsidiary Body (sect. III).

4. Because there have been only eight submissions of revised national biodiversity strategies and action plans and no stand-alone submissions of national targets, the present note does not include a global analysis of the information contained in the submissions. Such an analysis will be prepared for the fifth meeting of the Subsidiary Body, at which the Subsidiary Body will conduct a further review of progress in implementation of the Framework and will pilot an open-ended forum for voluntary country review.

## **II. Summary of progress**

### **A. Updating national biodiversity strategies and action plans and setting national targets**

5. Following the adoption of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework, eight Parties submitted their revised and updated national biodiversity strategy and action plan, pursuant to the request by the Conference of the Parties in paragraph 6 of decision 15/6. The submissions were made by China, the European Union, France, Hungary (in Hungarian), Ireland, Japan (in Japanese, with a summary in English), Luxembourg and Spain. As noted in paragraph 4 above, there have been no stand-alone submissions by Parties of national targets.

6. Five of the seven submitted documents that have been prepared in an official language of the United Nations contain national targets articulated in a manner that aligns well with the targets of the Framework. However, none of the countries have yet submitted the national targets using the template for such submission contained in annex I to decision 15/6, either in a document or through use of the online reporting tool.

7. Although only eight national biodiversity strategies and action plans have been submitted so far, the subregional and regional dialogues, described in section B below, have revealed that many Parties have made significant progress in revising and updating their national biodiversity strategies and action plans. In addition, while no Party has made a submission in accordance with the template for the submission of national targets adopted in decision 15/6 and contained in annex I to that decision, a number of Parties have entered draft targets into the online reporting tool, which indicates that many of them are working on their targets for submission in accordance with the agreed template. It is therefore expected that the preparation of an insightful global analysis, for consideration by the Subsidiary Body on Implementation at its fifth meeting, will be possible.

8. In each submission noted above, the national biodiversity strategy and action plan cover a period up to 2030. Since the entry into force of the Convention in 1993, 193 Parties to the Convention have prepared at least one national biodiversity strategy and action plan. Of those prepared and submitted before the adoption of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework, 71 covered a period up to 2030, 1 covered a period up to 2035 and 16 covered a period up to 2050. Although those national biodiversity strategies and action plans remain temporally valid, it is expected that they will be revised or updated to align with the Framework and its goals and targets, as requested by the Conference of the Parties in its decision 15/6.

9. An analysis of national biodiversity strategies and action plans submitted during the implementation of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011–2020 was prepared by the Secretariat for consideration by the Conference of the Parties at its fifteenth meeting (CBD/COP/15/9/Add.1). The analysis highlighted successes and challenges encountered in the development of national biodiversity strategies and action plans during that decade. One of the main challenges related to the

long time lag between the adoption of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011–2020 and the development of aligned national biodiversity strategies and action plans. While Parties had a five-year period for preparing and submitting their national biodiversity strategies and action plans, only 69 Parties had submitted their national biodiversity strategies and action plans by the deadline of December 2015. By 17 October 2022, an additional 108 countries had submitted an updated national biodiversity strategy and action plan, bringing the total to 177, but many of those national biodiversity strategies and action plans were submitted very close to the end of the decade of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011–2020.

10. One of the main challenges noted by Parties during the previous decade were delays in initiating Global Environment Facility enabling activity projects which provide support for developing national biodiversity strategies and action plans. While the national biodiversity strategies and action plans developed during the decade 2011–2020 included more successes in terms of achieving whole-of-government approaches, as compared with the decade 2001–2010, there remained gaps in: adoption of national biodiversity strategies and action plans as a national policy through legislation; costing the actions of the plan and developing a clear finance plan; stakeholder engagement; building capacity; and mainstreaming in other sectors of government. In addition, national targets in many national biodiversity strategies and action plans were not aligned with the Aichi Biodiversity Targets of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011–2020.

11. The lack of alignment with global targets presented a major challenge in undertaking global analyses of those national biodiversity strategies and action plans. In particular, information was not submitted in a standardized manner and Parties had taken different approaches in defining national targets, which limited the ability to aggregate and compare the information contained in the various national biodiversity strategies and action plans.

12. The use of the template in annex I to decision 15/6 for submission of information on national targets under the national biodiversity strategies and action plans will greatly improve the ability to carry out a global analysis of the information contained in them and improve the quality of the analysis. In addition, as the information will be submitted using the online reporting tool, it will allow for near real-time visualization of the information in the national targets.

## **B. Regional or subregional dialogues on national biodiversity strategies and action plans**

13. Since August 2023, the Secretariat has been organizing regional and subregional dialogues on national biodiversity strategies and action plans, designed to provide opportunities for Parties to share experiences and lessons learned in revising or updating their national biodiversity strategies and action plans, aligned with the Framework. It is expected that all Parties will have been invited to participate in one dialogue prior to the sixteenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties. For each dialogue, Parties are invited to nominate two representatives, specifically the national focal point for the Convention or a government official who is responsible for leading the work on revising or updating the national biodiversity strategy and action plan and an officer or expert who is directly involved in supporting the work related to means of implementation of the national biodiversity strategy or action plan, such as capacity-building and development and financing. Each dialogue includes participation by representatives of major stakeholder groups. A summary of the experiences and findings derived from the regional and subregional dialogues held before 31 March 2024 is provided in information document CBD/SBI/4/INF/6.<sup>1</sup>

14. As described in document CBD/SBI/4/INF/6, four dialogues were held before 31 March 2024 for the following subregions: South-East Asia; the Middle East and North Africa; South and East Asia; and the Pacific. A fifth dialogue will be held in April 2024, for the Caribbean, before the fourth meeting of the Subsidiary Body on Implementation. The Secretariat is planning additional regional or subregional dialogues in the coming months with the aim of ensuring that all Parties have had the opportunity to participate in one of the dialogues prior to the fifth meeting of the Subsidiary Body.

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<sup>1</sup> The web page for each dialogue is available at [www.cbd.int/nbsap](http://www.cbd.int/nbsap).

15. The dialogues are being organized with the financial support of the Government of Denmark; the European Union; the Government of Japan, through the Japan Biodiversity Fund; and the Government of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland. The dialogues are being undertaken in collaboration with various organizations, which up until April 2024 have included the Association of Southeast Asian Nations Centre for Biodiversity, the Caribbean Community, the Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme and the United Nations University. The dialogues are being enabled through the support of the countries hosting them, which up to April 2024 have included Fiji, Guyana, Japan, Jordan and the Philippines, and have benefited from the technical support of United Nations entities, including the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, the United Nations Development Programme and the United Nations Environment Programme.

16. At the dialogues, the representatives of Parties exchanged information on experiences, successes, challenges and lessons learned in revising or updating national biodiversity strategies and action plans. The dialogues provided an open discussion forum on the following aspects of the development of a national biodiversity and action plan: (a) whole-of-government and whole-of-society approaches, (b) integration of the Protocols and relevant multilateral environmental agreements, (c) setting or revising national targets and (d) developing the national monitoring plans. The dialogues included structured sessions on developing capacity-building and biodiversity financing plans for the national biodiversity strategies and action plans according to the guidance provided by the Conference of the Parties in its decisions 15/6, 15/7 and 15/8. At the end of each dialogue, participants agreed on a summary of key points or conclusions that emerged from the discussions, including common challenges, lessons learned, best practices and opportunities.

17. As mentioned in document CBD/SBI/4/INF/6, most participating Parties have started revising or updating their national biodiversity strategy and action plan. However, some Parties have experienced delays. Reasons for those delays include a lack of political support, a lack of or delays in the provision of funds and inadequate awareness among relevant stakeholders of the adoption of the Framework. Moreover, Parties have noted that developing a science-based, high-quality whole-of-government policy takes time. Parties have had successes and challenges in undertaking consultations with relevant government ministries, sectors and stakeholders and analysing current biodiversity status and trends, as well as implementation challenges and challenges in developing financing and monitoring plans.

18. The dialogues held thus far have highlighted the following points (among others, which are considered in CBD/SBI/4/INF/6 and the meeting reports):

- (a) The importance of a whole-of-government and whole-of-society approach;
- (b) The need to engage a broad range of stakeholders, in particular in order to take into account section C of the Framework on considerations for its implementation;
- (c) The importance of integrating the Protocols and relevant multilateral environmental agreements in order to promote synergetic implementation;
- (d) The need for guidance on the scientific and technical aspects of support for national target setting; and the point that national circumstances and capabilities are the basis for revising or setting targets;
- (e) The need for capacity support, particularly around issues related to monitoring; the importance of developing a national biodiversity financing plan; and the value of promoting exchanges and mutual learning among countries;
- (f) That for countries that receive Global Environment Facility funds for revising or updating national biodiversity strategies and action plans, strong coordination between the implementing agency and the national focal points for the Convention on Biological Diversity is the foundation for project implementation and increasing the ownership of the process by countries.

19. In its decision 15/6 (para. 29 (c)), the Conference of the Parties requested the Executive Secretary to support the Subsidiary Body on Implementation in the further development and piloting of a modus operandi of an open-ended forum for voluntary country review.<sup>2</sup> Based on the experiences derived from the dialogues, the draft modus operandi prepared by the Executive Secretary for consideration by the Subsidiary Body at its fourth meeting includes a preparatory phase which consists of national-level self-review followed by regional or subregional dialogues held prior to the conducting of the open-ended forum at a meeting of the Subsidiary Body. The preparatory phase will inform the open-ended forum for voluntary country review by providing information related to regional and subregional successes and challenges in the development and implementation of the national biodiversity strategies and action plans. Moreover, the preparatory phase will serve to enable development of country capacity through the sharing among Parties of experiences and lessons learned and will contribute to improving subregional and regional collaboration among Parties.

### III. Recommendation

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

*The Subsidiary Body on Implementation,*

*Recalling* decision 15/6 of the Conference of the Parties, in particular paragraphs 6 and 7 of that decision,

*Taking note* of the outcomes of the regional and subregional dialogues on national biodiversity strategies and action plans that have been conducted and the plan for further dialogues,

*Noting with appreciation* the financial support for the organization of regional and subregional dialogues on national biodiversity strategies and action plans provided by the Government of Denmark, the European Union, the Government of Japan through the Japan Biodiversity Fund and the Government of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland; the support provided by the Governments of Fiji, Guyana, Japan, Jordan and the Philippines in hosting those dialogues; and the collaborative support provided by the Association of Southeast Asian Nations Centre for Biodiversity, the Caribbean Community, the Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme and the United Nations University in organizing the dialogues,

*Noting with appreciation also* the support provided to eligible countries by the Global Environment Facility and its implementing agencies for facilitating the revision and updating of their national biodiversity strategy and action plans,

*Recognizing* that, at its fifth meeting, the Subsidiary Body on Implementation will review progress in the implementation of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework, including through an open-ended forum on voluntary country review,

*Welcoming* the submission of revised and updated national biodiversity strategies and action plans by China, the European Union, France, Hungary, Ireland, Japan, Luxembourg and Spain,

*Noting with concern* that no Party has made a submission of national targets in accordance with the template adopted by the Conference of the Parties in its decision 15/6 and contained in annex I to that decision,

1. *Urges* Parties to complete the implementation of actions required to fulfil the requests made by the Conference of the Parties in paragraphs 6 and 7 of decision 15/6 as soon as possible;

2. *Encourages* Parties to submit their revised and updated national biodiversity strategies and action plans, including national targets, as soon as possible in order to enable the Executive Secretary to prepare a global analysis of the information that they contain, for consideration by the

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<sup>2</sup> A proposal for the modus operandi of the open-ended forum for voluntary country review is provided in document CBD/SBI/4/4/Add.1 for the consideration of the Subsidiary Body on Implementation at its fourth meeting.

Subsidiary Body on Implementation at its fifth meeting and the Conference of the Parties at its sixteenth meeting;

3. *Also encourages* Parties to submit that information using the online reporting tool;
  4. *Invites* the Global Environment Facility and its implementing agencies to provide timely support, aligned with national circumstances and needs, in order to enable eligible countries to finalize the revision and updating of their national biodiversity strategy and action plan in time for submission before the sixteenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties.
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