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DRAFT LONG-TERM STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK FOR CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT TO SUPPORT IMPLEMENTATION OF THE POST-2020 GLOBAL BIODIVERSITY FRAMEWORK

Note by the Executive Secretary

I. INTRODUCTION

1. Biodiversity is vital for humans and the health of the planet. Despite ongoing efforts, biodiversity is declining worldwide at alarming rates and this trend is projected to continue or worsen under business-as-usual scenarios. Capacity development is one of the key means of implementation of the post-2020 global biodiversity framework which sets out an ambitious plan to bring about a transformation in society's relationship with biodiversity and to ensure that, by 2050, humanity lives in harmony with nature. This long-term strategic framework for capacity development has been developed to support the realization of this vision and is organized as follows: section I describes the purpose of the strategic framework and the meaning and scope of capacity development; section II presents the overall vision and theory of change along with examples of high-level capacity results; section III presents guiding principles and approaches for effective capacity development; section IV proposes key strategies for improving capacity development; and finally, section V outlines mechanisms to help put the elements into action.

A. Purpose of the long-term strategic framework for capacity development

2. The purpose of the strategic framework is to guide the capacity development efforts of government and non-government actors in support of the implementation of the post-2020 global biodiversity framework and the Sustainable Development Goals, complementing, and not duplicating, capacity development strategies and plans under other biodiversity-related multilateral environmental agreements (MEAs), processes and institutions. Achieving the ambitious mission, goals and action targets of the post-2020 global biodiversity framework would require putting in place effective means of implementation, including capacity development. To catalyse and galvanize transformative action, it is necessary for government and non-government actors¹ at various levels, from national to subnational and local, to have the requisite capacities, tools and resources. This requires better resourced, more effective, coordinated and complementary capacity development activities. Also, achieving transformative change requires thinking beyond short time horizons and calls for interventions that are robust, institutionalized, and sustainable. This strategic framework aims to help all actors to achieve coherence, efficiency and effectiveness in their

* CBD/SBI/3/1.

¹ In this framework, references to government actors include, as appropriate, government institutions at national and subnational levels. The term "non-government actors" includes United Nations organizations and programmes, other multilateral environmental agreements, intergovernmental organizations, community organizations, indigenous peoples and local communities, academia, faith-based and religious groups, women and youth organizations, non-governmental organizations, media, and private sector entities such as private financial institutions, businesses, industries, insurers, producers and investors. The scientific community is embedded in both academia and the private sector.

capacity development efforts at all levels and foster a coordinated strategic approach to capacity development, which will create opportunities for cooperation and synergy.

3. Furthermore, the strategic framework is intended to provide guidance to promote harmonized approaches and initiatives to address capacity needs for the post-2020 global biodiversity framework and the Sustainable Development Goals, including Goal 14 (Life below water), Goal 15 (Life on land), and Goal 17 (Partnerships for the goals), which has indicator 17.9 on capacity-building. Accordingly, this strategic framework is aligned with and draws on the integrated capacity development programming, approaches and terminology promoted by the United Nations Development Group (UNDG).²

4. A study to provide an information base for the preparation of the long-term strategic framework was commissioned to the United Nations Environment Programme World Conservation Monitoring Centre (UNEP-WCMC).³ It noted that capacity development efforts, especially in developing countries, have been limited, fragmented and undertaken in silos, largely through externally funded short-term projects. Overall, many countries have not yet adopted systemic, long-term and institutionalized approaches to capacity development for biodiversity. Capacity development interventions are often implemented in an ad hoc manner and not as part of a coherent long-term strategy or programme, and without a strong enabling environment. Consequently, many have not succeeded in bringing about the desired changes in a transformative and sustainable manner. The strategic framework aims to provide guidance to address these shortcomings.

5. The strategic framework for capacity development is not intended to be an operational plan, and as such it does not have its own, specific goals and measurable targets for implementation. Instead, it seeks to establish a common conceptual understanding of capacity development and provide strategic guidance to improve capacity development actions to support the achievement of the 2030 milestones and targets of the post-2020 global biodiversity framework, while acknowledging that ongoing capacity development will be required to achieve the 2050 vision. It also aims to ensure that biodiversity capacity development interventions are needs-driven, scalable, systematically monitored and regularly evaluated to assess their impact and sustainability.

6. It is considered a living document to be periodically reviewed as new effective practices, experiences and lessons emerge. Application of the strategic framework would help to ensure that government and non-government actors design, deliver, monitor and evaluate capacity development actions effectively to achieve sustainable impact at scale. Additional documentation will be developed to complement and provide more detailed guidance and examples for operational implementation upon adoption of the framework.

B. Meaning and scope of capacity development

1. Definitions

7. The term “capacity development” is now widely used by most organizations, including the majority of United Nations agencies, rather than “capacity-building”.⁴ Notably, capacity development has been adopted in the context of approaches to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals at the national level. The main difference between the two terms is that capacity-building implies starting to build something new from scratch while “capacity development” acknowledges that, in virtually every context, some capacity already exists as a starting point. It is recommended that, moving forward, the term “capacity development”, which is more reflective of the current understanding and good practice, be

² UNDG (2017). “UNDAF Companion Guidance: Capacity Development”, available at <https://unsdg.un.org/resources/capacity-development-undaf-companion-guidance>.

³ The study, commissioned by the Executive Secretary of the Convention on Biological Diversity pursuant to decision 14/24 A, was carried out from May to December 2019 by UNEP-WCMC with funding from the European Union. The report on the study is available as document CBD/SBI/3/INF/9.

⁴ For example, the UNDAF Companion Guidance document cited above, and the FAO learning modules on capacity development available at <http://www.fao.org/capacity-development/resources/fao-learning-material/learning-modules/en/>.

adopted. This change of language could help to inspire the change in both thinking and action that is needed to bring about a transformational shift in the approach to capacity development.

8. There is no single agreed definition of capacity or capacity development. For the purpose of this framework, an adapted version of UNDG overarching definition of capacity as “the ability of people, organizations and societies as a whole to achieve the set biodiversity-related goals and action targets”⁵ is used. In the context of the framework, capacity development is understood as “the process whereby people, organizations and society as a whole, unleash, strengthen, create, adapt and maintain capacity over time to achieve positive biodiversity results.”⁶

2. Levels of capacity

9. Capacity exists at different interconnected levels, and effective change is dependent both on getting the relevant capacity in place at the appropriate levels and on the levels interacting in ways that support and reinforce the effectiveness of each. Many organizations use the following three-level delineation: enabling environment, organizational and individual, which is what has been adopted for this framework (figure 1):

(a) The *enabling environment level* encompasses the broad system and conditions needed for organizations and individuals to function effectively, including the overall governance systems, policies, laws, agreements, conventions, protocols, customary laws, and social norms and how they are applied, as well as the political will and vision for change, relationships with external actors and the availability of resources;

(b) The *organizational level* encompasses the internal structures, processes and procedures, leadership, management systems, incentive structures, multi-stakeholder processes, platforms and other elements that influence the ability of any government or non-government actor, network or partnership to operate effectively to achieve its mission;⁷

(c) The *individual level* is about the knowledge, skills, expertise, attitude, competencies and experience of the people within organizations or communities, which enable them to do their work effectively.

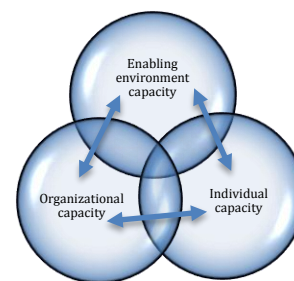
10. Individuals cannot utilize their capacity if they work in a dysfunctional organization or if they are not provided with the required resources and a conducive environment to do their work. On the other hand, organizations may have good policies and systems but will not be able to function effectively without competent skilled staff. Organizations also need an environment that enables their operations, for example, appropriate legal frameworks and financial mechanisms.

11. Understanding these interdependent and mutually reinforcing relationships between the levels is essential for having a comprehensive understanding of capacity within any given system or context. In this regard, it is important to understand that the levels do not exist only within a country, but within all geographic areas from subnational through regional to global.

3. Types of capacity

12. The types of capacity needed for meeting the biodiversity goals can be grouped in different ways. They can be grouped into “technical” capacities (which are specific to a particular sector or thematic area,

Figure 1. Relationship between



the levels of capacity

⁵ “UNDAF Companion Guidance: Capacity Development”.

⁶ Adapted from the definition given in “UNDAF Companion Guidance: Capacity Development”.

⁷ Tangible resources, such as human, financial and physical resources (including infrastructure, buildings, vehicles, equipment and documentation) can also be considered as the material expression or products of organizational capacity.

e.g. agriculture, forestry, etc.) and “functional” capacities (which are needed across the board regardless of the sector or area, such as planning, budgeting, policymaking, financial analysis, strategy formulation and communications).⁸ In summary, the functional capacities that are most urgently needed, both by government and non-government actors, at all levels, include the capability to:

(a) *Create enabling conditions*: The technical ability to develop and enact effective and participatory biodiversity policies and legislation, and related strategies and plans, based on participatory and inclusive informed decision-making processes;

(b) *Aspire, engage, organize and inspire*: The ability to aspire to and manage change; and to communicate, engage, organize and collaborate with all members of society in order to influence and inspire them to promote coherent, proactive and constructive responses to global biodiversity challenges, and to persevere in the face of adversity;

(c) *Mobilize and manage resources and support*: The ability to secure and efficiently utilize the relevant financial and other resources necessary to support the achievement of specific biodiversity goals, objectives and targets;

(d) *Plan, manage and implement*: The ability to prioritize, set SMART goals (goals that are simple, measurable, achievable, realistic and time-bound), and carry out core functional and technical tasks, including strategic planning and the management and implementation of sustainable biodiversity actions and innovative solutions;

(e) *Monitor and evaluate*: The ability to monitor and evaluate the achievements and impact of initiatives and to develop effective indicators for monitoring policy, project and programme interventions, in order to provide feedback for adaptive management, learning and the creation of more effective solutions;

(f) *Learn and adapt*: The ability to use new learning to adapt, reform and self-renew. This includes the integration of technical knowledge and new ideas from multiple sources and methods to diagnose and address global biodiversity problems and to identify creative solutions.

13. Capacities can also be grouped into “hard” capacities (which are tangible and visible) and “soft” capacities (which are social, relational, intangible and invisible attributes, values, skills and competencies that influence performance and adaptation). Soft capacities are extremely important but often are not given due consideration. Table 1 below outlines examples of hard and soft capacities at each level.

Table 1. Examples of capacity at the three levels

Level ↓	Hard capacity	Soft capacity
Enabling environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regional and international treaties, conventions, etc. • National social and economic policy framework and laws • Political systems and strategies • Financial mechanisms 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Visionary leadership to inspire change • Political will to influence others for positive change • Good will for cooperation and collaboration • Effective governance

⁸ In the UNEP-WCMC study, governments, indigenous peoples and local communities, and other stakeholders identified their priority functional capacity development needs. These included capacities for engagement (particularly of subnational and local governments, indigenous peoples and local communities, women, youth, and other relevant stakeholders); for networking and partnership development; for generation, access to and use of information and knowledge; for policy and legislation development; for management and implementation; for monitoring, evaluation and reporting; for mainstreaming gender and mainstreaming indigenous peoples and local communities issues; for socio-environmental safeguards; and for resource mobilization.

Level ↓	Hard capacity	Soft capacity
Organizational	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organizational structures • Management systems and procedures • Strategic frameworks and action plans • Networks and multi-stakeholder processes, partnerships and platforms • Financial and human resources • Knowledge/technology transfer systems • Monitoring and evaluation frameworks • Project cycle management 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organizational mandate and strategies • Inspirational organizational culture: values, accountability, trust and continuous learning • Change management: readiness, adaptability, flexibility, creativity, innovation and entrepreneurship. • Ability to balance long-term solutions with emergent changes • Organizational reputation, credibility
Individual	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Competency to use appropriate methods and tools for designated tasks • Technical awareness, knowledge, skills and expertise, especially the traditional knowledge of indigenous and local communities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Personal values, attitudes, behaviours and ethics • Relational skills: negotiation, teamwork, conflict resolution, facilitation, etc. • Social and emotional intelligence; confidence, motivation, self-esteem • Problem-solving skills • Ability to self-reflect and learn for change • Analytical and logical thinking

14. The successful achievement of the post-2020 biodiversity targets may require that specific technical capacities be put in place or strengthened, which means addressing needs and opportunities for technical and scientific cooperation. For example, to achieve a target on invasive alien species, some governments may require expertise in DNA technologies to identify species, or the use of geographic information systems and satellite imagery technologies to map the location of invasive species, in order to design effective control and eradication measures. Thus, all capacity development strategies, programmes and initiatives should address the technical needs identified as a priority by governments, indigenous peoples and local communities and other stakeholders involved in developing plans to achieve the post-2020 biodiversity targets.

4. The capacity development process

15. Capacity development is a dynamic and iterative process. It encompasses interventions not only for capacity development (enhancing capacities or creating new ones), but also for capacity analysis (analysing existing capacity and identifying capacity needs and gaps), capacity utilization (mobilizing, deploying and utilizing existing capacities), and capacity retention (nurturing and sustaining the capacity created over time). The matrix in table 2 below gives examples of such interventions at the three levels, which can be adapted as appropriate.

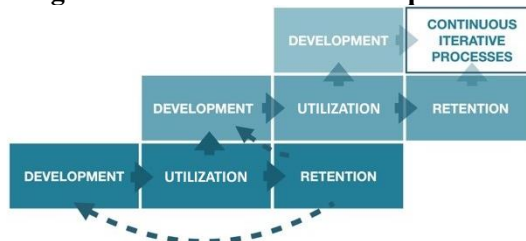
Table 2. Capacity analysis, development, utilization and retention interventions at each level

Level ↓	Analysis	Development	Utilization	Retention
Enabling environment	Analysis of gaps in the enabling environment	Establishment of adequate policies, laws and regulations	Implementation and enforcement of laws and regulations	Review, adaptation and update of policies, laws and regulations
Organizational	Analysis of organizational capacity and readiness for change	Establishment of efficient structures, processes and procedures	Integration of structures, and operationalization of processes and procedures into daily workflows	Adaptation of structures, processes and procedures Empowerment of skilled individuals as trainers
Individual	Identification of training needs of individuals in an organization	Development of adequate required skills, knowledge, competencies and attitudes	Application of skills, knowledge and competencies in the workplace	Nurturing existing expertise, reduction of capacity loss through staff turnover, facilitation of skills and knowledge transfer within institutions

Source: The Rwanda Public Sector Capacity Building Secretariat (2011), now the Capacity Development and Employment Services Board.

16. While the above matrix may give the incorrect impression that capacity development is a linear process with a definite end point, capacity development is in reality an ongoing and iterative process with constant feedback loops and flexibility for adoption and revision of new strategies (see figure 2). Utilizing newly created capacity may lead to further capacity development as implementation and practice lead to increased understanding and proficiency.

Figure 2. Continuous iterative processes



II. STRATEGIC DIRECTION AND OUTCOMES

A. Overall vision and theory of change

17. The long-term vision of this strategic framework is that by 2050 all societies will be fully empowered and effectively living in harmony with nature. The medium-term vision is that, by 2030, Governments and relevant non-government actors will have the requisite capacities to effectively and sustainably contribute to the achievement of the goals, milestones and 2030 targets of the post-2020 global biodiversity framework.

18. The overall goal of the strategic framework is to support ongoing development and strengthening of the capacities necessary for the achievement of the vision, mission, goals and targets of the post-2020 global biodiversity framework. This calls for enhancing the coherence, efficiency and effectiveness of capacity development initiatives at all levels and ensuring alignment with relevant initiatives supporting the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals. It also requires having in place effective, agile and continuously learning organizations⁹ supported with sufficient financial and technical resources. Moreover, it is important to have qualified and motivated staff, and strong partnerships and learning networks empowered to deliver high-quality, integrated and impactful biodiversity programmes that are mainstreamed into policy, society and relevant economic sectors.

19. This strategic framework, similarly to the post-2020 global biodiversity framework, is underpinned by a theory of change, visualized in figure 3 below.¹⁰ The theory of change outlines the intended pathways of change in capacity, the important contextual factors, the underlying assumptions and the anticipated high-level changes/outcomes.

20. The purpose of the theory of change is to ensure that relevant actors are conscious of the change scenarios/ pathways, the causal relationships and the desired results, and that the assumptions and decisions guiding the strategic framework and its implementation are made explicit and reviewed regularly for relevance as contexts and conditions evolve and capacities are developed. The theory of change is also intended to aid ongoing reflection and learning to ensure that capacity is developed, retained and used effectively.

21. Capacity is needed at all levels to address the unprecedented decline of biodiversity and support transformational change towards realizing the goals and action targets of the post-2020 global biodiversity framework and the 2050 vision of living in harmony with nature. The theory of change provides examples of the key expected changes in capacity and the anticipated high-level substantive outcomes (see Box 1), which may be underpinned, in part, by the capacities to be put into place.

B. Capacity results

22. To effectively guide planning of programmes, projects and activities, all strategies, including national biodiversity strategies, should establish high-level and long-term capacity development goals and objectives. These should specify expected results relevant to the achievement of the post-2020 global biodiversity goals and targets, and, where relevant, should be aligned with the Sustainable Development Goals.

23. The ability of people, organizations and societies as a whole to achieve the set of biodiversity-related goals and targets comprises a number of strategic capacities. Government and non-government actors may need to state clearly what capacities are being targeted in the results hierarchy formulated for any given capacity development initiative.

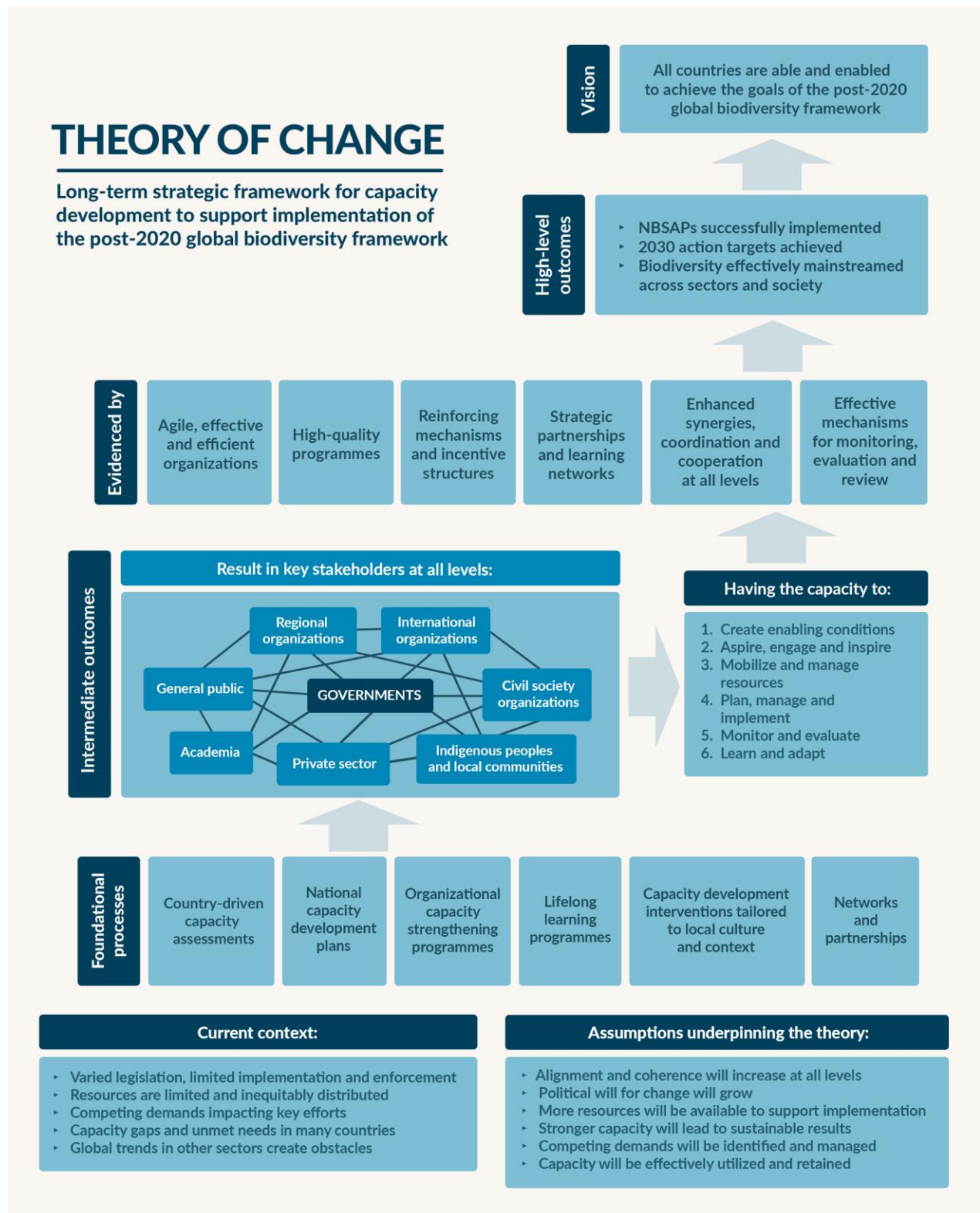
24. Box 1 below is complementary to the theory of change illustrated in figure 3, providing some examples of medium and long-term capacity results (outputs and outcomes). This list is not exhaustive, as

⁹ An organization can become a “learning organization” by applying existing internal knowledge and learning from past experiences and lessons with the aim of improving its performance (e.g. see <https://warwick.ac.uk/fac/soc/wbs/conf/olkc/archive/olk4/papers/villardi.pdf>).

¹⁰ The development of this theory of change took into account the technical guidance provided as part of the UNDAF process: UNDG (2017). “UNDAF Companion Guidance: Theory of Change” (<https://unsdg.un.org/resources/theory-change-undaf-companion-guidance>).

the outputs and outcomes will vary depending on whose capacities are being developed and for what purpose. More information and guidance about developing a results hierarchy will be prepared at a later date.

Figure 3. Visual representation of the theory of change



Box 1. Examples of expected capacity results

Long-term, high-level outcomes

- Successful implementation of NBSAPs
- Achievement of 2030 action targets
- Biodiversity mainstreamed throughout sectors and society

Medium-term outcomes

- Sound enabling frameworks and institutional arrangements support achievement of national biodiversity strategies and action plans (NBSAPs)
- Strategic partnerships and learning networks enhance biodiversity conservation and sustainable use efforts along with the equitable sharing of benefits arising from the use of genetic resources
- High-quality programmes and projects that are technically sound, have realistic and achievable plans, and address gender considerations
- Effective monitoring and evaluation (M&E) and learning processes embedded into projects and programmes from the start, to support evidence-based decision-making at all levels
- Reinforcing mechanisms, incentive structures and investments ensure utilization and retention of capacity of all types at all levels

III. GUIDING PRINCIPLES FOR EFFECTIVE CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT

25. This section sets out important guiding principles, which, if applied by governments and non-government actors in their capacity development initiatives, would contribute to more effective and sustainable capacities to support the post-2020 global biodiversity framework. These are grouped under six overarching principles that underpin the efficiency, effectiveness and sustainability of capacity development action.

A. Inclusive analysis of the context, existing capacities and needs is essential to ensure effective interventions

26. Development and delivery of effective interventions for capacity development are dependent on understanding the national, subnational or local context and the related capacity needs. This requires quality analysis of the prevailing circumstances, existing capacities, and the needs and interests of the relevant stakeholders. In this regard, it is necessary to:

- (a) Ensure inclusion of all relevant entities and groups in capacity development processes, including through extensive stakeholder mapping;
- (b) Ensure that existing capacities are identified and leveraged in the design of new interventions;
- (c) As much as possible, ensure that capacity development interventions will contribute to multiple MEAs, and to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development;¹¹
- (d) Identify opportunities to link with relevant Sustainable Development Goal initiatives;
- (e) Build on needs assessment undertaken in other contexts, such as the Global Environment Facility needs assessments;
- (f) Integrate gender perspectives fully into assessment and analysis.

¹¹ See [General Assembly resolution 70/1](#) of 25 September 2015 entitled “Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development”.

B. Country ownership and commitment should be cornerstones for capacity development actions

27. Experiences from various initiatives and processes have shown that for capacity development to be effective and sustainable, ownership and commitment at the national, subnational and local levels is a prerequisite. Ownership and commitment relate not only to governments but also to non-government actors and target audiences. The study by UNEP-WCMC noted that a number of capacity-building initiatives are currently donor-driven, not fully “owned” by the concerned governments and target audiences, and sometimes do not reflect their priorities. To foster country ownership and commitment, it is important to:

(a) Fully involve relevant government entities (including subnational and local government entities), indigenous peoples and local communities, and stakeholder groups, including women and youth, to ensure that their perspectives are considered;

(b) Ensure that interventions are demand-driven and responsive to the country needs, priorities, national circumstances and cultural contexts;

(c) Ensure that capacity development actions are integrated into NBSAPs (discussed further in section IV. B below).

C. Strategic and integrated system-wide approaches to capacity development should be promoted

28. Government and non-government actors should formulate strategic and holistic country-level approaches to capacity development that are relevant to their context and identified needs. In order to do this, it is important to:

(a) Promote strategic planning and alignment via multi-actor and multi-sector approaches, including links to relevant Sustainable Development Goal initiatives;

(b) Ensure that country-level programmes are fully coordinated;

(c) Ensure that strategies and plans recognize existing capacity and how to use it most effectively, and also promote conditions to retain capacity;

(d) Ensure that strategies and actions adopt an intersectional approach that integrates gender, class, age and ethnic considerations;

(e) Design programmes and interventions to contribute to achieving agreed long-term goals and objectives that enhance and further develop existing capacity.

D. Interventions should be designed and implemented according to recognized good practice and lessons learned

29. Several studies and analyses have documented effective lessons learned. For example, guidance about good practice is provided in the UNDG document referred to above.¹² Wherever possible, these lessons and guidance points should be integrated, as appropriate, in the design and implementation of new capacity development interventions to enable their replication and upscaling. However, while some of those lessons and practices may have global applicability, it is important to ensure that they are adapted to the appropriate context, whether at the national, subnational, landscape or local levels. Examples of good practice include:

(a) Ensuring that new initiatives build on and fully utilize existing processes, endogenous capacities and previous initiatives, and what works locally;

(b) Co-creating and tailoring capacity development interventions to fit specific needs and contexts, ensuring that existing capacity is utilized and retained;

¹² <https://unsdg.un.org/resources/capacity-development-undaf-companion-guidance>.

- (c) Maximizing peer-to-peer learning to spread knowledge and solutions generated at the local level;
- (d) Diversifying capacity development delivery methods and approaches, and ensuring that monitoring, evaluation and reporting are adjusted accordingly;
- (e) Targeting resources and activities at the ground level and among different stakeholders, including approaches that retain existing capacity;
- (f) Ensuring the full involvement of indigenous peoples and local communities, women and other vulnerable groups.

E. Gender perspectives should be fully integrated into biodiversity capacity development efforts

30. Ensuring full, effective and equitable engagement of women in assessments, analysis and the design of interventions can be transformative in terms of achieving the desired capacity goals. Planning for sustainable and alternative livelihoods related to the use of biodiversity requires considering the needs and roles of women, and the potential to advance women and girl's empowerment, which can help to strengthen their ability to support the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity. Assessing established gender differences and inequalities arising from gender roles, responsibilities and rights provides a necessary basis for determining the barriers and opportunities where capacity development can make a difference in improving gender equality and biodiversity outcomes.

F. Monitoring, evaluation and learning frameworks should be incorporated into capacity development strategies, plans and programmes from the start

31. Monitoring, evaluation and learning are crucial for improving the quality, effectiveness and sustainability of capacity development efforts. They help to assess if things are on the right track and facilitate timely intervention, if necessary, to achieve the intended outcomes. They also facilitate identification of the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and challenges of ongoing or past interventions and the generation and application of knowledge, good practices and lessons learned to inform future interventions. To ensure effective monitoring, evaluation and learning, it is necessary to:

- (a) Formulate the results hierarchy and indicators through an inclusive, participatory and gender-responsive process with the key stakeholders, especially indigenous peoples and local communities and youth, who will be involved in long-term implementation;
- (b) Establish capacity baseline assessments, disaggregated for relevant groups, before activities start;
- (c) Incorporate reflection and learning activities into project planning, using relevant tools;¹³
- (d) Utilize monitoring and evaluation methods and tools¹⁴ that produce long-term comparable qualitative and quantitative data, especially when working in complex systems;
- (e) Enhance the collaboration with and between institutions that can support learning processes.

IV. KEY STRATEGIES TO IMPROVE CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT

32. This section presents proposals that government and non-government actors could adopt, as appropriate, in applying the long-term strategic framework to develop more effective and sustainable capacities to support the post-2020 global biodiversity framework. It includes suggestions for

¹³ There are many different tools available based on Kolb's Experiential Learning Cycle. For summary information about this model of learning, see <https://www.simplypsychology.org/learning-kolb.html>.

¹⁴ There are many resources available for measuring capacity, for example, UNDP's guide on Measuring Capacity (https://www.undp.org/content/undp/en/home/librarypage/capacity_development/undp-paper-on-measuring-capacity.html); the GEF guidelines (https://www.thegef.org/sites/default/files/publications/Monitoring_Guidelines_Report-final.pdf); FAO Capacity Development Evaluation Framework (<http://www.fao.org/publications/card/en/c/CA5668EN/>) and Pact's Organizational Performance Index handbook (<https://www.pactworld.org/library/pacts-organizational-performance-index-opi>).

institutionalization of capacity development, integration of capacity development into national biodiversity policies, programmes and plans, possible partnerships and mechanisms for greater coordination and cooperation among stakeholders engaged in biodiversity capacity development, and recommendations for enhancing synergies with other relevant international processes, as well as funding considerations for capacity development. The strategies are not listed in any order of priority. Each country should decide which strategies need to be given priority, taking into account the national needs, prevailing circumstances and local contexts.

A. Institutionalize capacity development

33. Government and non-government actors are encouraged to take measures to institutionalize biodiversity capacity development activities, projects and programmes to increase their effectiveness and sustainability. An institutionalized approach could include measures for ensuring that all capacity development interventions are delivered as an integral and complementary part of the broader corporate strategies and plans, ongoing human resources and organizational development. Other measures could include strengthening mechanisms for internal knowledge management, organizational learning, mentorship and peer-to-peer support, nurturing of communities of practice, and systematic sharing of experiences, best practices and lessons learned.

B. Integrate long-term capacity development into national strategies and action plans

34. Governments are encouraged to integrate capacity development components into their NBSAPs or develop dedicated national capacity development action plans to support implementation of the NBSAPs, as appropriate.¹⁵ Such action plans can help identify capacity development needs, goals, targets and milestones, and ensure their alignment with this strategic framework and with other relevant global, regional and national frameworks, as well as with initiatives on related Sustainable Development Goals. This would also help ensure that capacity development for biodiversity is well thought through, planned strategically and coherently, institutionalized, and streamlined into national development investments and budgeting processes.

35. Actionable NBSAPs create ownership and commitment and provide a mechanism for the implementation of the post-2020 global biodiversity framework at the country level. Hence, NBSAPs should (a) include an assessment of capacity needs of all actors (identified through a stakeholder mapping); (b) provide a strategy that prioritizes mid-term and long-term capacity development goals and objectives, and identify the authorities and actors and the domestic resources needed to implement them; (c) include an assessment of competing demands (mentioned in figure 3, on the theory of change) and strategies to manage them; and (d) include a monitoring and evaluation mechanism for capacity development activities. The NBSAPs should also include approaches to prepare and enable the next generation (the youth) to transition into biodiversity-friendly economies.

C. Align biodiversity capacity development with broader cross-sectoral plans and programmes

36. The whole-of-government and whole-of-society approaches to national implementation proposed in the post-2020 global biodiversity framework, should also be applied to the means of implementation, including capacity development, in order to galvanize transformative action linked to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals and biodiversity goals and targets. Adopting such approaches to biodiversity capacity development, especially by engaging ministries and sectors with portfolios traditionally unrelated to the biodiversity agenda, would facilitate the development of a shared vision, reduce potential duplications and make capacity development efforts more efficient, effective and sustainable. The national focal points of the biodiversity-related conventions and the Rio conventions, and representatives of other line ministries and sectors should come together to adopt a road map for alignment and coordinated or joint action. The national mechanisms established to implement the Sustainable Development Goals should incorporate and synergize with the biodiversity agenda and the associated

¹⁵ At least 19 Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity have prepared biodiversity capacity development strategies or plans, either as a chapter or section within their NBSAP or as stand-alone documents: <https://www.cbd.int/cb/plans/>.

capacity development efforts. Furthermore, the United Nations country teams should play a key role in promoting integrated programming and coordination of capacity development at the national level as part of the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) support.¹⁶

D. Undertake measures to fully utilize and retain existing capacity

37. Progress in achieving targets will be quicker and more efficient if existing capacity is fully recognized and utilized. Government and non-government actors are encouraged to undertake context-specific assessments and stocktaking processes to identify existing capacity and the obstacles that prevent it from being fully utilized. Likewise, it is important to identify and promote incentives that will help retain and fully utilize existing capacity. In the study carried out by UNEP-WCMC, many countries highlighted the problem of high staff turnover, which not only leads to loss of expertise and institutional memory but also generates discontinuity with respect to partnerships/relationships built by departing individuals. Creative incentives and other approaches that are not dependent on the availability of financial resources should be considered. Research has shown that non-financial incentives, such as recognition, career development and learning opportunities, accommodative work arrangements and others, can be as effective as financial means to retain capacity.¹⁷

E. Develop thematic and regional capacity development action plans and programmes

38. It is recommended that, following the adoption of the post-2020 global biodiversity framework, thematic capacity development strategies or action plans be developed for the different targets or groups of related targets, as appropriate, and that these should be aligned with the strategic framework for capacity development. One such action plan is being developed under the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety pursuant to decision [CP-9/3](#).¹⁸ Other examples include the strategic framework for capacity-building and development to support the effective implementation of the Nagoya Protocol on Access and Benefit-sharing, adopted in decision [NP-1/8](#) and the Capacity-building Strategy for the Global Taxonomy Initiative adopted in decision [XI/29](#) of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention. In these specific action plans or strategies, special attention should be paid to the capacity development needs of least developed countries, countries with economies in transition and small island developing States.

39. Furthermore, governments, biodiversity-related conventions, international organizations and other relevant stakeholders in a position to do so should, as appropriate, consider developing dedicated regional, subregional, national and subnational capacity development strategies and actions plans and programmes across multiple thematic sectors. Such strategic plans should have specific capacity targets, milestones and indicators to be reached within the period of the post-2020 global biodiversity framework. These could be aligned with or integrated into regional biodiversity strategies,¹⁹ as appropriate.

F. Promote partnerships and networks for implementation and learning

40. Partnerships provide effective mechanisms for mobilizing capacities and sharing knowledge, expertise, technologies and financial resources to support country-driven priorities. The establishment and strengthening of partnerships would be crucial for the effective implementation of this strategic framework. At the global level, key organizations and donors engaged in biodiversity capacity development could pool resources and expertise, create coalitions and work together to implement medium to long-term capacity development programmes on specific issues related to the targets of the post-2020

¹⁶ Capacity development is one of the core outcome areas of UNDAF support in a number of countries, as demonstrated by the example of Bhutan (https://www.unicef.org/evaldatabase/index_70552.html).

¹⁷ As cited in the UNDP publication [Incentive Systems: Incentives, motivation and development performance](#).

¹⁸ The action plan for capacity-building for the implementation of the Cartagena Protocol and its Supplementary Protocol (<https://bch.cbd.int/protocol/post2020/portal/review.shtml>) is to be aligned with the Implementation Plan for the Cartagena Protocol and complementary to the long-term strategic framework for capacity development.

¹⁹ Examples of regional strategies include the [European Union's Biodiversity Strategy for 2030](#), the [Southern African Development Community's Biodiversity Strategy](#), and the [Caribbean Community \(CARICOM\) Biodiversity Strategy](#). Other examples can be accessed at <https://www.cbd.int/nbsap/related-info/region-bsap/>.

global biodiversity framework, in line with national priorities. Such collaborative programmes could deliver comprehensive and sustainable capacity development outcomes.

41. Equally, it is important for governments to establish or strengthen partnerships at the national, subnational and local levels, as well as across different sectors. Such partnerships should consider the knowledge and expertise held by various actors, for example indigenous peoples and local communities, women and youth, to ensure successful implementation.

G. Enhance synergies between capacity development efforts of relevant processes

42. Efforts should be made to enhance synergies with the capacity development efforts of other relevant conventions and processes through existing mechanisms, such as the Liaison Group of Biodiversity-related Conventions (BLG) and the Joint Liaison Group (JLG) of the Rio Conventions, which meet regularly to explore opportunities for synergistic activities and increased coordination, and to exchange information.²⁰ Additionally, efforts should be made to identify and maximize synergies with Sustainable Development Goal implementation processes at the global,²¹ regional and national levels. At the national level, it is important that the focal points of relevant conventions and processes establish a mechanism to foster joint planning and coordination for biodiversity action. Funding mechanisms, such as the Global Environment Facility (GEF) and the Green Climate Fund (GCF), should also encourage and support countries to promote integration and synergies at the programming, implementation, and monitoring and evaluation levels, as much as possible. In doing so, consideration should be made to ensuring that such integrated initiatives do not undermine or have unintended negative consequences on any other conventions or protocols.

H. Promote South-South and triangular cooperation

43. In many developing countries, one of the key challenges to meeting international biodiversity commitments is a lack, or shortage, of local expertise and capacities. For countries in the same geographic region or those that share similar characteristics, including economic and social conditions and language, such capacities could be built through South-South cooperation and the development of regional nodes, networks or centres of excellence. To this end, there is a need to strengthen open access to data and tools that are an essential requirement for multiple capacity development needs. In turn, the expertise developed could be leveraged by other countries that require it. Triangular cooperation, in which donor countries and multilateral organizations facilitate South-South initiatives, through the provision of funding, training, management, and technological systems as well as other forms of support, also provides opportunities for countries to develop capacities in the pursuit of shared goals. Similarly, working collaboratively on technical and scientific cooperation initiatives can facilitate capacity development.

I. Engage the private sector

44. The involvement of the private sector in the development of national capacities is a strategic component of achieving sustainable change. Many of the technical and financial resources, expertise and technologies useful for the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity, and for the equitable and fair sharing of the benefits arising from the utilization of genetic resources, lie in the hands of private entities. The private sector can play a leading role in promoting and incentivizing sustainable production, trade and consumption to achieve global biodiversity and environmental objectives. Governments and organizations may wish to engage proactively and cultivate working relationships with the private sector to promote these goals, support national capacity development efforts and to invest in the transfer of biodiversity-friendly technologies and know-how that would support transformational change towards achieving the

²⁰ For example, under the BLG, a group of capacity development coordinators of the biodiversity-related convention secretariats and organizations was established in 2017 to promote synergies between existing capacity development strategies, mechanisms, programmes, projects and activities; identify common issues and gaps across the conventions that require capacity development; implement joint actions to address the identified common issues and gaps; and share experiences and lessons learned.

²¹ Examples of such global processes include the [Bio-Trade Initiative](#) of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD). This is a global initiative with the objective of providing key stakeholders with the ability to seize and capitalize on trade opportunities from linking biodiversity and sustainable development.

2030 targets. However, it is important to ensure that transparency and accountability around issues such as intellectual property rights are incorporated as fundamental features of any public-private partnership. Further, it is important to recognize and respond to the fact that the private sector, especially small and medium enterprises, also have capacity development needs with regards to addressing biodiversity-related issues.

J. Strengthen the monitoring and evaluation of capacity development interventions

45. Governments and relevant non-government actors should develop and implement adaptive management systems for monitoring and evaluation of biodiversity capacity development efforts, in order to assess whether their intended capacity results are achieved in an impactful and sustainable manner, to identify and correct mistakes, and to capture and share good practices and lessons learned. The most effective monitoring and evaluation processes are those that are built into activity design and planning from the beginning, rather than treated as an add-on at a later stage. A well formulated capacity development intervention should set out medium and/or long-term goals and objectives and specify what capacities are expected to be in place after the interventions. Programme and project planning should also define specific monitoring indicators and means of verification.

46. There are various resources available for measuring capacity development which government and non-government actors can adapt and use. Examples include the GEF guidelines for monitoring capacity development in GEF projects,²² the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)'s discussion paper on measuring capacity,²³ the capacity development evaluation framework of the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO),²⁴ and Pact's Organizational Performance Index handbook.²⁵ There may be a need for more specific guidance and tools about monitoring and evaluating biodiversity capacity development. This guidance could be developed with the support of capacity development practitioners.

V. MECHANISMS FOR IMPLEMENTATION

A. Governance and coordination mechanisms

47. There is a need for mechanisms that could provide strategic leadership and foster coordinated capacity development action for biodiversity at the global, regional, and national levels. Specifically, the roles of such mechanisms may, inter alia, include (a) enhancing synergy, through inter-agency coordination and cooperation among relevant organizations, initiatives and funding agencies; (b) providing strategic guidance, advice and support to government and non-government actors; (c) promoting strategic and coherent approaches to capacity development; (d) fostering partnerships and multi-stakeholder initiatives; (e) identifying opportunities to mobilize additional resources for biodiversity capacity development efforts; and (f) proposing innovative ideas to improve and advance implementation of the strategic framework.

48. At the global level, the above roles could be accomplished through:

(a) Establishment of a new high-level biodiversity capacity development committee or a broader inter-agency implementation support committee;²⁶

(b) Designation of a biodiversity capacity development task team under existing mechanisms such as the United Nations Environment Management Group (EMG) or the Liaison Group of Biodiversity-related Conventions (BLG).²⁷

²² <https://www.thegef.org/publications/monitoring-guidelines-capacity-development-global-environment-facility-projects>.

²³ <https://www.undp.org/content/undp/en/home/librarypage/capacity-building/undp-paper-on-measuring-capacity.html>.

²⁴ <http://www.fao.org/3/ca5668en/ca5668en.pdf>.

²⁵ <https://www.pactworld.org/library/pacts-organizational-performance-index-handbook>.

²⁶ The implementation support committee would provide advice and strategic guidance on all the means of implementation of the post-2020 global biodiversity framework, including capacity development, technical and scientific cooperation, technology transfer, knowledge management and resource mobilization.

49. At the regional level, biodiversity capacity development coordination and coherence could be achieved with the support of the United Nations Regional Economic Commissions and the regional teams of the United Nations Sustainable Development Group (UNSDG).

50. At the country level, coordination of biodiversity capacity development could be done through the national biodiversity committees or similar mechanisms and facilitated through the United Nations country teams, within the United Nations Development Assistance Framework for the country.

51. In addition, an informal biodiversity capacity development forum could be established and convened periodically on a rotational basis by different biodiversity-related conventions to bring together government and non-government actors to network and share experiences, good practices and lessons learned.

B. Mutual supportiveness between various implementation strategies and processes

52. The implementation of this strategic framework will be synergized with the other means of implementation and enabling conditions for the post-2020 global biodiversity framework, and with the mechanisms for reporting, assessment and review of implementation. For example, the resource mobilization component²⁸ should include links to this capacity development framework, as strengthening the capacities of governments and non-government actors to mobilize and access resources for biodiversity and to leverage climate change finance have been identified as a priority. The proposals for strengthening technical and scientific cooperation²⁹ also include actions that would contribute to capacity development. Similarly, the knowledge management component³⁰ should reinforce capacity development, including organizational learning. Furthermore, the long-term approach to mainstreaming biodiversity³¹ should incorporate links to the capacity development framework in relation to capacity development for mainstreaming biodiversity.

C. Domestic resource mobilization for capacity development

53. There is a need to mobilize domestic financial resources to improve national capacities, and to help create an enabling environment for greater private sector investment in capacity development. At the national level, the UNDP Biodiversity Finance Initiative (BIOFIN) may offer opportunities for countries to include in their national resource mobilization strategies a mechanism to mobilize resources to support capacity development.

54. It is also important for indigenous peoples and local communities, and other local actors, to access resources to enable them to develop their capacities and to implement activities at the ground level. They also need to be proactively involved in national and local-level planning and budget development processes.

D. Regional and global support networks

55. Regional and global support networks should be strengthened, or established where they do not exist, to provide, upon request, capacity development support to national government institutions, subnational governments and local authorities and non-government actors within the respective geographic regions or subregions. This includes providing the support and expertise to facilitate dialogue and cooperation across different sectors and groups within society. Examples of existing support networks include: the regional

²⁷ The EMG (<https://unemg.org/>) or BLG (www.cbd.int/blg/) could include on the task team senior representatives of international organizations, indigenous peoples and local communities, civil society organizations, the private sector, donors and academia with experience on matters related to capacity development and/or actively involved in implementing or supporting capacity development in support of the post-2020 global biodiversity framework.

²⁸ See CBD/SBI/3/5 and addenda.

²⁹ See CBD/SBI/3/7/Add.2.

³⁰ See CBD/SBI/3/8.

³¹ <https://www.rbge.org.uk/science-and-conservation/workshop-for-subnational-governments-in-the-cbd-post-2020-global-biodiversity-framework/>.

implementation support networks for protected areas,³² the CBD-BIOFIN regional technical support nodes,³³ the regional networks of laboratories for the detection and identification of living modified organisms,³⁴ the network of Biosafety Clearing-House regional advisors,³⁵ the ABS Capacity Development Initiative,³⁶ and UNDP's Global Access and Benefit-Sharing Community of Practice.³⁷ The global and regional support centres suggested in the proposals to strengthen technical and scientific cooperation in support of the post-2020 global biodiversity framework³⁸ could also play this role. Lead organizations in various regions and subregions could be identified and requested to work with other partners to establish or expand such support networks.

E. Enhanced review mechanisms

56. The proposed enhanced planning, reporting, and review mechanism under the Convention on Biological Diversity should consider the capacity development dimension. The guidelines for national reporting by governments should also include requirements for measuring and reporting on capacity development, opportunities to share experiences and lessons to facilitate learning across countries.

57. As well, the process for the review and revision of NBSAPs should include a review of capacity development strategies and approaches. The proposed open-ended forums for the review of national implementation, and the voluntary peer review of NBSAP revision and implementation (see CBD/SBI/3/11),³⁹ should also address the capacity development aspects.

F. Outreach and dissemination of the strategic framework for capacity development

58. A campaign will be undertaken to raise awareness of, and support for, this long-term strategic framework. The campaign will target relevant government and non-government actors with a view to promoting alignment with active programmes, partnerships, communities of practice and academic programmes and strengthening rather than duplicating existing initiatives. A dedicated web portal will be created and linked to the websites of biodiversity-related conventions and organizations to share information about the framework, the activities of various government and non-government actors aligned with it, and experiences and lessons learned in its implementation.

59. Key partners and stakeholders will be invited to indicate how they can support the implementation of the framework. For example, they could do so through the alignment of their capacity development actions with the framework, elaboration of thematic action plans, establishment of coalitions and communities of practice, and the integration of the proposed ideas into new capacity development initiatives and academic curricula. The key stakeholders and their potential roles include the following:

(a) *National Governments* – plan and guide the implementation of biodiversity capacity development as part of the NBSAPs, plus take responsibility for the provision of enabling environments, support and resources for implementers;

(b) *Subnational governments and local authorities* – guide and support biodiversity capacity development efforts at the subnational and local levels; promote cooperation with stakeholders and local

³² At least 10 implementation support networks have been established at the regional and subregional levels to help build capacity and support national action plans for the implementation of Aichi Target 11, on protected areas. Each network is coordinated by an agency, which brings together relevant stakeholders to coordinate and align their support activities and identify gaps and opportunities.

³³ <http://www.biodiversityfinance.net/regional-nodes>.

³⁴ http://bch.cbd.int/onlineconferences/portal_detection/lab_network.shtml.

³⁵ <https://www.unenvironment.org/explore-topics/biosafety/what-we-do/developing-biosafety-frameworks/bch-regional-advisers>.

³⁶ <http://www.abs-initiative.info/>.

³⁷ <https://community.abs-sustainabledevelopment.net/>.

³⁸ www.cbd.int/doc/recommendations/sbstta-23/sbstta-23-rec-06-en.pdf.

³⁹ The voluntary peer review of NBSAPs seeks to help Parties improve their individual and collective capacities to implement the Convention more effectively by providing opportunities for peer learning for Parties involved: <https://www.cbd.int/nbsap/vpr/>.

leaders to support the national efforts for capacity development; and facilitate the integration of relevant local actors into national biodiversity committees or thematic groups;

(c) *Non-governmental and civil society organizations and associations*, including those representing indigenous peoples and local communities, women, youth and faith-based organizations – contribute to the development of national capacity development strategies and plans; serve as intermediaries for local communities; and facilitate the engagement of local stakeholders in the design, planning and implementation of capacity development activities;

(d) *Youth groups* (who are driving the global dialogue for change) – bring innovative ideas regarding the content and technological aspects of capacity development; hold responsible positions in government and organizations at an earlier age than the generations before;

(e) *Academia and research organizations* – contribute research; generate and disseminate intercultural and multidisciplinary knowledge materials; improve the understanding of issues and formulation of responses; train the next generation of biodiversity experts;

(f) *Private sector* – multiple areas of contribution, such as infrastructure development, technical expertise, research and development, and provision of products, services and financial resources;

(g) *Regional and subregional organizations* – create enabling conditions through agreements and partnerships; coordinate and resource the implementation of regional strategies and plans;

(h) *International organizations and United Nations agencies* – ensure biodiversity capacity development is appropriately integrated into their strategic plans; promote, integrate and support good practice principles for capacity development in their programme and project support;

(i) *Bilateral and multilateral development agencies and financial institutions* (including development banks, GEF, GCF and other funds) – ensure long-term biodiversity capacity development is appropriately integrated into their strategic plans and funding mechanisms; promote and support good practice principles for capacity development in the programmes and projects they support.

G. Reporting and review of the strategic framework

60. This long-term strategic framework is intended to be a living document. It will be reviewed periodically to assess its relevance and use by governments and relevant non-government actors and, if necessary, will be updated to ensure its continued relevance, use and effectiveness. There will be a first review five years into its implementation (2025) and an independent evaluation will be carried out in 2030, at the end of the period coinciding with the review of the post-2020 global biodiversity framework targets. Among other things, the review will assess whether the strategic guidance provided in the framework for capacity development is being used, how it is being used/applied and whether there is a recognizable change attributable to the framework. This would contribute to measurement of its effectiveness as a tool.

61. Reporting on the application of the strategic framework and the lessons learned by governments will be done through their national reports under the respective biodiversity-related conventions and processes. It will also be done by relevant non-government actors through voluntary submission of reports and case studies to the secretariats of the respective conventions and processes. The involvement of relevant stakeholders and the public in the reporting process could help foster transparency and accountability, and could also help create a culture of co-ownership of the successes and failures in meeting biodiversity goals.

62. The secretariats of biodiversity-related conventions will be invited to prepare synthesis reports on the status of implementation of the strategic framework including lessons learned, based on the information provided by governments and non-government actors, for consideration by the respective Conferences of the Parties, at intervals to be determined.

63. A set of headline indicators for capacity development will be included in the monitoring framework for the post-2020 global biodiversity framework. A complementary set of indicators, and a methodology for measuring progress in the achievement of the strategic directions proposed in this long-

term strategic framework, could be prepared with the support capacity development practitioners and made available following the adoption of the strategic framework. Government and non-government actors could also adapt and use the complementary indicators to monitor, assess and report on their capacity development efforts at the subnational, national and regional levels. The information generated from the monitoring and capacity development assessments processes at the national and regional levels should inform the periodic review and update of the framework.
