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CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES TO THE CONVENTION ON BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY

Tenth meeting

Nagoya, Japan, 18-29 October 2010

Agenda items 2.3 and 7

DECISION ADOPTED BY THE CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES TO THE CONVENTION ON BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY AT ITS TENTH MEETING

X/22. Plan of Action on Subnational Governments, Cities and Other Local Authorities for Biodiversity¹

The Conference of the Parties,

Recalling decision IX/28, which recognizes the role of cities and local authorities in their national biodiversity strategies and action plans and invites Parties to support and assist cities and local authorities in implementing the Convention at local level,

Acknowledging the progress achieved by the Global Partnership on Cities and Biodiversity under the Convention on Biological Diversity and consolidated in events such as the Second Curitiba Meeting on Cities and Biodiversity, held in January 2010 in Curitiba, Brazil, the fifth World Urban Forum held in March 2010 in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, the second Conference of the Network Urban Biodiversity and Design URBIO 2010 in May 2010 in Nagoya, Japan, and the Expo Shanghai 2010, in China,

Welcoming the significant support of the cities of Curitiba, Bonn, Nagoya and Montreal to this initiative, and of Singapore in incorporating biodiversity in the annual World Cities Summit, developing the City Biodiversity Index (CBI) and offering Singapore National Parks Board's Centre for Urban Greenery and Ecology as a collaborative centre for the implementation of this Plan of Action, as well as the support of South Africa to the development of the guidebook *Biodiversity Management for Local Governments*, produced in partnership with ICLEI Local Action for Biodiversity programme as a twin publication to the UN-HABITAT *Supporting Local Action for Biodiversity: The Role of National Governments*,

¹ For the purposes of this document, "local authorities" include all levels of government below the subnational, national or federal level (prefectures, districts, counties, municipalities, cities, towns, communes, etc), while "subnational governments" (states, provinces, domains, territories, regional governments) applies only to the first immediate level of government below the national.

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Welcoming the outcomes of the City Biodiversity Summit 2010, held in the City of Nagoya, Aichi Prefecture, Japan, from 24 to 26 October 2010,

1. *Endorses* the Plan of Action on Subnational Governments, Cities and Other Local Authorities for Biodiversity (2011-2020) annexed to the present decision and *encourages* Parties and other Governments to implement it, as appropriate, in the context of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020, taking into account national priorities, capacities and needs, and to report on their activities in the fifth national report of the Parties to the Convention;

2. *Invites* Parties to involve subnational governments, cities and other local authorities when revising their national biodiversity strategies and action plans;

3. *Invites* subnational governments, cities and other local authorities and their networks to contribute to the implementation of the Plan of Action, in coordination with their national Governments, taking into account activities conducted to implement the programme of work on communication, education and public awareness (CEPA);

4. *Also invites* Parties, other Governments, regional organizations, development cooperation agencies, non-governmental organizations and other donors to support the implementation of the Plan of Action technically and financially, considering in particular the needs of developing countries especially the least developed countries and small island developing States, as well as countries with economies in transition;

5. *Welcomes* the invitation by the City of Montpellier, France, to host the first meeting on the implementation of this Plan of Action on 17-18 January 2011;

6. *Requests* the Executive Secretary, subject to the availability of resources, to prepare an assessment of the links and opportunities between urbanization and biodiversity for the eleventh meeting of the Conference of the Parties, based on the third edition of the Global Biodiversity Outlook, and convene, with appropriate partners, meetings of local authorities at the margins of future meetings of the Conference of the Parties, as per its two previous meetings, and continuing with a summit on local authorities and biodiversity to be held in India prior to the high-level segment of the eleventh meeting of the Conference of the Parties;

7. *Further requests* the Executive Secretary to report on the implementation of the Plan of Action at future meetings of the Conference of the Parties.

Annex

**PLAN OF ACTION ON SUBNATIONAL GOVERNMENTS, CITIES AND OTHER LOCAL
AUTHORITIES FOR BIODIVERSITY (2011-2020)**

A. *Background*

1. The Plan of Action on Subnational Governments, Cities and Other Local Authorities for Biodiversity under the Convention on Biological Diversity is intended to support Parties, their partners and local authorities in implementing the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020, the Aichi Biodiversity Targets and relevant decisions of the Conference of the Parties, as well as paragraphs 3, 4, 5, and 6 of decision IX/28, consistent with each Party's specific governance arrangements and legislation. The Plan of Action has been developed through a four-year long wide-ranging consultation process with Parties, cities and local authorities, and other organizations cooperating through the Global Partnership on Cities and Biodiversity at various events through 2010, culminating with the Aichi/Nagoya City Biodiversity Summit, held from 24 to 26 October 2010, on the margins of the tenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties in Nagoya, Japan.

B. *Mission*

2. Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity should, as appropriate, seek to engage their subnational Governments, cities and other local authorities, as appropriate, to achieve the objectives of the Convention and the implementation of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020, by developing policy tools, guidelines and programmes, providing technical assistance and/or guidance, as appropriate, in line with their national biodiversity strategies and action plans (NBSAPs) and other relevant governance arrangements established by their national Governments.

3. By 2020:

(a) Relevant tools, guidelines and capacity-building programmes based on best practices, as well as innovative financial mechanisms to support their implementation should, as appropriate be in place to increase synergies between the various levels of government in implementing the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020, considering the specific mandates of each level of government;

(b) National biodiversity strategies and action plans should be supported, as appropriate, by subnational and local strategies and corresponding action plans;

(c) Awareness campaigns on the importance of biodiversity and ecosystem services should, as appropriate be implemented at local level as part of the Parties' communication, education and public awareness strategies, including major groups such as business, youth, non-governmental organizations and indigenous and local communities, through initiatives such as celebrations of the International Day for Biological Diversity (May 22), *The Green Wave* initiative, and other activities in support of the Convention on Biological Diversity;

(d) Monitoring and evaluation systems for subnational governments and local authorities should, as appropriate be applied, guided by national frameworks, to report on progress to national governments in line with reporting obligations under the Convention on Biological Diversity, and to set benchmarks for local biodiversity management in line with the 2011-2020 indicator framework under the Convention on Biological Diversity, using tools such as the Singapore Index on Cities' Biodiversity.²

C. *Objectives*

4. The present Plan of Action has the following objectives, based on the mission outlined above:

² The User's Manual for the index, developed in two expert meetings and tested in over 30 cities, is available at <http://www.cbd.int/authorities/gettinginvolved/cbi.shtml>.

(a) Increase the engagement of subnational governments and local authorities, in support of their Parties, in the successful implementation of national biodiversity strategies and action plans, the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020, the 2020 target and the programmes of work under the Convention on Biological Diversity;

(b) Improve regional and global coordination and exchange of lessons learned between Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity, regional and global organizations, United Nations and development agencies, academia, and donors on ways and means to encourage and support local authorities to manage biodiversity sustainably, provide ecosystem services to citizens and incorporate biodiversity concerns into urban planning and development;

(c) Identify, enhance and disseminate policy tools, guidelines, and programmes that facilitate local action on biodiversity and build the capacity of local authorities to support their national Governments in implementing the Convention on Biological Diversity;

(d) Develop awareness-raising programmes on biodiversity for local residents (including major groups such as business, local administrators, non-governmental organizations, youth and indigenous and local communities) in line with communication, education and public awareness strategies.

D. Indicative list of activities

5. Parties may wish to consider the activities below, based on concrete examples researched with the Global Partnership on Cities and Biodiversity, in order to enable and support their subnational governments and local authorities to contribute to the objectives of the Convention on Biological Diversity. These activities are considered to be interrelated and complementary:

(a) Consider and engage subnational governments and local authorities in the revision and implementation of national biodiversity strategies and action plans (NBSAPs) at the local level, as appropriate;

(b) Encourage the development and implementation of subnational and local biodiversity strategies and actions plans in support of national biodiversity strategies and action plans;

(c) Encourage subnational governments and local authorities to apply the ecosystem approach and promote other holistic landscape management approaches, consistent with relevant decisions of the Conference of the Parties, integrated into adaptation and sustainable development plans, and engage them in synergies across the Rio conventions and the biodiversity-related conventions;

(d) Recognize and reward efforts of subnational governments and local authorities in implementing the Convention on Biological Diversity at their respective levels, such as through the ICLEI Local Action for Biodiversity programme, the European Capitals of Biodiversity award, the Nordic Nature project, the *Red + Biodiversidad 2010* in Spain and many others;

(e) Encourage subnational governments and local authorities, as appropriate, to integrate biodiversity considerations into public procurement policies and urban infrastructure investments (parkways and green transportation systems, public buildings, vertical gardens, water treatment and distribution, convention and conference centres, housing projects, waste management, etc);

(f) Engage subnational governments and local authorities in the implementation of the programme of work on protected areas of the Convention on Biological Diversity, by supporting the establishment and maintenance of systems of local protected areas, local conservation corridors and mosaics of land-use (such as biosphere reserves), in line with the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020;

(g) Encourage, promote and support, as appropriate and through policy tools, guidelines and programmes, direct decentralized cooperation on biodiversity and development between local authorities at national, regional and global levels;

(h) Promote and support the representation of subnational governments, cities and other local authorities in delegations for official events and activities under the Convention on Biological Diversity, such as meetings of the Conference of the Parties, the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice, the Working Group on Review of Implementation, and ad hoc technical expert groups. Local authorities can contribute specifically to thematic programmes of work and cross-cutting issues such as inland waters, protected areas, invasive alien species, climate change, development and poverty alleviation, tourism, health and biodiversity, agriculture, food and nutrition, among others;

(i) Support the development of landscape-level and ecosystem-based partnerships between subnational governments and local authorities on conservation corridors and sustainable land-use mosaics at national and transboundary levels, also in the context of the Multi-Year Plan of Action on South-South Cooperation for Biodiversity and Development;

(j) Organize regular consultations with local authorities (such as Japan's preparatory meeting for the City Biodiversity Summit 2010 and Canada's consultative process), regarding their commitments and activities that contribute to the targets and relevant programmes of work of the Convention on Biological Diversity, also as a contribution to each Party's reporting process to Conference of the Parties and Convention bodies.

(k) Support as appropriate the use of the Singapore Index on Cities' Biodiversity, and local biodiversity surveys and assessments or similar mechanisms, as a means for local authorities to measure the state of their biodiversity and its management in line with the Convention's 2011-2020 indicator framework;

(l) Contribute to a dialogue with and between subnational governments and local authorities at regional and international levels through relevant forums to be held back with or parallel to the meetings of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity;

(m) Welcome the Global Partnership on Cities and Biodiversity as a possible platform for promoting cooperation and strengthening local-national dialogue;

(n) Organize, as appropriate and while recognizing the roles of different levels of government, capacity-building initiatives (web-based tools, publications, newsletters, collections of case-studies, best practices and lessons learned, workshops, seminars and conferences) for local authorities on the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 and on the present Plan of Action and its tools (including the Singapore Index on Cities' Biodiversity), at national, regional and global levels, and disseminate these activities through the clearing-house mechanism;

(o) Promote research and technology development on urban biodiversity, and encourage the establishment of national and regional centres of excellence in urban biodiversity, and biodiversity-friendly city design, planning and management, with links to global academic networks such as URBIO and URBIS,

(p) In line with the communication, education and public awareness programme of the Convention on Biological Diversity, encourage local authorities to reach out to major groups such as children and youth, women, local parliamentarians and/or legislators, NGOs and businesses, to raise awareness about the importance of biodiversity and promote partnerships on local action for biodiversity.

E. Partnerships and coordination mechanism

6. Parties and other Governments are encouraged to implement the Plan of Action, as appropriate, with the support of the Secretariat of the Convention, and other key partners, taking into account national priorities, capacities and needs, and to report on their activities in future national reports of the Parties to the Convention..

7. An advisory committee comprising mayors of relevant cities will provide input and support to the Plan from the point of view of cities and local authorities. These cities may be previous and/or current

hosts of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention and of its Secretariat. When first set up in 2007, it included the mayors of the headquarters of the Convention, Montreal, and of past and future venues of the Conference of the Parties: Curitiba, Bonn and Nagoya. The host mayors of the last and upcoming meetings of the Conferences of the Parties shall act as co-chairs of the Advisory Committee. A similar mechanism may be set up for subnational governments in close consultation with Parties and partners, such as National and Regional Governments for Sustainable Development (nrg4SD), in recognition of their critical, complementary and distinct role in the implementation of the Convention.

8. Implementation of the Plan of Action will also be supported by the Global Partnership on Cities and Biodiversity, an informal cooperative platform launched at the IUCN World Conservation Congress in 2008 and composed of United Nations agencies and programmes, such as UN-HABITAT, UNEP and UNESCO, the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN), academic networks such as URBIO and networks of local authorities such as ICLEI and its Local Action for Biodiversity (LAB) programme, and facilitated by the Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity. The Global Partnership and its advisory committees may propose events and activities in support of the plan of action, and may meet at the margins of relevant and appropriate meetings of the Convention on Biological Diversity. The meetings shall be open to Parties, observers or special invitees, and its outcomes shall be incorporated into reports submitted to Parties by the Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity at each meeting of the Conference of the Parties.

9. Parties may further promote projects and programmes and coordinate activities in support of subnational and local authorities at the regional and global levels through regional centres of excellence and organizations, and regional offices of United Nations agencies. Consultations and partnerships may involve other relevant and interested stakeholders such as donors, regional economic commissions, regional development banks, representatives of the private sector, non-governmental organizations, and indigenous and local communities as appropriate. Where such regional mechanisms do not exist and when appropriate, Parties and the Global Partnership on Cities and Biodiversity may cooperate towards their establishment.

10. The Plan of Action recognizes the need to maintain flexibility in its strategy for implementation in order to accommodate changing national and local priorities as well as future decisions of the Conference of the Parties.

F. Monitoring and reporting

11. In order to measure the success of the Plan of Action, Parties are requested to include, in their national reports and other reports to the Convention on Biological Diversity (such as in-depth reviews and issues-based consultations), information on cooperation between different levels of government, and with relevant local organizations, on subnational and local action for biodiversity. Towards this goal, Parties may promote the use of self-monitoring tools such as the Singapore Index on Cities' Biodiversity (CBI) to set goals and milestones, and to measure progress by subnational and local authorities.

12. At the eleventh meeting of the Conference of the Parties, in 2012, and at future meetings, the Executive Secretary of the Convention on Biological Diversity will report on the implementation of the present Plan of Action. Contributions will be sought from relevant Parties, participating organizations and United Nations agencies.

G. Funding

13. The present Plan is designed to avoid additional financial burdens on Parties and partners; however, according to national priorities and processes, and in acknowledgment of the substantial implementation capacity and obligations of the subnational and local levels, Parties may identify

funding avenues oriented specifically towards biodiversity at the subnational and local levels for the implementation of this plan of action. Initiatives may include, *inter alia*:

- (a) Designing and supporting innovative partnerships with the private sector, non-governmental organizations, development banks, multi- and bilateral cooperation agencies and other donors, to support subnational and local authorities in the implementation of the three objectives of the Convention on Biological Diversity;
- (b) Engaging and linking subnational governments and local authorities and their networks with new and innovative financial mechanisms being discussed and formulated in other areas such as climate change, payments for ecosystem services, and enhanced efforts to reduce emissions from deforestation and forest degradation (REDD +);
- (c) Exploring opportunities presented by environmental fiscal reforms, including innovative tax allocation models and fiscal incentives for achieving the three objectives of the Convention at the subnational and local levels;
- (d) Earmarking national budgetary allocations and re-prioritizing existing allocations to engage subnational and local authorities on local action on biodiversity;
- (e) Engaging the Global Environment Facility to assist in the efforts to implement the Plan of Action at the project level.
