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DRAFT GUIDELINES FOR THE FIFTH NATIONAL REPORT

Note by the Executive Secretary

I. INTRODUCTION

1. The draft guidelines for the fifth national report have been developed on the basis of the experiences and lessons learned from the fourth and previous rounds of national reporting of the Convention and in line with the proposals for the fifth national report contained in recommendation 3/7 of the Working Group on Review of the Implementation, held in Nairobi, from 24-28 May 2010.

2. The Working Group reviewed the draft guidelines as contained in the document UNEP/CBD/WGRI/3/6/Add.1. The Working Group on Review of the Implementation in principle welcomed the proposed changes for the fifth national report proposed in that document, and agreed in its recommendation 3/7 that the fifth national report would continue to use a narrative format primarily, combined with use of common formats, including tables, suggested charts and questionnaires for statistical analysis. Specifically the Working Group agreed that the fifth national report should:

(a) Focus on the implementation of the updated Strategic Plan of the Convention (2011-2020), and progress toward the 2020 targets, using indicators where possible and feasible;

(b) Include, as appropriate, information concerning contributions of implementation of the updated Strategic Plan towards the achievement of relevant Millennium Development Goals;

(c) Allow countries to provide updates on the revision, updating and implementation of national biodiversity strategies and action plans and similar strategies, plans and programmes;

(d) Provide a concise update on the national status and trends of and threats to biodiversity, using national biodiversity indicators;

(e) Provide an overall assessment of the national implementation of the Convention, and include suggestions for future priorities at the national and international levels;

* UNEP/CBD/COP/10/1.

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(f) Provide an updated account of information provided in the last national report, to reflect changes that have occurred since then;

(g) Provide more quantitative analysis and synthesis than description of the status of implementation.

3. The Working Group also agreed that Parties, in preparing their fifth national report, should elaborate on:

(a) Outcomes and impacts of actions taken to implement the Convention at various levels;

(b) Successful experiences and lessons learned from implementation;

(c) Obstacles encountered in implementation.

4. The Working Group requested the Executive Secretary to further develop the draft guidelines for the fifth national report, taking into consideration views expressed at its third meeting, as well as further views submitted by Parties and observers before 30 June 2010, and to submit the revised guidelines for consideration and adoption by the Conference of the Parties at its tenth meeting.

5. In response, the Executive Secretary sent a notification on 8 June 2010 to all Parties and observers requesting them to submit further views on the draft guidelines for the fifth national report. By the 29 July, comments or suggestions were received from Argentina, Australia, Canada, the European Union, Mauritius, Myanmar and New Zealand.

6. Section II below briefly summarizes the views expressed at the third meeting of the Working Group on Review of the Implementation and further comments received after the meeting and describes how the guidelines have been adjusted in light of those changes. The annex contains the draft guidelines for the fifth national report, which have been revised based on the views and comments received, and are presented for adoption by the tenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties. A draft decision as prepared along the lines of recommendation 3/7 of the Working Group on Review of Implementation and for consideration and adoption by the tenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties is contained in the compilation of draft decision (UNEP/COP/10/1/Add.2).

II. REVISION OF THE DRAFT GUIDELINES IN LIGHT OF THE VIEWS AND COMMENTS RECEIVED

7. Consistent with the recommendations of the third meeting of the Working Group on Review of the Implementation, Parties were generally in broad agreement with the draft guidelines and acknowledged the benefits of continuing to use a predominately narrative format combined with use of common formats such as tables, charts and questionnaires. One regional group emphasized the importance of keeping the consistency of the formats for the fifth and sixth national reports to allow for long-term tracking of progress towards the 2020 targets.

8. One regional group noted that the guidelines are organized along 14 general questions and suggested that more specific advice be provided for the scale of the reporting. For appendix III, it was suggested that the Secretariat develop a matrix for reviewing implementation of thematic programmes of work and cross-cutting issues to assist countries in providing specific information. To help countries prepare the fifth national report, a reference manual will be prepared as was the case for the fourth national reports. This will include both more specific advice for the scale of reporting, and include a matrix for reviewing the programmes of work as well as suggested common formats for tables and charts. A preliminary draft with some elements of the manual will be made available to the tenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties as an information document, and a first full manual will be made available to Parties in the course of 2011.

9. A few countries noted overlaps among a few questions (such as questions 2, 3, 9 and 10 of the earlier draft contained in the draft guidelines for the fifth national report prepared for the third meeting of the Working Group on Review of Implementation (UNEP/CBD/WG-RI/3/6/Add.1) and suggested that

they be merged or reformulated to allow each of them to have a specific focus. Thus some questions have been merged or reformulated to reduce overlaps.

10. Though Parties agreed that progress towards relevant goals and targets of Millennium Development Goals could be part of the report, they cautioned against a format that might be construed as inviting Parties to report on implementation of the MDGs themselves. The fifth national reports should only cover information as appropriate concerning how the implementation of the Convention, particularly the updated Strategic Plan of the Convention, has contributed or is contributing to the achievement of relevant targets. The guidelines have been revised with this in mind.

11. While one Party questioned whether it is within the mandate of the Convention to report on aspects related to human well-being and socio-economic development, this aspect has been retained in light of earlier decisions of the Conference of the Parties recommending that Parties to highlight these linkages in their national biodiversity strategies and action plans and to make use of the framework of the Millennium Ecosystem Assessment.[1]

12. A number of Parties commented that it would be challenging for Parties to develop possible future biodiversity scenarios using models considering their limited data and capacities to do this, and they suggested that this question be omitted or considered optional. One Party was also concerned about whether countries could assess impacts or implications of loss of biodiversity and ecosystem services as they have limited data and knowledge in this regard. Another was concerned about the reliability of projections developed in this way. Accordingly, the revised guidelines retain this question as an option. This recognizes, consistent with earlier decisions of the Conference of the Parties,[2] that such scenarios can be very useful tools to explain to decision-makers and other stakeholders about the urgent need to take actions for biodiversity. Additionally, these approaches are generally becoming more widely available.

13. One regional group highlighted the importance of the use of indicators for reporting and noted the need to incorporate relevant intersessional developments between the tenth and eleventh meeting of the Conference of the Parties in the guidelines for the fifth national report in particular with regard to the post-2010 Strategic Plan, the post-2010 multi-year programme of work and the work by the Ad Hoc Technical Expert Group on Indicators and the implications of revisions of NBSAP. This regional group also suggested that the potential role of a future Intergovernmental Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES) in providing evidence for national level reporting should be dealt with once IPBES is established. To address these issues, further guidance emerging from the AHTEG process and other relevant developments will be incorporated into updated versions of the aforementioned resource manual.

14. One country suggested that the report should cover constrains experienced in implementation of the Convention. Another emphasized the necessity of financial resources for data collection, monitoring and reporting. This has been specifically mentioned in the revised guidelines. Two countries noted the importance of harmonization of national reporting to different biodiversity-related conventions. In terms of support to the preparation of the fifth national report, many countries emphasized the importance of timely provision (in the early stage of the process) of funding and support to developing countries in particular small island developing States and least developed countries.

[1] Decisions IX/8 1 (in developing, implementing and revising their national biodiversity strategies and action plans, and equivalent instruments, and in implementing the three objectives of the Convention, Parties were urged to "highlight the contribution of biodiversity, as appropriate, ecosystem services, to poverty eradication, national development and human well-being, ….") and XIV/9.

[2] Decisions XIV/9 and IX/15.

Annex

GUIDELINES FOR THE FIFTH NATIONAL REPORT

I. INTRODUCTION TO THE GUIDELINES

Purposes of reporting and intended use of information from national reports

1. In accordance with Article 26 of the Convention and [COP decision X/xx], Parties are required to submit their fifth national report by **31 March 2014.**

2. National reports are essential tools in allowing the Conference of the Parties to keep the implementation of the Convention under review, *inter alia*, by providing material for the preparation of the *Global Biodiversity Outlook*. The fifth national report provides a key source of information for a mid-term review of the implementation of the updated Strategic Plan for 2020, which will be undertaken at the twelfth meeting of the Conference of the Parties. Perhaps more importantly they are important tools for biodiversity planning at the national level, providing the analysis and monitoring necessary to inform decisions on implementation. Finally they are important communication tools.

Structure of the report

3. The guidelines for the fifth national report are composed of three main parts:

Part I - An update on biodiversity status, trends, and threats and implications for human well-being.

Part II - The national biodiversity strategies and action plans, its implementation, and the mainstreaming of biodiversity.

Part III - Progress towards the 2020 Biodiversity targets and contributions to the relevant 2015 Targets of the Millennium Development Goals.

4. Part III draws upon the information in the first two parts of the report to analyze how national actions taken to implement the Convention are contributing to relevant strategic goals and headline targets of the updated Strategic Plan, including as appropriate, how the implementation of the Strategic Plan for 2020 has contributed and is contributing to achievement of relevant goals and targets included in the Millennium Development Goals. The three parts together form the main body of the report, and should be drawn upon as a whole in preparing the executive summary. This summary should highlight the most important findings and conclusions from the report, and will serve as an important communication tool. In addition, Parties may submit annexes or appendices as part of their national report.

5. Throughout the report, Parties are requested to report on latest developments since the last national report, including progress towards the 2020 targets with reference to relevant baselines (e.g. 2010), using indicators where possible, without repeating in detail what has been already covered in the earlier national reports, and to provide more analysis and synthesis than description, supported with evidence and cases of outcomes from implementation.

How to use the guidelines

6. In the fifth national report, Parties are requested to report on their national implementation of the Convention primarily in narrative form, structured as answers to a number of key questions. In addition, Parties are encouraged to complement narrative reporting with any tables, charts, figures or graphics and indicators that might help support or better communicate the information presented. A reference manual with detailed suggestions for each part of the report will include some suggested tables or matrices,

charts, figures, and indicators for use by Parties.[3] Parties are encouraged to provide substantive information in concise form.

7. The length of the fifth national report is expected to be at least 40 pages and no more than 100 pages, including Appendices I to III. If the report must exceed this limit, Parties are encouraged to append additional information as supplementary material.

8. Parties are requested to adhere to the headings of the main parts of the reports and also to structure the sub-sections of each part according to the questions set out in the guidelines. The structure of each section is flexible. In cases where there are overlaps in the information provided within and among parts or sections, Parties are encouraged to make cross-references in order to avoid repetition.

9. Parties are invited to contact the Secretariat for any clarification on the use of the guidelines or the preparation of the fifth national report. The Secretariat would also welcome feedback on any difficulties encountered in using the guidelines, as well as ideas for improvements. Such information will be used in the development of the supporting tools and also contribute to future reporting cycles.

Processes of preparation

10. Guidance provided in various decisions of the Conference of the Parties requests Parties to involve stakeholders in the preparation of their national reports, including NGOs, civil society, indigenous and local communities, business, and the media. In addition, the national focal point responsible for preparing national reports is encouraged to work closely with national counterparts responsible for implementation of other related conventions. By coordinating report preparation, the focal points for the various conventions can share data and analysis, ensuring consistency among reports and reducing the overall reporting burden for the country. Such coordination could furthermore enhance opportunities for synergy in the national implementation of related conventions. Parties are invited to provide, in Appendix I of their report, a brief summary on the participatory process followed in preparing the report.

Outreach and communication

11. The preparation of national reports is an important opportunity for communicating achievements made in meeting the Convention objectives to the general public and involving them in national implementation. To this end, in addition to involving stakeholders in the preparation of national reports, it is particularly important for Parties, after having submitted their national report, to communicate to the general public the positive outcomes for biodiversity identified in the report, and the obstacles and challenges that remain. Various means of communication could be used, including: publicly launching national reports on International Biodiversity Day; making national reports accessible to a wider audience through national clearing-house mechanisms or other media; developing and disseminating byproducts of national reports.

12. At the international level, the fourth edition of the Global Biodiversity Outlook, which will draw upon information provided in the fifth national reports, will also serve as a communication tool.

Submission of the fifth national report

13. Parties are required to submit their fifth national report to the Executive Secretary by **31 March 2014**, using the format outlined in these guidelines. The submission of the fifth national report ahead of this deadline is encouraged as this would facilitate the preparation of the fourth edition of the Global Biodiversity Outlook, and of other analyses and syntheses that will be made available to the Conference of the Parties and its subsidiary bodies.

[3] The reference manual will be developed and made available to Parties in the course of 2011, which will incorporate ongoing and intersessional developments particularly with regard to the post-2010 Strategic Plan and multi-year programme of work and the AHTEG on indicators.

14. Parties are requested to submit an original signed copy by post and an electronic copy on diskette/CD-ROM, or by electronic mail, to the Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity. Electronic copies should be available in a Word-processing software and graphic elements provided in separate files to facilitate the electronic publication of the reports.

15. Parties that anticipate any difficulty in submitting the report by the deadline mentioned above are encouraged to initiate the process of the preparation of the report as early as possible to ensure that the report shall be submitted by the deadline.

II. GUIDELINES

The executive summary

For the purposes of communicating to stakeholders at various levels, Parties should prepare an executive summary of the fifth national report that provides the main messages and key findings of the report. These might be derived from answers to the Questions listed under each Part of the main report. The executive summary should be short and concise, preferably between 6 to 10 pages in length. For example, there could be one (or two) paragraph(s) for each question. It should appeal to the general public and relevant decision-makers. To this end, Parties are encouraged to include illustrative tables, figures and images. While the executive summary can only be finalized after the three main chapters of this report have been completed, an early draft of the executive summary may serve as a useful outline for the development of the report, helping to clarify the main messages.

The main parts of the report

Part I: An update on biodiversity status, trends, and threats and implications for human well-being.

This part should answer the following questions:

Q1: Why is biodiversity important for your country? Please elaborate the importance of biodiversity by highlighting contributions of biodiversity and related ecosystem services to human well-being and socio-economic development, using information from completed and ongoing biodiversity assessments or studies. Where possible provide estimates of economic, social and cultural values (the economic value can be presented in monetary terms, or for example in numbers of people supported). Also highlight a few examples of exceptional biodiversity and ecosystems in the country.

Q2: What major changes have taken place in the status and trends of biodiversity in your country? Focus on changes that have occurred, or that have become known, since the fourth or last national report was prepared. The analysis or synthesis should provide a succinct overview of biodiversity status, trends and threats sufficient to inform decision-makers, rather than an exhaustive assessment of these issues. There is no need to repeat detailed descriptions of your country's biodiversity that were provided in the fourth or previous national reports. However, countries that have not presented a comprehensive analysis of the status and trends of biodiversity in their previous reports could do so in this report. Where possible, show changes in biodiversity or other trends over time and use quantitative indicators (with technical details of the indicators provided in an annex). Also draw upon expert qualitative assessments. Illustrate trends with charts, graphs, figures and tables. Where possible, analyse how actions taken (i.e actions described in Part II) have resulted in changes in biodiversity. Use case-studies to illustrate general points. The case-studies should demonstrate significant reductions in the loss of biodiversity (or a specific component) within a defined scale, and a clear rationale of how this is linked to the actions taken. The case will be most useful if it contains lessons that are more widely applicable.

Q3: What are the main threats to biodiversity? (Or, what are the main causes of the negative changes described in the answer to question two?). For the main biomes and/or components of biodiversity,

describe the main direct drivers of biodiversity loss (pressures) and the main indirect drivers (underlying causes) and relate these to the relevant economic sectors. Be specific about the direct drivers (e.g. "dynamite fishing", "coastal development"), but also categorize them (habitat change, climate change, overexploitation, invasive species, pollution), with some detailed analysis.

Q4: What are the impacts of the changes in biodiversity for ecosystem services and the socio-economic and cultural implications of these impacts? Describe the impacts of declining biodiversity and ecosystems on human well-being, livelihoods, poverty reduction etc. Consider all relevant and significant ecosystem goods and services.

Optional question: What are possible future changes for biodiversity and their impacts? Describe plausible future scenarios for biodiversity in terms of underlying causes, pressures, impacts on biodiversity and implications for human well-being. For example compare what might happen under "business as usual" policies with what might happen with greater investment in biodiversity and ecosystems. Such scenarios may be simple "what if?" narratives style or based on models if such models are available. Any presentation of future scenarios should describe scientific uncertainties.

Part II: The national biodiversity strategies and action plans, its implementation, and the mainstreaming of biodiversity.

This part should answer the following questions:

Q5: What are the biodiversity targets set by your country? Describe the measurable targets (for example, for 2020) that have been developed in line with the Convention's Strategic Plan for 2011-2020. Please provide further updates on the targets if your country has submitted a report to the eleventh meeting of the Conference of the Parties.

Q6: How has your national biodiversity strategy and action plan been updated to incorporate these targets and to serve as an effective instrument to mainstream biodiversity? Provide a brief description of your NBSAP. If the NBSAP has been updated, how does it differ from the previous NBSAP? Describe: (i) how the actions contained therein will achieve the targets outlined in the answer to question 6; (ii) how it will contribute to the achievement of Convention's new Strategic Plan; (iii) how it will address the threats to biodiversity identified in the answer to question three; and (iv) how it addresses the guidance provided in decision IX/8 of the Convention on Biological Diversity. Describe in particular how the NBSAP will achieve the integration of biodiversity considerations into broader national plans, programmes and policies, economic and social sectors and levels of government.

Q7: What actions has your country taken to implement the Convention since the fourth report and what have been the outcomes of these actions? Describe relevant legislation, policies, institutional and cooperative mechanisms, and funding. Where relevant, link these actions to outcomes in terms of the status and trends of biodiversity and implications for human well-being. Use case-studies and, as appropriate cross-reference to the answer to question two. Indicate how the actions relate to the various programmes of work and cross-cutting issues of the Convention (with details provided in Appendix III), particularly those selected in the post-2010 multi-year programme of work of the Convention for in-depth review at the eleventh and twelfth meetings of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention. Highlight any obstacles to implementation (including lack of capacity, human and financial resources). Note that if your NBSAP has been recently updated, most of the actions reported may relate to the previous version.

Q8: How effectively has biodiversity been mainstreamed into relevant sectoral and cross-sectoral strategies, plans and programmes? Describe how biodiversity is reflected in poverty reduction strategies and other key cross-cutting policy instruments, and into the various economic sectors (which sectors (and ministries) integrate biodiversity well and which do not)? Describe also how biodiversity is integrated into planning mechanisms. Describe actions taken and outcomes achieved by each sector to implement

biodiversity actions included in their respective strategies, plans and programmes. Which tools are used (e.g. the Ecosystem Approach, biodiversity-inclusive environmental impact assessment and strategic environmental assessment, spatial planning, etc.)? Describe also how synergies are achieved at the national level in the implementation of the Convention on Biological Diversity, the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) and other relevant conventions. Describe also how biodiversity is considered in international and/or transboundary cooperation, including South-South cooperation.

Q9. How fully has your NBSAP been implemented? Analyse the extent to which the NBSAP has been implemented. For example, what proportion of the planned activities has been carried out and to what extent have the objectives been met. Identify the remaining challenges for implementation. (Note that if your NBSAP has been recently updated, this analysis will relate primarily to the previous version of the NBSAP).

Part III: Progress towards the 2020 Biodiversity targets and contributions to the relevant 2015 Targets of the Millennium Development Goals.

This part should draw upon Parts I and II to answer the following questions:

Q10: What progress has been made by your country towards the implementation of the Convention's Strategic Plan and its 2020 targets? Drawing upon information in Parts I and II, analyse the progress towards each of the 2020 targets of the Convention's Strategic Plan as well as the overall Mission of the Plan. Also indicate progress towards the national targets referred to in the answer to question five, national actions taken to achieve each target and outcomes achieved. Where possible, use quantitative indicators (with technical details of the indicators provided in an annex). Also draw upon expert qualitative assessments. You may wish to use a simple "traffic-light" scheme or similar device to give an overall assessment of progress.

Q11: What has been the contribution of actions to implement the Convention towards the achievement of the relevant 2015 Targets of the Millennium Development Goals in your country? In order to highlight the importance of biodiversity for achieving broader national objectives, and drawing upon, as appropriate, on information in Parts I and II, analyse how the actions taken to implement the Convention, particularly the implementation of the 2015 milestones and 2020 targets of the updated Strategic Plan of the Convention, have contributed or are contributing to achievement of relevant 2015 targets of the Millennium Development Goals as well as to the overall Goals themselves .

Q12: What lessons have been learned from the implementation of the Convention in your country? Provide an analysis of lessons learned from implementation, highlighting examples of successful and less successful actions taken, including remaining challenges. Also provide suggestions for actions that need to be taken at the national, regional and global levels to further enhance implementation of the Convention at the national level, level and, in particular, to achieve the strategic goals and targets of the updated Strategic Plan.

Annexes and Appendices

Use annexes and appendices to provide detailed or supporting information that is not necessary in the main report. Annexes and appendices may be bound separately to limit the size of the main report. Suggested annexes and appendices are listed here:

Appendix I - Information concerning reporting Party and preparation of national report. Please provide information on the process used to prepare this report, including information on stakeholders involved and material used as a basis for the report.

Appendix II - Further sources of information. Parties should provide sources of information on national implementation, such as website addresses, publications, databases and national reports submitted to other related conventions, forums and organizations.

Appendix III-National Implementation of the thematic programmes of work and plans under the Convention on Biological Diversity or decisions of the Conference of the Parties related to cross-cutting issues. Parties could use a table or matrix[4] to highlight how national actions taken to implement the NBSAP, mainstreaming and the 2020 targets have contributed or are contributing to goals, targets and activities suggested in the thematic programmes of work and plans or decisions related to cross-cutting issues, particularly those selected in the post-2010 multi-year programme of work of the Convention for in-depth review at the eleventh and twelfth meetings of the Conference of the Parties. Parties could focus on those thematic areas and cross-cutting issues that are nationally relevant and important.

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[4] The table or matrix will be developed and provided to Parties in a reference manual for the fifth national report.