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CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES TO THE CONVENTION ON BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY

Eleventh meeting

Hyderabad, India, 8–19 October 2012

Item 4.1 of the annotated agenda*

INFORMAL DIALOGUE ON THE CBD STRATEGY FOR RESOURCE MOBILIZATION

Report of the chair of the informal dialogue

I. INTRODUCTION

1. Under agenda item 4.1, the Conference of the Parties at its eleventh meeting (COP-11) will review the implementation of the strategy for resource mobilization, adopted by the Conference of the Parties at its ninth meeting, in 2008. This review will include the establishment of targets for the strategy. In order to enhance understanding of the various issues related to the strategy for resource mobilization and with a view to facilitate discussions at the eleventh meeting of the Conference of the Parties, the Executive Secretary organized an informal dialogue that aimed to help identifying and exploring possible approaches to resource mobilization and possible types of targets, and how these would be related to baselines and financial needs.

2. Based on document UNEP/CBD/COP/11/14, which will constitute the basis for the consideration of this item by the Conference of the Parties at its eleventh meeting, the informal dialogue specifically sought to:

(a) explore, and contribute to understanding of, the various elements of this document, and (i) review the available information relevant to the reporting framework; (ii) identify financial flows, possible baseline years, available baseline numbers and potential approaches and elements for target-setting;

(b) Discuss possible sources of financing and financing mechanisms;

(c) Build a better understanding of the evolving nature of the work on resource mobilization for COP 11 and beyond.

3. The meeting did not engage in negotiation on targets or other related issues, nor did it draft any recommendations.

4. The meeting was organized by the Executive Secretary, with financial support provided by the Government of Norway, and was held at the International Environment House in Geneva, Switzerland. It brought together members of the COP Bureau and a regionally balanced group of Government nominated experts, from the following Parties: Argentina, Belarus, Belgium, Bhutan, Bolivia, Bosnia and

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Herzegovina, Botswana, Brazil, China, Denmark, Ecuador, Ethiopia, European Union, Fiji, Germany, Grenada, India, Japan, Mexico, New Zealand, Norway, Philippines, Morocco, Namibia, Nigeria, Sweden, Switzerland, and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland. Representatives of the Institute of Advanced Studies of the United Nations University and of the ICF GHK Consultancy also attended the meeting. Also in attendance were representatives of the High-Level Panel on Global Assessment of Resources for implementing the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020, and of the expert team for assessing the funding needs for the sixth replenishment of the Global Environment Facility (GEF-6). The list of participants for the workshop can be found in annex I to the present report.

5. The meeting was chaired by Mr Andrew Bignell, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade, New Zealand. The meeting was conducted in English.

II. OPENING AND INTRODUCTION

6. The meeting was opened by the Executive Secretary of the Convention, Mr Braulio Ferreira de Souza Dias, at 9:00 a.m. on Monday, 17 September 2012.

7. Mr Dias welcomed the participants and thanked the Government of Norway for its support. He pointed to the need to mobilize resources, both financial and non-financial, for effectively implementing the Strategic Plan and its Aichi targets. He recalled that the Conference of the Parties adopted the strategy for resource mobilization at its ninth meeting and started to work on indicators at its tenth meeting, but did not agree on targets. Recognizing the difficulty of this issue, he noted that better information was needed on baselines and financial needs, including improving knowledge on current and past spending for biodiversity purposes. He acknowledged the 20 reports on resource mobilization and funding needs received from countries so far and the past meetings held to further understanding of the complexities of this topic, such as the ones held in Quito and La Paz, as well as at the margins of the fourth meeting of the Working Group on Review of Implementation of the Convention, and expressed his hope for a constructive discussion.

8. The Chair of the meeting, Mr Andrew Bignell from New Zealand, introduced the background and objectives of this meeting. He recalled the challenges ahead in the next eight years and emphasized that the purpose of the dialogue is not to engage in negotiations or produce recommendations.

9. Mr. Ravi Sharma of the CBD Secretariat presented an overview on the status of decisions related to resource mobilization, pointing in particular to the development of resource mobilization indicators and targets, and to the reporting framework on resource mobilization and the submissions received thereon.

10. Specifically on the innovative finance aspect of resource mobilization, one participant noted the link of some of the Aichi Targets to the green economy agenda, and cautioned that this may lead to a new green colonialism. In this regard, he highlighted that the green economy was one instrument among others to achieve sustainable development, and that each country could choose the most appropriate instrument or instruments in accordance with national conditions and circumstances. Referring to pertinent language in the Rio +20 outcome document of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development,¹ he suggested similar language to be reflected under the Convention.

11. Another participant said that the resource mobilization strategy went beyond an objective to only raise financial resources for biodiversity by actually providing a plan for an alternative economy.

12. One participant, supported by many, noted a need for pragmatism and for being as obliging as possible. It was also said that the future work for instance on targets should express a sense of urgency.

¹ 'The future we want.' See <http://www.uncsd2012.org/thefuturewewant.html>

III. REPORTING FRAMEWORK AND BASELINES

13. Mr. Sharma of the CBD Secretariat presented an overview on the work undertaken on the reporting framework for resource mobilization. He recalled that a draft framework was prepared by the Secretariat of the Convention and was further elaborated after the fourth meeting of the Working Group on Review of Implementation of the Convention. It was used by 20 Parties so far as a flexible framework for the preparation of reports on national resource mobilization. The information provided seemed to indicate a need to further simplify the reporting framework in order to facilitate reporting and increase comparability.

14. Upon invitation by the chair, the subsequent discussion revolved around the following topics: (i) experiences with the reporting framework and how to improve it; (ii) identification of financial flows and possible sources of financing, as well as financing mechanisms; (iii) improving the efficiency of available funding, enabling conditions for financing mechanisms, achieving co-benefits from sustainable development actions, etc. (iv) approaches for defining baselines based on information on current financing flows.

(i) Experiences with the reporting framework and how to improve it

15. The meeting reviewed existing figures on resources mobilized at national level, based on a brief presentation on Finland's experiences, and identified a number of methodological challenges. It was noted that in many cases, domestic funding constitutes a significant share of resources mobilized, and that this needs to be highlighted accordingly.

16. Some participants noted that, despite the methodological challenges as outlined below, the process of preparing the national resource mobilization reports was very useful and helpful as it catalysed contacts and discussions with colleagues and stakeholders working in other relevant areas and economic sectors, thus contributing to the objective of mainstreaming biodiversity across society and economy. Other participants however expressed a more sceptical view. They cautioned that biodiversity was still an abstract concept in many countries and reporting on biodiversity financing, in particular in light of co-benefits and multi-purpose financing, may actually backfire in e.g. budget negotiations. The value added of such reports, in light of the resource requirements for their preparation, was also questioned.

17. Participants identified the following methodological challenges:

(a) How to delineate actual financing for biodiversity purposes, with an on-going need to develop a common understanding thereon;

(b) How to measuring biodiversity co-benefits, as the discussion on resources needed must be informed not just by the costs but also by benefits of better biodiversity conservation and sustainable use (e.g. in the context of water management, food security etc); this challenge is also relevant for baseline development;

(c) In this context, how to assess the values of biodiversity for linking biodiversity policies to financing;

(d) How to provide precise figures on new and additional resources – beyond ODA – in the light of data gaps and recurrent risks of double-counting, such as with regard to the relevant funding sources including sub-national and municipal governments and private sector, as well as the fact that figures on paper may sometimes be different from the figures spent on the ground;

(e) How to reflect collective action and the role and activities of indigenous and local communities, including non-monetized efforts. There was a need identified to review indicators and the reporting framework accordingly (see below).

18. Participants noted the difficulty to submit precise figures even under the simplified reporting framework, and recognized a need for further simplification while maintaining comparability, flexibility and robustness. They identified the following opportunities for further work:

- (a) Joint methodological work could be undertaken with the OECD with a view to synergize with the creditor reporting system and Rio markers;
- (b) More information could be collected from available sources;
- (c) More systematic needs assessments could be undertaken in particular in developing countries with regard to implement revised NBSAPs. Such work could also inform initiatives such as broadening lifeweb approach to the whole Strategic Plan;
- (d) Methodological guidance could be developed on how to avoid double-counting;
- (e) Reflect activities by indigenous and local communities including non-monetized efforts (e.g., community work in climate adaptation; volunteer work) in the framework, and develop guidance on how to reflect such activities.

(ii) Identification of financial flows and possible sources of financing, as well as financing mechanisms

19. On a general note, participants noted the disproportionality between biodiversity financing and amount of harmful incentives, including subsidies, for instance agricultural subsidies that were in direct competition with biodiversity.

20. For effective resource mobilization, it was important to understand the motivations/objectives of potential funding sources, for instance, the profit motive behind private sector funding.

21. Participants suggested to engage more with regional organizations including regional development banks, and to work with regional funds such as under the Micronesia challenge.

22. Participants underlined the importance of non-monetary contributions to resource mobilization, such as capacity-building or technology transfer. In particular, non-monetary benefit-sharing under the Nagoya Protocol could also contribute to resource mobilization, while bearing in mind that such benefit-sharing would typically occur under private contracts.

23. In the context of the Nagoya Protocol, one participant pointed to the potential role of a global benefit-sharing mechanism as a financing mechanism. An obligation to contribute to biodiversity conservation efforts whenever benefits were derived from biodiversity could raise significant additional resources.

24. It was also observed that mainstreaming needed to be considered not just at a political level but also at the level of implementation. One participant suggested for instance that guidance to the financial mechanism could require setting aside as certain percentage (e.g., 10-20%) of funds of each project for the purpose of mainstreaming biodiversity. Other participants cautioned that mainstreaming should not become conditionality for financing.

25. Some participants expressed the view that strengthening existing funds would be preferable to the creation of new funds, and that creating new funds may actually side-track. They also expressed the opinion that achieving coherence in approaches (e.g. on what constitutes biodiversity financing) would be more important than creating new funds.

(iii) Improving the efficiency of available funding, enabling conditions for financing mechanisms, achieving co-benefits from sustainable development actions, etc.

26. As regard the efficiency of the existing financial mechanism, participants expressed divergent views. Some participants observed that the latest reform of the GEF, in particular the introduction of the

STAR allocation framework, the enhanced opportunities to access funds directly through accreditation of national agencies as implementing agencies, and the enhanced opportunities to generate synergies among issues, was helpful and improved transparency and effectiveness of the mechanism – bearing in mind that coordination among focal points was a critical precondition. Other participants noted that they still encountered difficulties in accessing funds effectively and in getting it to local levels, and called for an objective and balanced assessment.

27. The issue of negotiating GEF funds for biodiversity purposes as national level was also highlighted as a potential challenge.

28. Participants highlighted the importance of enabling conditions for effectively absorbing funds, and called for targeted capacity-building for associated enabling activities under goal A of the Strategic Plan, such as on natural resource accounting (minerals, water, livestock, etc.).

29. Highlighting the returns that would result from biodiversity expenditures would contribute to successful resource mobilization. This would relate to assessing the value of biodiversity and its contribution to the economy and society (see also paragraph (c) above). More generally, feeding the goals and targets of the Strategic Plan into the future Sustainable Development Goals would help significantly in future biodiversity financing.

(iv) Approaches for defining baselines based on information on current financing flows

30. Participants suggested looking at trends in past biodiversity funding to inform negotiations on baselines. One participant raised the question as to what level of robustness was needed in defining baselines, and expressed the view that quality requirements should be applied in a relative ('is the data good enough?') and not an absolute ('is the data perfect?') manner. He supported using 2006-2010 as baseline period.

31. Participants also cautioned that (i) the baseline discussion should not delay target development and adoption, and that (ii) baselines should not be linked to the completion of revised NBSAPs as time was running. It was suggested to take a pragmatic approach whereby some progress would be made during COP-11 based of existing information, but without the goal to finalize baselines, and to revisit and further refine them at COP-12.

IV. FINANCIAL NEEDS ASSESSMENTS

32. Mr. Bob Watson, Chief Scientific Advisor of the United Kingdom and member of the High-Level Panel on Global Assessment of Resources for implementing the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 presented preliminary finding of the High-level Panel. He explained that the panel was established to contribute to the understanding of the global resources required for the Strategic Plan and achieve the Aichi Targets, by providing an initial but credible assessment of these resources.

33. He reviewed the overall organizational arrangements and methodologies for conducting the assessment, referring also to GEF-6 needs assessment, and presented some initial results. In discussing these, he highlighted the need for a coherent political and institutional framework and the need to undertake critical enabling activities such as subsidy reforms. The costs of achieving the Strategic Plan were presumably outweighed by the benefits, and biodiversity funding should therefore be viewed as investments with positive and significant returns. He cautioned however that, due to data gaps, limited knowledge of actions needed to implement the individual Aichi Targets, as well as the limited timeframe and resources more generally, no claim for comprehensiveness could be made at this stage and that the quantitative findings should better be viewed as a preliminary/interim reporting exercise with a view to stimulate further thinking.

34. Mr. Guenter Mitlacher, WWF Germany and member of the expert team for assessing the funding needs for the sixth replenishment of the Global Environment Facility (GEF-6), presented the work of the

expert team to identify the necessary biodiversity funding for 2014-2018 using the concept of incremental costs (thus focussing on global environmental benefits). He introduced methodologies applied and showed, by way of examples, assessments undertaken on two of the Aichi Targets. Total numbers provide a range of funding needs under different options for co-financing options and levels of ambition (in number of eligible countries). In discussing these, he highlighted: (i) a need to focus on mainstreaming/addressing drivers of biodiversity decline; (ii) the importance of focal area programmes to better serve country-driven implementation; (iii) the importance of co-financing, and (iv) the importance of country-specific needs assessments, noting however the limited number of responses received.

35. In closing, he identified, by way of a thought experiment hence to be interpreted and applied with due caution, a needed annual compounded increase of 17-19 % of international financial flows against the baseline spending in 2006-2010. This would be based on an assessed funding gap of 5.6 billion annually.

36. In discussing the findings of the High-Level Panel and of the expert team, participants: (i) supported further work on this issue, including possibly under IPBES; (ii) pointed to the limitations of the incremental cost concept; (iii) noted the linkage and, sometimes, potential tension between financial needs and absorptive capacity; (iv) cautioned that significant co-financing was in form of loans, and questioned whether this could ultimately contribute to achieving the Aichi Targets.

V. APPROACHES AND ELEMENTS FOR TARGET SETTING

37. Mr. Ravi Sharma from the CBD Secretariat made a presentation providing background information on the potential approaches and elements for target-setting.

38. A participant appreciated the briefing and requested for a cooperative approach for achieving agreed commitments and also suggested to separate the GEF funding and give it a priority in the discussions.

39. Another participant highlighted that for biodiversity most of the resources actually come from domestic resources in developing countries and as the GEF resources will not be enough for the required needs there is a need to substantially enhance international financial flows. This was supported by another participant who suggested to separate international and domestic flows, in reference to the footnote in para 12 of the document 11/14 and stressed that there would be a huge effort required to achieve the target 12 (b) by 2014 and suggested a phased approach.

40. In this context the participants asked to keep into consideration the climate change funding for market and non-market mechanisms that have benefits for biodiversity. While another participant asked to for a balanced outcome at COP-11 instead of focusing on what is easily achievable.

41. The secretariat was asked to clarify that 12(a) was about international flows for biodiversity and not all flows, to clarify whether this target was over and above the Rio agreement and also to identify the baseline. The Executive Secretary confirmed that 12 (a) was about biodiversity flows, though with a broader scope. He also expressed the need for GEF to be more catalytic in mobilizing more funds.

42. A participant talked about raising money using innovative ways and narrated their experience of starting a national fund based on polluter pays principle which delivers more money than the Government.

43. There was a consensus on incorporating biodiversity goals in the Rio+20 follow-up activities related to resource mobilization and also consider financing from all sources including through policy reform, efficiency in utilizing resources and ensuring that there was no negative impact of sustainable

development activities on biodiversity etc. and in this context stressed on the need to provide more resources for developing countries to fulfill their mandate on reporting.

44. The role of the private sector was highlighted as important, specifically through fiscal reforms and public-private partnerships. However, it was recognized that appropriate institutional structures were critical to achieve participation of private sector and role of government funding was still vital as markets did not necessarily value the long-term biodiversity goals. In this context a need for capacity development was recognized, especially for fiscal reforms.

45. A participant suggested to harmonize targets between ODA and GEF replenishment for biodiversity.

46. A couple of participants highlighted that according to Article 20 action by developing countries was dependent on contributions of developed countries and such contributions need to be predictable. In this context having a target for domestic funding was questioned by some participants.

47. A participant reminded the need for considering all approaches for resource mobilization and cautioned focussing only on commodification and commercialization of nature and need to recognize the rights of Mother Nature.

IV. CLOSURE OF THE WORKSHOP

48. Closing remarks were provided by Mr Dias, Executive Secretary of the Convention and Mr Bignell, the chair of the meeting. Closing remarks were also provided by Mr. Naohisa Okuda from Japan for the current presidency as well as Mr. M.F. Farooqui from India for the upcoming presidency. Speakers recognized the rich and open discussion that had taken place and emphasized that the meeting had been useful for effective preparation of the discussions to be held at COP-11.

49. After the usual exchange of courtesies, the workshop was officially closed at 1:00 p.m. on Tuesday, 18 September 2012.

ANNEX I

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