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### PROPOSALS FOR AN UPDATED SCIENTIFIC ASSESSMENT OF PROGRESS TOWARDS SELECTED AICHI BIODIVERSITY TARGETS

*Note by the Executive Secretary*

#### I. INTRODUCTION

1. In its decision X/2, paragraph 14, the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity decided that, at its future meetings, it would review progress in the implementation of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 and that the fourth edition of the *Global Biodiversity Outlook* should provide a mid-term review of progress towards the Aichi Biodiversity Targets (para. 13).
2. Following the review of the fourth edition of the *Global Biodiversity Outlook*, the Conference of the Parties, in decision XII/1 (para. 18), requested the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice to review the main implications and findings of the fourth edition of the *Global Biodiversity Outlook* and its underlying technical reports as well as additional information from fifth national reports and other submissions with a view to identifying further opportunities and additional key actions, including the contribution of collective actions of indigenous and local communities for the achievement of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 and the Aichi Biodiversity Targets, and other actions on the targets for which there has been the least progress at the global level, for consideration by the Conference of the Parties at its thirteenth meeting.
3. In response to decision XII/1, a number of documents examining progress towards specific Aichi Biodiversity Targets, or elements of them, were prepared for consideration during the nineteenth and twentieth meetings of the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice.<sup>1</sup>

\* UNEP/CBD/COP/13/1/Rev.1.

<sup>1</sup> These include: The further consideration of the implications of the findings of the fourth edition of the *Global Biodiversity Outlook* and related reports, including with respect to mainstreaming and the integration of biodiversity across sectors (UNEP/CBD/SBSTTA/19/2); Key scientific and technical needs related to the implementation of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 and related research (UNEP/CBD/SBSTTA/19/3); Updated assessment of progress towards selected Aichi Biodiversity Targets (UNEP/CBD/SBSTTA/20/2); Progress toward pathways prioritization in compliance to Aichi Target 9 (UNEP/CBD/SBSTTA/20/INF/5); Analysis of progress on Aichi Biodiversity Targets 5 and 15 (UNEP/CBD/SBSTTA/20/INF/38); Updated assessment of progress towards Aichi Biodiversity Target 12 (UNEP/CBD/SBSTTA/20/INF/44).

4. A list of the targets where there has been the least progress at the global level was contained in the annex to document UNEP/CBD/SBSTTA/19/2, drawing on the assessment of progress provided in the fourth edition of the *Global Biodiversity Outlook*. For each target, activities under way to enhance progress towards their achievement have been identified.

5. Documents examining progress towards specific Aichi Biodiversity Targets were also prepared for the first meeting of the Subsidiary Body on Implementation.<sup>2</sup>

6. In considering the analysis contained in these documents, the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice at its twentieth meeting noted that there was a need to clearly distinguish between reviews of implementation and scientific review as follows:

(a) Reviews of implementation on information provided by Parties on progress made in implementing national biodiversity strategies and action plans and thereby contributing to the implementation of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 and the achievement of the Aichi Biodiversity Targets. Information can be based on official submissions (for example, national reports, national biodiversity strategies and action plans, official responses to requests for information) or informal communications with country officials (for example, information shared through capacity-building activities, informal exchanges with national experts). Reviews of implementation enable a country-by-country examination of categories of progress towards national and/or global targets;

(b) Scientific reviews are based on examination of the latest data sets, updated indicators, peer-reviewed literature and their analysis in thematic, regional or global assessments. They result in global – and sometimes regional – statements of current trends and conclusions of the likelihood of achieving global targets based on qualitative assessments or statistical analyses of likely near future trends.

7. Assessments, such as future issues of the *Global Biodiversity Outlook*, are based on a combination of reviews of implementation and scientific reviews and discuss trends in the light of these multiple lines of evidence, often combining them with socioeconomic scenarios and policy options to highlight possible futures.

8. Noting that a primary task of the Subsidiary Body on Implementation is to review relevant information on progress in the implementation of the Convention, the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice would consider updated scientific reviews and provide the Conference of the Parties with recommendations on that basis, complementing recommendations from the Subsidiary Body on Implementation based on reviews of implementation. The Conference of the Parties would make its decisions on the review of progress towards the implementation of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 and the achievement of the Aichi Biodiversity Targets drawing on both streams of information and ensuing recommendations.

9. Accordingly, in recommendation XX/2, the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice requested the Executive Secretary to develop proposals for the next scientific assessment of progress towards selected Aichi Biodiversity Targets for which the least progress has been made, further to decisions X/2 and XII/1, taking into account information and priorities emerging from the nineteenth and twentieth meetings of the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice and the first meeting of the Subsidiary Body on Implementation, to identify those targets for which a scientific assessment would have the greatest potential to help achieve the relevant targets, and to submit those proposals to the Conference of the Parties at its thirteenth meeting.

10. In addition, the Subsidiary Body on Implementation, in recommendation 1/4 (para. 2), requested the Executive Secretary, when undertaking the scientific assessment, to take into consideration the potential effects

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<sup>2</sup> These include: Progress in the implementation of the Convention and the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 and towards the achievement of the Aichi Biodiversity Targets (UNEP/CBD/SBI/1/2); Update on progress in revising/updating and implementing national biodiversity strategies and action plans, including national targets (UNEP/CBD/SBI/1/2/Add.1); Analysis of the contribution of targets established by Parties and progress towards the Aichi Biodiversity Targets (UNEP/CBD/SBI/1/2/Add.2); Progress in implementing Article 8(j) and related provisions, including the Plan of Action on Customary Sustainable Use of Biological Diversity (UNEP/CBD/SBI/1/2/Add.3); Progress towards Aichi Biodiversity Target 16 on the Nagoya Protocol on Access to Genetic Resources and the Fair and Equitable Sharing of Benefits Arising from Their Utilization (UNEP/CBD/SBI/1/3).

on biodiversity and ecosystem services, and on the customary sustainable use of biological resources by indigenous peoples and local communities, from the productive, extractive and business sectors, taking into account the work of the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES).

11. The present note provides proposals for an update of the scientific assessment of progress towards selected Aichi Biodiversity Targets requested in the decision and recommendation cited above. Section II contains the proposed purpose and scope for the assessment, while section III outlines the preparatory process. The draft decision prepared by the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice in recommendation XX/2 is provided in the compilation of draft decisions (UNEP/CBD/COP/13/2).

## II. PURPOSE AND SCOPE OF THE UPDATED ASSESSMENT

12. The fourth edition of the *Global Biodiversity Outlook* was published in 2014. A draft of the next edition of the report is expected to be reviewed by the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice in 2019 with the final version being launched in the first half of 2020. In addition, IPBES will be conducting several assessments between now and 2019. Among these are global and regional assessments of biodiversity and ecosystem services. These assessments will provide information relevant to the assessment of progress towards the Aichi Biodiversity Targets and the review of implementation of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011–2020. They will also provide elements of the rationale for the follow-up to the current strategic plan to be considered by the Conference of the Parties at its fifteenth meeting, in 2020.

13. Work on an updated scientific assessment of progress towards selected Aichi Biodiversity Targets will begin after the thirteenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties in preparation for a meeting of the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice prior to the fourteenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties, likely in the second quarter of 2018.

### A. Targets to be assessed

14. In decision XII/1, the Conference of the Parties requested the focus of the assessment to be on those targets where there has been the least progress at the global level. Further in SBSTTA recommendation XX/2 the Subsidiary Body requested that the work focus on those targets for which a scientific assessment would have the greatest potential to help achieve the relevant targets. These criteria set the overall scope of the assessment.

15. As part of the assessment, a scoping exercise will be undertaken to identify what new information has become available since the publication of the fourth edition of the *Global Biodiversity Outlook* has been published. Initially all of the Aichi Biodiversity Targets will be considered in this scoping exercise. Based on the results of this exercise, the assessment will then focus on those targets for which significant (in terms of either volume or implications) new information is available. It is envisioned that once completed, the assessment will, for each Aichi Biodiversity Target, indicate if significant new information is available and then for those Aichi Biodiversity Targets for which it is, explore the implications of this information for the attainment of the Target. In particular, the assessment will focus on those targets which a scientific assessment indicates are not currently on track to be met by 2020 but, with additional efforts between now and 2020, could be reached.

### B. Information sources

16. The functions of the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice, as set out in Article 25 of the text of the Convention, focus on scientific, technical and technological issues associated with the implementation of the Convention. In contrast, the Subsidiary Body on Implementation directly considers issues related to the implementation of the Convention. Thus, the assessment of progress towards the Aichi Biodiversity Targets will focus only on scientific and technical issues. The assessments will be based on three main types of information:

(a) *Indicators* – Information derived from indicators, including those identified at the thirteenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties<sup>3</sup> as well as indicators under the Biodiversity Indicators Partnership, the

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<sup>3</sup> The updated list of indicators for the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 is contained in the annex to the relevant draft decision (see UNEP/CBD/COP/13/2, p. 147).

Sustainable Development Goals and other relevant processes will be used to help assess progress towards the attainment of the Aichi Biodiversity Targets. Only indicators which have been updated with new data points, or which have been identified or developed, since the publication of fourth edition of the *Global Biodiversity Outlook* will be considered;

(b) *Scientific literature* – A review of scientific literature relevant to the Aichi Biodiversity Targets will be undertaken. This review will focus primarily on syntheses, reviews and meta-analyses published in scientific journals and which either focus on the global level or have global implications. In some exceptional cases “grey literature” may also be considered. The review of scientific literature will be limited to publications which have become available since the publication of the fourth edition of the *Global Biodiversity Outlook*;

(c) *Recent assessments* – A range of partner organizations have prepared assessments and other publications which are relevant to the assessment of progress towards the Aichi Biodiversity Targets. These include, but are not limited to, reports prepared by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), IPBES, the Global Environment Outlook of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP-GEO), UN-Water, UN-Oceans, the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN), the Group on Earth Observations Biodiversity Observation Network (GEO-BON) and Future Earth, including in the context of their contributions to monitoring progress towards the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals. The consideration of these assessments will focus on those which are global in nature, which have been made available since the publication of fourth edition of the *Global Biodiversity Outlook* and have not already been considered by the Conference of the Parties or its subsidiary bodies.

17. Of particular relevance will be the report on the *State of the World's Biodiversity for Food and Agriculture*, expected to be made available in draft form in January 2017, the IPBES regional/subregional assessments on biodiversity and ecosystem services and the IPBES thematic assessment on land degradation and restoration, both of which are scheduled to be considered and approved by IPBES at its sixth plenary session, in March 2018.

### III. PREPARATORY PROCESS FOR THE ASSESSMENT

18. In undertaking the assessment requested in decision XII/1 and recommendation XX/2, the Secretariat will seek to collaborate with relevant partners and stakeholders, including the members of the Biodiversity Indicators Partnership, the Bureau of the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice and members of the Ad hoc Technical Expert Group on Indicators for the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020. Further the Secretariat will provide opportunities for Parties and stakeholders to review the assessment prior to its finalization for the Subsidiary Body. In parallel, there will be opportunities for experts and Parties to review the above-mentioned IPBES assessments through the mechanisms and processes established by IPBES.

19. A tentative timeline for the preparation of the assessment is presented below. This timeline has been constructed on the assumption that the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice could meet in May 2018 to review the results of the assessment. Following the thirteenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties, this timeline will be updated.

<i>Date</i>	<i>Action</i>
January 2017	Scoping exercise starts: call for updated indicator information and internal arrangements for review of literature
February 2017	Sixteenth Regular Session of the Commission on Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture considers draft report on the <i>State of the World's Biodiversity for Food and Agriculture</i>
March 2017	Identification of targets for which significant additional information is available
April - October 2017	Preparation of scientific assessment
November - December 2017	Review by Parties and other partners ahead of the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice (SBSTTA)

<i>Date</i>	<i>Action</i>
January - February 2018	Finalization of document for SBSTTA
19-23 March 2018	IPBES-6: expected approval of the regional/subregional assessments on biodiversity and ecosystem services and the thematic assessment on land degradation and restoration
April 2018	Supplementary document on implications of the findings of the IPBES regional assessments and the thematic assessment on land degradation/restoration
May 2018	Consideration by SBSTTA prior to the fourteenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties

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