CBD voluntary guidelines for the consideration of biodiversity in environmental impact assessments (EIAs) and strategic environmental assessments (SEAs) in marine areas
CBD voluntary guidelines for the consideration of biodiversity in environmental impact assessments (EIAs) in marine areas

- COP 8 endorsed CBD voluntary guidelines on biodiversity-inclusive environmental impact assessments (EIAs) and strategic environmental assessments (SEAs)

- COP 10 requested the development of voluntary guidelines for the consideration of biodiversity in EIAs and SEAs in marine and coastal areas

- Developed based on input from an expert workshop and technical peer review by Parties, other Governments and organizations
CBD Voluntary Guidelines on Biodiversity-inclusive EIA
(annex to decision VIII/28)

- Structured in accordance with good practice for environmental impact assessment
- Intended to facilitate better integration of biodiversity-related considerations into the EIA process

Address biodiversity issues at different stages of environmental impact assessment:
- Screening
- Scoping
- Assessment and evaluation of impacts
- Reporting: the environmental impact statement (EIS)
- Review of the environmental impact statement
- Decision-making
- Monitoring, compliance, enforcement and environmental auditing
CBD Guidance on Biodiversity-inclusive SEA
(decision VIII/28)

- Intended to provide guidance on how to integrate biodiversity issues into SEAs, which in turn should be integrated into a planning process.

- Fully consistent with the Ecosystem Approach.

- Focuses on people-nature interactions and the role of stakeholders in identifying and valuing potential impacts on biodiversity.

FOCUS ON:
- What biodiversity issues are relevant to SEA?
- How to address biodiversity in SEA?
Key Elements of CBD EIA Guidelines for Marine and Coastal Areas

- Introduction
- Stages in the process
- Biodiversity Issues at different stages of the process
- Appendix 1 – Indicative Set of Screening Criteria for EIAs for Marine and Coastal Areas
- Appendix 2 – Indicative List of Ecosystem Services for Marine and Coastal Areas
- Appendix 3 – Aspects of Biodiversity: Composition, Structure and Key Processes
Stages in Process

- **Screening** to determine which activities require an EIA
- **Scoping** to identify which potential impacts are relevant to assess, to identify alternative options
- **Assessment and evaluation of impacts and development of alternatives**
- **Reporting** - the EIS or EIA report including an EMP and a non-technical summary for the general audience
- **Decision-making** on whether to approve the project
- **Monitoring, compliance, enforcement and environmental auditing**
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level of diversity</th>
<th>Conservation of biodiversity</th>
<th>Sustainable use of biodiversity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ecosystem diversity</td>
<td>Would the intended activity lead to damage to (an) ecosystem(s), thus leading to a loss of ecosystem services?</td>
<td>Would the intended activity affect the sustainable human use of (an) ecosystem(s) such that the use becomes unsustainable?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Species diversity</td>
<td>Would the intended activity cause a loss of a population of species?</td>
<td>Would the intended activity affect sustainable use of a population of species?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Genetic diversity</td>
<td>Would the intended activity result in extinction of a population of species of scientific, ecological, or cultural value?</td>
<td>Would the intended activity cause a local loss of varieties of genes of social, scientific and economic value?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix 1
INDICATIVE SET OF SCREENING CRITERIA

Category A: Activities that EIAs should be mandatory for:

• Activities in protected areas: This should include sectoral conservation areas (e.g. fisheries closed areas, particularly sensitive sea areas (PSSAs), areas of particular environmental interest (APEI), etc.)

• Activities in threatened ecosystems outside protected areas; This should include ecologically or biologically significant marine areas (EBSAs) and vulnerable marine ecosystems (VMEs)

• Activities in ecological corridors important for ecological or evolutionary processes;

• Activities in areas known to provide important ecosystem services;

• Activities in areas known to be habitat for threatened species; In the marine context there should be reference to communities characteristic of vulnerable marine ecosystems
Appendix 1
INDICATIVE SET OF SCREENING CRITERIA

Category B: Activities for which the need for, or the level of EIA is to be determined:

• Activities resulting in emissions, effluents and/or other chemical, thermal, radiation or noise emissions in areas providing ecosystem services;

• Activities leading to changes in ecosystem composition, ecosystem structure, or ecosystem functions responsible for the maintenance of ecosystems and ecosystem services in areas providing other relevant ecosystem services;

• Extractive activities, activities leading to a change of use of marine and coastal ecosystems
Special Biodiversity Considerations: Consequences of less knowledge

• Great challenges in quantifying sustainable levels of impacts
  – Setting baselines and benchmarks is difficult
  – Documenting drivers of past change is often difficult

• Outlines need for greater reliance on models & extrapolation
  – Less experience in how to bound extrapolations
  – Less independent data to test / validate models

• Lack of knowledge underlines importance of precautionary approach
Guidelines addressed by CBD COP 11
(Decision XI/18)

- **Encouraged** Parties, other Governments and competent organizations to apply voluntary guidelines;

- **Invited** Parties and other Governments to share information on their progress in applying these voluntary guidelines;

- **Invited** Parties, other Governments and relevant organizations to facilitate further research to fill gaps in knowledge;

- **Requested** the Executive Secretary to provide further assistance to promote capacity-building on the application of the voluntary guidelines