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REGIONAL WORKSHOP FOR CENTRAL AND EASTERN EUROPE AND CENTRAL ASIA ON THE PREPARATION OF THE FIFTH NATIONAL REPORT

Minsk, Belarus, 20 - 24 January 2014

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INTRODUCTION

1. The workshop for Central and Eastern Europe and Central Asia on the preparation of the Fifth National Report was held from 20 to 24 January 2014 in Minsk, Belarus with the generous financial support of the Government of Japan. The workshop was organized in collaboration with the Government of Belarus and was held in response to decision X/10 requesting the Executive Secretary to continue to provide support to countries for the preparation of the fifth national reports. The workshop was the eighth in a series of workshops being convened to strengthen the capacities of countries to prepare their fifth national reports and to facilitate the submission of the reports by the deadline of 31 March 2014.

2. The workshop was attended by government-nominated representatives from the following countries: Albania, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Georgia, Hungary, Islamic Republic of Iran, Kyrgyzstan, Poland, Russian Federation, Serbia, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Ukraine and Uzbekistan. Participants were comprised of government officials and experts involved in the preparation of their country's fifth national report and/or the development and implementation of relevant biodiversity policies and programmes. The list of participants is contained in annex I to this report.

ITEM 1. OPENING OF THE WORKSHOP AND ORGANIZATIONAL MATTERS

3. The workshop was opened by Mr. Igor Kachanovsky, Deputy Minister of Natural Resources and Environmental Protection of Belarus. In his remarks he welcomed participants to Minsk, Belarus, and thanked the Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity for organizing the workshop. He also thanked the Government of Japan for its financial support to the workshop. He noted that conservation and sustainable use of key components of biodiversity were reflected in the national biodiversity strategy of Belarus which had been approved in 2010, taking into consideration the outcomes from the tenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties, with the expansion of the protected area system and the conservation of wetlands among the priority actions. The strategy also took into account the social and economic dimensions of development and its contribution to the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals. He referred to the challenges all countries were facing to stem biodiversity loss and called for a proactive attitude and rapid and decisive action. He noted that the workshop presented an important opportunity to exchange experiences and learn about the practices of other countries in the implementation of the biodiversity agenda. He concluded by wishing participants successful deliberations throughout the week.

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4. Mr. Robert Höft delivered an opening statement on behalf of the Executive Secretary of the Convention on Biological Diversity, Mr. Braulio Ferreira de Souza Dias. In his remarks, he noted that the workshop was the eighth in a series of workshops on national reporting that complimented and built on the series of capacity-building workshops on national biodiversity strategies and actions plans, on indicators for the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 and on synergies between conventions. He thanked the Government of Belarus for generously agreeing to host this workshop. He stressed that having a meaningful number of the fifth national reports by the submission deadline would be important for the success of the twelfth meeting of the Conference of the Parties in October 2014, in Pyeongchang, Republic of Korea. He noted the rich biodiversity harboured by countries in Central and Eastern Europe and Central Asia and observed that these were essential for the development of the region. At the same time he recalled that habitat fragmentation and degradation, climate change, and the unsustainable consumption of natural resources were all exerting significant pressures on biodiversity. As many Parties in the region had limited resources with which to address the biodiversity challenges they were facing, he encouraged participants to seek ways of learning from each other, to share experiences and to collaborate to tackle joint challenges. As an example of this, he noted the importance of the recent adopting of the Pan-European 2020 Strategy for Biodiversity which was established during the Sixth Biodiversity in Europe Conference in Batumi, Georgia in April 2013. He also noted that the importance of the Astana Ministerial Declaration adopted at the Pan-European Environmental Ministers Conference (21 September, 2011, Astana, Kazakhstan) which recognized that biodiversity and ecosystem services were key pillars of a green economy. In concluding he emphasized the many tools and initiatives which were available to Parties to assist them in fulfilling the objectives of the Convention and to implement the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020.

5. The opening statements were followed by a quick round of introductions in which participants highlighted their respective roles in the preparation of their countries' fifth national reports and/or updating of national biodiversity strategies and action plans.

6. A press conference was held in which media representatives asked questions about the status of biodiversity in Belarus and other participating countries. On behalf of the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environmental Protection of Belarus, Ms. Natalya Minchenko elaborated on key activities and development in Belarus, including work on the conservation of wetlands within the framework of the Ramsar Convention; the elaboration of the Red Data book of threatened species of Belarus; the efforts in expanding the country's protected area system; activities to promote sustainable tourism in rural parts of the country; and the accession to the Bern Convention. She reported on a methodology recently developed to assess the values of ecosystem services, which could be shared with other countries and praised the technical experience available through the National Academy of Sciences. Participants from Albania, Georgia, Iran, Poland, Russia, Serbia, Tajikistan and Turkmenistan also shared their experiences, focusing *inter alia* on activities related to protected areas; ecosystem restoration; sustainable tourism; intersectoral collaboration; and the use of instruments developed under the Carpathian Convention.

ITEM 2. OVERVIEW OF THE OBJECTIVES AND PROGRAMME FOR THE WORKSHOP

7. Mr. Robert Höft gave an overview of the workshop, the anticipated outcomes and the working methods that were going to be used. He indicated that the workshop would use a mix of presentations with question-and-answer sessions, discussions and exercises in small working groups, as well as individual exercises. In his remarks he emphasized that the national reporting process was closely linked to the process of NBSAP revision and development and that it was also important for the mid-term review of progress towards the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 and the preparation of the fourth edition of the Global Biodiversity Outlook (GBO-4).

8. Participants expressed their expectations from the workshop, including in addition to those addressed in the agenda the need for information on the valuation of ecosystem services and the integration of values of biodiversity into plans, programmes and strategies in accordance with Aichi Biodiversity Target 2. With the support of the host Government a session on ecosystem services valuation was incorporated into agenda item 5 (b).

ITEM 3. EXPERIENCES AND LESSONS LEARNED FROM THE PREPARATION OF THE FOURTH NATIONAL REPORTS

9. Mr. Robert Höft provided an overview of the experiences and lessons learned from the fourth round of national reporting under the Convention, focusing on the factors that contributed to the high rate of submissions. Among the factors that contributed to the high rate of submission were changes in the format of the national reports, the development of supporting materials and tools, capacity development workshops, greater communication with Parties and the greater availability of biodiversity monitoring programmes and assessments among other things. However, it was also noted that challenges still remained particularly related to the timely submission of the reports. By the submission deadline of the fourth national reports, only 26 reports had been received. If a similar situation was to occur with the fifth national reports, this would create challenges for the preparation of the fourth edition of the Global Biodiversity Outlook as well as the mid-term assessment of progress towards the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 to be undertaken by the Conference of the Parties at its twelfth meeting in October 2014. Lessons learned from the previous round of reporting were also discussed, including the need to start the preparation of the national reports well before the deadline, and the need for more stakeholder involvement in the preparation of the report. A number of tools and resources to help Parties prepare their national reports and to revise their national biodiversity strategies and action plans, such as the NBSAP Forum, a joint initiative of UNEP, UNDP and the CBD Secretariat, with potentially additional partners, were highlighted. During the opening presentation, an update of the status of revision and development of NBSAPs was also presented.

10. Ms Bozena Haczek presented Poland's national experiences and lessons learned from the preparation of the fourth national report. She described the preparation process including the development of several iterations of draft reports, the review and consultation process and approval of the report, including timelines and obstacles encountered. She highlighted in particular practical challenges connected with identifying and contracting a suitable team of experts, including a chief editor and gave insights into the scope of the report. She underlined the necessity to start preparation of the report as early as possible and the usefulness of broad consultations and stakeholder involvement throughout the preparation process.

ITEM 4. NATIONAL PROCESS OF PREPARING THE FIFTH NATIONAL REPORT - LINKING IT WITH UPDATING OF NATIONAL BIODIVERSITY STRATEGIES AND ACTION PLANS (NBSAPs)

11. In his presentation Mr. Robert Höft emphasized that the national report was an integral part of the planning cycle and that there was a continuum from planning, strategy development, target setting through implementation, evaluation and reporting with each step depending on stakeholder engagement. He also provided an overview of the global status of NBSAP preparation and updating, noting that NBSAP implementation was a continuum and that countries could report on NBSAP implementation independently of the stage in which they were with regard to the preparation, approval and implementation of an updated NBSAP.

12. Ms. Katja Jelić reported on the implementation of Croatia's national biodiversity strategies and action plans, noting that the first NBSAP was adopted in 1999 for the period 1999-2008. During this period the preparations for joining the European Union exerted significant influence on the nature protection sector. Based on the NBSAP, a new Nature Protection Act came into force in 2003 (with amendments in 2008, 2011 and 2013) which included all the provisions of international agreements in the field of nature protection, including CBD, and the relevant regulations of the EU were incorporated into national legislation. This led to institutional strengthening, promoted mainstreaming and led to the expansion of the network of protected areas in the country. Ten years later the NBSAP went through a comprehensive review and a new NBSAP was adopted in 2008 focusing on harmonization of legislation with the relevant EU directives and regulations, including establishment of effective enforcement mechanisms and the adoption of the proposal for the Natura 2000 ecological network. Cooperation with sectors had improved significantly after adoption of the obligation to integrate nature protection requirements and conservation measures into sectoral natural resources management plans and spatial plans. A good example of cooperation was with forestry, hunting, water

management and physical planning sectors. At the time, Croatia was working on the evaluation and revision of its second NBSAP and the preparation of the fifth national report.

13. Ms. Azra Velagic presented the status of progress in Bosnia and Herzegovina in updating the country's NBSAP and preparing the fifth national report. Supported by the Global Environment Facility with UNEP as implementing agency, the project started in January 2013 and was to end in December 2014. The process was overseen by a Project Steering Committee and the Center for Energy, Environment and Resources provided technical support to the implementation. In addition, an expert group met regularly and broader stakeholder meetings with representatives from different ministries, NGOs, research and educational institutions were being held. She introduced the proposed structure of the NBSAP noting that the strategy was expected to be completed in July 2014 to enable approval and adoption by December. She also reported on the progress in preparing the fifth national report, noting that Parts I and II had been completed and the remaining parts were in preparation. She confirmed that the country planned to submit the report by the deadline, noting however that this might present some challenges.

14. Ms. Maryam Rohani Barzoki made a presentation about the process of preparing the fifth national report and the revising of the NBSAP in Iran. She provided an overview of the status of biodiversity in the country and noted that there is no Ministry of Environment but instead a Department of Environment headed by the Vice-President. She noted that Iran, despite its request, had not received funding from the GEF to undertake the NBSAP updating and preparation of the fifth national report and as a consequence the entire process was delayed. She gave examples of actions taken in line with some Aichi Biodiversity Targets since 2010 such as increasing public awareness, assessing the values of biodiversity components of 14 protected areas and integrating biodiversity values, and increasing the number enhancing management effectiveness of protected areas in the country.

15. Among the main challenges that were noted by most participants were the implications of the need to translate documents from the national language into one of the official languages of the United Nations and the time it took for the official approval process. Also noted was the general scarcity of specialized staff and field studies and limited monitoring information.

ITEM 5. PREPARATION OF THE PARTS AND APPENDICES OF THE FIFTH NATIONAL REPORT

(a) Assessing the status and trends of, and threats to, biodiversity and implications for human well-being (Part I of the fifth national report)

16. Mr. Robert Höft provided suggestions for the preparation of the first part of the fifth national report. It was suggested that in Part I of the national reports, Parties should focus on providing information on why biodiversity was important for their country, what major changes to the status and trends of biodiversity had taken place since the last national report, the main threats to biodiversity, the impacts of any changes to human wellbeing and any information on possible future changes. Participants were encouraged to use a variety of information sources in this section of the report, including indicators, expert assessments, graphs and maps. It was also emphasized that this part of the report should provide an analysis of the changing conditions of biodiversity and the implications for human wellbeing rather than only describing its status.

17. Following a question and answer session on the first part of the fifth national reports, Mr. Höft introduced a group exercise designed to help participants identify the type of information they might wish to include in their national reports (see annex II). The exercise consisted of a table based on the 20 Aichi Targets. It was suggested that participants initially focussed on Aichi Targets 5 to 15 and to identify, for each target, the status and trends of the relevant components of biodiversity (ecosystems, species, genes, pressures, threats, etc.) and to assess the implications of these trends for human wellbeing. Participants worked on completing the table in groups.

(b) *Implementation of national biodiversity strategies and action plans and mainstreaming of biodiversity (Part II of the fifth national report)*

18. Mr. Robert Höft provided suggestions on the preparation of the second part of the fifth national report which focused on the implementation of a country's national biodiversity strategy and action plan and the mainstreaming of biodiversity. It was suggested that in this Part, Parties should report on all the actions taken to implement the Strategic Plan instead of focusing only on the implementation of the NBSAP. It was also suggested that Parties should consider reporting on the implementation of their old NBSAP as well as the progress which had been made in developing their new NBSAP. As with the first part of the report, Parties were encouraged to include more analysis than description, particularly on the effectiveness of the actions which had been taken. Where possible, Parties were also encouraged to incorporate case-studies into their national reports. It was also suggested that Parties should consider including information on any national biodiversity targets which had been set, and the effectiveness of biodiversity mainstreaming in this part of the report.

19. Following the presentation on Part II of the national report and the subsequent discussions, workshop participants again divided into groups and continued to work on the exercise they had started in the previous session. This time they were asked to consider all of the Aichi Biodiversity Targets and to identify any related actions which had been taken to implement their country's NBSAP or the Convention. They were also asked to indicate the level of effectiveness of these actions. The information identified through this exercise was the type of information which could be included in Part II of the fifth national reports.

20. Ms. Shirin Karryeva reported on the implementation of the UNDP/GEF Project on «National Biodiversity Planning to Support the Implementation of the CBD 2011-2020 Strategic Plan in Turkmenistan». She noted that a Working Group had been established, which consisted of representatives of key stakeholders from different ministries and agencies for better mainstreaming the NBSAP into the plans and programme of other sectors and to facilitate approval on government level. Project activities included economic assessment of ecosystem services; development of national targets and action plan, and preparation of the fifth national report to the Convention on Biological Diversity. Training on the economic assessment of ecosystem services had been carried out and work on the NBSAP and national report is underway.

21. Mr. Michail Maksimenkov described the experience of the Republic of Belarus in the preparation of the second part of the fifth national report, focusing on the implementation of the NBSAP and its links to the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020. He noted that the NBSAP had been prepared just prior to the tenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties in 2010 and was approved shortly afterwards. National targets were therefore not fully aligned with the Aichi Biodiversity Targets and this analysis was currently underway in preparing an updated NBSAP. He described the process underway, noting that the Center for Bioresources of the National Academy of Sciences of Belarus was tasked in coordinating the scientific and technical aspects of the task.

22. Ms. Kalina Vassileva Stoyanova made a presentation on the implementation of aspects of Bulgaria's protected areas strategy. She explained that the National Ecological Network consisted of protected areas and Natura 2000 sites. Recent developments saw a small increase in protected area coverage and at the same time a sizable increase in numbers of protected sites. This was the result of a growing network of small protected areas for plant species in Bulgaria using the plant micro-reserve model (see <http://life.s-kay.com/>). The micro-reserves were established to protect 47 rare and endangered plants located in 61 localities, which prior to this initiative were outside existing protected areas, and therefore exposed to a significant risk of extinction. She noted that plant micro-reserves were small-sized areas (less than 20 ha) for protection and long-term monitoring of populations of endemic, rare and endangered plant species and vegetation types. Usually they were located on agricultural land or in forests, subject to commercial use, and they were under high anthropogenic pressure. Due to their small size, these sites required maintenance and restoration actions. For their legal protection, the sites were declared as 'protected sites' under the Bulgarian Protected Areas Act. In the process of creating this network of small protected areas, partnerships had been developed between scientists, public administrations, local authorities and communities, who join their efforts to conserve these rare plants.

23. Ms. Eneida Rabdishta reported on the progress in Albania in preparing the NBSAP and fifth national report. She said a GEF project had started in March 2013 with the World Bank as implementing agency. Some delays had been caused by unsuitable personnel and the focus so far had been on taking stock of status and trends in biodiversity which would inform both the NBSAP and Part I of the national report. The preparation of the fifth national report is currently being commissioned to a suitable contractor with an envisaged deadline of April 2014.

24. Ms. Mariam Urdia summarized the status of NBSAP revision and preparation of the fifth national report in Georgia. She reported that the NBSAP revision process had started in 2011 with the support of GIZ (German cooperation). As a result of the process, a number of documents had been prepared including an analysis of status and trends in biodiversity, a synthesis report on the implementation of Georgia's first NBSAP, and the revised NBSAP itself. These provide a good basis for the fifth national report for which funding had been requested from the GEF and a response was outstanding. Georgia also participated in the TEEB initiative as a pilot country. A scoping study, conducted by the WWF Caucasus with the financial support of UNEP, was completed in 2013 and identified hydropower, tourism, agriculture, forestry as key sectors which would benefit from incorporating valuation of biodiversity and ecosystem services in their strategies. At the time, funding was being mobilized to undertake a full country study.

Economic valuation of ecosystem services

25. Mr. Andrei Kuzmich, Head of Lands and Landscapes Department in the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environmental Protection of Republic of Belarus, made a presentation on the procedures for the valuation of ecosystem services to determine the values of biological diversity in Belarus. He reported that a Technical Code had been adopted in 2013 to facilitate the systematic and comparable economic evaluation of biological resources of flora and fauna with regard to the implication of possible development alternatives in four ecosystem types: forests, aquatic systems, grasslands, and wetlands. He described the methodology and steps followed and the indicators taken into account conducting integrated valuations of ecosystem services. He explained how regulating services were taken into account with regard to the capacities of ecosystems for carbon sequestration, water and air purification and absorption of pollutants. The calculation of the biodiversity values took into account the assessment of primary productivity, secondary productivity and the presence of wild plants and animals listed in the Red Book of the Republic of Belarus or protected in accordance with international treaties to which Belarus was a party.

26. Mr. Dmitry Grummo, Deputy Director for Research and Innovation at the V.F. Kuprevich Institute of Experimental Botany of the Belarus National Academy of Sciences, taking two protected areas as an example, considered the practice of using calculation of ecosystem service and biodiversity values. By way of comparison with alternative scenarios (of using the area for peat extraction) it was shown that conservation of ecological functions of peat bogs provided greater economic returns than their development for the production of fuel briquettes.

(c) Assessing progress towards the 2020 biodiversity targets and relevant targets of MDGs (Part III of the fifth national report)

27. Mr. Robert Höft provided suggestions on the preparation of the third part of the fifth national report which focused on assessing progress towards the Aichi Biodiversity Targets and the relevant Millennium Development Goals. He informed the participants that the overall purpose of this part of the report was to provide an assessment of progress towards any national targets which had been set and towards the global Aichi Biodiversity Targets. He pointed out that the assessment contained in this section of the report should draw on, and build from, the information contained in the previous two parts of the report.

28. Following the presentation participants continued to work in groups on the exercise they had started the previous sessions. Participants were asked, for each of the Aichi Targets, to assess the level of progress that had been made towards their attainment, progress towards any associated Millennium Development Goals, to provide possible suggestions on any national targets which could be set, to identify any relevant indicators or sources of information and the possible stakeholders that should be consulted in setting national targets or who may have information to help assess the progress which had been made.

28. Ms. Yuliya Bondarenko reported on links and synergies between environment and development-related national goals, including the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) in Ukraine. She noted that biodiversity issues are reflected in the Strategy of the State Environmental Policy (2010-2020), the State Programme on the Development of the National Ecological Network (2000-2015) and the National Action Plan on Environmental Protection (2011-2015). They are also included in sectoral legislation on forestry, agriculture and transportation among others. Some Aichi Biodiversity Targets are included in the National Action Plan on Environmental Protection, focused in particular on the enhancement of the protected areas network, the control and eradication of invasive alien species, research and protection of endangered species, and the development of methodologies for ecosystem services evaluation. She reported on links between the biodiversity related goals and activities and national Millennium Development Goals, confirming that these were mutually supportive or overlapping with some indicators being used for both purposes.

(e) ***Preparation of the executive summary and reviewing the implementation of thematic programmes of work and the cross-cutting issues under the Convention (Appendix III of the fifth national report)***

29. Mr. Robert Höft provided suggestions on the preparation of the executive summary of the fifth national report and emphasized that it was often the most read section of the report and that as such, it should contain the main messages of the entire report and present important facts, necessary background information and the major conclusions from the report. While the executive summary should be concise it should provide the reader with an overall sense of the complete report. As such, the executive summary should draw from all sections of the report. It was also suggested that the executive summary could serve as a basis for additional communication or outreach materials.

30. With regard to the appendices, it was noted that these offered Parties the opportunity to provide detailed information on topics which were nationally important without increasing the length of the main body of the report. It was suggested that appendix one could be used to provide information on the process followed for the preparation of the national report while appendix two could be used to include additional references or links to relevant reports. Lastly, the third appendix could be used to report on the implementation of any thematic programmes of work and cross-cutting issues under the Convention. It was noted that there were a number of COP decisions which required that such information be included in the national reports. Much of this information was likely to be reflected in the three main parts of the report given the broad scope of the national report and of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020. However, if there were specific issues which were particularly important, given national circumstances and which warranted more detailed and in-depth discussion, this information could be included in Appendix III. In concluding, it was noted that there was no obligation to include appendices in the national report and that Parties should only do so if it suited their needs.

31. Following the presentation on the preparation of the executive summary and appendices, participants continued their work on the exercise table and on preparing a draft plan for the preparation of the fifth national report.

ITEM 6. USE OF INDICATORS FOR ASSESSMENT AND REPORTING

32. Mr. Robert Höft (CBD) provided an overview of indicators as they related to monitoring changes in biodiversity, assessments and reporting. He noted that indicators were useful for tracking and monitoring progress, guiding policy development, highlighting those areas where action was needed and communicating with stakeholders. He however pointed out that while an indicator may provide information on a number of issues, a single indicator would never provide a complete picture and additional explanations and interpretation of the information were important to avoid misconceptions. He also pointed out that indicators could be divided into two categories: quantitative (numerical) indicators and qualitative indicators based on expert opinion, and that both types of indicators could be used in the national reports. Following this overview, the relevant COP decisions on indicators were presented. In particular, the indicator framework contained in decision XI/3 and the indicators database developed by the Secretariat were highlighted. In concluding his presentation, Mr. Höft provided information on the Biodiversity Indicators Partnership and noted that the

Partnership had developed a range of tools and information related to indicators and national indicator development and that it had been running a series of indicators workshops in support of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity. He also reported that the Biodiversity Indicators Partnership had organized a workshop for Biodiversity Indicator Development Facilitators (Cambridge, UK, 22-26 April 2013) and that the list of trained facilitators was available.¹ The facilitators for Central and Eastern Europe and Central Asia were Ms. Ivna Vukšić (Croatia), Ms. Mariam Urdia (Georgia) and Ms. Irina Onufrenya (Russian Federation). Ms. Vukšić had changed her post in the Government and was currently not in a position to facilitate indicators work in the region, but Croatia was willing to put forward new facilitator.

33. Mr. Alexander Shekhovtsov reported on the use of indicators for biodiversity in the Russian Federation. He emphasized the existence of suites of environmental, economic, social and institutional indicators developed under various international processes including the United Nations Commission for Sustainable Development, the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, the European Environment Agency, the UN Economic Commission for Europe and noted that several of these enabled assessments relevant to biodiversity. Together with specific biodiversity indicators, these enabled an understanding of status and trends as well as causes of environmental change and its implications as well as an assessment of the effectiveness of measures taken. They also enabled assessing the achievement of political goals and targets. He provided specific examples of national indicators and their application in informing political processes, noting that existing indicators from the period before 2010 were useful in tracking progress towards the Aichi Biodiversity Targets.

ITEM 7. PREPARATION OF THE FOURTH EDITION OF THE GLOBAL BIODIVERSITY OUTLOOK

34. Mr. Robert Höft provided an overview of the production plan for the fourth edition of the Global Biodiversity Outlook (GBO-4). It was noted that the GBO was the flagship publication of the Convention and that the fourth edition of the report would provide a mid-term assessment of progress towards the implementation of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 and the Aichi Biodiversity Targets. The main source of information for GBO-4 would be the fifth national reports and as such it would be important that the reports were submitted by the deadline, particularly as one of the main weaknesses of GBO-3 was the limited amount of national information that was included. It was also emphasized that there were a number of ways for Parties to participate in the preparation of GBO-4, including by providing advance drafts of their fifth national reports and other assessments, providing case-studies, and participating in the peer-review process of the Outlook drafts. As such, he urged participants to provide advance drafts, case-studies and other related information as early as possible.

35. Participants were invited to report on success stories from their professional experience, noting that some of these might be suitable for reflection in GBO-4. In groups of three, participants told each other a story that they considered motivating and encouraging and then select the “best” of the three stories to be reported to plenary. Stories included the following:

- Commercial use of *Ferula foetidissima* in Tajikistan: from overuse to sustainable production.
- Cross-boundary conservation efforts for the Amur tiger in the Russia-China-North Korea triangle: from the brink of extinction to a viable population.
- Research on the European mudminnow (*Umbra krameri*), listed as Critically Endangered in Serbia, enables legislative and management measures to enhance its populations.
- Reintroduction of the Critically Endangered carnivorous plant *Aldrovanda vesiculosa* in Bulgaria.
- Iran: The magic and mystery of insects - from larvae to butterflies.
- European bison (*Bison bonasus*) in Belarus: Extinct in the wild in 1920, reintroduced from captivity and now downgraded to Vulnerable as a consequence of successful conservation efforts.

¹ <http://www.bipnational.net/LinkClick.aspx?link=176&tabid=38&language=en-US>.

36. Additional stories were also provided by participants in writing.

ITEM 8. INTRODUCTION OF THE PILOT ONLINE REPORTING SYSTEM

37. Mr. Robert Höft provided an overview of a pilot online reporting system developed under the clearing-house mechanism of the CBD. He noted that the need for monitoring implementation of the Convention had been recognized in many decisions of the Conference of the Parties. He also noted that the pilot online reporting system was a complement to national reporting and would facilitate scientific and technical cooperation. The online reporting tool had been designed to allow Parties to provide information on the progress that had been made towards their national biodiversity targets as well as the Aichi Biodiversity Targets on an ongoing basis. The system allowed Parties to directly submit information and would facilitate Parties in the identification of information and implementation gaps. He emphasized that the online reporting tools was complementary to the traditional reports and provided more continuous and outcome-oriented assessments. He described the process for entry of draft information and the need to designate a primary user with the authority to publish information. He noted that information entered as draft was only visible to authorized users at national level and that this tool could therefore be valuable for communication and discussion at national level. This could be enhanced through the integration of the tool into national clearing-house mechanisms. It was noted that the tool needed additional debugging before it could be made public.

ITEM 9. NEXT STEPS: PLAN FOR PREPARING THE FIFTH NATIONAL REPORT AND EARLY SUBMISSIONS FOR GBO-4

38. Under this agenda item, participants from each country developed their plans for the preparation of the fifth national report, providing a likely calendar or the preparation process, completion and submission of the national report. The Secretariat invited participants from each country to provide information on the status of updating NBSAPs and preparing the fifth national report. It was noted that a number of countries were well advanced in the preparation process and expected to submit their fifth national report in time for the deadline of 31 March 2014. Others were facing delays in accessing funding or caused by challenges in project implementation. It was noted that a capacity-building workshop on the preparation of national reports should best be organized well ahead of the deadline for submission of the reports.

ITEM 10. CLOSURE OF THE WORKSHOP

39. Mr. Robert Höft, on behalf of the Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity, thanked the Governments of Belarus and Japan for their support to the workshop. He also thanked the participants for their hard work throughout the workshop and expressed the hope that the workshop had been useful to assist countries in preparing their fifth national reports. On behalf of participants, Mr. Alexander Shekhovtsov thanked the CBD Secretariat for organizing this workshop and thanked the Government of Belarus for its hospitality. He noted that the workshop had been very valuable in supporting countries in the process of preparing their national reports and suggested that a future similar workshop might be organized more in advance of the deadline for submission of the reports. Following these final remarks, the formal part of the workshop closed at 14:30 pm on 23 January 2014 with a field excursion organized by the host government on 24 January 2014.

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Annex II

WORKSHEET FOR THE PREPARATION OF THE FIFTH NATIONAL REPORT

The following worksheet was compiled from work provided by some participants as examples. The information presented in the table is for illustration purposes only as it reflects only some of the issues discussed during the course of the workshop.

Aichi Biodiversity Target	Part 1 Biodiversity status, trends, and threats and implications for human well-being		Part 2 The NBSAP, its implementation, and the mainstreaming of biodiversity		Part 3 Progress towards the Aichi Biodiversity Targets and contributions to the relevant Millennium Development Goals.			
	State of relevant biodiversity component or pressure	Impacts on or implications for human wellbeing	Implementation Actions/Case studies	Action Effectiveness	Assessment of progress towards Aichi Targets and MDGs	Proposed National Target	Indicators/ Other information	Stakeholders
Target 1- Awareness increased								
Target 2 - Biodiversity values integrated								
Target 3 – Incentives reformed								
Target 4 – Sustainable consumption and production								
Target 5 – Habitat loss halved or reduced	Forest clearance	Loss of resources (economic, recreational and resource losses) Advancing of soil erosion, decrease of soil productivity Natural disasters Disruption of microclimate Diminishment of tourist revenue CO2	Increase in forest cover Reduction of forest clearance Prohibition on cutting of certain forest types.	High (ecologic, economic, natural disaster prevention) Medium (weak state control) High Medium	Slow to moderate (increase in forest cover is hampered by industrial use)	Increasing forestland to 16% of the of the country's territory Creation of genetic banks of the most valuable tree species Development of sustainable forestry	% of forest cover Increase in forest area, dynamics Area of the most valuable forests Number of developed plans Number of genetic banks and the	Environmental authorities Foresters Administrations of the specially protected natural areas Scientific institutes Local authorities

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		Climate change	Conservation of valuable tree species in fellings Conservation of hollow-bearing trees with nests in fellings	Low		plans for conservation areas and areas under forests designated for economic activity Expansion of specially protected natural areas and creation of transboundary specially protected natural areas	amount of genetic material Number and coverage of the specially protected natural areas Increasing numbers of threatened species	
	Insect population outbreak	Loss of valuable tree species	Establishment of multi-storeyed forests Use of non-chemical protectants Implementation of phytosanitary activities	Medium (комплексное мероприятие) Low (costly activity) High (if used timely)				

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	Climate change	Interruption of natural regeneration Changes in composition and structure Invasive alien species	Increase in forest cover Use of non-timber forest products for biofuel manufacturing	High (different programs in action) Low (costly technologies)				
Target 6 – Sustainable management								
Target 7 – Sustainable agriculture, aquaculture and forestry								
Target 8 – Pollution reduced	-Under grazing of grasslands leading to succession -Habitat degradation and fragmentation due to agricultural activities -pesticide and fertilizer use -IAS introduction and spreading	- Habitat conversion - Organic farming with healthy products - Opportunities for rural ecotourism -Loss of genetic diversity	-incentives for sustainable agriculture and aquaculture -incentives for domesticated breeds -regulations of the use and type of pesticides and fertilizers	-low (lack of finances) -medium (good approach for eradication of some IAS species as well as under grazing problems) -low (problems with enforcement)	-low to moderate (better progress in the forestry sector than agriculture and aquaculture sector; activities are related to MDG targets 1, 2 and 7)	Increase sustainable agriculture and aquaculture by 20% and ensure integration of nature protection measures into sectoral plans and programmes	Organic farming Fertilizer and pesticide consumption Fish production Compliance of plans and programmes with nature protection requirements and conservation measures	Farmer organizations Ministry of agriculture Agriculture advisory service Aquafarmers

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	(agriculture, aquaculture) -Introduction of alochtonous species in aquaculture -Degradation of carp fishponds (valuable wetlands) -intensification of fish production		-issuance of special permit -restoration of degraded fish ponds -reintroduction of endangered fish species	-high -low -low (implemented only for some species)				
Target 9 – Invasive alien species	<i>Eichornia crassipes</i> and <i>Azolla</i> in wetlands <i>Mnemiopsis</i> in Caspian sea, <i>Heracleum mantegazzianum</i> in Belarus. Pressures: Poorly controlling the pathways, ballast water of	Large economic losses and threats to human health. In the long term invasives can change the original structure of the ecosystem via competition and predation and become the dominant species, pushing other	Isolation: Establishing a black list of current invasive species and potential invaders though case studies. Training and increasing awareness about the species. Online platforms for participatory	Medium Medium (annual assessments show moderate increases)			Number of the species that have management plans. Percentage of the affected areas that have been cleared	

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	ships	species into extinction. In Belarus <i>Heracleum</i> causes phytophotodermatitis if the sap gets on human skin.	reporting (such as Nature Watch) Training customs officers.					
Target 10 – Pressures on vulnerable ecosystems reduced	- High pressure due to poorly controlled pathways	Effecting health, agriculture, economy	Identification of the worst invasive species and creation of the Black List for existing as well as potential species Legislative changes Phytosanitary measures Training of the employs of customs department Action plan for certain species obliging all the farmers to fight the	Medium (Basis for adequate actions and effective in this sense, but not effective as itself) Medium Medium High Medium	Progress is moderate (The invasive species are identified and prioritized, but pathways are not identified and controlled for the most of them)	The pathways for all the priority species are identified and controlled by 2020	Number and distribution of invasive species Number of the species with management plans Number of potential invasive species with management plans %of areas affected by invasive % of development funds going for invasive species Amount of invasive fish species removed	Ministry of Environment Ministry of Agriculture Customs Ministry of Education Ministry of Health Agency for Marine Issues NGOs Academic sector (e.g. Institute of Botany, Institute of Zoology)

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			problem Online platform for interactive reporting (Nature Watch)	Low (because it is new, but it has a potential)			from internal waters	International Community

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Target 11 – Protected areas	The Baikal and Issyk-Kul lakes entered into the list of UNESCO's World Natural Heritage sites. This led to measures for conservation of species composition, habitat stabilization, forest conservation, stock enhancement, overall improvement of the environmental situation.	Lessening of anthropogenic impacts, overall improvement of the environmental situation. Limitation of economic activity of local population and full embargo on some of its kinds. Increase in unemployment, decline in living standards, outflow of population from protected areas.	Limitation of economic activity in the lake's central ecological zone. Closure of the Baikal pulp-and-paper mill - the major polluter of the Baikal lake; increasing the input of specially protected natural areas system in maintaining the natural capacity of the Baikal natural site and optimization of recreational load on natural systems. Conservation of a part of plant and animal species included in the Red Book of the Russian Federation and in the specially protected natural	Adoption of the federal law On the Lake Baikal Protection Targeted Federal Program of the Lake Baikal Protection and the socioeconomic development of the Baikal natural area for 2012-2020	Improving conditions of ecosystems in the territories adjacent to the Baikal and Issyk-Kul lakes, ensuring their ecological stability, increasing fish capacity of the water bodies.	Significant reduction in sewage polluted water discharge into the waters of lakes (up to 68.4 % into the Baikal lake); increasing the input of specially protected natural areas system in maintaining the natural capacity and optimization of recreational load on natural systems; increasing the effectiveness of forest conservation. Rehabilitation of 80% of Baikal's natural area, that was subjected to high and extremely high pollution.	Water quality. Expansion of specially protected natural areas. Conservation of forests and their wildlife species. Sustainable management of fresh-water ecosystems, including fish stocks, invertebrate and aquatic plants.	Water resources management bodies. Nature protection supervisory authorities. Agriculture and forestry management authorities. Bodies of local self-government. Public and non-government environmental organizations.

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			<p>sites in the total amount of plant and animal species in the Red Book of the Russian Federation at the level of 13.6 %; enhancing the stocks of valuable fish species in the Baikal lake by 43.6%</p> <p>Mainstreaming of biodiversity in environmental impact assessment of mining operations and tourism development in the Baikal territory.</p> <p>The territory of the Issyk-Kul region was declared as a specially protected</p>	<p>UNDP/GEF Project "Integrated management of natural resources in the transboundary ecosystem of the Lake Baikal basin"</p>				

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			natural area (biosphere territory); it's envisaged to create a base for restoring the number of fish, create nurseries for growing saplings and organize forested strips; currently are being elaborated ecological tourist destinations; legal and regulatory frameworks are being harmonized with the international requirements established for biosphere territories.	Adoption of the Law on sustainable development of the Issyk-Kul ecologo-economic system by virtue of which the concept for sustainable development of the Issyk-Kul ecologo-economic system for the period till 2020 and its implementation Program were adopted by Presidential Decree.				

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Target 12 – Extinction prevented	PAs area and number increasing	People can have a rest, develop various tourism activities, increasing their awareness on biodiversity and nature protection, new investment restrictions, but there are other income opportunities (ecotourism), additional values: fresh water, fresh air, beautiful landscape, mitigate climate change, incentives for ecotourism development, changes in prices of land, limitations in economy development and changes in traditional ways of living, maintenance	Law (general and individual for each PA), species and habitats monitoring system, management plan action plan for threaten species establishment of marine PAs	High (low in place) 50% (not all areas and species are covered) Low low (lack of resources for implementation) low (lack of politic will, conflict of interest) 1	Good progress	Increase (by...)number and covered of Pas 100% of PAs have management plan	Number of PAs Number of MPs % of territory	Ministry of Envir, Agriculture, Forestry, Fisheries, local communities, NGOs, media

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		of old varieties of plants and domestic animals						
Target 13 – Genetic diversity maintained								
Target 14 – Ecosystems and essential services safeguarded								
Target 15 – Ecosystems restored and enhanced								
Target 16 – Nagoya Protocol								
Target 17 – NBSAPs adopted								
Target 18 – Traditional knowledge respected								
Target 19 – Knowledge improved, shared and applied								
Target 20 – Financial resources increased								

Annex III

LIST OF DOCUMENTS

Document symbol	Document title
UNEP/CBD/RW/5NR-CEECASI/1/1	Provisional agenda
UNEP/CBD/RW/5NR-CEECASI/1/1/Add.1	Annotations to the provisional agenda
Relevant COP decisions, supporting tools and background documents	
Decision XI/3	Monitoring progress in implementation of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 and the Aichi Biodiversity Targets
Decision X/10	National reporting: review of experience and proposals for the fifth national report
Decision X/2	The Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 and the Aichi Biodiversity Targets
UNEP/CBD/COP/11/27	Monitoring implementation of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020, including progress in the preparation of the fourth edition of the Global Biodiversity Outlook
UNEP/CBD/COP/10/8	Implementation of the Convention and the Strategic Plan and progress towards the 2010 Biodiversity Target
UNEP/CBD/SBSTTA/15/2	Suggested indicators for the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 and the Aichi Biodiversity Targets
UNEP/CBD/SBSTTA/15/3	Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020: Provisional technical rationale, possible indicators and suggested milestones for the Aichi Biodiversity Targets
UNEP/CBD/SBSTTA/16/3	Global Biodiversity Outlook: Considerations for the preparation of the fourth edition of the Global Biodiversity Outlook
UNEP/CBD/SBSTTA/17/INF/12	Facilitating national monitoring and implementation of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020
	Guidelines and a resource manual for the fifth national report available at the CBD website at http://www.cbd.int/nr5/
	Reports of workshops on the preparation of the fourth national reports available at http://www.cbd.int/reports/nr4/workshops/
	Reports of the first and second meetings of the Advisory Group for GBO-4 http://www.cbd.int/gbo/gbo4/UNEP-CBD-GBO-4AG-2.pdf and http://www.cbd.int/doc/meetings/sbstta/sbstta-17/information/sbstta-17-inf-17-rev1-en.pdf .
	GBO-3: Biodiversity scenarios: Projections of 21st century change in biodiversity and associated ecosystem services http://www.cbd.int/doc/publications/cbd-ts-50-en.pdf
UNEP/CBD/RW/5NR-AFR-LDC/1/2 UNEP/CBD/RW/5NR-AFR-LDC/2/2 UNEP/CBD/RW/5NR-EASI/1/2 UNEP/CBD/RW/5NR-PAC/1/2 UNEP/CBD/RW/5NR-CAR/1/2	Reports of the first and second regional workshops for African least developed countries on the preparation of the fifth national report and regional scenario analysis Report of the regional workshop for South, East and Southeast Asia on the preparation of the fifth national report and regional scenario analysis Report of the regional workshop for the Pacific countries on the preparation of the fifth national report Report of the regional workshop for the Caribbean countries on the preparation of the fifth national report