



Ref.: SCBD/STTM/JM/JLe/JG/77026

11 October 2011

NOTIFICATION

Subject: Request to submit scientific information in support of the objectives of the Western South Pacific Regional Workshop to Facilitate the Description of Ecologically or Biologically Significant Marine Areas (EBSAs), 22-25 November 2011, Fiji

Dear Madam/Sir,

Reference is made to the earlier notifications (2011-136; 2011-160) sent on 22 July 2011 and 29 August 2011 regarding the nomination of experts to the Western South Pacific Regional Workshop to Facilitate the Description of Ecologically or Biologically Significant Marine Areas (EBSAs), which will take place from 22 to 25 November 2011, in Fiji.

The Conference of the Parties to the Convention, at its tenth meeting, requested the Executive Secretary to work with Parties and other Governments as well as competent organizations and regional initiatives, such as the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), regional seas conventions and action plans, and, where appropriate, regional fisheries management organizations (RFMOs), with regards to fisheries management, to organize, including the setting of terms of reference, subject to the availability of financial resources, a series of regional workshops, before a future meeting of the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice (SBSTTA) prior to the eleventh meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention, with a primary objective to facilitate the description of ecologically or biologically significant marine areas through application of scientific criteria in annex I of decision IX/20 as well as other relevant compatible and complementary nationally and intergovernmentally agreed scientific criteria, as well as the scientific guidance on the identification of marine areas beyond national jurisdiction, which meet the scientific criteria in annex I to decision IX/20 (paragraph 36, decision X/29).

Pursuant to the above request, this regional workshop is being convened by the CBD Secretariat, with financial support from the Government of Japan, in collaboration with the Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP). The Government of Australia is providing support, through the Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research

To: CBD National Focal Points, SBSTTA Focal Points, and other Governments; the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO); regional seas conventions and action plans and regional fisheries management organizations (RFMOs) in the western South Pacific region; other competent organizations and regional initiatives

Organisation (CSIRO) in collaboration with UNEP-GRID Arendal, to the CBD Secretariat and SPREP in their scientific and technical preparation for the workshop.

In order to prepare necessary scientific input to the workshop in a timely manner, I invite Parties and other Governments as well as competent organizations and regional initiatives to provide relevant scientific information in support of the objectives of the above-mentioned workshop, as soon as possible but no later than **10 November 2011**, which will allow enough time for the Secretariat to compile and collate submitted information.

Relevant scientific information can be submitted in two ways: (1) by using the EBSA information template attached as an appendix to this letter, or (2) through another appropriate format, such as scientific articles, documents, datasets, maps or visual and audio information. Information should contribute to the description of ecologically or biologically significant marine areas through application of scientific criteria in annex I of decision IX/20 (<http://www.cbd.int/decision/cop/?id=11663>) as well as other relevant compatible and complementary nationally and intergovernmentally agreed scientific criteria.

Submission of information should be made to the CBD Secretariat by the above deadline (faxed to +1 514 288-6588 or via an email addressed to secretariat@cbd.int).

Please note that all the submitted information will be available only for the consideration by the above-mentioned workshop. The information considered by the workshop will be kept in the CBD EBSA repository, as called for by COP 10 in decision X/29, paragraph 39, in accordance with the guidance provided in this decision.

I thank you in advance for your continued cooperation with the work of the Convention.

Please accept, Madam/Sir, the assurances of my highest consideration.

Ahmed Djoghlaif
Executive Secretary

Please note that this template is provided to facilitate information submission on a voluntary basis, only when the information provider finds this template appropriate. If the available information does not fit the format of this template, information can be submitted in another format, in consultation with the Secretariat.

Appendix

Template for Submission of Scientific Information

to Describe Ecologically or Biologically Significant Marine Areas

*Note: Please **DO NOT** embed tables, graphs, figures, photos, or other artwork within the text manuscript, but please send these as separate files. Captions for figures should be included at the end of the text file, however.*

Title/Name of the area:

Presented by (names, affiliations, title, contact details)

Abstract (in less than 150 words)

Introduction

(To include: feature type(s) presented, geographic description, depth range, oceanography, general information data reported, availability of models)

Location

(Indicate the geographic location of the area/feature. This should include a location map. It should state if the area is within or outside national jurisdiction, or straddling both. It should also state if the area is wholly or partly in an area that is subject to a submission to the Commission on the Limits of the Continental Shelf)

Feature description of the proposed area

(This should include information about the characteristics of the feature to be proposed, e.g. in terms of physical description (water column feature, benthic feature, or both), biological communities, role in ecosystem function, and then refer to the data/information that is available to support the proposal and whether models are available in the absence of data. This needs to be supported where possible with maps, models, reference to analysis, or the level of research in the area)

Feature condition and future outlook of the proposed area

(Description of the current condition of the area – is this static, declining, improving, what are the particular vulnerabilities? Any planned research/programmes/investigations?)

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Assessment of the area against CBD EBSA Criteria

(Discuss the area in relation to each of the CBD criteria and relate the best available science. Note that a candidate EBSA may qualify on the basis of one or more of the criteria, and that the boundaries of the EBSA need not be defined with exact precision. And modeling may be used to estimate the presence of EBSA attributes. Please note where there are significant information gaps)

CBD EBSA Criteria (Annex I to decision IX/20)	Description (Annex I to decision IX/20)	Ranking of criterion relevance (please mark one column with an X)			
		Don't Know	Low	Some	High
Uniqueness or rarity	Area contains either (i) unique (“the only one of its kind”), rare (occurs only in few locations) or endemic species, populations or communities, and/or (ii) unique, rare or distinct, habitats or ecosystems; and/or (iii) unique or unusual geomorphological or oceanographic features.				
<i>Explanation for ranking</i>					
Special importance for life-history stages of species	Areas that are required for a population to survive and thrive.				
<i>Explanation for ranking</i>					
Importance for threatened, endangered or declining species and/or habitats	Area containing habitat for the survival and recovery of endangered, threatened, declining species or area with significant assemblages of such species.				
<i>Explanation for ranking</i>					
Vulnerability, fragility, sensitivity, or slow recovery	Areas that contain a relatively high proportion of sensitive habitats, biotopes or species that are functionally fragile (highly susceptible to degradation or depletion by human activity or by natural events) or with slow recovery.				
<i>Explanation for ranking</i>					

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Biological productivity	Area containing species, populations or communities with comparatively higher natural biological productivity.				
<i>Explanation for ranking</i>					
Biological diversity	Area contains comparatively higher diversity of ecosystems, habitats, communities, or species, or has higher genetic diversity.				
<i>Explanation for ranking</i>					
Naturalness	Area with a comparatively higher degree of naturalness as a result of the lack of or low level of human-induced disturbance or degradation.				
<i>Explanation for ranking</i>					

Sharing experiences and information applying other criteria (Optional)

Other Criteria	Description	Ranking of criterion relevance (please mark one column with an X)			
		Don't Know	Low	Some	High
<i>Add relevant criteria</i>					
<i>Explanation for ranking</i>					

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References

(e.g. relevant documents and publications, including URL where available; relevant data sets, including where these are located; information pertaining to relevant audio/visual material, video, models, etc.)

Maps and Figures

Rights and permissions

(Indicate if there are any known issues with giving permission to share or publish these data and what any conditions of publication might be; provide contact details for a contact person for this issue)