



Ref.: SCBD/MPO/AF/DA/83759

25 July 2014

NOTIFICATION
Results of the Open Working Group on Sustainable Development Goals

Madam/Sir,

On 19 July 2014, the Open Working Group on Sustainable Development Goals of the 68th session of the United Nations General Assembly agreed by acclamation to forward a proposal containing 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) to the General Assembly. Biological diversity and ecosystems featured prominently in the text of 17 goals and 169 targets.

There is much more work ahead, but Parties, stakeholders and others involved in this process should all be very proud to have contributed to this great accomplishment, which will have a significant impact in our efforts to mainstream biodiversity into development and poverty eradication.

This outcome will form an important part of the Secretary General's "synthesis report" on SDGs and the Post-2015 agenda, which will lay out the final steps for completing the Post-2015 package in 2015, bringing together different processes that have been ongoing: one on SDGs, one on the Post-2015 agenda, and one that includes the Intergovernmental Committee of Experts on Sustainable Development Financing, supported by the Working Group on Financing for Sustainable Development.

From the perspective of the Convention on Biological Diversity and the implementation of its Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 and the Aichi Biodiversity Targets, the outcome is extremely positive. Biodiversity and ecosystems are included throughout the goals and targets. There are two goals directly related to biodiversity: Goal 14 on oceans and coasts, and Goal 15 on terrestrial biodiversity. Goal 12 on sustainable consumption and production is also very relevant to the Strategic Plan.

Language relevant to biodiversity and ecosystems and/or natural resources is also included in many other goals, including Goal 2 on food security, Goal 6 on water and sanitation, and Goal 11 on cities and human settlements. Other goals which include "sustainability" considerations are also of relevance, as is Goal 17 on means of implementation.

In addition to these goals, the language in the chapeau underscores that conservation, sustainable use and equitable sharing of benefits are at the heart of the sustainable development process and are top overarching priorities. Paragraph 3 states: "Poverty eradication, changing unsustainable and promoting sustainable patterns of consumption and production and protecting and managing the natural resource base of economic and social development are the overarching objectives of and essential requirements for sustainable development."

To: CBD National Focal Points and relevant organizations



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These results are directly relevant to the theme of COP 12 and its High-level Segment – “Biodiversity for Sustainable Development”, and point out the growing recognition outside of the traditional biodiversity community, of the essential role of biodiversity to achieving sustainable development. The close parallel of the language in these goals to the text of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 and its Aichi Biodiversity Targets, and the setting of the date of 2020 for achievement of many of the SDG targets demonstrate an integration of the work of the CBD in the broader development agenda.

It is clear that when Parties to the CBD meet in Pyeongchang, COP 12 and the High-level Segment will provide opportunities to further reinforce and integrate the agenda of the CBD with that of the SDGs Post-2015 development agenda. It is expected that a number of COP 12 decisions, related to oceans, forests, biodiversity for development and others, as well as the many parallel meetings and side events will have the potential to contribute to advancing and implementing the goals and targets proposed under the SDG process. The Pyeongchang Roadmap, an anticipated result from COP 12, will also be important to ensuring that the biodiversity and the Post-2015 development agendas are more closely linked.

The efforts that have taken place to date in and around the Open Working Group processes have also demonstrated the professionalism and coordination among United Nations bodies. The work by those organizations which deal directly with the CBD agenda have been tireless and consensual. The FAO, UNEP, UNDP, UNESCO, UNFF, the World Bank, the biodiversity-related conventions such as CITES, CMS, Ramsar, WHC, UNCCD and UNFCCC, among others, were key to the crafting of background documents, and their participation in the sessions of the Open Working Group provided important technical expertise to the delegations.

Furthermore, the overall process through which these outcomes have been generated, ably led by the co-chairs, Ambassador Csaba Kőrösi of Hungary and Ambassador Macharia Kamau of Kenya, has been one of transparency, and open dialogue. This bodes well for the challenges of implementation which lie ahead.

We all need to ensure that biodiversity remains strongly in the final outcomes of the negotiations for the Post-2015 development agenda. We further need to ensure that the indicators for these goals and targets, as well as their implementation are meaningful and effective.

In light of the above, I invite all Parties and interested stakeholders to review the results of the work of the Open Working Group to be found at: <http://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/focussdgs.html>

I would also like to invite Parties to explore opportunities to take into consideration the goals and targets adopted by the Open Working Group in the planning and implementation of their revised NBSAPs. As you begin your preparations for COP 12, let us further this momentum for implementation of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020.

Finally, I am pleased to announce that the theme for the International Day for Biological Diversity 2015 will be: “Biodiversity for Sustainable Development.” Parties and stakeholders are kindly invited to begin the planning for their events and celebrations now, and to communicate these to the Secretariat.

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

Braulio Ferreira de Souza Dias
Executive Secretary