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11 November 2014

NOTIFICATION

CBD Regional Workshop to Facilitate the Description of Ecologically or Biologically Significant Marine Areas (EBSAs) in the North-West Indian Ocean and Adjacent Gulf Areas, 20 to 25 April 2015, and Training Session on EBSAs, 19 April 2015 – Dubai, United Arab Emirates

Dear Madam/Sir,

I have the pleasure to inform you that, with financial support from the Government of Japan, through the Japan Biodiversity Fund, the Secretariat is convening the Regional Workshop to Facilitate the Description of Ecologically or Biologically Significant Marine Areas (EBSAs) in the North-West Indian Ocean and Adjacent Gulf Areas, from 20 to 25 April 2015, preceded by a training session on EBSAs on 19 April 2015, in Dubai, United Arab Emirates. The workshop will be hosted by the Ministry of Environment and Water of the Government of the United Arab Emirates and is being convened in collaboration with the United Nations Environment Programme Regional Office West Asia (ROWA), Convention on Migratory Species Office – Abu Dhabi, the Regional Organization for the Conservation of the Environment of the Red Sea and Gulf of Aden (PERSGA), the Regional Organization for the Protection of the Marine Environment (ROPME), and the Abu Dhabi Global Environmental Data Initiative (AGEDI). Scientific and technical support for this workshop is being provided by the Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organization (CSIRO) of Australia.

This workshop is being convened pursuant to decision X/29, in which the Conference of the Parties (COP) to the Convention on Biological Diversity requested the Executive Secretary to organize a series of regional workshops with a primary objective to facilitate the description of ecologically or biologically significant marine areas through application of the 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. At its eleventh and twelfth meetings, the COP reviewed the outcomes of the first and second set of regional workshops conducted and requested that additional workshops be organized for the remaining regions or subregions where Parties wish workshops to be held (respectively, decisions XI/17 and XII/22).

The COP also requested, in decision XI/17, that the Executive Secretary further collaborate with Parties, other Governments, competent organizations, and global and regional initiatives, such as the United Nations General Assembly Ad Hoc Working Group of the Whole on the Regular Process for Global Reporting and Assessment of the State of the Marine Environment, including Socio-Economic Aspects, the International Maritime organization, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, regional seas conventions and action plans, and, where appropriate, regional fisheries management organizations, with regard to fisheries management, and also including the participation of indigenous and local communities, in organizing the above regional workshops.

To: CBD National Focal Points and SBSTTA Focal Points in the North-West Indian Ocean and adjacent gulf areas region; FAO; IMO; ROWA; CMS Office – Abu Dhabi; PERSGA; ROPME; AGEDI; other relevant regional seas conventions and action plans; relevant regional fisheries management organizations; indigenous peoples and local communities; and other relevant global and regional organizations/initiatives



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Parties in the region, as well as relevant global and regional organizations/initiatives are therefore invited to nominate experts who can participate in this workshop and provide scientific information in support of its objectives both prior to and during the workshop. Draft terms of reference for the workshop are annexed for your reference.

Please note that this is a scientific and technical workshop in which participants will be expected to analyze detailed scientific information related to the workshop objectives in collaboration with other workshop participants. Participants should be scientists or individuals able to understand and interpret scientific data, and should have access to relevant ecological and biological data on marine ecosystems, habitats and species, and/or relevant physical/oceanographic/geological data (e.g., seamounts, canyons, vents, seeps, climatologies).

As such, the selection of experts will be based on scientific and technical expertise and experience, taking into account the guidance of COP in its decisions X/29 and XI/17, and will be carried out using the following criteria:

- Good scientific knowledge and research experience related to describing 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;
- Good scientific knowledge and experience related to the application of scientific guidance on the application of the EBSA criteria (annex VI, UNEP/CBD/SBSTTA/14/INF/4); and
- Good scientific knowledge and experience related to developing and applying biogeographic classification systems for open-ocean waters and deep-sea habitats.

Prior to the workshop, experts will be asked to provide relevant scientific and technical information, in collaboration with relevant scientists within their respective countries, to support the workshop discussions, including by filling in the [EBSA information template](#). These templates will then be refined and further developed during the workshop through scientific discussion among workshop participants, with technical and mapping support of CSIRO. A notification requesting the submission of scientific information, including by completing the EBSA template, in support of this workshop, is being issued separately (ref no. 2014-130, dated 11 November 2014). For examples of documentation from previous EBSA workshops, including data reports, compilations of submissions and workshop reports, please see the information available at the following link: <http://www.cbd.int/ebsa/meetings?tab=previous>.

Meeting documents will be forwarded to the selected experts and posted on the CBD website in due course. The meeting will be conducted in English and Arabic.

Parties in the region, as well as relevant regional organizations and initiatives, are invited to nominate one expert to participate in this workshop. Nominations should include the name and full contact details of nominee and should be submitted via an official letter addressed to the Executive Secretary and signed, respectively, by the National Focal Point or head of the organization/initiative. All nominations must be accompanied by a *curriculum vitae* clearly indicating the areas of expertise and experience of the nominee. Nominations must be received as soon as possible, but no later than **Monday, 22 December 2014** (scanned and sent to secretariat@cbd.int, or faxed to +1 (514) 288-6588).

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

Braulio Ferreira de Souza Dias
Executive Secretary

Attachment

**Annex. Draft Terms of Reference for CBD Regional Workshop
to Facilitate the Description of Ecologically or Biologically Significant Marine Areas (EBSAs)
(paragraph 36, decision X/29)**

1. Describe ecologically or biologically significant marine areas through application of the scientific criteria adopted through decision IX/20 and contained in annex I to that decision, 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;
2. Collate, review, analyse and synthesize relevant scientific data/information/maps collected and compiled by the CBD Secretariat, to undertake the above activity in paragraph 1;
3. Produce a regional workshop report on areas meeting EBSA criteria for consideration by SBSTTA; and
4. The regional workshops will be convened by the Executive Secretary in collaboration 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.

