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NOTIFICATION

Eighth Trondheim Conference on Biodiversity on “Food systems for a sustainable future: Interlinkages between biodiversity and agriculture” 31 May - 3 June 2016 – Trondheim, Norway

Dear Madam/Sir,

The purpose of this notification is to draw your attention to the eighth Trondheim Conference on Biodiversity, entitled “Food systems for a sustainable future: Interlinkages between biodiversity and agriculture”, which will be held on 31 May – 3 June 2016 in Trondheim, Norway. The conference will be hosted by the Government of Norway in collaboration with the United Nations Environment Programme, the Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, the United Nations Development Programme, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization and the World Bank. The conference is expected to bring together over 350 participants.

Since 1993, the Trondheim Conferences have advanced a scientifically informed dialogue on critical issues on the agenda of the Convention. The need to mainstream biodiversity into other sectors has been widely recognized by Parties, and this year's conference will explore the interrelationships between biodiversity and the food and agriculture sector, with a view to identifying approaches for the achievement of mutually beneficial and sustainable outcomes, in the context of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Sustainable Development Goals.

The eighth Trondheim Conference on Biodiversity is expected to make an important contribution to the implementation of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 and contribute to the thirteenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity to be held in Cancun, Mexico in December 2016. A summary of the conference programme is attached and the detailed conference programme will be published shortly on the conference webpage (<http://www.trondheimconference.org>). The conference will be conducted in English.

On behalf of the Government of Norway, His Excellency Mr. Vidar Helgesen, Minister of Environment, is inviting all Parties to the Convention and Member States of the United Nations to be represented at the conference. Two representatives from each country may attend the conference. As the conference aims to foster a cross-sectoral exchange of ideas, Governments are invited to designate one national expert from the biodiversity sector and one from the agricultural sector. Representatives from eligible countries will receive assistance to attend the conference. Such assistance will be available, upon

To: CBD National Focal Points, SBSTTA Focal Points and relevant organizations



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request, for a limited total number of participants. From each country, one expert from each of the sectors may apply for such assistance. Invitations are also being sent to relevant United Nations entities and to selected international organizations and institutions that are involved in supporting the implementation of the CBD.

Further information on the conference, including online registration and visa procedures, is available on the conference webpage (<http://www.trondheimconference.org>) and can also be obtained by contacting the Conference Secretariat in the Norwegian Environment Agency at trondheimconference@miljodir.no. The deadline for online registration is **31 March 2016**. Kindly note that all registrations should be accompanied by an official letter from the CBD National Focal Point.

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

Braulio Ferreira de Souza Dias
Executive Secretary

Enclosure

Food systems for a sustainable future: *Interlinkages between biodiversity and agriculture*

The Eight Trondheim Conference on Biodiversity
Trondheim, Norway, 31 May – 3 June 2016

Conference rationale

In 2010, Governments adopted 20 Aichi Biodiversity Targets as part of the *Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020* and progress and actions in addressing these targets will be reviewed at CBD COP13. However, five years after their adoption, it is widely recognised that further efforts are needed in order to achieve these targets and to reverse the effects of biodiversity loss. Fully understanding the drivers behind such loss, and ways to reverse them, are of fundamental importance in addressing this.

The Aichi Biodiversity Targets are also highly relevant for the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) adopted by governments in September 2015 as part of the *2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*. The SDGs address the complex challenges we face in our interconnected world, and are a call to action that will shape the next 15 years of policies, programmes and funding. They are equally relevant to all countries, and across all sectors. Agriculture is strongly connected to achieving the goals. Investing in the agricultural sector can address not only hunger and malnutrition, but also other challenges related to poverty, loss of biodiversity, water and energy use, climate change, and unsustainable production and consumption patterns.

The Eighth Trondheim Conference therefore aims to bring together decision-makers and experts from governments, private sector, academia, UN agencies and other non-governmental organisations from around the globe to discuss interrelationships between agriculture for food (with a special focus on crops and livestock) and biodiversity, and to identify approaches for the achievement of mutually beneficial and sustainable outcomes. It is intended that the deliberations and report of the Conference will amongst other things provide inputs to the high-level segment of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity to be held in Mexico in December 2016 (CBD COP13).

A significant determining factor for the future status of terrestrial, coastal and freshwater biodiversity is the agricultural sector. This sector faces significant challenges in meeting the needs for increased quantity and quality of food for a growing world population, and is at the same time trying to address other dimensions of sustainability, including environmental impact. Biodiversity and ecosystem services are a critical foundation for food production, and the agricultural and food sector is also an important provider of ecosystem services and contributor to human well-being.

Better integration of biodiversity and agriculture will help provide solutions for the challenges we will face between now and 2030. Efforts to meet an increasing demand for food while conserving

biodiversity can be mutually supportive, with tools and approaches that can help in advancing both agendas. Building on the outcomes of the Seventh Trondheim Conference on Biodiversity “*Ecology and Economy for a Sustainable Society*”, the Eighth Conference will explore the role of agriculture and food systems in building a sustainable future, and how biodiversity and agricultural policies can be mutually supportive to address shared problems and to provide shared solutions.

Expanding opportunities for constructive dialogue with a broad range of stakeholders is one of the basic steps in integrating biodiversity and agriculture considerations into each other’s operations. This will be essential to delivery of both the Aichi Biodiversity Targets and the SDGs. Since 1993 the Trondheim Conferences on Biodiversity have provided opportunities for dialogue and capacity enhancement amongst stakeholders on current issues relating to the biodiversity agenda. Organized by the Norwegian Government, the Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO)¹, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and the World Bank, the intention is to provide a forum for open and constructive dialogue, leading to a transparent and scientifically sound basis for addressing each of the chosen issues.

Programme Summary

The following is a summary of the Conference programme as it currently stands. This is still subject to change based on dialogue amongst those organizations and individuals involved in the Conference organization, and a revised and augmented version will be circulated in due course.

Session 1 *Opening session and setting the scene*

Following a cultural performance and welcoming remarks, this opening session will include presentations from Ministers and other dignitaries who will set the scene for the Conference, and prepare the participants for substantive debate. These presentations will be complemented by introductions to key issues from a number of other experts.

Session 2 *Conference organization*

Short session to ensure mutual understanding of what the Eighth Trondheim Conference aims to achieve, and to explain the format of the Conference.

Session 3 *Interlinkages between biodiversity and agriculture: Part I – Imperatives and implications*

In the first of several sessions exploring interlinkages between biodiversity and agriculture for food, the Conference will consider the potential pathways for sustainable intensification in agriculture, and the impacts that this might have on food security and on biodiversity and ecosystem services. This session will include an overview of the economics of biodiversity and ecosystem services in the sector, as well as discussion on the current status of three different areas (pollination, soil formation/nutrient cycling and genetic resources) where agriculture benefits from biodiversity and ecosystem services are evident, and what this might mean for both biodiversity and agriculture.

Session 4 *Interlinkages between biodiversity and agriculture: Part II – Policies and institutions*

The SDGs provide multiple objectives that countries will need to pursue, which will require identifying priorities sector by sector and analysing trade-offs between and within them. This session will therefore enter into more detailed discussions on what the priorities are for the biodiversity and agriculture for food sectors, with a view to identifying common priorities. Examples of national policies

¹ To be confirmed

and institutional arrangements that are being used by countries for alignment of those priorities will then be profiled. Spatial planning, environmental-economic accounting for agriculture and ways of addressing land rights will be examined as some of the approaches that countries use to explore policy options that can support the realisation of different objectives.

Session 5 *Interlinkages between biodiversity and agriculture: Part III – Planning for a changing climate*

After an overview of some of the challenges of conserving biodiversity and satisfying food demand, this session will reflect on the relevance of considering climate change for achieving both objectives. The importance of the use of scenarios in informing planning will be explored, particularly in the context of participatory scenario development. Different approaches analysing agriculture, biodiversity and climate change in a holistic manner will be discussed, with the aim of identifying a range of challenges and opportunities that would enable the alignment of different policy objectives.

Session 6 *Roundtable discussions*

The primary purpose of the roundtable discussions is to increase the engagement of meeting participants through work in smaller groups to identify and develop options and potential pathways to enhance the transition towards a sustainable agriculture. Discussions would draw on the earlier presentations and on the experience of Conference participants. The intention is that these discussions will identify ways of helping to support national planning/policy development in contributing to an enabling environment for sustainable agriculture, and thereby inform inputs to the high-level segment of the thirteenth session of the CBD Conference of the Parties (COP) to be held in Mexico in December 2016. Tables of approximately 10 participants will each consider a set of identical questions, with the objective of producing a list of elements under each question that can be used as a basis to build on in the roundtable discussions on the next day.

Session 7 *Interlinkages between biodiversity and agriculture: Part IV – Changing practices*

Identification of mutual interests and improved alignment between the agriculture and biodiversity sectors concerns not only agricultural production, but also other related issues such as food distribution and consumption. In order to provide further context for the following session which will profile practical examples of building interlinkages between biodiversity and agriculture, this session will draw upon some of the content of the previous sessions to discuss ways to promote a change to biodiversity-friendly practices for both producers and consumers, and why this is important to all those involved.

Session 8 *Panel session: Building interlinkages between biodiversity and agriculture*

This panel session will explore practical examples of how specific small, medium and large-scale food producers, distributors and retailers in a variety of subsectors are contributing to biodiversity conservation. A selection of sustainable agricultural practices will be briefly presented by panellists (e.g. mixed production systems such as agroforestry, tillage approaches, precision agriculture, conservation agriculture, organic farming) and they will be asked to identify key benefits, challenges and limitations associated with these practices from their experience. Further experience will be sought from meeting participants, who will also be invited to question the panel.

Session 9 *Roundtable discussion*

Building on the outputs produced in the previous roundtable discussion in Session 6, and drawing upon the presentations and discussions from Sessions 7 and 8, this roundtable discussion will aim to move towards development of roadmaps or pathways towards transition to sustainable agriculture. This session will encourage participants to have an open dialogue on those elements that should be considered when planning the design and implementation of national policies to enable sustainable agriculture.

Session 10 *Outlook 2030*

This session will explore how the national implementation of the SDGs will provide a platform for further consideration of the linkages between biodiversity and agriculture, the role of science in support of this process, and how to communicate the biodiversity challenge to different stakeholders related to the agricultural and food sector.

Session 11 *Consideration of the draft Report by the Co-Chairs*

The intention is that a Co-Chairs' summary report will be prepared during the Conference based on the presentations and discussions that take place, and this will be presented by the Chief Rapporteur. A discussion on the Conference report will follow, which will be taken into account in the final report. This report will be prepared as an information document for Parties for CBD COP13.

Session 12 *Closing session*

Following completion of the work of the Conference, this session will hear a few short closing addresses before participants depart.