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17 November 2017

NOTIFICATION

CBD Regional Workshop to Facilitate the Description of Ecologically or Biologically Significant Marine Areas (EBSAs) in the Baltic Sea, 20 to 24 February 2018, and Training Session on EBSAs, 19 February 2018 – Helsinki, Finland

Dear Madam/Sir,

I have the pleasure to inform you that, with financial support from the Governments of Finland and Sweden, the Secretariat is convening the CBD Regional Workshop to Facilitate the Description of Ecologically or Biologically Significant Marine Areas (EBSAs) in the Baltic Sea, from 20 to 24 February 2018, preceded by a training session on EBSAs on 19 February 2018, in Helsinki, Finland. The workshop will be hosted by the Government of Finland and organized in collaboration with the Baltic Marine Environment Protection Commission – Helsinki Commission (HELCOM).

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. The description of EBSAs will draw on the scientific guidance on the identification of marine areas beyond national jurisdiction, which meet the scientific criteria in annex I to decision IX/20. Since 2011, 13 regional workshops have been held, and the outcomes of the first twelve were reviewed by the COP at its eleventh, twelfth and thirteenth meetings (decisions XI/17, XII/22 and XIII/12). In these same decisions, the COP requested that additional workshops be organized for the remaining regions or subregions where Parties wish workshops to be held.

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 to this notification 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,

To: CBD National Focal Points, SBSTTA Focal Points and Marine and Coastal biodiversity Focal Points in the Baltic Sea region (Denmark, Estonia, European Union, Finland, Germany, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Russian Federation, Sweden); HELCOM; indigenous peoples and local communities; relevant regional fisheries bodies; and other relevant global and regional organizations/initiatives

habitats and species, and/or 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, XI/17, XII/22 and XIII/12 as well as gender balance, and will be carried out using the following criteria:

- a. 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;
- b. Good scientific knowledge and experience related to the application of scientific guidance on the application of EBSA criteria (annex VI, UNEP/CBD/SBSTTA/14/INF/4); and
- c. Good scientific knowledge and experience related to developing and applying biogeographic classification systems of 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; a notification requesting the submission of scientific information will be issued separately.

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>. Documents for this meeting will be forwarded to the selected experts and posted on the CBD website in due course. The meeting will be conducted in English.

Parties in the region are invited to nominate *two experts* to participate in this workshop; relevant global and regional organizations and initiatives are invited to nominate *one expert* to participate. Nominations should include the name and full contact details of nominee/s 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 should be sent as soon as possible, but no later than **15 December 2017**, via e-mail to secretariat@cbd.int or via fax to +1 514 288 6588.

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

Cristiana Paşca Palmer, PhD
Executive Secretary

Attachment

**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. The description of EBSAs will draw on 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.