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21 January 2019

NOTIFICATION
2019 High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development

Madam/Sir,

Through this notification, I wish to bring the attention of Parties in addressing the High-level Political Forum's (HLPF) 2019 theme of 'Empowering people and ensuring inclusiveness and equality'. This process presents another important opportunity to highlight the role of biodiversity and healthy ecosystems in implementing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

The importance of biodiversity for achieving the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development was again recognized by the fourteenth meeting of Conference of the Parties to the Convention, which took place in Sharm El-Sheikh, Egypt, from 17 to 29 November 2018. In decision 14/3, the Conference of the Parties stressed that mainstreaming biodiversity in the sectors of energy and mining, infrastructure, manufacturing and processing, is essential for the goals and objectives of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Paragraph 14 of decision XIII/3 urged Parties to mainstream biodiversity in the implementation of all relevant SDGs, and paragraph 103 of the same decision calls on the Executive Secretary to support Parties in their efforts to utilize an integrated approach towards achieving the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and national biodiversity strategies and action plans.

In 2018, the High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development, convened under the auspices of the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) in July, reviewed progress towards SDG 15 on terrestrial ecosystems and biodiversity, among other SDGs. Given biodiversity's central role in SDG 15, the Secretariat actively engaged in the HLPF's regional preparatory forums and expert thematic meetings and collaborated with partners to organize and participate in a suite of events at the HLPF to highlight the cross-cutting role that biodiversity plays in achieving the SDGs, beyond SDG 15.

This year's HLPF will meet twice, once at the ministerial level from 9 to 18 July 2019, under the auspices of ECOSOC, and again from 24 to 25 September 2019 at the Heads of State and Heads of Government level in the General Assembly and its SDG Summit. A declaration giving political guidance for how to accelerate implementation of the 2030 Agenda is expected to be adopted at this meeting of the General Assembly. The set of goals to be reviewed in 2019 include SDG 4 (Quality Education), SDG 8 (Decent Work and Economic Growth), SDG 10 (Reduced Inequalities), SDG 13 (Climate Action), SDG 16 (Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions) and SDG 17 (Partnerships). Fifty-one countries will be presenting their Volunteer National Reviews (VNRs) at the July meeting of the HLPF.

Further to notification 2018-005 of 12 January 2018, I invite your Government to highlight the specific role of biodiversity and ecosystems for sustainable development in your country during this high-level political forum, including, as applicable, through VNRs that will be presented during the forum.

To: CBD National Focal Points, Cartagena Protocol Focal Points, and ABS Focal Points

In order to assist Parties to the Convention in reflecting biodiversity in their VNRs, the Secretariat prepared a biodiversity-specific guidance for VNRs, meant as a supplement to the UN Secretary General's updated Common Voluntary Reporting Guidelines for VNRs. The Biodiversity Guidance for Voluntary National Reviews was presented as an information note during COP 14 and is available on the CBD [website](#)¹.

The Secretariat will organize an information webinar on the Biodiversity-specific Guidance for Preparing VNRs on 20 February 2019. The webinar targets in particular officials that are responsible for embedding national biodiversity policies in the larger sustainable context of their country and/or for national reporting. It will present an introduction into the guidance and several good practice case examples of how biodiversity was reflected in the 2018 VNRs. In order to register, interested participants are invited to send an e-mail, referencing this notification and providing their full name and function, to gordana.dosen@cbd.int, preferably before **10 February 2019**. Registered participants will be provided in due course with the detailed agenda and the necessary technical information for accessing the webinar.

I continue to count on the active engagement of your country in these processes in order to ensure positive outcomes for the Convention through the HLPF in 2019.

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

Cristiana Paşca Palmer, PhD
Executive Secretary

¹ <https://www.cbd.int/doc/c/23a5/bb2d/356e3d8e6df1c1a993b406b3/cop-14-inf-26-en.pdf>