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20 January 2020

## NOTIFICATION

### Theme for the International Day for Biological Diversity 2020

Dear Madam/Sir,

As part of the efforts to raise awareness of the negotiations of the Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework, the Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity is pleased to announce that the theme of the International Day for Biological Diversity on 22 May 2020 will be:

“Our Solutions are in Nature”

The theme for the day shows that Biodiversity remains the answer to a number of sustainable development challenges that we all face. From nature-based solutions to climate, to food and water security, and sustainable livelihoods, biodiversity remains the basis for a sustainable future.

With a number of events and activities, 2020 promises to be a “super year” for global biodiversity governance, environmental decision making and ultimately for all life on Earth. Against this backdrop, I am pleased to announce that in 2020, the celebrations of the International Day for Biological Diversity (IDB) will be part of a broader commemoration of Biodiversity Week, from 18 to 22 May 2020. This will coincide with the twenty-fourth meeting of the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice, which will take place from 18 to 23 May 2020 in Montreal, Canada.

I am attaching the plans for the Biodiversity Week, which provide the themes and details for each day during the week. In this regard, National Focal Points and other stakeholders will be interviewed about their IDB celebrations. Among others, Parties are invited to promote activities throughout the week to their national media.

As per standard practice, the Secretariat is in the process of developing a variety of outreach materials to help celebrate this important week including, inter alia, the following:

- Key messages for Biodiversity Week
- IDB logo
- Social media kit
- IDB web page featuring events and information materials and links to partner activities.

Enclosure

To : CBD National Focal Points, Cartagena Protocol Focal Points, ABS Focal Points, relevant organizations, and indigenous peoples and local communities



I invite Parties to keep the Secretariat informed of national plans for activities to celebrate the International Day for Biological Diversity, so that they may be included on the special pages ([www.cbd.int/idb/2020](http://www.cbd.int/idb/2020)) of the Convention's website, dedicated to these celebrations worldwide.

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

Elizabeth Maruma Mrema  
Acting Executive Secretary



## Biodiversity Week 18-22 May 2020

### Background

In the year 2000, the United Nations proclaimed May 22 as the International Day for Biological Diversity (IDB) to increase understanding and awareness of biodiversity issues ([www.cbd.int/idb](http://www.cbd.int/idb)).

In 2020, the IDB is expanding into a Biodiversity Week full of events to demonstrate why IDB in 2020 is different from previous years.

2020 is a year of opportunity and solutions. It is the year where the world can signal a strong global framework that will “bend the curve” on biodiversity loss. 2020 will mark the convergence of several pivotal moments that together can lead to a new long-term global biodiversity framework. It is the “Super Year” that will witness:

- The final period for the [2011-2020 Strategic Plan on Biodiversity](#) and its 20 Aichi Biodiversity Targets;
- The end of the [2011-2020 United Nations Decade on Biodiversity](#), leading to the transitional phase for the start of other new pivotal biodiversity-related decades for the period 2021-2030: the [UN Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development](#) and the [UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration](#);
- The grand UN Biodiversity Conference (COP 15 – Fifteenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity) in October, in Kunming, China; and
- The adoption of the new, innovative, transformative, and universal global biodiversity framework based on negotiations that will take place during the year.

As part of a comprehensive communication strategy, the CBD Secretariat, working with Parties, UN entities and other partners around the world, will enhance the usual celebrations of the International Day for Biodiversity (IDB) on 22 May, and will celebrate a Biodiversity Week<sup>1</sup> from 18 to 22 May 2020. Each day will highlight interconnected topics related to the biodiversity agenda. It is hoped that this roadmap could also be adapted, emulated and used by all countries and stakeholders around the world. All biodiversity-related conventions are invited to contribute to Biodiversity Week in accordance with their mandates.

<sup>1</sup> In recent years, “Biodiversity weeks” have been celebrated at national or subnational levels by a number of countries.



## Proposal

The themes to be covered from 18 to 22 May 2020 are key elements of the biodiversity agenda. The “story” unfolds:

<b>Biodiversity Week: 18-22 May 2020</b>				
<b>Mon 18<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>Tue 19<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>Wed 20<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>Thu 21<sup>st</sup></b>	<b>Fri 22<sup>nd</sup></b>
<b>Science and Knowledge</b>	<b>Awareness</b>			<b>Action</b>
Outputs	Dissemination			Impact on the process
	Conservation of Biodiversity	Food, Health and Biodiversity	People, Culture and Biodiversity	

**18 May** – The week will open on Monday, 18 May, by putting the spotlight on science and traditional knowledge, not only to understand the state of biodiversity, but also to comprehend the drivers of biodiversity loss and pathways for a sustainable future. The launch of the Global Biodiversity Outlook 5 (GBO-5) will provide the basis for the conversation.

**19-21 May** – Taking advantage of [World Bee Day](#), and the [World Day for Cultural Diversity for Dialogue and Development](#), the following three days, 19-21 May, will be devoted to raising awareness on areas that deal with the different objectives of the Convention: 1) different ways of conserving biodiversity; 2) agriculture, food and feed, food security and health; and 3) biodiversity, people and culture. Awareness should also be raised on the link between biodiversity, climate and land (particularly in light of the outcome of Climate Change COP 25).

**22 May** – The week will culminate with the IDB around the theme of action for biodiversity and emphasizing that “**Our Solutions are in Nature**”.

The theme and the slogan are meant to mirror the GBO-5 as well as the relationship with IPBES assessments. It can also help support and communicate the theme of COP 15: “Ecological Civilization: Building a Shared Future for All Life on Earth.”

### **Biodiversity Week - Day by day**

For each of these themes, events are planned to be held in Montreal, Canada, in the margins of the meetings of the SBSTTA and SBI, which take place in May 2020. At the same time, the expectation is that Parties to the CBD, relevant UN entities and partners around the world will also hold events. The rationale for each of the themes is outlined below.

## **Topline messages**

In whichever ways the message “biodiversity matters to us and our lives” will be adapted at the national level, all messages should feed into an overarching narrative, i.e. that 2020 is a defining year for biodiversity (Super Year), that there is an urgency to act, and that there is a need for a strong global framework to save biodiversity. Messages should be illustrated by stories and examples on why biodiversity matters, and how humans are already affected.

## **Monday, 18 May 2020 – Science and Knowledge**

### **Topline message**

Science, social science and indigenous local knowledge are all the most reliable sources of knowledge regarding the state of biodiversity, its complex interactions within wider socio-ecosystems, the direct and indirect drivers of biodiversity loss, and the effects of policy options. Science has been providing evidence, data, information and expertise to inform policy action for decades. Scientific knowledge also interacts with traditional knowledge and other systems to provide the basis for solid decision-making. The fifth edition of the [Global Biodiversity Outlook](#) (GBO-5) helps bridge that gap between science, knowledge and policy-makers.

### **Proposed Celebrations**

#### **Opening of [SBSTTA-24](#), Montreal, Canada**

National Focal Points and other stakeholders will be interviewed before and throughout the week about their IDB celebrations. The interviews will be announced much in advance (they may start in February, in Kunming). For example, Parties will be asked for feedback on what they need in order to organize successful large-scale and impactful celebrations, and what would help them to report on achievements. Given the general lack of reporting by Parties, the interviews will be used to do a proper assessment of worldwide celebrations, gaps and needs. Interviews, and in particular success stories, may also be filmed and shared on social media, as appropriate.

Parties are also invited to ensure that the entire Week is covered well by their media (TV, newspapers, etc). The Secretariat can provide common messages which can be adapted and used within national contexts.

#### **Launch of GBO-5, Montreal, Canada** (*media opportunity*)

At the opening of SBSTTA 24, the Global Biodiversity Outlook 5 (GBO-5) will be released. GBO-5 will provide the definitive assessment of the state of implementation of the Aichi Biodiversity Targets, as well as suggestions of the way forward for the next decade.

The launch will be done through a press conference. Potential speakers would elaborate on the relevance of the report and its implications: SBSTTA Bureau, China, Egypt, Mexico, UNEP, IPBES, BIP, FAO, UNEP-WCMC, IPBES Chair, Local Biodiversity Outlook, etc.

The Secretariat will ensure Canadian and international media coverage through working with IPBES and a Media Consultant.

## **Global launches of GBO-5**

In partnership with UNEP Communications, the UN Department of Public Information in New York, and Parties to the CBD, regional launch events for GBO-5 will be carried out. These include press conferences and interviews with experts on the conclusions of the report. In addition, Parties will be asked to note their success stories that have been reported through the National Reports. An extensive global media campaign (details to come at a later date) will provide media coverage of the report across different markets.

Different networks of universities can play an important role in disseminating the results of GBO-5. Furthermore, splash media coverage will help reach out to the general population.

## **Tuesday, 19 May – Conservation of Biodiversity**

### **Topline messages**

The wider landscape and seascape managed appropriately constitute an important stock of natural, cultural and social capital, yielding flows of economically valuable goods and services that benefit society, secure livelihoods, and contribute to the achievement of Sustainable Development Goals. There has been good progress in expanding the coverage of both terrestrial and marine protected and conserved areas, with marine coverage increasing faster than terrestrial coverage. For example, the world has achieved Aichi Biodiversity Target 11 on protecting 10% of its coasts and marine areas by 2020, with 3.6 million square kilometers of ocean, an area larger than India, having been designated as marine protected areas since April 2016. Further, Parties have made advances on the important role of IPLCs in the implementation of the Conservation and Sustainable Use Agenda.

The restoration agenda will be looked at, and opportunities provided for protection and conservation.

Progress on Aichi Biodiversity Target 11 will be showcased (note: Target 11 also covers other effective area-based conservation measures toward wider landscape conservation). Also, it is expected that SDG Target 14.5 will be reached by the end of 2020: it is to be determined how the day will be used to celebrate this achievement, which is factual and practical.

In order to avoid misunderstanding about the figures, the current total of MPA size may also be mentioned (18.5 million km<sup>2</sup>), as well as the significant progress made in terrestrial PA coverage.

Both protected areas and other effective area-based protection measures should be addressed: the concept should be broader and encompassing. Areas that are conserved as a result of a harmonious relationship between nature and humans and their culture are more equitable and more coherent with the SDGs and have also proven to be more effective and sustainable in the long term.

### **Proposed Celebrations**

**Canada** (specifically Parks Canada) could be celebrated, as it has made significant progress on protected and conserved areas, and May 19 is the occasion of the anniversary of Parks Canada, the world's 1st national park service (established in 1911).

*Note: the anniversary of Sierra Gorda biosphere (most ecologically diverse region in Mexico) also takes place on this day.*

**SBSTTA-24:** interviews continue with National Focal Points on IDB celebrations. Side-events, poster sessions, nature maps, etc.

## **Wednesday, 20 May – Food, Health and Biodiversity**

### **Topline messages**

Biodiversity is key for food security and nutrition; and contributes to the achievement of Sustainable Development Goal 1 on poverty eradication and Goal 2 on zero hunger. Food systems depend on biodiversity and the ecosystem services that support agricultural productivity, soil fertility, and water quality and supply. For example, pollination is one of the most important mechanisms in the maintenance and promotion of biodiversity and life on Earth. Pollinators and pollination are critical for food production and human livelihoods, and directly link wild ecosystems with agricultural production systems.

The soil's ecosystem (microorganisms and invertebrates) are also critical for food security.

*Note: Some IDB2019 and World Food Day messages could be reused. However, do not generate confusion with World Food Day. FAO will be invited to lead IDB activities on this day.*

### **Proposed Celebrations**

[World Bee Day](#) 2020 seems to have no theme at time of writing. The emphasis could be on the role of pollination for food systems, and then get into the issue of transformations needed in the food sector as a second-tier messaging.

**SBSTTA-24:** interviews continue with National Focal Points on IDB celebrations.

### **IPBES**

The CBD Secretariat will engage with IPBES since one of the recent IPBES assessments is on pollinators and food production: <https://www.ipbes.net/deliverables/3a-pollination>. Given that IPBES will be involved in the GBO-5 launch, perhaps the CBD Secretariat could suggest both issues.

## Thursday, 21 May – Culture and the relationship of humans and biodiversity

### Topline messages

Biodiversity is the source of our cultural and spiritual enrichment. Species, genetic diversity and diversity of ecosystems are frequently integral to religious, cultural and national identities. All major religions, for example, include elements of nature and 231 species are formally used as national symbols in 142 countries. The particular relationship between indigenous peoples and nature has enabled them to conserve the largest percentage of the Earth's biodiversity. On the other hand, many relationships between humans and nature occur in urban areas. Ecosystems such as parks and other effective area-based conservation measures provide recreation and a knowledge resource for visitors, an urban oasis for (re) connecting people with nature, and biodiversity is a frequent source of inspiration for artists and designers.

Messages could emphasize on values of humanism instead of theism. Instead of religion and spirituality, cultural players and their constituencies like poets, writers, painters, theatre artists, film makers etc. should be solicited. Also include a strong gender dimension.

### Proposed Celebrations

#### [World Day for Cultural Diversity for Dialogue and Development](#)

At time of writing there seems to be no theme announced for 2020 yet. The CBD Secretariat (or partners) should strongly support UNESCO's campaign with the biodiversity angle. UNESCO will be invited to lead IDB activities on this day.

#### **International Indigenous Forum on Biodiversity (IIFB)**

The IIFB is planning to organize local and national activities to promote cultural dialogue between civilizations.

**SBSTTA-24:** interviews continue with National Focal Points on IDB celebrations.

## Friday, 22 May - “Our Solutions are in Nature”

### Topline messages

Our Solutions are in Nature. Nature-based solutions with biodiversity safeguards can help protect, sustainably manage, and restore natural or modified ecosystems, that also address societal challenges, thereby simultaneously providing human well-being and biodiversity benefits. Whether it is food security, climate change, water security, human health, disaster risk or economic development, nature can help. Nature-based solutions with biodiversity safeguards are key for the mitigation, resilience and adaptation in several critical areas, including the conservation and restoration of forest and other terrestrial ecosystems; the conservation and restoration of freshwater resources as well as marine and ocean ecosystems; sustainable agriculture and food systems; and, ensuring nature's systemic role in sustainable development in ways that halt biodiversity loss, help mitigate and adapt to climate change, as well as optimizing nature's contribution for, among other things, resilient livelihoods, green infrastructure, and sustainable settlements.



## Theme

It is recommended that the Week builds up to the IDB and, therefore, builds up to one main overall slogan: “**Our Solutions are in Nature**”. This theme brings both Nature-Based Solutions with biodiversity safeguards and the biodiversity/nature aspect together in a simple, easy to grasp way. It also gets at people being part of nature rather than separate from nature.

The COP 15 theme will be: “Building a shared future for all life on Earth”. To build that future, we can find solutions in nature.

This theme can also pair well with different calls to action for each day. Calls for action should include:

- Ecosystem-based solutions for addressing biodiversity loss, climate change and land degradation simultaneously;
- Mainstreaming biodiversity in economic sectors.

## Celebrations

### SBSTTA-24, Montreal, Canada

Minister of Environment of Canada to open IDB at ICAO. Mayor of Montreal will be invited – the City of Montreal will be asked to put ads on metro screens, buses, etc. China will be asked to present a video on COP 15 during SBSTTA-24 plenary. Interviews continue with National Focal Points on IDB celebrations. SBSTTA-24 side-events will be dedicated to Aichi Biodiversity Target 1.

### New York

In collaboration with UN Department of Public Information, the CBD Secretariat will seek to organize an event in UN headquarters.

## Worldwide

**Parties are in the best position to know what awareness-raising campaigns and calls to action work at their national level.** However, below is a list of **suggested** activities. For each of the themes/days, Parties are encouraged to collaborate with their Ministries of Education, formal and informal education actors, UNESCO National Commissions, and/or their networks of local NGOs to do specific activities and multiply the effects of the campaign.

1. *One million people* campaign. Note: given that about 75 Parties have populations smaller than 1 M, it needs to be worded properly. For example, a percentage of the population (ideally 10-25%, but perhaps more realistically 3-5%). Understanding that it may be difficult to achieve or measure, **Parties may wish to launch national IDB campaigns that will reach a minimum of 5% of their total population.** The objective can be reached (exceeded) over a number of weeks/months. The results must be quantitative and demonstrated (for example, number of views on youtube, likes on social media, etc.) and results will be announced in the IDB report/COP 15.
2. Campaigns and activities specifically targeted at women, youth and Indigenous peoples and local communities (e.g. the role of women in the food/agriculture sector, the role of youth in science

- and technology, armchair discussions with famous personalities to elevate the role of women and youth, etc.).
3. The launch of GBO-5 is an excellent opportunity for special scientific events for students, scholars, scientists and media. National Focal Points are encouraged to communicate in advance with Higher Education networks and sectoral research institutions for active involvement in the planned GBO-5 launch (local launches and promotion).
  4. Parties are encouraged to put together a committee at the beginning of the year to prepare for the Week. It is recommended that such committees be partly composed of a variety of members (ex. Ministry of Education, Health, Culture, Communications, Finance, Commerce, Energy, Tourism, Transport, Labour, Infrastructure, etc.) in order to reach new audiences. The *Seychelles* have already announced their intent of setting up a committee.
  5. Essay competition for students, with prizes.

## **IDB assets**

The CBD Secretariat will create a number of digital assets to support celebrations by the Parties. The list of partners and resources for each of the days will be developed once themes and key messages are finalized.

- **Logo & branding**

The IDB2019 logo designed by the UN Department of Public Information won the 2019 GDUSA Award. Hoping to repeat or surpass last year's success, the present document was shared with DPI and a request made to design a logo for 2020 (in the 6 UN languages).

- **Messages**

See messages sections above. The overall messages will be further developed (ICLEI has also offered to assist with tailoring messages to cities and regions).

As every year, the Secretariat will produce a video message, and will work with the UNSG to provide one as well.

- **Digital assets**

Digital platforms will feature content informed by the agreed key messages and the sub-themes for each of the days. Assets include:

- Biodiversity Week video
- Web stories on each of the sub-themes, produced by the CBD Secretariat or by/with partners
- Short videos, expert interviews (video or written), infographics and factsheets explaining the significance of each sub-theme
- Video messages from the Executive Secretary
- Video messages or written statements from UN leadership and partner organizations
- Hashtag(s), memes
- Calls to action related to the theme/sub-themes
- A discussion question for the week inviting social media followers to engage in the Biodiversity Week conversation

- A social media kit on Trello or other means to host and distribute assets (key messages, videos, social media cards, sample tweets and Facebook posts)
  - Short videos (1 to 1.5 min) not only from experts, but also from fishermen, youth, foresters, beekeepers, farmers/producers, carpenters, park rangers, tourists, business (agro-business or other), parents, artists, IPLCs, etc. explaining why biodiversity matters to them.
- **Webpage**  
As every year, there will be a dedicated webpage: [www.cbd.int/idb/2020](http://www.cbd.int/idb/2020).
  - **Notification**  
As every year, a notification will be sent out announcing the theme, the logo and other details.

## Annex

### Building momentum

The celebrations of the Biodiversity Week are meant to be understood as part of a series of key events that support the building of momentum for awareness of biodiversity:

#### Phase I

Building up to the Biodiversity Week and creating a buzz:

- World Wetlands Day (2 Feb)
- World Wildlife Day/Africa Environment Day/Wangari Maathai Day (3 Mar)
- International Day of Forests (21 Mar)
- World Water Day (22 Mar)
- **Earth Hour (28 Mar)<sup>1</sup>**
- World Health Day (7 Apr)
- Earth Day<sup>2</sup> & International Mother Earth Day (22 Apr)
- World Migratory Bird Day (9 May)<sup>3</sup>
- World Bee Day (20 May)
- **Biodiversity Week (18-22 May)**

#### Phase II

The outputs from the Week can feed into subsequent Days and events:

- **World Environment Day (5 Jun)\***
- World Oceans Day (8 Jun)
- World Day to Combat Desertification (17 Jun)
- International Day for the Conservation of the Mangrove Ecosystem (26 Jul)
- International Day for the Preservation of the Ozone Layer (16 Sep)
- World Maritime Day (26 Sep)
- World Migratory Bird Day (10 Oct)
- International Day for Disaster Risk Reduction (13 Oct)
- **CBD COP 15 (mid-Oct T.B.C.)**
- World Food Day (16 Oct)
- International Day for the Eradication of Poverty (17 Oct)
- World Cities Day (31 Oct)
- World Soil Day (5 Dec)
- International Mountain Day (11 Dec)

\* As communicated by UNEP, World Environment Day 2020 will be about COP 15: “The 2020 edition of World Environment Day is expected to provide an opportunity for driving the momentum and public awareness of nature as a key aspect in the lead up to the 15th meeting of the Parties (COP 15)” <https://sdg.iisd.org/events/world-environment-day-2020/>

Many other international days are also excellent opportunities to highlight links to biodiversity (ex. International Day of Women and Girls in Science, International Women’s Day, World Population Day, International Day of Friendship, International Day of the World’s Indigenous Peoples, International Youth Day, World Humanitarian Day, World Tourism Day, World Teachers’ Day, World Habitat Day, International Day of Rural Women, etc.)