



PRESS RELEASE

Governments meet in Egypt to build momentum for a New Deal for Nature and People 2018 UN Biodiversity Conference held under the theme of “Investing in Biodiversity for People and Planet”

- *Conference will address mainstreaming of biodiversity in crucial economic sectors, such as energy and mining, infrastructure, manufacturing and processing as well as health*
- *Delegates will recharge ambition to scale and accelerate efforts to make progress on the 20 global “Aichi Biodiversity Targets” by 2020*
- *Participants will set the path to develop the post 2020 global biodiversity framework.*

8 November 2018 - The global community will lay the groundwork for action over the next few decades to protect biodiversity and nature at the 2018 UN Biodiversity Conference¹, scheduled to take place in Sharm El Sheikh, Egypt from 17 to 29 November 2018.

More than 80 Ministers are expected to attend the High-Level Segment of the Conference on 14 and 15 November, during which round-tables will address the mainstreaming of biodiversity into critical sectors of the economy and society, in particular mining and energy, infrastructure, manufacturing and processing and health.

The UN Biodiversity Conference will be preceded by an African Ministerial Summit on Biodiversity, on 13 November, featuring the participation of over 30 Ministers.

Originally launched in 1992 as part of the Rio Earth Summit, the Convention on Biological Diversity is a global agreement among 196 nations inspired by the world community's growing commitment to sustainable development. It represents the global community's commitment to the conservation of biological diversity, the sustainable use of its components, and the fair and equitable sharing of benefits arising from the use of genetic resources.

In its 25 years, it has advanced global action to safeguard biodiversity and contribute to all life's well-being on our common planet. In the next two years it aims to define a post 2020 global framework on biodiversity to be adopted in Beijing, China in 2020, much as the Paris Agreement did in 2015 for climate change.

¹ Fourteenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity; Ninth meeting of the Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety; Third meeting of the Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Nagoya Protocol on Access and Benefit-sharing.

A number of crucial issues will be addressed at the 2018 UN Biodiversity Conference: including on digital sequence information, synthetic biology, and other effective area-based conservation measures. The Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity will address key measures to accelerate and scale actions to further advance the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020, and review progress made towards the 20 Aichi Biodiversity Targets, a set of agreed goals on biodiversity conservation and sustainable use to be reached by 2020. They will also decide on the process for developing the post 2020 global biodiversity framework. In this context, Parties will discuss long-term strategic directions to the 2050 Vision for Biodiversity, which lays out a new approach to living in harmony with nature by 2050. In addition, Parties will explore ways to engage with productive sectors and work on shared objectives in support of the global biodiversity agenda.

The conference takes place at a critical moment for the fate of biodiversity worldwide. WWF's *Living Planet Report 2018* found that worldwide vertebrate populations are currently set to decline by 60 per cent from their 1970 levels by 2020. Scientific reports from the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES), released in March, also offers a detailed survey of the status and health of biodiversity region by region. The full reports can be found here: www.ipbes.net/deliverables/2b-regional-assessments

In response to these and other reports, governments are expected to send a clear message that safeguarding biodiversity and the health of the planetary ecosystems is fundamental to our survival and the social and economic well-being of everybody, everywhere.

Mainstreaming biodiversity into productive sectors

Significant action is needed to address continuing biodiversity loss and to achieve the three objectives of the Convention. Catalyzing action at the necessary scale requires integrating biodiversity in relevant economic sectors, as well as in cross-cutting national policies, development plans and processes, budgets, and economic projects. These kinds of actions are often referred to as “biodiversity mainstreaming.”

At the 2016 UN Biodiversity Conference, held in Cancun, Mexico, Ministers considered the mainstreaming of biodiversity with a focus on the agriculture, forestry, fisheries, and tourism sectors. Parties decided that the 2018 UN Biodiversity Conference would focus on the mainstreaming of biodiversity in other productive sectors, namely, energy and mining, infrastructure, manufacturing and processing, as well as health.

Assessing progress towards the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020

The Conference will assess progress in the implementation of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 before its final evaluation in 2020. Parties will be guided in their discussions by a variety of assessments – including those undertaken by Parties to the Convention through their fifth national reports and the fourth edition of the Global Biodiversity Outlook. These assessments suggest that while countries are advancing in implementing the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity, progress is not occurring at a rate that will allow the Aichi Biodiversity Targets to be reached by 2020, unless efforts are significantly increased.

While most countries are taking actions to safeguard biodiversity, determining what constitutes an effective action is challenging. For this reason, Parties will consider scientific and technical tools evaluated and recommended by the two Subsidiary Bodies of the Convention, in order to assess the effectiveness of policy instruments for the implementation of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity.

Towards the post 2020 global biodiversity framework

At this Conference, Parties are expected to adopt the process to develop the post 2020 global biodiversity framework for adoption in Beijing, China, in October 2020.

Dr. Cristiana Paşca Palmer, UN Assistant Secretary-General and Executive Secretary of the Convention on Biological Diversity, said: “While the scope and content of the post-2020 global biodiversity framework will be agreed over an almost two-year consultative period, it is apparent that the framework will need to bring about a transformational change in how we, as a human community, interact with biodiversity, and how we associate it with other economic and social priorities.”

The framework will be consistent with, and supportive of the Sustainable Development Goals, as well as provide input to those related goals with a 2020 target.

“We know that we need to mobilize broad societal engagement to catalyze global action on biodiversity. We need to engage the political channels to reinforce the urgency for action and mobilize partnerships to raise public awareness and encourage cooperative initiatives in support of biodiversity conservation and sustainable use,” said Dr. Paşca Palmer.

Discussions by governments are expected to build on existing processes, including the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity, but also to further define the tools, financial models and points of reference to build the case for an ambitious agenda that will achieve the Convention’s 2050 Vision of Living in Harmony with Nature.

Other critical issues to be covered

Other Effective Area-Based Conservation Measures

Parties are expected to adopt a definition of “other effective area-based conservation measures” (OECMs) that will recognize forms of nature protection that differ from traditional protected areas, including areas managed by indigenous peoples and local communities. Such conservation measures represent an effective way to increase protection of biodiversity across the globe.

Digital Sequence Information (DSI)

Parties will consider the potential implications of DSI on genetic resources for the objectives of the Convention on Biological Diversity and the objective of the Nagoya Protocol on Access and Benefit-Sharing. Digital sequence information, or DSI, on genetic resources is used in a range of activities for the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity, including taxonomy and monitoring for invasive species. However, questions persist about how digital sequence information relates to access and benefit-sharing.

Synthetic Biology

Parties are expected to discuss the possibility of establishing a process and modalities for conducting a regular monitoring and assessment of new developments in the field of synthetic biology, which will increase the possibilities to minimize any possible adverse effect on biodiversity.

Other Events of Note

- **The Business and Biodiversity Forum**, involving members of the private sector and other interested members of the biodiversity community, will be held on 14 and 15 November 2018, in parallel with the High Level Segment. The forum will review and encourage action among different stakeholders

including the business, industry, and the financial sectors to safeguard biodiversity.

www.cbd.int/business/doc/2018-bf-cop-14-draft-agenda-en.pdf

- **The Nature and Culture Summit** “Biological and Cultural Diversity for Biodiversity and Human Resilience - Achieving the Sustainable Development Goals and the Paris Agreement” will be held 23-24 November 2018. At the summit, governments, stakeholders, and specialized agencies will reflect on achievements made over the last decade on finding synergies between biological and cultural diversity, and between science and indigenous knowledge systems.
www.cbd.int/tk/nature/programme.shtml
- **The 2nd Wildlife Forum** will be held 21 November under the central theme “Sustainable Use for Conservation and Livelihoods.” The Forum will share experiences and seek creative solutions to issues associated with the health and security of people and wildlife, the wild meat crisis, and unsustainable use of wildlife. www.wildlife-forum.com/
- **The Rio Conventions Pavilion**, being held 17 – 27 November, profiles numerous events on thematic issues underscoring synergies on sustainable development, biodiversity, climate change, and combating desertification and land degradation. www.riopavilion.org/cbd-cop14-egypt/
- **The Biodiversity Innovations and Solutions Fair**, 17-29 November, showcases innovations, technologies, and solutions applied, or under development, for the conservation of biological diversity. www.cbd.int/conferences/2018/parallel-meetings/innovation-fair

NOTES TO EDITORS

The UN Biodiversity Conference takes place at the Maritim Sharm El Sheikh from 17 to 29 November 2018, with its High Level Segment taking place on 14 and 15 November 2018.

All documents and information relating to the conference can be found at:

www.cbd.int/conferences/2018

An online press kit, including press briefs on the main issues to be addressed at the meeting, accreditation instructions, and the schedule of press conferences can be found at:

www.cbd.int/conferences/2018/information/media

Live and on demand webcasts of negotiations, press conferences and selected side events are available at: www.cbd.int/webcast/

Media accreditation: Online media accreditation remains open until the opening date of the meeting. The form is accessible at: www.cbd.int/participation/2018/media

Press conferences: Press conferences can still be reserved by partners. All press conference requests should be made using the form available at: www.cbd.int/conferences/2018/information/media

Press Briefings: To be held every morning of the Conference at 9:15. The briefing will be webcast.

FAQs of relevance to media are available at: www.cbd.int/conferences/2018/information/media-faq

UN Biodiversity Conference media list – if you wish to be added to the Conference media list and receive media advisories, updates, press releases and various alerts on conference activities, please email: johan.hedlund@cbd.int

Social media for the Conference can be found on:

www.facebook.com/UNBiodiversity

www.facebook.com/UNBiodiversityConvention/

<https://twitter.com/unbiodiversity>

www.instagram.com/unbiodiversity
www.linkedin.com/company/unbiodiversity

Executive Secretary social media accounts:
www.facebook.com/CristianaPascaPalmer/
<https://twitter.com/CristianaPascaP>

Hashtags for the meeting include:

#UNBiodiversityConference
#COP14
#EgyptCOP14
#InvestInBiodiversity
#PeopleAndPlanet
#Biodiversity2020

Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD)

Opened for signature at the Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro in 1992, and entering into force in December 1993, the Convention on Biological Diversity is an international treaty for the conservation of biodiversity, the sustainable use of the components of biodiversity and the equitable sharing of the benefits derived from the use of genetic resources. With 196 Parties, the Convention has near universal participation among countries. The Convention seeks to address all threats to biodiversity and ecosystem services, including threats from climate change, through scientific assessments, the development of tools, incentives and processes, the transfer of technologies and good practices and the full and active involvement of relevant stakeholders including indigenous and local communities, youth, NGOs, women and the business community. The Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety and the Nagoya Protocol on Access and Benefit Sharing are supplementary agreements to the Convention. The Cartagena Protocol, which entered into force on 11 September 2003, seeks to protect biological diversity from the potential risks posed by living modified organisms resulting from modern biotechnology. To date, 171 Parties have ratified the Cartagena Protocol. The Nagoya Protocol aims at sharing the benefits arising from the utilization of genetic resources in a fair and equitable way, including by appropriate access to genetic resources and by appropriate transfer of relevant technologies. It entered into force on 12 October 2014 and to date has been ratified by 114 Parties. For more information visit: www.cbd.int. For additional information, please contact: David Ainsworth on +1 514 561 2720 or at david.ainsworth@cbd.int; or Johan Hedlund on +1 514 287 6670 or at johan.hedlund@cbd.int
