

Revised Terms of Reference of an Informal Advisory Group on Ecologically or Biologically Significant Marine Areas¹

I. MANDATE

1. Taking into account annex III of decision XIII/12 and annex III of decision 14/9 on the terms of reference of the Informal Advisory Group on Ecologically or Biologically Significant Marine Areas, and annex of decision 16/16 containing the modalities for modifying descriptions of ecologically or biologically significant marine areas and the description of new areas, the informal advisory group shall, in providing scientific and technical advice to the Executive Secretary, have the following objectives:

(a) Provide scientific and technical advice on matters relating to revising and further developing existing scientific guidance, particularly regarding information collection, protocol for data quality control and sharing, gap analysis, systematic assessment against the EBSA criteria, and improvement of the functionality of the EBSA repository;

(b) In line with paragraph 4 of decision 16/16, provide scientific and technical advice regarding the need for additional workshops at the appropriate scale, based on the analysis of new information (including submissions for the modification of EBSA descriptions and the description of new EBSAs), and a representativeness analysis with regard to the geographic coverage beyond national jurisdiction as well as coverage of ecological and biological features of existing areas meeting the EBSA criteria in areas beyond national jurisdiction².

(c) Identify the need for scientific gap analysis and/or thematic analysis, which could complement regional workshops; and, as appropriate, provide advice to the Executive Secretary, based on the results of such analysis,

(d) Advise the Executive Secretary in the planning of EBSA workshops to ensure the provisioning of scientific and technical knowledge, as well as traditional knowledge, at appropriate scales;

(e) Advise the Executive Secretary in developing draft voluntary guidelines for scientific peer-review processes.

II. COMPOSITION

2. The Executive Secretary, in consultation with the Bureau of the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice, will select scientific and technical experts from the nominations submitted by Parties, other Governments and relevant organizations, including indigenous peoples and local communities. The informal advisory group shall comprise up to 30 experts who are competent in the relevant field of expertise, with no more than 20 selected from a roster developed on the basis of nominations from Parties, with due regard to geographical representation, to gender balance and to the special conditions of developing countries, in particular the least developed countries, small island developing States, and countries with economies in

¹Contained in annex III to decision XIII/12, amended by annex III to decision 14/9.

²The activities described in this subparagraph only relate to the areas meeting the EBSA criteria in areas beyond national jurisdiction. In cases where the EBSA is located both within and beyond national jurisdiction, the activities only relate to the portion of the EBSA that is beyond national jurisdiction.

transition, as well as a limited number of experts nominated by other Governments and by relevant organizations, depending on the subject matter.

3. The informal advisory group is established for a two-year period, and may be renewed by a decision of the Conference of the Parties. The members of the advisory group shall be selected for two-year period. Changes in the membership should not affect the continuity of the work of the advisory group.

4. The informal advisory group may also draw on existing expertise and liaise with relevant international, regional and national organizations, as appropriate, in the execution of its mandate.

III. OPERATIONAL PROCEDURES

5. The Secretariat will use available means of electronic communication to reduce the requirement for face-to-face meetings. Subject to the availability of financial resources, the informal advisory group will meet as needed to ensure timely provision of advice, and will, wherever possible, meet back-to-back with other relevant meetings.

6. The results of the activities outlined above by the informal advisory group shall be submitted, after peer-review, as appropriate, for consideration by the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice at a future meeting held prior to a future meeting of the Conference of the Parties.