



Convention on Biological Diversity

**BUREAU OF THE SUBSIDIARY BODY ON SCIENTIFIC,
TECHNICAL AND TECHNOLOGICAL ADVICE**
8h30 to 10h00 Montreal
Via teleconference (Microsoft Teams)
28 April 2022

MINUTES

1. A meeting of the Bureau of the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice (SBSTTA) was held via teleconference on Thursday 28 April 2022, from 8:30 to 10:00 (Montreal time).
2. The meeting was attended by the following members of the Bureau: Mr. Hesiquio Benitez Diaz (Mexico, Chair), Ms. Helena Jeffery Brown (Antigua and Barbuda), Ms. Alison McMorrow (Australia), Mr. Jan Plesnik (Czech Republic), Ms. Marina von Weissenberg (Finland), Mr. Jean Bruno Mikissa (Gabon), Mr. Andreas Schei (Norway), Mr. Adams Toussaint (Saint-Lucia), and Ms. Gwen Sisor (Palau). Apologies were received from Ms. Senka Barudanovic (Bosnia-Herzegovina), Mr. Bilal Qtishat (Jordan), Ms. Marie-May Muzungaile (Seychelles), and Ms. Ana Lecaros Terry (Peru).
3. The meeting was supported by the following CBD Secretariat staff: Ms. Jihyun Lee (SBSTTA Secretary), Mr. David Cooper, Ms. Sakhile Koketso, Mr. Joseph Appiott, Ms. Véronique Allain and Ms. Jacqueline Grekin.

I. OPENING OF THE MEETING

4. The meeting was opened at 8:30 a.m. (Montreal time) on Thursday 28 April 2022 by the SBSTTA Chair.

II. ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

5. The SBSTTA Chair presented the agenda for the meeting and it was adopted without any changes.

III. INTER-SESSIONAL WORK ON MARINE AND COASTAL BIODIVERSITY

6. The Chair provided a slide presentation to update the Bureau members on the inter-sessional work on marine and coastal biodiversity, including funding, logistics arrangements, and technical preparation, pursuant to:

- (i) the recommendation 9 (Conservation and sustainable use of marine and coastal biodiversity) by SBSTTA-24 (paragraph 4), in which SBSTTA requested the Executive Secretary, in advance of the fifteenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties, and subject to the availability of financial resources, to facilitate consultations, both in person and online, among Parties, other Governments and relevant stakeholders, including indigenous peoples and local communities, women and youth, with a view to advancing discussions on the conservation and sustainable use of marine and coastal biodiversity; and
- (ii) the recommendation 10 (Ecologically or biologically significant marine areas) by SBSTTA-24, in which SBSTTA requested the Executive Secretary, in advance of the fifteenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties, and subject to the availability of financial resources, to facilitate consultations, both in person and online, among Parties, other Governments and relevant stakeholders, including indigenous peoples and local communities, women and youth, with a view to advancing discussions on ecologically or biologically significant marine areas.

7. In this presentation, he informed the efforts made by the Secretariat in response to the above recommendations, in particular mobilizing necessary financial resources to organize an in-person workshop, in particular on the subject of conservation and sustainable use of marine and coastal biodiversity. As of the date of this meeting, no sufficient financial resources have been identified despite indication of funding contributions by some donors, which is required for the Secretariat to send out notification for requesting the submission of nominations to a workshop. It was explained that the delay in identifying necessary financial resources would not allow enough time for necessary logistics preparation and arranging travel and visa of participants, in particular if the workshop is to be organized prior to the fourth meeting of the Open-Ended Working Group on Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework (OEWG-4) to be held in Nairobi, from 21 to 26 June 2022.

8. The Chair then presented an alternative option of on-line discussion forum, for consideration by the Bureau members, which can be organized either in lieu of in-person workshop (in case sufficient financial resources are not identified in a timely manner prior COP 15) or in addition to the in-person workshop, in line with the above-noted recommendations by SBSTTA-24. He highlighted that the on-line discussion forum has been used to advance discussions on other issues under the Convention and Protocols; that it allows for broader participation (no limit to number of participants; participation by nomination/selection, taking into account regional and gender balance and the relevant expertise); that it allows for more time to discuss issues (e.g., participants can provide input on any topic open for discussion over a 1 week period); and that it can be moderated by co-facilitators.

9. It was also noted that :

- As inputs to the online forum, Secretariat will prepare two background documents synthesizing information from submissions provided by Parties and observers in Geneva as contained in CBD/SBSTTA/24/INF/42 (Conservation and sustainable use of marine and coastal biodiversity) and CBD/SBSTTA/24/INF/41 (Ecologically or biologically significant marine areas), which can be introduced at an opening webinar at the beginning of the forum by the co-facilitators;

- On-line discussion forums will be opened for a set period (e.g, 1 week) wherein registered participants can post their views/inputs on specific topics, and discussion can be organized according to respective topics;
- Participants can reply to each others' inputs posted on-line;
- Co-facilitators will moderate the on-line discussion by posting their own guidance and intervene, as appropriate, if the posted input is outside the scope of the forum or not relevant to respective topics; and
- The results of discussion will be compiled by the forum co-facilitators, with assistance by the Secretariat, which can be submitted to COP 15-2 as information document

10. In response to the Chair's presentation, Bureau members exchanged their views, questions and suggestions, as summarized below:

- a. Appreciated the Chair for elaborating the possible ways forward on intersessional work on marine and coastal biodiversity in response to the recommendations by SBSTTA-24, noting the lack of sufficient financial resources to organize in-person workshop, in particular prior to the OEWG-4;
- b. Highlighted the importance of organizing intersessional work to facilitate the consultation among Parties on the conservation and sustainable use of marine and coastal biodiversity, and make the results available as information for delegates, prior to the OEWG-4;
- c. Indicated support for the organization of the on-line discussion forum (coupled with opening and closing webinars), in view of the lack of sufficient fund to organize an in-person workshop prior to the OEWG-4, while noting the concern from some regions that internet connection could pose a challenge for active participation, and also noting the concern on different time zones for participation;
- d. Noted that inputs to the on-line discussion forum can be made in written text and at any time of convenience by participants during the week when it is open, which would address the concerns raised above; and
- e. Recommended that Ms. Marie-May Muzungaila (Seychelles) be invited to serve as the co-facilitator, together with another one to be identified by the Secretariat in consultation with her and SBSTTA chair

11. Bureau members then requested the Secretariat to circulate a concept note on the organization of on-line discussion forum for their review and comments, as an extension of this meeting's discussion.

12. Based on the above-noted request from the Bureau members, the Secretariat circulated the draft concept note on 3 May, and modified it with some edits based on comments from the Bureau members (see annex to this note). Then, the Secretariat issued, on 17 May 2022, a notification (Ref No. 2022-028) to request submission of nominations of experts to participate in the on-line discussion forum, including its opening and closing webinars.

IV. OTHER MATTERS

13. No other matters were discussed.

V. CLOSURE OF THE MEETING

14. The Bureau meeting was closed at 10:00 a.m. (Montreal time) on Thursday 28 April 2022.

Annex

Concept Note¹

Intersessional work on the SBSTTA 24 outcomes on marine and coastal biodiversity

Background

1. At its 24th meeting, the CBD Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice (SBSTTA) adopted recommendation 24/9, “conservation and sustainable use of marine and coastal biodiversity”, and recommendation 24/10, “ecologically or biologically significant marine areas”. In these recommendations, SBSTTA noted that the work reflected in these documents was not completed due to the extraordinary circumstances prevailing.
2. In addition, SBSTTA requested, in the above-noted recommendations 24/9 and 24/10, the Executive Secretary, in advance of the fifteenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties, and subject to the availability of financial resources, to facilitate consultations, both in person and online, among Parties, other Governments and relevant stakeholders, including indigenous peoples and local communities, women and youth, with a view to advancing discussions on the conservation and sustainable use of marine and coastal biodiversity and on ecologically or biologically significant marine areas, respectively.

Objectives

3. Pursuant to the above-noted requests, the Secretariat is convening **a series of online discussion forums**, in consultation with the SBSTTA Bureau, on: (i) conservation and sustainable use of marine and coastal biodiversity, and (ii) ecologically or biologically significant marine areas. These online discussion forums will provide an opportunity for participants nominated by Parties, Other Governments and relevant organizations, and selected by SBSTTA Bureau, to share their views and inputs on the outcomes of SBSTTA 24. In line with previous practice² of the online discussion forums undertaken under the Convention, these discussion forums will facilitate moderated dialogues on these topics, in order to support advancing discussions at COP 15.

Modalities of Online Discussion Forums

4. The Secretariat will issue **notifications³** (one for each discussion forum) to request nominations from Parties, Other Governments and relevant organizations for participants to take part in the forums. Participants will be selected by SBSTTA Bureau with assistance from the secretariat, taking into account regional and gender balance as well as expertise and experience relevant to respective topics.
5. The forums will be hosted on the CBD website and open only to selected participants, based on nominations.
6. The forums will be scheduled as follows:

¹ Initial draft circulated to Bureau members on 3 May 2022, and edited based on comments from Bureau members.

² See an example at <https://www.cbd.int/sustainable/forum/>

³ The first notification on the online discussion forum on the conservation and sustainable use of marine and coastal biodiversity was later issued on 17 May 2022 (Ref No. 2022-028).

- **Forum 1. Conservation and Sustainable Use:** Opening Webinar on 6 June; On-line forum from 7 to 10 June; Closing Webinar 13 June.
 - **Forum 2. EBSAs:** Opening Webinar on 15 July; On-line forum from 18 to 22 July; Closing Webinar 25 July
7. **Opening webinars** will be organized to introduce each forum, its objective and focus of discussion. The forums will each be wrapped up respectively by a **Closing Webinar** that will provide a summary of the discussion and guidance on next steps. The recordings of these webinars will be made available to the public.
 8. The forums will be moderated by two **co-facilitators**, who will lead the opening and closing webinars, moderate the online forum, and develop summary reports based on the forum discussions. Their roles also entail providing overall guidance for the forums, providing guiding questions and input throughout the forum period to help guide discussions and ensuring that the forum discussion stays within its scope.
 9. As **input to each forum**, the Secretariat will develop, for each forum, a **synthesis of the views expressed on these issues at SBSTTA-24**, including those proposals provided by Parties and observers in response to the invitation from the Chair of SBSTTA and contained in document CBD/SBSTTA/24/INF/41 (EBSAs) and CBD/SBSTTA/24/INF/42 (Conservation and sustainable use of marine and coastal biodiversity). This will provide a basis for discussion during the forums. The forums will each be structured thematically (with separate discussions on sub-topics) to facilitate coherent discussions.
 10. The **output of each forum** will be a document produced by the co-facilitators that synthesizes and summarizes the discussions. These will be made available as information documents for COP 15. The results of the **Forum 1. Conservation and Sustainable Use** can be also made available for participants of the 4th meeting of OEWG to be held in Nairobi in June, and its summary can be presented at an information session during this OEWG-4.
 11. The forums will be managed in English. The opening and closing webinars will be held in English, with simultaneous interpretation into some other UN languages, if necessary and subject to available financial resources.

Budget Implications

12. A preliminary estimate for the cost of each on-line forum, as discussed above, is about 10,000 USD/forum, with total of 20,000 USD.

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