

## Biodiversity Capacity Development Update



**Cameroonian Officials  
Trained on Marine and  
Coastal Areas Planning  
and Management**



**Eleven Countries  
Receive Small Grants  
to Organize Training  
Courses on Standard  
DNA Technologies  
for Rapid Species  
Identification**



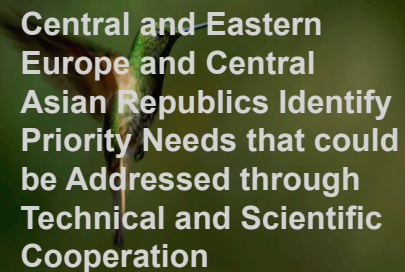
**Asian and Arab  
Countries Trained  
to Strengthen their  
National Clearing-House  
Mechanisms**



**African Region  
Officials Trained on  
Mainstreaming Biosafety  
at the National Level**



**Countries in the Baltic  
Sea Region Trained  
on the Description  
of Ecologically or  
Biologically Significant  
Marine Areas**



**Central and Eastern  
Europe and Central  
Asian Republics Identify  
Priority Needs that could  
be Addressed through  
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**Scientists from  
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**The Bio-Bridge Initiative  
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Scientific Cooperation**

## In Memoriam Olivier de Munck (1965-2018)



On 21 February 2018, the Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity with immense sadness lost a dear colleague and friend, Olivier de Munck, Programme Officer for the Clearing-House Mechanism at the age of 53.

Olivier, who joined the Secretariat in 1999, was an extremely dedicated colleague. For almost two decades he helped to develop and then lead the Clearing-House Mechanism, the backbone of the Secretariat's information management system. Olivier loved his work and was generous with his time and expertise. During the last year, he fought his illness with immense courage and fortitude. He will be greatly missed by many across the world with whom he shared his passion for using technology to better protect biodiversity.

Olivier grew up in Africa and earned his first degree in electrical engineering and later an MBA in his birth country of Belgium. Earlier in his career he worked with the private sector in Brussels and in London, and with a technical co-operation project in the Seychelles. His UN experience began with UNIDO in Haiti and Costa Rica, working as coordinator of a PAHO/WHO project for the Regional Disaster Information Center for Central America and the Caribbean.

Olivier was a very kind colleague, mentor and friend. His optimism, enthusiasm and politeness made the Secretariat a better place to work in. He always strove for perfection and persevered even

during the most difficult challenges. He loved his family very much and he fought to stay with us all for as long as he could. Olivier is survived by his two sons, his wife, as well as his parents and brother.

A memorial service was held for Olivier in Montreal, Canada, on 13 March 2018 and subsequently laid to rest on 6 April 2016 in the village of Vergnies, Belgium, where his parents live. We dedicate this issue of BioCAP to honor Olivier's memory and legacy. Rest in peace dear friend.



## The Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity Welcomes New Staff

The Secretariat is delighted to welcome the following new staff members:

### ***Ms. Jyoti Mathur-Filipp, Director, Implementation Support Division:***

Jyoti has extensive experience in environment and biodiversity management. She worked for 25 years supporting countries with policy development, programmatic implementation, resource mobilization and accessing financial mechanisms in the domain of global environmental protection and sustainable development. She worked with both UNDP and UNEP in implementing and executing Global Environment Facility projects for both biodiversity, including biosafety, and climate change focal areas, the Adaptation Fund, Least Developed Countries Fund and most recently, with the Green Climate Fund. She also worked at the UNFCCC Secretariat and with CMS and CITES Conventions on capacity-building, country resilience and financing. Jyoti is a national of India and holds a Masters of Science in Urban Planning and a Masters in Business Administration.

### ***Mr. Alexander Shestakov, Director, Science and Policy Support Division:***

Alexander has extensive experience from academia, public and private sectors, national

and international NGOs working in the fields of environmental conservation, environmental mapping, environmental audits, management and policy. For almost 10 years, Alexander was member of the Committee on Ecology at the Russian Parliament, where he contributed to the drafting process of federal laws, including key federal environmental laws. He also worked for WWF-Russia as Environmental Law Officer and then as Conservation Director, and also run the TRAFFIC office in Russia. Between 2006 and 2010, Alexander led the Health, Safety and Environment Department at BP Russia and managed WWF's Arctic Programme. He has over 80 publications on various environmental issues and has taught the course on environmental management for 15 years at Moscow State University. Alexander is a national of the Russian Federation and holds a Masters of Science, a Masters of Arts in Land and Environmental Law, and a PhD in physical geography, landscape sciences and environmental management.

### ***Mr. Wataru Suzuki, Director, Japan Biodiversity Fund:***

Wataru has extensive experience in biodiversity issues both at the national and international levels. He worked for the Ministry of Environment of Japan for more than 20 years, during which

he led the development of the first Guidelines for Private Sector Engagement in Biodiversity and the third National Biodiversity Strategy of Japan, management of invasive alien species and living modified organisms in the country. In 2010, he was involved in the organization of the tenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties. He worked for United Nations University Institute for the Advanced Study of Sustainability and oversaw the operation of the Secretariat for the International Partnership for the Satoyama Initiative. Most recently, he supported the preparation of IPBES' Regional Assessment for Asia and the Pacific. Wataru is a national of Japan and holds a Masters of Science in Environment Science and conducted field research in the Philippines.

### ***Ms. Gudrun Fosse, Chief, Administration, Finance and Conference Services Division:***

Gudrun joins the Secretariat from the United Nations Headquarters in New York, where she was Coordinator for the Digital Blue Helmets overseeing all administrative and substantive matters of the project team.

*[continues on next page]*

She has served the UN for more than 25 years, occupying diverse positions that allowed her to gain thorough professional UN experience in administration and financial management. Gudrun was responsible for the establishment of the Unite Service Desk with hubs in New York, Geneva, Nairobi and Bangkok. While in the Office of Information and Communications Technology (ICT), she worked in implementing the UN Secretariat's ICT strategy and planned, designed and oversaw the implementation of the Nova Framework. Additionally, she has extensive experience in UMOJA and has collaborated with the UN Office in Nairobi. Gudrun is a national of Norway and holds a Masters of Business Administration.

***Mr. Camillo Ponziani, Programme Management Officer, Bio-Bridge Initiative:***

Camillo is a programme management professional with a career history of driving the successful inception-to-completion delivery of complex technology, policy, and organisational change management projects within a variety of government, corporate, non-profit and international organisations with a specialized focus in the conservation, development, healthcare, and the civil aviation sectors. Camillo has led international projects for major development agencies and grant mechanisms,

international conservation organisations, the health IT sector (eHealth Ontario) and within the civil aviation sector (Greater Toronto Airports Authority). Camillo is a national of Canada and holds a Masters in Economics.

***Ms. Marianela Araya, Programme Management Officer, Risk Assessment and other Scientific and Technical Matters under the Cartagena Protocol:***

Marianela joins the Secretariat from the UN Environment's Regional Office for Latin America and the Caribbean in Panama, where she worked as a Programme Officer for the Ecosystem Division, assisting countries in developing and implementing GEF-funded projects. She began managing biosafety capacity-building projects and expanded her portfolio to cover areas such as land degradation, climate smart agriculture, biodiversity, protected areas, and access and benefit sharing. Prior to joining UN Environment, she worked in various fields including biosafety capacity-building with the International Centre of Genetic Engineering and Biotechnology in Trieste, Italy, and Buenos Aires, Argentina, and in wastewater treatment with the private sector in Costa Rica. Marianela is a national of Costa Rica and holds a Masters in Biosafety in Plant Biotechnology.

***Ms. Claire Parois, Programme Management Assistant, Bio-Bridge Initiative:***

Claire brings significant experience in project management, administration, communication and outreach from having worked directly and indirectly with the international development world for the past 12 years. Her most recent experience was as part of the business development unit of Universal Management Group, a consulting firm specializing in performance management for major development actors. She has also worked as an independent contractor on translation and communication assignments and managed the Timor-Leste project of the Canadian NGO Building Markets, which focuses on conscious procurement practices and private sector development in post-conflict countries. Claire is a national of France and holds a Masters in International Relations.

***Mr. Hai Li, Team Assistant in Administration, Finance and Conference Services Division:***

Hai has experience working within UN agencies, including the Conference, Security and General Services Section of the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO). Hai is a national of China and holds a Masters in International Studies. His research studies focused on the aviation policy in South East Asia.

## Cameroonian Officials Trained on Marine and Coastal Areas Planning and Management

The Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity, in collaboration with the Ministry of Environment, Protection of Nature and Sustainable Development of Cameroon and the Global Ocean Biodiversity Initiative (GOBI), hosted the Sustainable Ocean Initiative (SOI) National Capacity Building Workshop for Cameroon in Yaoundé from 17 to 19 January 2018. The workshop was organized as part of the SOI activities coordinated by the Secretariat, with financial support from the Government of the Republic of Korea (through the Ministry of Oceans and Fisheries), the Government of Japan (through the Japan Biodiversity Fund) and the Government of Sweden.



maps and geographic information system (GIS) tools to describe potential areas in Cameroon that meet the EBSA criteria. The workshop concluded with recommendations for future action including further identification of potential EBSAs in Cameroon as well as potential tools and management measures that can be used to minimise pressures on marine areas.

More information about the [Sustainable Ocean Initiative](#) and the ecologically or biologically significant marine areas is available on the [EBSA dedicated page](#) on the CBD website.



This workshop provided a forum for dialogue and discussion among different stakeholders and sectors in Cameroon regarding marine and coastal areas planning and management.

It highlighted different ways of describing and mapping-out areas in the country that meet the criteria for ecologically or biologically significant marine areas (EBSAs), and how to use EBSA information to support planning and management.

Over the three-day workshop, 36 national experts participated in technical sessions and interactive group exercises and discussions. Participants learned about EBSAs and how to use EBSA information to implement marine spatial planning in the regional context and in line with Cameroon's national priorities for marine biodiversity. During the group exercise, participants used printed



## Eleven Countries Receive Small Grants to Organize Training Courses on Standard DNA Technologies for Rapid Species Identification

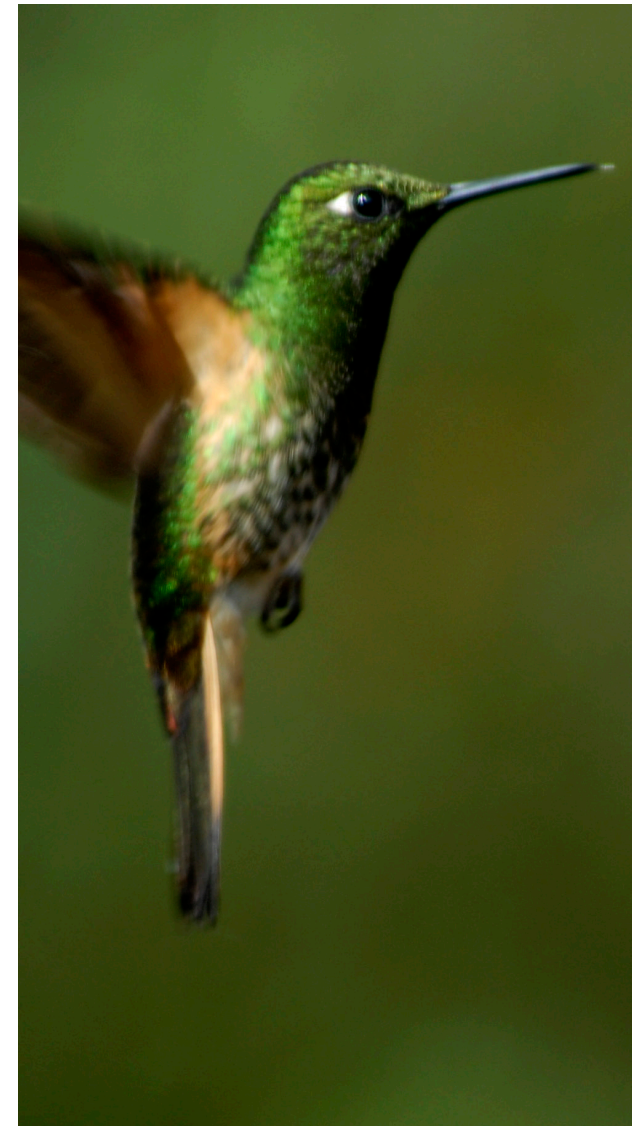
On 29 January 2018, the Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity announced the countries selected to receive small grants (up to USD 20,000 each) under the Global Taxonomy Initiative (GTI) to organize training courses on Standardized DNA technologies, such as DNA Barcoding, for rapid species identification to support Parties in the implementation of their national biodiversity strategies and action plans and in achieving the Aichi Biodiversity Targets.

Developing countries and countries with economies in transition were [invited to submit proposals](#) for organizing such courses, in line with Aichi Biodiversity Target 9 of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 and the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals.

Based on the [selection criteria stipulated in the invitation](#), the Secretariat in consultation with the GTI Coordination Mechanism, selected [eleven countries](#) (Belarus, Bhutan, Brazil, Colombia, Nigeria, Philippines, Sri Lanka, Suriname, Tunisia, Turkey and Uruguay) to carry out training activities to develop capacity to apply DNA technologies for rapid identification of invasive alien species, agricultural pests, non-indigenous marine species and threatened species, to support biodiversity management and law enforcement on illegal wildlife trade.

The CBD Secretariat, in partnership with Guelph University and the Biodiversity Institute of Ontario in Canada and with the financial support from the Government of Japan through the Japan Biodiversity Fund, supports these training courses as part of implementation of the Global Taxonomy Initiative Capacity Building Strategy.

This round of GTI Training Courses will be implemented by the trainers who participated in the previous round of training courses held in 2015 and 2016. In November 2017, a webinar entitled “Getting Familiar with the Call for Proposals on the GTI Training Courses” was hosted to explain the application procedure and selection criteria and to offer useful tips to institutions and organizations interested in hosting training courses using DNA technologies in 2018. More information on the Global Taxonomy Initiative and the 2018 training courses is available on the [GTI dedicated page](#) on the CBD website.



## Asian and Arab Countries Trained to Strengthen their National Clearing-House Mechanisms

The Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), in collaboration with the ASEAN Centre for Biodiversity, organized a [regional workshop for the Asian region](#) in Bangkok, Thailand, from 29 January to 2 February 2018 to enhance the capacity of Asian countries to develop their national clearing-house mechanism (CHM). Similarly, in collaboration with the Royal Belgian Institute of Natural Sciences, a [subregional workshop for Arabic-speaking countries](#) was organized from 5 to 9 March 2018 in Cairo, Egypt, to enhance countries' capacity vis-à-vis the clearing-house mechanism, including their experiences with the European Portal Took Kit (PTK). During both workshops, participants gained a deeper understanding of the CHM, its supporting role and potential benefits.



They also had an opportunity to exchange biodiversity-related information, as well as share experiences with the development of their

national CHMs and to understand the benefits of coordinating activities related to the development of a national CHM with a view to ensuring effectiveness and sustainability.



Participants learned about the impacts of content management on the effectiveness of a website, and were provided with general guidelines on how to strategically plan and manage web content. They also learned about existing technologies and the support available from the CBD Secretariat for the establishment or further development of national CHMs. Participants were introduced to the Bioland tool developed by the Secretariat as an option for establishment of a national CHM website platform and received hands-on technical training on the tool using their individual test sites. Participants also drafted strategic visions and road maps for developing their national CHMs and identified the immediate next steps.

The CBD Secretariat learned more about the situation in the two regions, including their experiences and challenges, and gained a better understanding of the countries' needs. Feedback on the usefulness of the workshops and the Bioland tool was collected during the workshops. As a result of the workshops, countries in both regions are now better positioned to adopt a sound approach to further developing their national clearing-house mechanisms, based on a strategic vision and a realistic implementation roadmap.



The Bioland tool, developed with the financial support of the Government of Japan through the Japan Biodiversity Fund, aims to reduce the technical burden on countries to develop and maintain their national clearing-house mechanisms. Workshop materials, country presentations as well as more information on the CHM are available on the CBD website.

## African Officials Trained on Mainstreaming Biosafety at the National Level

In the context of the project entitled “Integrated Implementation of the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety, the Nagoya-Kuala Lumpur Supplementary Protocol on Liability and Redress and the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD)”, the CBD Secretariat organized the African regional workshop on strengthening capacities for the integrated implementation of the Cartagena Protocol, the CBD and the Supplementary Protocol in Lilongwe, Malawi, from 19 to 23 February 2018.

This project, supported by the Government of Japan through the Japan Biodiversity Fund, was designed to support Parties to the Cartagena Protocol in strengthening their capacities for mainstreaming biosafety at the national level.



The workshop introduced participants to the concept of integrated implementation of biosafety across various sectors and cross-sectoral instruments, including the rationale, tools and best practices to facilitate biosafety mainstreaming.

Participants were also introduced to existing capacity-building materials on mainstreaming and had an opportunity to navigate through the e-learning module and toolkit, available on the [Biodiversity e-Learning Platform](#).



Additionally, participants made presentations on the extent to which their national laws, policies and institutional frameworks address and/or facilitate the integration of biosafety, and highlighted their national capacity needs and gaps related to integrated implementation.

A representative of the Government of Malawi made a presentation on the ways entry points for biosafety mainstreaming were selected and highlighted Malawi’s successful contribution to the pilot phase of the project and the lessons learned. At the end of the workshop, participants discussed the importance of developing a national strategy for biosafety mainstreaming and were introduced to existing practical tools, including an online application developed by the CBD Secretariat and Strathclyde University, to assist them in the development of their national strategies.

More information on [mainstreaming biosafety](#) available on the Cartagena Protocol webpage.





## Countries in the Baltic Sea Region Trained on the Description of Ecologically or Biologically Significant Marine Areas

The Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), in collaboration with the Baltic Marine Environment Protection Commission (HELCOM), organized a training session on ecologically or biologically significant marine areas (EBSAs) on 19 February 2018 prior to the Regional Workshop to Facilitate the Description of Ecologically or Biologically Significant Marine Areas in the Baltic Sea, which was held in Helsinki, Finland, from 20 to 24 February.



The regional workshop, hosted by the Government of Finland with financial support from Finland and Sweden, and with scientific and technical support from Duke University, resulted in the description of EBSAs in nine Baltic marine areas, including five transboundary areas covering the waters of two or more countries.



The pre-workshop training session was organized to guide and equip participants for the five-day workshop and provide them with the opportunity to improve their understanding of the Secretariat's work on marine and coastal biodiversity and support national efforts to achieve the Aichi Biodiversity Targets.

During the training, participants were introduced to the science behind EBSAs, including the application of EBSA criteria. The description of nine such areas was then carried out as part of the regional workshop. It was noted that a marine area can be identified as an EBSA if it meets one or more of the following seven scientific criteria, adopted by the CBD Conference of the Parties during its ninth meeting in 2008:

- 1) uniqueness or rarity;
- 2) special importance for life history stages of species;
- 3) importance for threatened, endangered or declining species and/or habitat;
- 4) vulnerability, fragility, sensitivity or slow recovery;
- 5) biological productivity;
- 6) biological diversity;
- and 7) naturalness.

The workshop and the pre-workshop training session brought together 23 participants from seven countries in the Baltic Sea region (Estonia, Finland, Germany, Latvia, Lithuania, Russian and Sweden), as well as additional participants from the host government and HELCOM.

More information on EBSAs is available on the dedicated [website](#), and details on this workshop can be found on the [CBD website](#), as well as through the [EBSA brochure](#).



## Central and Eastern Europe and Central Asian Republics Identify Priority Needs that could be Addressed through Technical and Scientific Cooperation

The Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity successfully organised a Bio-Bridge Initiative (BBI) [regional round table](#) for Central and Eastern Europe (CEE) and Central Asian Republics in Minsk, Belarus, from 26 to 28 February 2018. This round table was the fourth in a series of regional round tables organised since 2017 to promote and facilitate technical and scientific cooperation under the Convention and its Protocols.



During the round table, participants were introduced to the various BBI tools and services, including the helpdesk and the [BBI web platform](#), which are available to help Parties find and access the expertise, resources and technologies they need to better address biodiversity-related issues and to successfully implement the Convention and its Protocols. The BBI platform, for example, can be used by Parties to communicate their

priority needs, submit requests for assistance and access available opportunities. Relevant institutions and private sector entities can also use the BBI platform to register as technical assistance providers.



The round table also gave participants the opportunity to learn about examples of technical and scientific cooperation projects that have implemented with seed-funding under the Initiative, and to express their national priority needs that could be addressed through technical and scientific cooperation.

Some of the common priority needs identified include: protection and recovery of threatened species, access and benefit sharing, ecosystem valuation and accounting, biodiversity monitoring and assessment, biodiversity information

management, protected area management and tourism, and climate change and biodiversity.

As a follow-up to the regional round table series, the Secretariat, through the Bio-Bridge helpdesk, will reach out to and assist countries with similar technical needs to identify next steps and to nurture collaborative partnerships on the common themes.

More information on the Bio-Bridge Initiative is available on the [website](#). To submit a request for assistance or to become a technical assistance provider, please visit the [BBI web platform](#) or contact the BBI helpdesk at [biobridge@cbd.int](mailto:biobridge@cbd.int)



## Scientists from Francophone African Countries trained on Detection and Identification of Living Modified Organisms

With support from the Government of the Republic of Korea, through the Korea Biosafety Capacity Building Initiative, and in collaboration with the National Gene Bank of Tunisia and the Tunisian Ministry of Local Affairs and Environment, the Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity organized the Workshop on Detection and Identification of Living Modified Organisms (LMOs) for Francophone Africa from 5 to 9 March 2018 in Tunis, Tunisia.



The workshop provided theoretical and practical training to laboratory technicians on sampling, detection and identification of LMOs in the context of the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety. This included hands on experience with laboratory methodologies for the analysis of LMOs and the processes that take place in the collection of representative samples at points of entry,

such as customs and border control points.



A session on laboratory sampling and preparation of test samples introduced the general principles of handling test samples for LMO detection and identification in a regulatory context. Key concepts, such as mass reduction techniques, preparation of samples from commonly encountered matrices, and considerations about test portions were also discussed.

Participants had the opportunity to carry out DNA extraction and purification from test samples that were presented. They were also introduced to methodologies and techniques that can be used to detect, identify and quantify LMOs. They also considered the elements that may be included in a report to communicate the

laboratory's findings to the competent national authority, in a clear and concise manner.

Furthermore, the workshop allowed participants to share experiences and assess their national needs and gaps for the effective implementation of the relevant provisions of the Cartagena Protocol. A total of 19 laboratory technicians from the Francophone Africa region attended the workshop (Benin, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cameroon, Republic of Central Africa, Comoros, D.R. Congo, Ivory Coast, Djibouti, Gabon, Guinea, Madagascar, Mali, Morocco, Niger, Senegal and Togo).

More information about the [workshop](#) is available on the CBD website.



## The Bio-Bridge Initiative Provides Seed Grants to Catalyse Technical and Scientific Cooperation

The Bio-Bridge Initiative, an overarching programme launched in 2014 with support from the Republic of Korea, approved seed funding for 10 new demonstration projects in January 2018 to promote technical and scientific cooperation and technology transfer among Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity and to its Protocols. Access to and transfer of DNA technologies; creation of stronger access and benefit-sharing networks; access to better biological information systems and tools; and improved valuation of biodiversity and ecosystem services are just some of the themes of the projects announced through [Notification 2018-022](#).



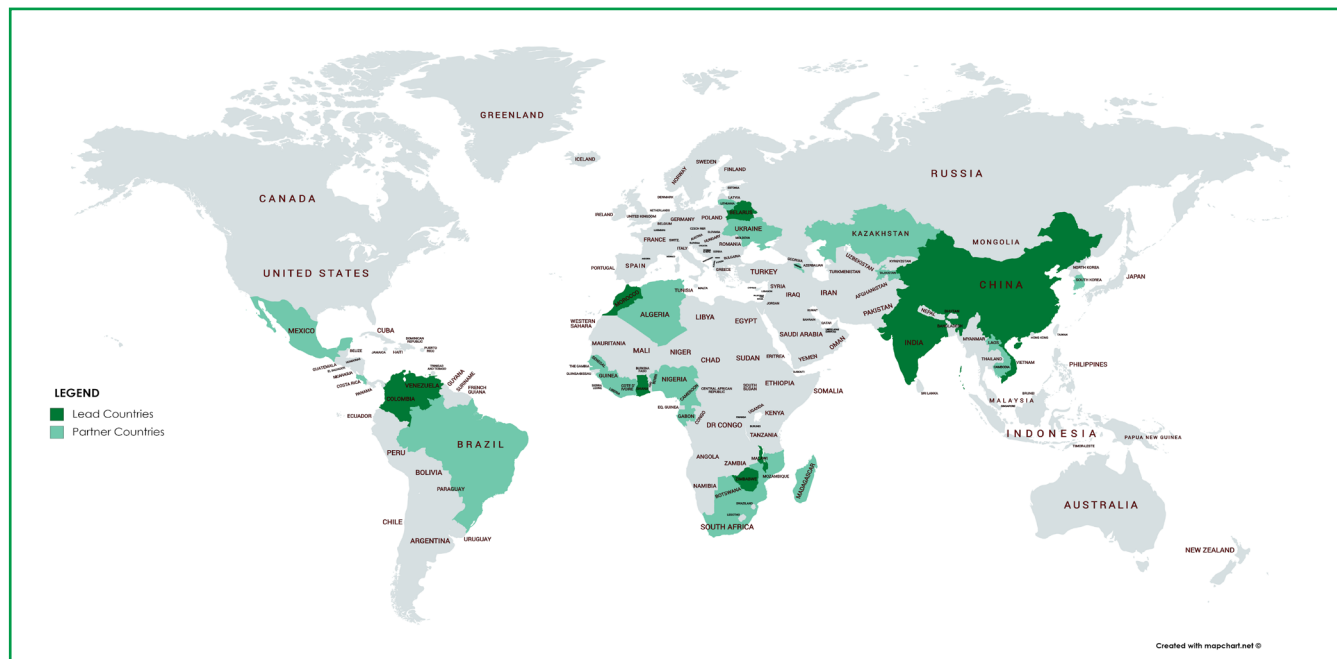
Out of the 31 requests for assistance received, [10 project proposals](#) were pre-selected. Eight projects have been formally approved and are currently being implemented.

The Bio-Bridge Initiative is making inroads and playing a special role in nurturing and incubating collaborative partnerships to better support implementation of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity and its Aichi Biodiversity Targets.

Building on the initial success of the [BBI pilot projects in 2016](#), over \$400,000 in seed funding has been disbursed to date to promote technical and scientific cooperation and technology transfer on a wide range of topics. The reach of the demonstration projects is exciting, as

the implementing partners have already forged partnerships with other Parties and institutions spanning 35 countries. Equally impressive is the gender balance achieved; over half of the successful demonstration projects are led by female scientists.

Parties are encouraged to communicate their priority needs or requests for assistance and to access available opportunities through the Bio-Bridge Initiative web platform or by contacting the BBI help desk at [biobridge@cbd.int](mailto:biobridge@cbd.int)



## Opportunities and Resources

Call for nominations for the [MIDORI prize 2018](#). Deadline for nominations 15 June 2018

Call for conservation, research and education projects for [The Save Our Seas Foundation's Keystone Grant for worldwide marine conservation](#). Deadline for submission 30 June 2018

Call for project proposals that combine biodiversity with cultural diversity for the [Christensen Fund's Grants for Biodiversity and Cultural Diversity](#). Deadline for submission of pre-proposals 31 August 2018

## Upcoming Events

Pacific Regional Training Workshop related to national arrangements on traditional knowledge for achieving Aichi Biodiversity Target 18 and contributing to Aichi Biodiversity Target 16 of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020, Whangrei, New Zealand, 21 - 25 May 2018

International Day for Biological Diversity 2018, 22 May 2018

Regional Dialogue on Integrating Climate Change Action and Biodiversity Action at the National Level in North, West and Central Africa, Dakar, Senegal, 18 - 22 June 2018

Capacity-building Workshop on Gender Mainstreaming for Convention Delegates, Montreal, Canada, 30 June - 1 July 2018

### About BioCAP

BioCAP: Biodiversity Capacity Development Update has been developed to provide periodic updates on the implementation of the short-term action plan on capacity-building adopted in Cancun by the Conference of the Parties, with a particular focus on the main outcomes of the capacity development and technical and scientific cooperation activities facilitated and supported by the Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity in collaboration with partners. Previous issues of BioCAP are available on the [CBD website](#).

