



Convention on Biological Diversity

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BUREAU OF THE SUBSIDIARY BODY ON
SCIENTIFIC, TECHNICAL AND
TECHNOLOGICAL ADVICE
Trondheim, Norway, 31 May & 1 June 2013

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE BUREAU OF THE SUBSIDIARY BODY ON SCIENTIFIC, TECHNICAL AND TECHNOLOGICAL ADVICE

INTRODUCTION

1. The meeting of the Bureau of the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice (SBSTTA) was held on Friday, 31 May 2013, from 3:00 to 6:00 p.m. and on Saturday, 1 June 2013, from 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m., at the Directorate for Nature Management of the Government of Norway, in Trondheim, Norway. The Bureau meeting was made possible thanks to the generous financial support from the Government of Norway.
2. Five members of the SBSTTA Bureau and four members of the Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) attended the meeting. The list of participants is available in the Annex.

ITEM 1. OPENING OF THE MEETING

3. The meeting was opened by the Chair of SBSTTA, Mr. Gemedo Dalle Tussie. Mr. Dalle Tussie welcomed participants and thanked the CBD Secretariat for organizing this first face-to-face meeting of the current SBSTTA Bureau. He highlighted the mandate of SBSTTA to provide timely advice relating to the implementation of the Convention, and its specific responsibilities. He also stressed the importance of this Bureau meeting given the different approach to be taken for SBSTTA-17. He reminded Bureau members of the need for SBSTTA-17 to focus on scientific discussions and exchanges and enhancing access by Parties to suitable scientific and technical approaches needed for the implementation of the Convention. He invited Bureau members to play a role in explaining to colleagues in their region the goal and format of the next SBSTTA meeting.
4. Mr. David Cooper from the CBD Secretariat provided some introductory remarks. Mr. Cooper thanked the Government of Norway for making this meeting possible. He reminded the Bureau of the opportunity to use SBSTTA-17 to implement the request contained in decision XI-13 to focus its work on the scientific and technical aspects of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020, to look at the tools we have to implement the Strategic Plan, to monitor progress towards achievement of the Aichi Targets, and to identify gaps. Mr. Cooper also reminded the Bureau that the Friends of the CBD at their meeting in

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Bogis-Bossey (Switzerland) held in February 2013, as well as the Executive Secretary, in his statements, repeatedly acknowledged the need to implement this request by the Conference of the Parties (COP) and to adapt the format of meetings of the Subsidiary Body accordingly.

5. The Executive Secretary of the CBD, Mr. Braulio Ferreira de Souza Dias, in his opening statement, discussed what we can do to enhance the work of SBSTTA. He mentioned that some aspects of the SBSTTA mandate have not been given much attention in the past, such as the assessment of effectiveness of measures taken in accordance with the Convention, and that it is time for SBSTTA to address this. Also, there is a need to think how we can avoid an unnecessary high number of COP decisions. He suggested that some tasks could end at SBSTTA as conclusions, instead of recommendations to go to the COP. Some of the changes that SBSTTA could bring would be an increased consideration of the role of social sciences, scientific panels that present updated scientific literature, more attention to assessments and monitoring, as well as data and baselines. Another important aspect of SBSTTA-17 will be to establish a good working liaison with the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES).

ITEM 2. ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

6. The Bureau adopted the provisional agenda for its meeting as presented in document UNEP/CBD/SBSTTA-BUR/2013/4/1.Rev.1. The Bureau decided to discuss progress in the preparation for the fourth edition of the Global Biodiversity Outlook (GBO-4) under Item 6: Other matters.

ITEM 3. PREPARATIONS FOR SBSTTA-17

(a) Update on submissions received on the identification of scientific and technical needs related to the implementation of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020

7. The Secretariat provided the Bureau with an update on the submissions received in response to notification 2013-005 on the identification of scientific and technical needs related to the implementation of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 and its Aichi Targets.

8. Mr. Cooper introduced the Bureau to a note prepared by the Secretariat summarizing the submissions received. All submissions have been made available on the CBD website. He explained that because only a few submissions were received, it is difficult to discern general conclusions. He invited the Bureau to discuss to what extent we can prompt more input. He suggested, as next step, to ask Parties to look at the general conclusions coming out of the submissions, and to say if they agree or not. Mr. Cooper informed the Bureau that one of the main conclusions is that the greatest impact of tools and guidance developed under the Convention was in providing a framework for Parties to develop their own tools. Another conclusion regarding data and observation is that data is inadequate and observations not continuous, but also that the data that does exist is not fully used due to communication gaps between those who hold data and those who need to use it.

9. - Bureau members noted the complexity of the notification, which could explain the limited number of responses, and suggested that future requests should be more targeted focusing on fewer, strategically relevant, points. It was also suggested to provide more assistance to Parties as to where to find the information and to send reminders. The Bureau also stressed the fact that answering to notifications can be difficult in certain countries with limited staff, such as small islands. For those regions, working with regional organizations and potentially organizing regional workshops can be a more effective way to collect information and build capacity.

10. The Bureau agreed on the way forward, to provoke further discussion through a simple survey to ask if they agree with the general conclusions coming from the submissions. This survey could be answered as an individual or country representative.

(b) Organization of work and format and modalities of the meeting

11. Under this item, the Bureau discussed the organization of work as well as format and modalities of SBSTTA-17.

12. Mr. Cooper first provided an overview of the different items on the agenda of SBSTTA-17, and invited the Bureau to comment on a proposed organization of work. He also invited the Bureau to discuss the possibility of presentations from countries, panels, facilitated discussions, etc.

13. The Bureau agreed with the new approach to be taken at SBSTTA-17. A suggestion was made to have the agenda items organized around each of the Goals of the Strategic Plan.

14. The Secretariat agreed to finalize the annotated agenda as soon as possible, explaining in detail the mandate from the COP and what we are aiming at and what outcomes we expect, and describing the proposed approach. The annotated agenda should also explain the respective roles of SBSTTA-17, and SBSTTA-18, noting that the latter will need to prepare a number of items for consideration at COP-12.

15. The Bureau also mentioned the need to discuss and share experiences on national implementation, from Parties covering the different regions of the world and different approaches. Others suggested having a poster session on national implementation. However, some limitations exist for posters in certain countries, such as language and lack of financial and/or technological capacity.

16. Regarding the different ways to get input during the meeting, the Bureau agreed that a range of formats should be employed, including expert panels and facilitated discussions.

17. The Bureau discussed the possibility of using morning regional meetings to discuss certain topics of interest to be previously agreed on. The Secretariat could provide some framework for discussion, and invite regions to report on priorities and gaps.

18. Regarding the role of the Bureau during SBSTTA-17, members agreed to share the work in terms of chairing sessions. The Secretariat will consult the Bureau and provide proposals. The Bureau also considered the potential use of professional facilitators.¹

19. Another suggestion was to organize side events around certain issues.

(c) Preparation of documents

20. The Secretariat briefed the Bureau on the preparation of documents for SBSTTA-17, including a proposed list and schedule for the preparation of documents.

21. Mr. Robert Höft from the CBD Secretariat introduced the Bureau to a document that will be prepared as background for consideration of items 3 and 4 of the SBSTTA-17 agenda. In preparing documentation on these connected issues, the CBD Secretariat will draw *inter alia* on:

- Responses to notification 2013-005 (Identification of scientific and technical needs related to the implementation of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 and its Aichi Targets) and 2013-018 (New and emerging issues relating to the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity);
- The GEO BON Adequacy Report;
- The development status of indicators under the Biodiversity Indicators Partnership (BIP);
- Responses on the outcomes/effects of measures reported in the 4th National Report to the CBD;

¹ While this was discussed under “Other Matters”, it is most relevant to this agenda item.

- Discussions at, and on the margins of, relevant preparatory meetings (Trondheim Conference, SBSTTA Bureau meeting, etc.).

22. There are a number of linkages between the sub-items under agenda item 3 and item 4. Documentation may therefore consist of a single pre-session document on both items 3 and 4, complemented by and drawing on addenda and/or information documents on each sub-item.

23. The Bureau was invited to comment on the document outline. A first draft of the document is expected to be ready at the end of June.

24. The Bureau noted that some already planned regional workshops could be used to gather information to feed into this document (e.g. Regional Workshop for the Pacific Countries on the Preparation of the Fifth National Report, in Fiji, in July).

25. The Secretariat presented an overview of the other documents that could be produced and agreed to present to the Bureau a revised list of proposed documents that will match with the agreed organization of work.

(d) Review of the draft annotated agenda

26. Under this item, the Bureau reviewed the draft annotated agenda for SBSTTA-17 and provided guidance for its finalization by the Secretariat.

27. Mr. Cooper informed the Bureau that an updated annotated agenda capturing comments from the meeting would be sent shortly. The annotated agenda would also provide a proposed organization of work. Mr. Cooper invited the Bureau to brainstorm on the different panel topics and presentations and to share ideas with the Secretariat. Some proposed panels themes included: the contribution of social sciences, data for the process of Ecologically or Biologically Significant Marine Areas, observations including remote sensing, strengthening technical and scientific cooperation among Parties, including through the role of institutes such as CONABIO, Humboldt, and SANBI, etc.

ITEM 4. INPUT TO THE IPBES INTERSESSIONAL PROCESS

28. The Secretariat updated the Bureau on the IPBES intersessional process, noting that the Bureau meeting will be immediately followed by the first formal meeting of the Multidisciplinary Expert Panel (MEP), in which the Chair of SBSTTA is an observer, and in which Bureau members from Trinidad and Tobago and from Saudi Arabia are members.

29. The Secretariat made available to the Bureau a discussion note on considerations for the development of a work programme for IPBES, which was annexed to its submission to IPBES, responding to a call for submissions by IPBES on requests on scientific and technical matters that require the Platform's attention. The note contains references to the CBD decisions relevant to IPBES (i.e. XI/2, XI/3, and XI/13) and discusses their potential implications for the work programme.

30. The Bureau welcomed the note and expressed satisfaction that it covered well most of the main issues. The Bureau highlighted the urgency in addressing biodiversity issues, especially if we want to achieve the 2020 Targets. The Bureau also emphasized the need to not focus only on ecosystem services, but to also consider the importance of biodiversity itself as well as the ecosystem services it generates. The Bureau also welcomed the consideration by IPBES of traditional knowledge related to biodiversity. These points were noted by the Chair and included in his statement for the MEP meeting.

31. The Bureau also discussed how the issues related to IPBES may be taken up at SBSTTA-17. Mr. Cooper explained that, at SBSTTA-17, it is expected that item 3 will address the main substance. Emerging from these discussions will be a list of what needs to be done. Before arriving at item 7 on conclusions and recommendations for further work, including inputs to the IPBES work plan, Parties will

need to be aware of what is the status of IPBES, so as to decide from the pool of what is to be done, what can go to IPBES. The background note on IPBES will be revised in light of the MEP meeting, and then will be reviewed by the CBD Parties before being finalized as a pre-session document for SBSTTA-17.

ITEM 5. OVERVIEW OF THE AGENDA FOR SBSTTA-18

32. The Secretariat provided the Bureau with an overview of the issues on the agenda of SBSTTA-18. The Bureau reviewed the list of items and provided comments for finalization by the Secretariat.

33. Mr. Cooper reminded the Bureau that SBSTTA-18 will address issues in preparation for COP-12. The main items are the review of GBO-4 and the marine and coastal biodiversity items. There will also be progress reports on certain topics such as ecosystem restoration, bushmeat, REDD+, and synthetic biology.

34. The Bureau proposed to consider the possibility of having a 6-day meeting given the number of tasks on the agenda.

ITEM 6. OTHER MATTERS

35. Under other matters, the Bureau requested the Secretariat to provide an update on the preparation of GBO-4. The Secretariat informed the Bureau that the work on scenarios was well under way, and that a literature analysis on individual targets was also ongoing. All elements will undergo an internal review process. SBSTTA-18 will have before it a summary document which will have undergone one round of review and the full report in one language. Other things to be considered will be what can be done after COP-12 in terms of products and translating in other languages to target certain communities and sectors. The Secretariat also emphasized the need to receive more case studies from countries. Guidelines for case studies are available on the GBO website.

36. The Bureau also discussed opportunities for future meetings, and the need to explore different ways of communicating (e.g. Skype, video-conference, webinars, etc.). The Bureau asked the Secretariat to look into other opportunities to meet face-to-face, for example on the margins of a meeting where some members would already be present. The Bureau also agreed to continue exchanging views via email.

ITEM 7. CLOSING OF THE MEETING

37. The Chair thanked participants for their active participation and welcomed their continued support. The meeting was closed at 12:00 p.m. on 1 June 2013.

Annex

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