



PRESS RELEASE

UN Convention on Biological Diversity's science body provides advice critical for next year's UN Biodiversity Conference

- *Governments identified key elements of the scientific base needed to build post-2020 global biodiversity framework.*
- *New ecologically or biologically significant marine areas in the North-East Atlantic catalogued.*
- *Parties recognized urgency of tackling biodiversity loss and climate change through ecosystem-based approaches to climate change adaptation, mitigation and disaster risk reduction.*

1 December 2019 – The Convention on Biological Diversity's (CBD) subsidiary body on science suggested elements of the science base that will be used at next year's biennial UN Biodiversity Conference¹ in Kunming, China that will include discussions on an ambitious, transformative and effective post-2020 global biodiversity framework.

Some 673 delegates representing 118 countries convened in Montreal for the twenty-third meeting of the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice (SBSTTA-23), held from 25-29 November. The agreed recommendations include decisions suggested to be adopted at the UN Biodiversity Conference.

“The results of SBSTTA-23 illustrated the critical role this scientific body of the Convention plays in ensuring that all work under it is underpinned by sound science,” said Elizabeth Maruma Mrema, Acting Executive Secretary. “To that end, Parties have identified key elements of the scientific base for the development of the post-2020 global biodiversity framework. While much work remains to be done, we are well on our way to achieve a framework that is both ambitious and effective.”

In late 2020, the 196 Parties to the Convention will adopt the post-2020 global biodiversity framework. This global agreement will offer an unparalleled opportunity to advance progress on the conservation, restoration, and sustainable use of biodiversity, while strengthening interlinkages between biodiversity, climate change and sustainable development agendas.

Development of this framework is based on an open and transparent consultative process, engaging all Parties and stakeholders in a meaningful and integrated manner. The process is informed by best available science and evidence base learning also from relevant global and other assessments., such as the IPBES Global Assessment.

¹ Fifteenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity; Tenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety; Fourth meeting of the Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Nagoya Protocol on Access and Benefit-sharing; Kunming, China, October 2020.



At SBSTTA-23, governments agreed on the following recommendations:

Informing the Scientific and Technical Evidence Base for the Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework:

Parties stressed the need for action to address indirect and direct drivers of biodiversity loss, and to tackle climate change and land degradation in an integrated manner. This includes scaling up existing measures and initiating steps to achieve transformative change. Parties further recognized that to achieve the 2050 vision of the CBD: 'living in harmony with nature,' changes are needed in finance and economics that support pathways to sustainability.

Biodiversity and Climate Change: Parties recognized that biodiversity loss, climate change, desertification and land degradation are inseparable, interdependent challenges of "unprecedented severity." Parties noted that limiting the global average temperature increase to 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels is not sufficient to halt biodiversity loss but would significantly reduce it. Parties noted that nature-based solutions provide approximately 37 per cent of climate change mitigation needed by 2030 to keep warming below 1.5°C. Ecosystem-based approaches to climate change adaptation, mitigation and disaster risk reduction are indispensable to achieving multiple globally agreed goals, including the Paris Agreement and the sustainable development agenda.

Possible Elements of Work on the Links Between Nature and Culture in the Post-2020 Biodiversity Framework:

The Scientific Body built on the results of the previous eleventh meeting of the Convention's Working Group on Traditional Knowledge and Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities. Parties considered increased interagency cooperation bringing together the CBD, United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, IUCN and indigenous peoples and local communities, and other partners to integrate biological and cultural diversity - Nature and Culture - in the development of the post-2020 framework.

Sustainable Wildlife Management: Parties recognized the importance of the sustainable use of biodiversity in wildlife management, including the contribution of indigenous peoples and local communities. They agreed to strengthen collaboration among multilateral environment agreements and international organizations to tackle illegal and unsustainable use and trade of wildlife trade. Additional work is still required to implement decisions on sustainable wildlife management, and voluntary guidance for a sustainable wild meat sector.

Technical and Scientific Cooperation: Parties recognized the importance of technical and scientific cooperation to implement the post-2020 framework. Such cooperation will need to extend across a wide range of fields and disciplines to support the mainstreaming of biodiversity. SBSTTA asked for additional views and suggestions for matters such as technology horizon scanning, assessment and monitoring, and examples of effective institutional mechanisms, partnerships, networks, and regional and subregional institutional arrangements.

Results of The Regional Workshop to Facilitate the Description of Ecologically or Biologically Significant Marine Areas in the North-East Atlantic Ocean:

Parties considered the outputs of a regional workshop that described 17 areas meeting the criteria for ecologically or biologically significant marine areas (EBSAs) in the North-East Atlantic Ocean and adjacent areas. These results fill an important geographical gap in the work under the Convention to describe EBSAs globally. Parties also acknowledged the collaboration of the Convention for the Protection of the Marine Environment of the North-East Atlantic and the North-East Atlantic Fisheries Commission and their pioneering work related to EBSAs in the North-East Atlantic Ocean. Parties encouraged continued efforts to describe EBSAs using the best available science and emphasized that EBSAs can inform the development of the post-2020 global biodiversity framework.

New and emerging issues: Parties deferred consideration of whether synthetic biology would be classified as a new and emerging issue to its twenty-fourth meeting, and recommended that pending the outcome of that meeting, the Conference of the Parties not to add new and emerging issues to the SBSTTA agenda in the coming biennium.

NOTES TO EDITORS

The Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice, the intergovernmental body responsible for providing scientific, technical and technological advice related to the implementation of the Convention, plays a key role in assessing the current status of the world's biodiversity, identifying solutions and in bringing emerging issues related to the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity to the attention of the global community.

Meeting documents: www.cbd.int/conferences/sbstta23-8j11/sbstta-23/documents

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, 172 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 123 Parties.

For more information visit: www.cbd.int. For media inquiries, 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.