



Australian Government

CONVENTION ON BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY (CBD) 2017 – 054

Submission of Information on New and Emerging Issues Proposals

Submission by Australia

NOTE: All information provided in this response has been drawn from Australian Government agency inputs only. No consultation with State and Territory governments was possible for this notification due to the deadline for the response.

Notification 2017- 054 Invitation to provide relevant information and views related to the proposals for new and emerging issues

Australia thanks the Secretariat for the invitation to provide relevant information and views related to the proposals for new and emerging issues, communicated in its notification 2017-054 Ref SCBD/OES/DC/RH/84326 of 20 June 2017.

Australia reiterates its position as outlined in our previous submission (2017 – 014) that in an already resource constrained environment, it is important to remain focussed without adding to an already demanding work program. As such, we encourage the Secretariat and the Parties to the Convention to focus on implementation of current work programs and the Aichi Biodiversity Targets and therefore not add any new and emerging issues to the agenda at this time.

Australia reinforces the importance of undertaking robust assessments of all proposals against the criteria set out in Decision IX/29 paragraph 12 drawing on accompanied information, where possible, as outlined in Decision IX/29 paragraph 11. Australia notes the Secretariat has only identified one proposal as having met the information requirements as per Decision IX/29 paragraph 11.

Australia reserves its final position on whether this proposal from the Peruvian Society for Environmental Law meets the criteria set out in Decision IX/29 paragraph 12, but provides the following initial comments. Australia agrees with the Secretariat's comments that this proposal relates to ongoing discussions under the Convention and the Nagoya Protocol. Australia also notes this proposal covers issues outside the scope of the Convention. Australia does not support duplicative work programs under the Convention, its Protocols or across International forums.

Acknowledging Canada's recommendation that the process for the identification of new and emerging issues should be reviewed, Australia provides some initial comments on some of the questions proposed in paragraph 5 of this notification.

In response to question 5(a) Australia considers all seven criteria should be considered as a package and therefore all met in order for the proposal to qualify being formally placed on the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice agenda. Australia's view is formed in recognition of the desire in setting the criteria as a mechanism to reduce the number of agenda items for consideration by the Subsidiary Body at each meeting in order to improve the effectiveness of its proceedings.

In response to question 5(b) Australia is of the view while paragraph 12 of Decision IX/29 broadly prompts submissions to address those issues with negative impacts, a submission for the inclusion of an issue with positive impacts should not be disregarded if it has considered all of the criteria.