



# Convention on Biological Diversity

Distr.  
GENERAL

CBD/COP/Bur/2019/1/2  
10 April 2019

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

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BUREAU OF THE CONFERENCE OF THE  
PARTIES TO THE CONVENTION ON  
BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY

First meeting

Nairobi, Kenya, 16 March 2019

## REPORT OF THE MEETING

### INTRODUCTION

1. The first inter-sessional meeting of the Bureau of the Conference of the Parties since the fourteenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties and concurrent meetings of the Protocols in Sharm El-Sheikh, Egypt 2018, was held on 16 March 2019, in Conference Room 13 at the UN Environment headquarters in Nairobi, Kenya. The meeting was preceded by a joint meeting of the COP and SBSTTA Bureaux on 15 March 2019. A joint session of the two Bureaux was also held on the morning of 17 March 2019.

2. The meeting was attended by the following members of the COP Bureau and substitutes:

*Presidency:* Mr. Hamdallah Zedan (Egypt)

*Africa:* Mr. Melesse Maryo (Ethiopia), Mr. Eric Okoree (Ghana)

*Asia and the Pacific:* Ms. Leina El-Awadhi (Kuwait)

*Central and Eastern Europe:* Ms. Teona Karchava (Georgia), Ms. Elvana Ramaj (Albania)

*Latin America and the Caribbean:* Ms. Helena Jeffery Brown (Antigua and Barbuda) and Mr. Francisco Lopez Achaval (Argentina, representing Mr. Luciano Donadio Linares, substitute for Costa Rica for matters related to the Nagoya Protocol)

*Western Europe and Others:* Ms. Gabriele Obermayr (Austria), Ms. Rosemary Paterson (New Zealand), Ms. Marie Haraldstad (Norway, substitute for New Zealand for matters related to the Nagoya Protocol)

*Ex-officio:* Ms. Charlotta Sörqvist (Sweden), Chair of the Subsidiary Body on Implementation

*Observers:* Mr. Francis Sabino Ogwal (Uganda) and Mr. Basile van Havre (Canada), Co-chairs of the Open-Ended Working Group on the Post-2020 global biodiversity framework, Ms. Zou Yueye (China), COP-15 host representative

Regrets were provided by H.E. Carlos Manuel Rodriguez (Costa Rica), Ms. Sujata Arora (India), Mr. Dilosharvo Dustov (Tajikistan, substitute for Georgia for matters related to the Nagoya Protocol),

3. Also present, as observer, was Mr. Mamadou Kane (UNEP).

4. The Secretariat was represented by Dr. Cristiana Paşca Palmer (Executive Secretary), Mr. David Cooper (Deputy Executive Secretary), and Mr. Thomas Deleuil (Legal Officer).

### ITEM 1. OPENING OF THE MEETING

5. The meeting was opened at 9:30 a.m. and was chaired by Mr. Hamdallah Zedan, representing the President of the Conference of the Parties. He noted that the discussions held the previous day jointly with the SBSTTA Bureau provided useful context for the Bureau meeting. The Executive Secretary, Dr. Cristiana Paşca Palmer, also made brief opening remarks, indicating her desire for an active relationship with the Bureau during this important biennium.

## **ITEM 2. ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA**

6. The Bureau adopted the provisional agenda for its meeting prepared by the Executive Secretary, in consultation with the COP President (document CBD/COP/Bur/2019/1/1).

## **ITEM 3. PREPARATIONS FOR THE MEETINGS OF THE OPEN-ENDED INTERSESSIONAL WORKING GROUP ON THE POST-2020 GLOBAL BIODIVERSITY FRAMEWORK**

7. At the invitation of the Chair, Mr. Basile van Havre and Mr. Francis Ogwal, Co-chairs of the Open-Ended Working Group on the Post-2020 global biodiversity framework, made some remarks regarding the preparatory process for the post-2020 global biodiversity framework. They referred to the presentation and discussion held in the joint session on the previous days, highlighting that they considered it would be desirable to have more than two sessions of the Working Group. They also noted the usefulness of a gap analysis and the necessity of promoting integration with other MEAs. They indicated that they would provide the Bureau with further responses to the issues raised at a later date.

8. The Bureau expressed its appreciation for the work of the Co-chairs in facilitating the preparatory process for the post-2020 global biodiversity framework and recalled that, pursuant to COP Decision 14/34, the Bureau would provide oversight of the process to develop the post-2020 global biodiversity framework.

9. Members of the Bureau noted with appreciation the progress regarding the regional consultations and highlighted the need for thematic consultations, as discussed in the joint meeting of 15 March. The Secretariat informed the Bureau that it would produce a full report on the consultations. The Co-chairs indicated that they would also produce a note on their reflections on the consultations and the process ahead.

10. Members of the Bureau emphasized the importance of engaging focal points of other biodiversity-related conventions in the preparatory process for the post-2020 global biodiversity framework as such conventions had an integral part to play in the preparation and implementation of the future framework. The necessity to communicate with one voice and message to other conventions was noted. The Co-chairs of the Working Group and the Secretariat agreed to prepare a communication fact sheet for such engagements. Bureau members asked the Co-chairs to ensure good coordination with the Secretariat in their communications with other conventions.

11. Responding to requests for clarification concerning participation in regional consultation meetings, the Secretariat indicated that funds were available to support one representative from each Party at the respective meetings. Regarding meetings of the Working Group, Parties would determine their own delegations as they do for other intergovernmental inter-sessional meetings.

12. It was noted that the COP had called for “at least two meetings” of the Working Group (Decision 14/34) and that the budget adopted by the COP provided for two meetings held at ICAO, Montreal. Therefore, any incremental costs for meetings held outside Montreal and any additional meetings beyond the two provided for in the budget would need to be fully financed through extrabudgetary resources. Bureau members also noted the time and administrative constraints for Parties especially for small delegations, as well as the heavy workload of Secretariat which is already overstressing the human capacity, if too many meetings are organized.

13. It was agreed that the first meeting of the Working Group should be held in late August 2019, as previously announced. It was expected that the meeting would be held at the UN Environment Headquarters in Nairobi or at the World Conference Centre in Bonn, subject to ongoing discussions, with facilities in Montreal being unavailable. It was noted that the meeting would coincide with the third

session of the Intergovernmental Conference on an international legally binding instrument under UNCLOS on the conservation and sustainable use of marine biological diversity of areas beyond national jurisdiction in New York, 20-30 August, but that this was unavoidable without clashes with other meetings or a lengthy delay, given that the UNCCD COP would be held on 3-14 September, in New Delhi, India.

14. It was also agreed that a meeting of the Working Group be held in late July 2020, as previously announced, to enable the Working Group to prepare a proposal for COP 15 that took into account preparatory work undertaken by SBSTTA 24 and SBI 3 in May 2020. The Secretariat indicated that while facilities for this meeting had been secured in Montreal, a country had expressed an interest in hosting the meeting. Discussions were ongoing, and the Secretariat indicated that the Bureau would be informed when the location would be decided.

15. It was noted that it would be desirable to have an additional meeting of the Working Group in early 2020. The Secretariat indicated that it was exploring options in that regard.

16. Following a brief introduction by the Secretariat and the Co-chairs, the Bureau reviewed the draft provisional agenda and annotations for the first meeting of the Working Group.

17. The Bureau approved the provisional agenda for the first meeting of the Working Group, subject to final confirmation of the date and venue<sup>1</sup> (CBD/WG2020/1/1, as annexed to this report) and took note of the draft annotations to the provisional agenda (draft of document CBD/WG2020/1/1/Add.1).

#### **ITEM 4. PREPARATIONS FOR THE ELEVENTH MEETING OF THE AD HOC OPEN-ENDED WORKING GROUP ON ARTICLE 8(J) AND RELATED PROVISIONS OF THE CONVENTION ON BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY**

18. Following a brief introduction by the Secretariat, the Bureau reviewed the draft provisional agenda and annotations for the eleventh meeting of the Ad Hoc Open-ended Working Group on Article 8(j) and related provisions.

19. A member of the Bureau sought clarification on the use of the term “a rapprochement of nature and culture” and suggested that the Secretariat consider another term.

20. The Bureau approved the provisional agenda (CBD/WG8J/11/1, as annexed to the report), and took note of the draft annotations to the provisional agenda, including the proposed organization of work (draft of document CBD/WG8J/11/1/Add.1).

21. Responding to a request for clarification concerning the length of the meeting, the Secretariat indicated that budget decision adopted by COP indicated that the Working Group would be a three-day meeting. Responding to another question, the Secretariat informed the Bureau that the work undertaken with UNICEF and IUCN on Article 8(j) and related provisions was of a substantive nature, to enhance this agenda and its implementation, and not of an administrative or financial nature.

22. The Bureau noted that, in accordance with established practice, the President of the Conference of the Parties or her representative would chair the Working Group on Article 8(j) and related provisions, and that the Bureau of the Conference of the Parties would serve as the Bureau of the meeting. The Bureau would need to designate a Rapporteur for the meeting from among its members.

23. In line with practice at past meetings of the Working Group, the Bureau also agreed that representatives of indigenous peoples and local communities (IPLC) would be invited to designate six representatives to act as “Friends of the Bureau”, one of whom to act as Co-chair of the Working Group, and others as Co-chairs of contact groups, as needed. The “Friends of the Bureau” would participate in relevant meetings of the Bureau throughout the week.

#### **ITEM 5. PREPARATIONS FOR THE THIRD MEETING OF THE SUBSIDIARY BODY ON IMPLEMENTATION**

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<sup>1</sup> Subsequently, the date and venue have been confirmed: Nairobi, 27-30 August 2019.

24. Discussions on this item were led by Ms. Charlotta Sörqvist, the Chairperson of SBI.
25. The SBI Chair and the Secretariat provided an overview of the items to be addressed at the third meeting of SBI.
26. It was noted that the Bureau of the Conference of the Parties would serve as the Bureau of SBI and that the Bureau would need to designate a rapporteur for the meeting from among its members.
27. The Bureau noted the heavy agenda and the short time available for the meeting. Bureau members asked to receive information on the establishment of any contact groups as early as possible so that Parties could prepare accordingly but highlighted that numerous contact groups would be difficult to follow for small delegations.
28. It was noted that the meeting would address a number of items related to the post-2020 global biodiversity framework. This includes items mandated by the Conference of the Parties. The Bureau noted that some flexibility would be required in the agenda to allow SBI to address issues in light of the work of the Open-Ended Working Group on the post-2020 global biodiversity framework.
29. Responding to a request, the Secretariat indicated that they would inform the Bureau members about the composition of the Informal Advisory Group for the development of the long-term approach to mainstreaming in the post-2020 global biodiversity framework.
30. The Bureau approved the provisional agenda (CBD/SBI/3/1, as annexed to the report).
31. The Bureau also took note of the draft annotations to the provisional agenda, including the proposed organization of work (draft of document CBD/SBI/3/1/Add.1). Members of the Bureau noted the need to clarify some matters in the annotations, including the need for a report on the evaluation of the implementation of the strategic plan for the Cartagena Protocol (under item 4), and how the second phase of work on the plan of action on customary sustainable use relates to the work on post-2020 (under item 5). The Secretariat indicated that it would address these points in finalizing the annotations.
32. Members of the Bureau highlighted the importance for the post-2020 framework of mechanisms for review of implementation (under item 10 of the provisional agenda). The Bureau noted that in addition to preparing recommendations for COP 15 on this matter, SBI 3 would need to test some potential approaches for review mechanisms as requested by COP. It was agreed that there was a need for further discussion of this matter at a future meeting of the Bureau.

**ITEM 6. PREPARATIONS FOR THE UN BIODIVERSITY CONFERENCE 2020 (THE FIFTEENTH MEETING OF THE CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES, THE TENTH MEETING OF THE CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES SERVING AS THE MEETING OF THE PARTIES TO THE CARTAGENA PROTOCOL, AND THE FOURTH MEETING OF THE CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES SERVING AS THE MEETING OF THE PARTIES TO THE NAGOYA PROTOCOL, AS WELL AS THE HIGH-LEVEL SEGMENT OF THESE MEETINGS)**

33. At the invitation of the Chair, Ms. Zou Yueyu, the representative of China, made a presentation to the Bureau on the preparations for the fifteenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties and the concurrent meetings of the Parties to the Protocols. She outlined the arrangements made by the Government of China to ensure successful preparations for the meetings, including the establishment of a national organizing committee chaired by the Vice-Premier. She provided an overview of the facilities available in Kunming, Yunnan, which had been selected as the venue for the meetings. She highlighted that Yunnan was the most biodiverse province of China and also the home of 26 of China's 56 ethnic groups. She also noted the efforts made by the People's Republic of China to conserve biodiversity and promote *ecological civilization*.
34. The Bureau expressed its appreciation to China and committed its full support for a successful COP 15.
35. The Executive Secretary informed the Bureau of the Secretariat's planned mission to China that would take place the following week, focussing on developing a strong partnership with China,

developing the host government agreement, finalizing the dates of the meetings, and reviewing the facilities available at the venue.

36. The Bureau agreed that the High-Level Segment of the meetings should take place close to the end of the second week of the meetings to enable ministers to provide high-level political support and to engage in the negotiations as needed. The Bureau also indicated the desirability of determining the dates of the meetings as soon as possible.

37. On the basis of draft documents prepared by the Secretariat, the Bureau held a preliminary discussion of the items to be addressed at the meetings. Bureau members sought clarification on how some items would be addressed and reflected in the agenda and annotations for COP 15, including with respect to ecosystem restoration, biodiversity and agriculture and nature and culture. The Secretariat indicated that it would take these points into account in further developing the documents. The Secretariat explained that, as per previous practice, the COP would be expected to update its multi-year programme of work (i.e. key agenda items for future sessions) in light of the post-2020 global biodiversity framework.

38. The agendas would be considered formally for adoption at a subsequent meeting of the Bureau, later in 2019.

#### **ITEM 7. FOLLOW UP ON THE FOURTEENTH MEETING OF THE CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES AND CONCURRENT MEETINGS OF THE PARTIES TO THE PROTOCOLS**

39. The Secretariat provided an update on the status of credentials for delegations to the fourteenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties, the ninth meeting of the Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Cartagena Protocol and the third meeting of the Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Nagoya Protocol (Document CBD/COP/Bur/2019/1/INF/1).

40. The Bureau noted that the rate of compliance had increased over recent biennia but highlighted the importance for the credibility of the outcomes of the meetings that *all* Parties comply with the requirements for credentials. It was agreed that Bureau members would follow up with Parties from their respective regions not in compliance; the Secretariat would provide the lists of Parties concerned. The Secretariat would also follow up with the Parties concerned with a view to understanding the reasons for non-compliance.

41. Based on preliminary results of a survey to all participants in the UN Biodiversity Conference Sharm El-Sheikh 2018, the Executive Secretary provided an overview of the views of participants on the conduct of the meetings, including with respect to the experience in holding concurrently meetings of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention and the meetings of the Parties to the Cartagena and Nagoya Protocols (Document CBD/COP/Bur/2019/1/INF/2). This information, together with an official survey of all Parties, would contribute to the review foreseen in decisions 14/32, CP-9/8 and NP-3/10.

42. Members of the Bureau commented on the distribution of items between the two Working Groups noting the desirability of both avoiding scheduling conflicts for small delegations while also clustering items to avoid specific experts having to stay at the meetings for an extended time, and also noting the inherent trade-off between these two objectives. Further to the discussion under item 6, the Bureau reiterated that for COP 15, the High-Level Segment should take place close to the end of the meetings. Bureau members also highlighted the importance of enhancing measures to reduce the environmental impact of the meetings.

#### **ITEM 8. ADMINISTRATIVE AND BUDGETARY MATTERS**

43. The Executive Secretary introduced a report on the status of the trust funds of the Convention and other matters arising from Decision 14/36 (CBD/COP/Bur/2019/1/INF/3). She also reported on recent discussions with officials in UNEP and UNON to improve the implementation of the administrative arrangements and the establishment of a joint working group. Finally, the Executive Secretary mentioned that the Secretariat was also working on the web strategy asked for by the COP and had contacted UNEP to organize the OIOS audit requested by the Parties.

44. In response to queries from members of the Bureau, the Executive Secretary provided further information on the status of progress in renewing the host country agreement with Canada and the lease of the Secretariat premises, and on the status of staff vacancies. The Bureau requested to be kept informed of progress on these matters, as well any recommendations arising from the joint working group with UNEP and UNON. The Secretariat also explained the use of technologies to facilitate remote participation in meetings to reduce travel, as well as efforts to reduce the environmental footprint of the Convention's activities, noting the need to comply new UN criteria on reporting of GHG emissions.

45. The Bureau noted that there is a need for further contributions to the BE, BZ and VB trust funds to support voluntary activities and the participation of developing countries and IPLCs in the work of the Convention and its Protocols. The Secretariat also circulated an informal document specifying funding needs and gaps related to the preparatory process for the post-2020 global biodiversity framework.

46. At the joint meeting of the COP and SBSTTA Bureaux on 17 March 2019, the Executive Secretary made a presentation on activities of the Secretariat during the first two years of her mandate, focussing on efforts to raise awareness and promote high-level political and business engagement in the work of the Convention. The presentation was accompanied by a written report that was made available to the members of the Bureaux. The report sparked a vivid discussion and was very well received. The Bureaux members congratulated the Executive Secretary on the richness of achievements and noted with appreciation that the report is very helpful in providing a synthetic overview of the activity, noting that the pro-active initiative of the Executive Secretary should be replicated by other MEAs. One Bureau member, appreciating the high quality of the document, inquired whether a consultant was hired to produce the activity report and wanted to know how much it cost. The Executive Secretary clarified that she wrote the report herself and colleagues in the Secretariat helped edit it in professional graphics, thus, it had no costs to the budget. Bureau members asked to be provided with a copy of the report, to share with their constituencies.

47. The Legal Officer provided an overview of the procedure for extension or appointment of the Executive Secretary. Pursuant to Decision VII/34 and a subsequent interpretative statement of the COP Bureau, an extension can be granted by the Secretary-General on a recommendation of the Executive Director of UN Environment, in consultation with the COP Bureau. Further information on the process is available in an information note (CBD/COP/Bur/2019/1/INF/5).

48. At a closed session of the Bureau on 17 March 2019, the Bureau initiated a discussion on this matter.

#### **ITEM 9. OTHER MATTERS**

49. No other matters were raised.

#### **ITEM 10. CLOSURE OF THE MEETING**

50. The Chair thanked the participants for the valuable discussions and closed the meeting on 16 March at 4.15pm. The closed session on 17 March took place from 12 noon to 1 pm.

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