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### SUBSIDIARY BODY ON SCIENTIFIC, TECHNICAL AND TECHNOLOGICAL ADVICE

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Item 6 of the provisional agenda\*

### **PROGRESS REPORT ON ECOSYSTEM RESTORATION AND RELATED AICHI TARGETS**

*Note by the Executive Secretary*

1. Article 8(f) of the Convention provides that each Party shall, as far as possible, rehabilitate and restore degraded ecosystems and promote the recovery of threatened species, *inter alia*, through the development and implementation of plans or other management strategies. The Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 adopted by the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity in decision X/2, includes Aichi Biodiversity Targets that envisage, by 2020, restoring ecosystems that provide essential services (Aichi Biodiversity Target 14) and, for enhancing ecosystem resilience, the restoration of at least 15 per cent of degraded ecosystems, thereby contributing to climate-change mitigation and adaptation and to combating desertification (Aichi Biodiversity Target 15).
2. The Conference of the Parties considered the issue of Ecosystem Restoration at its eleventh meeting, on the basis of intersessional work undertaken in light of recommendation XV/2 of the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice (see document UNEP/CBD/COP/11/21) and adopted decision XI/16. In paragraph 1 of that decision, the Conference of the Parties “urges Parties and encourages other Governments and relevant organizations to make concerted efforts to achieve Aichi Biodiversity Targets 14 and 15 and targets 4 and 8 of the Global Strategy for Plant Conservation, and to contribute to the achievement of all the other Aichi Biodiversity Targets through ecosystem restoration through a range of activities depending on national circumstances”.
3. In decision XI/16, the Conference of the Parties also invited Parties, other Governments and relevant organizations, and requested the Executive Secretary to undertake certain activities to support countries in implementing ecosystem restoration (paragraphs 2 and 5). The activities include providing capacity-building in the form of workshops; compilation of information, including through a website; further development, as necessary, of tools and guidance; clarification of terms and definitions; and pursuing opportunities for collaboration. In the same decision, the Conference of the Parties also recognized the need for funding for these activities and called upon donors and others accordingly (paragraphs 3 and 4).

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\* UNEP/CBD/SBSTTA/17/1.

4. Considering the focus of the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice in providing inputs on scientific and technical aspects of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 and the multi-year programme of work, the purpose of this note is twofold: firstly, to provide a preliminary progress report on tasks undertaken in response to requests contained in paragraph 5 of decision XI/16, including how these outcomes fit into a broader capacity-building strategy; secondly, to demonstrate how the available scientific information is useful in the Convention process by supporting Parties to determine potential areas for conservation and restoration and identifying possible national targets and commitments in response to the agreed goals and targets. Progress in these matters will be reported to subsequent meetings of the Subsidiary Body and to the Conference of the Parties.

5. The first section of this note describes the overall approach proposed by the Executive Secretary in undertaking the requested activities in a coherent manner; the second section describes the compilation and presentation of information and tools to support implementation; the third section describes the proposed series of capacity-building workshops embedded into a broader process; and the fourth section describes facilitating support for implementation and linking to poverty eradication efforts.

#### *A. Overall approach*

6. The list of activities to promote ecosystem restoration detailed in paragraph 1 of decision XI/16 provides a basis for an integrated approach to ecosystem restoration, building on existing relevant past decisions of the Conference of the Parties and existing programmes of work, including activities such as addressing causes of ecosystem degradation or fragmentation, identifying opportunities to link poverty eradication and ecosystem restoration and giving due attention to the rehabilitation of degraded ecosystems in order to restore critical ecosystem functions and the delivery of benefits to people.

7. Accordingly, in undertaking the activities referred to in paragraph 5 of decision XI/16, the Executive Secretary is pursuing an integrated approach to ecosystem restoration, bearing in mind:

(a) Both the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 (in the Rationale, Vision and in several goals and targets, especially Goal D and Target 14), and decision XI/16 (in the preamble, and in paragraphs 1 (i), 2 (g)) recognize the broader sustainable development benefits of biodiversity. In addition, cooperation with the agricultural and forestry sectors is necessary not only to implement the Strategic Plan and achieve the Aichi Biodiversity Targets (in particular Target 7) but also to build a broad constituency in support of ecosystem conservation and restoration;

(b) Three of the Aichi Biodiversity Targets set quantitative global targets to reduce the loss of natural habitats, restore degraded areas and improve protected area networks and can be considered as area-based Aichi Biodiversity Targets. Target 5 calls for the rate of loss of natural habitats to be at least halved; Target 11 calls for the protection of at least 17 per cent of terrestrial and inland waters and 10 per cent of coastal and marine areas; and Target 15 calls for the restoration of at least 15 per cent of degraded ecosystems. There is a need for a coherent approach to the achievement of these targets. Achievement of these targets will also contribute to other Aichi Biodiversity Targets: Target 12 (protecting species and preventing extinctions), Target 13 (maintaining genetic diversity) and Target 14 (maintaining ecosystem services). Undertaken in a landscape context, working toward these targets will also contribute to achieving Target 7 (sustainable agriculture and forestry);

(c) Information collected and generated is for the practical use of Parties and is intended to facilitate implementation. Information gathered through partners and global studies commissioned by the Secretariat will be provided to Parties through the clearing-house mechanism and other means, and directly to workshop participants to better prepare for and participate in workshops. Follow-up support will be provided to Parties by relevant partners working in regions for implementing proposed actions.

8. Accordingly, the outcomes of the work conducted by the Executive Secretary in response to paragraph 5 of decision XI/16 are complementary in nature and collectively they contribute to supporting Parties in achieving the Aichi Biodiversity Targets through conservation and restoration actions. The global studies described below will generate information to help identify potential areas for ecosystem restoration, co-benefits and social development. This information will be complemented by information emanating from global and regional initiatives, including *the Bonn Challenge*. Regional capacity-building workshops are planned to support Parties in generating and making use of national information on status of degraded ecosystems at national level, identification of potential areas for ecosystem restoration, possible national targets and commitments and fostering regional partnerships and awareness of tools.

9. Thus an integrated, participatory approach to capacity-building for supporting Parties to achieve various Aichi Biodiversity Targets is envisaged. Making use of the work conducted in response to paragraph 5 of decision XI/16, as well as information and support from partner agencies, global initiatives, and from Parties, the approach entails engaging Parties by providing and requesting information and encouraging discussion prior to and during subregional workshops, as well as encouraging follow-up support for Parties post-workshop by the Life Web Initiative, partner agencies and peer-to-peer exchanges in subregions.

10. The approach includes the compilation and presentation of information and tools to support implementation and linking to poverty eradication efforts and a proposed series of capacity-building workshops embedded into a broader process.

11. *The Bonn Challenge*, a global movement to restore 150 million hectares of degraded and deforested land by 2020, has already accumulated nearly 50 million hectares in pledges for restoration. Building on this, the *Hyderabad Call for a Concerted Effort on Ecosystem Restoration* made in October 2012 by concerned stakeholders<sup>1</sup>, called for coordinated long-term efforts to mobilize resources and facilitate ecosystem restoration activities for the benefit of all.

### ***B. Compiling information and developing tools***

12. The Executive Secretary has commissioned a global study to provide relevant information on ecosystem degradation and the potential for restoration in response to paragraph 5 of decision XI/16, in particular subparagraph (i). The study will provide detailed information on appropriate terms and definitions for ecosystem rehabilitation and restoration; review global estimates of the extent of ecosystem or landscape degradation and compare and summarize different methodologies used; provide an assessment of the area of degraded ecosystems; describe the potential for restoration and rehabilitation based on existing global degradation assessments; and identify, and where possible quantify, the multiple benefits of ecosystem restoration and rehabilitation.

13. All major ecosystems and landscapes have been the subject of global degradation assessments. However, available estimates vary widely due to differences in definitions, metrics, methods and data sources. Some of these differences reflect an underlying evolution in assessment technology and the manner in which the concept of degradation is understood and used. Estimates of the extent of degradation are much less common than estimates of loss, and the potential for restoration, particularly at the global level, has been much less studied than degradation. While global studies that quantify the benefits of restoration are rare, there are a few site-specific assessments which can be used as indicators for certain ecosystems; more common are studies that quantify the negative impact of additional degradation and the benefits of non-destruction. While arriving at definitive operational estimates of the global extent of ecosystem and landscape degradation, and since the potential for restoration and rehabilitation is not possible as even the best available scientific evidence contains a great deal of

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<sup>1</sup> Governments of India, the Republic of Korea and South Africa, SCBD, UNCCD, UNFCCC, the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands, GEF, UNEP, UNDP, UNFF, FAO, IUCN, and SER.

uncertainty, it is envisaged that the study will provide useful benchmarks of the broad magnitude of the potential for ecosystem restoration and help to inform action at the national level. It is also expected that national exercises to assess the potential for ecosystem restoration will help to further improve future global level assessments.

14. The above study is being undertaken by the World Resources Institute together with the Netherlands Environmental Assessment Agency (PBL) and other partners. In line with decision XI/16, the study will build upon the work presented in documents UNEP/CBD/COP/11/INF/17, 18 and 19.<sup>2</sup> The study will be made available to Parties and others for review and utilized in the planned series of capacity-building workshops referred to below. The work will be further refined in light of further information generated through the workshops and other sources as well as the review by Parties and will subsequently be published in the CBD technical series.

15. The Secretariat is compiling relevant decisions of the Conference of the Parties referring to ecosystem restoration (decision XI/16, paragraph 5 (d)). While there is no specific work programme on ecosystem restoration under the Convention, the importance of restoration has been recognized in many programmes of work and decisions of the Conference of the Parties (see annex I) and decision XI/16 is specifically on ecosystem restoration. Decisions of the Conference of the Parties, *inter alia*, on the programmes of work on marine and coastal biodiversity, inland waters biodiversity, agricultural biodiversity, forest biodiversity and the principles and operational guidance of the ecosystem approach included ecosystem restoration and rehabilitation aspects. A work plan on coral bleaching included as Appendix 1 to decision VII/5 on marine and coastal biological diversity specifically calls for management actions and strategies to support reef resilience, rehabilitation and recovery. The concept of habitat restoration is embedded in the Vision, Mission and in Targets 14 and 15 of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020.

16. The Secretariat is developing web pages and linkages on ecosystem restoration in collaboration with the Global Partnership on Forest Landscape Restoration and other partners toward fostering synergies and improving dissemination of information on ecosystem restoration.

### ***C. Capacity-building workshops***

17. The Secretariat is organizing series of regional and subregional capacity-building workshops in order to provide support to Parties on ecosystem conservation and restoration to support achievement of the Aichi Biodiversity Targets. The approach to capacity-building is based upon the experience of facilitating support for implementation of the programme of work on protected areas. The workshops will be conducted in cooperation with the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, the National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan Forum and regional partners.

18. The aim of the workshops is to support achievement of Aichi Biodiversity Targets 5, 11 and 15 through an integrated landscape approach, thereby contributing to the achievement of other Aichi Biodiversity Targets, in particular Targets 7, 12, 13 and 14, and to support Parties in:

(a) The development of national targets and plans for ecosystem conservation and restoration within the framework of Aichi Biodiversity Targets 5, 11 and 15;

(b) The integration of these targets and plans into updated national biodiversity strategies and action plans and mainstreaming into broader national policies, plans and programmes; and

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<sup>2</sup> Available Guidance and Guidelines on Ecosystem Restoration (UNEP/CBD/COP/11/INF/17); Available Tools and Technologies on Ecosystem Restoration (UNEP/CBD/COP/11/INF/18); Most Used Definitions/Descriptions of Key Terms Related to Ecosystem Restoration (UNEP/CBD/COP/11/INF/19).

(c) Using appropriate assessment, policy and planning tools to promote ecosystem conservation and restoration at all appropriate levels.

19. The workshops will also help to strengthen partnerships for ecosystem conservation and restoration at national, local and regional levels and provide updated information for consideration by the Conference of the Parties at its twelfth meeting on the status of progress towards achievement of Aichi Biodiversity Targets 5, 11 and 15.

20. The workshops are intended to be a part of a broader process of capacity-building including provision of information tailored to, and coming from, national level to elicit discussion and work prior to, and during, the workshop to support countries as they identify priority actions for achieving the Aichi Biodiversity Targets.

21. In line with the overall approach described above, the workshops will, where possible, include participants from the forest, agricultural, conservation and/or planning sectors nominated by Parties as well as biodiversity experts.

22. These workshops are conceived as part of a larger capacity-building process, building on existing regional work, providing access to e-learning resources and facilitating follow-up by partners including the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, its country offices and its proposed Forest and Landscape Restoration Mechanism. Further information is provided in annex II.

#### ***D. Facilitating support for implementation and linking to poverty eradication efforts***

23. Within the proposed approach to capacity-building, the Secretariat will maintain cooperation with the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, its country offices and its proposed forest and landscape restoration mechanism. Many key global and regional partners will be involved in this process including the United Nations Development Programme, the World Bank, relevant donors as well as the other partners of the Global Partnership for Forest Landscape Restoration.

24. During the series of proposed regional workshops, the LifeWeb initiative will provide an opportunity for countries to explore avenues for financing the implementation of actions identified for achieving area-based Aichi Biodiversity Targets. The mission of the LifeWeb Initiative is to facilitate financing that helps sustaining natural capital, improving livelihoods, supporting implementation of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 and achieving the Aichi Biodiversity Targets. In paragraphs 11 and 12 of decision X/31, the Conference of the Parties, while validating the role of the LifeWeb Initiative, encouraged countries to express their financial needs through the Initiative and urged donors to support those funding needs. Further, in paragraphs 4 and 5 of decision X1/24 the Conference of the Parties encouraged Parties to align their LifeWeb Initiative requests with national biodiversity strategies and action plans, thereby creating consistency between funding requests and the achievement of several interrelated Aichi Biodiversity Targets.

25. The Secretariat is preparing a global study on mobilizing support for conservation and restoration of ecosystems through the use of social programmes in developing countries. This study will analyse the potential of social development, poverty alleviation and public works programmes to contribute to large-scale ecosystem restoration (and vice-versa) and will provide the criteria for success, best practices and lessons learned. The finalized report will be utilized in the planned series of capacity-building workshops referred to above.

26. The Secretariat continues ongoing collaboration with the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification, the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands and other multilateral environmental agreements in order to enhance and harmonize efforts in ecosystem restoration and avoid duplication.

27. The Secretariat would like to acknowledge the kind support of the following Parties in providing voluntary funding in support of the activities referred to in the present document: Canada, the European Union Germany, Japan (through the Japan Biodiversity Fund), Norway and the Republic of Korea.

28. The Executive Secretary will provide an update on activities to the eighteenth meeting of the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice.

*Annex I***DECISIONS OF THE CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES TO THE CONVENTION ON BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY REFERRING TO ECOSYSTEM RESTORATION**

<b>Issue</b>	<b>Decision</b>
Ecosystem restoration	XI/16
Marine and Coastal Biodiversity	X/29 paras 13, 71, 72   IX/20 annex – rationale   VII/5 para 49, objectives 1.2, 1.3, 2.1, 2.3, appendix 3 – Elements of a marine and coastal biodiversity management framework. Section D. para 10   IV/5 Operational obj. 1.2, activity C; obj.1.3 activity C   II/10 annex I para (ii)
Agricultural Biodiversity	X/34 para 5   VI/5 annex II. I context - para 4. II para 6; Element 2 – rationale, Activities 2.1; Element 3   V/5 para 15   III/11 paras 15, 17, annex II para 1(vii)
Biodiversity and climate change	XI/19 annex para 17 (c) (d) (f); XI/21 para 6 (d); X/33 paras 8, 9   IX/16 para 3(f)   VIII/30 para 1   VII/15 paras 5, 18
Guidance to the financial mechanism	X/24 para B4   VII/20 para 6
Biodiversity of dry and sub-humid lands	X/35 para 8   VIII/2 Goal 2, target 2.1   VII/2 annex activity 7 (b).   V/23 para 11, and activity 7
Forest Biodiversity	X/36 para 5   IX/5 para 1(k),1(g)   VIII/19 B, para 3(c)   VI/22 Programme element 1, obj. 1, activity (i); and Goal 2, obj. 3 (c), and (d); obj. 4 (e); and obj. 5 (a). Goal 3, obj. 1, (a),(b),(c); obj. 3 (c); Programme element 3, Goal 3, obj. 1 (c).   V/4 para 10, annex I para 2
Global Biodiversity Outlook	X/4 para 6
Global Strategy for Plant Conservation	X/17 Objective II, Targets 4 and 8, para 15, VI/9 paras 5, 11; Targets strategy b (viii), Targets 4 and 8
Inland waters biodiversity	X/28 paras 10, 45   VII/4 para 26, and programme element 1, Goal 1.1, objective b., Goal 1.3, 1.4, and 2.2 and related activities   IV/4 paras 8, 9
Mountain biodiversity	X/30 paras 4, 5   VII/27 Goal 1.2, and related actions
Multi-year programme of work	X/9 para (a) (ix)
Protected Areas	X/31 paras 8, 14, 26   VII/28 para 12, annex of the programme of work, para 1 and Goals 1.2, 1.5, 3.3 and related activities
The Strategic Plan	X/2 the concept of habitat restoration is embedded in the Vision, the Mission, Targets 14 and 15 and in para 10.   VII/30 Goal 2, Target 2.1
Sustainable Use	VII/12, annex II para 2
Ecosystem Approach	VII/11 Principle 5 (rationale and in 5.6); Principle 9 (rationale and 9.10); principle 12 (12.5); annex II paras 6, 12, 16.   V/6 principle 5 (rationale), principle 9, section C operational guidance to (2) enhance benefit sharing
Invasive alien species	IX/4 para 15(e)   VIII/27 para 41   VI/23 para 28(d), section D – guiding principle 12   V/8 outline for case-studies para 2
Liability and redress	IX/23 para 1   VIII/29 paras 2, and 3   VI/11 paras 1(c), 2
Identification, monitoring, indicators and assessments	VI/7 Paras 25, 41   VIII/15 annex II – Indicators - Targets 2.1, 8.2.   Impact assessment VIII/28 , paras 23, 25

Tourism and biodiversity	VII/14 Goal 22, para 66, para 84
Island biodiversity	XI/15 para2 (b); VIII/1Target 1.1, action 1.1.3; Target 2.1 action 2.1.1; appendix
Incentive Measures	VIII/25 para 8
Global Taxonomy Initiative	XI/29 annex-capacity building strategy for the GTI, output of Action 8

## *Annex II*

### **CAPACITY-BUILDING WORKSHOPS ON ECOSYSTEM CONSERVATION AND RESTORATION TO SUPPORT ACHIEVEMENT OF THE AICHI BIODIVERSITY TARGETS**

In response to multiple decisions of the Conference of the Parties<sup>3</sup> the Executive Secretary plans to undertake a number of activities to promote achievement of the area-based Aichi Biodiversity Targets, including the organization of a series of regional and subregional capacity-building workshops using the ecosystem approach to land- and seascape management in order to more cohesively support countries in their efforts toward ecosystem restoration, expanding and improving protected areas networks, and mitigating and adapting to climate change.

Associated activities will include global studies, the development of web-based tools and support for the financing of proposals through the CBD LifeWeb Initiative. Activities will be undertaken in close collaboration with partners.

The capacity-building workshops will build upon the experience gained from the implementation of the programme of work on protected areas (PoWPA) under the Convention on Biological Diversity, as well as other capacity-building workshops under the Convention. Complementary activities will be undertaken under the Sustainable Ocean Initiative.

Aim: to support achievement of Aichi Biodiversity Targets 5, 11 and 15, through an integrated landscape approach, thereby contributing to the achievement of other Aichi Biodiversity Targets, in particular Targets 7, 12, 13 and 14.

#### Expected outcomes:

- Development by Parties of national targets and plans for ecosystem conservation and restoration within the framework of Aichi Biodiversity Targets 5, 11 and 15.
- Integration of these targets and plans into updated national biodiversity strategies and action plans and mainstreaming into broader national policies, plans and programmes.
- Increased capacity in countries to use appropriate assessment, policy and planning tools to promote ecosystem conservation and restoration at all appropriate levels.
- Updated information for the twelfth meeting of the Conference of the Parties on the status of progress towards achievement of Aichi Biodiversity Targets 5, 11 and 15.
- Strengthened partnerships for ecosystem conservation and restoration at national, local and regional levels.

<sup>3</sup> *Inter alia* para 5 of decision XI/16 on ecosystem restoration, para 10 of decision XI/24 on protected areas.



### Expected outputs:

- Compilation, exchange and synthesis of information on national policies, strategies and commitments related to reducing habitat loss, restoring degraded lands and developing protected area networks.
- Compilation, exchange and synthesis of information, including geographically explicit information, on potential areas for conservation restoration, and on the potential benefits for human well-being (including for biodiversity, ecosystem services, mitigation of and adaptation to climate change; and reduced land degradation).
- Compilation and exchange of case studies, and related lessons learned, of major ongoing ecosystem conservation and restoration initiatives.
- Awareness of tools to support ecosystem conservation and restoration in a landscape perspective, including relevant spatial planning and policy tools, tools for stakeholder involvement etc.

### Participants

There will be two or three officially nominated experts per country, depending on funding, including:

- Country experts on biodiversity nominated by the CBD Focal Points such as NBSAP Coordinator and/or the PoWPA Focal Point.
- Country experts on planning, agriculture and/or forests nominated through FAO and CBD focal points.

In addition, a limited number of resource persons from relevant international and regional organizations will participate.

Number and timing of workshops: A series of eight to ten subregional workshops will be organized across all United Nations regions from November 2013 to December 2014.

### Workshop programme

The workshop programme would comprise introductory presentations, presentations of case studies from the host country and from other countries in the region, and facilitated discussions in plenary and in smaller groups. The emphasis will be in interactive dialogue to promote mutual learning among the participants.

While the specific programme would be tailored to the needs of each region, it is expected that the programme would include the following elements:

- Overview of the Aichi Biodiversity Targets, focussing on how an integrated approach to Targets 5, 11 and 15 can support achievement of several targets.
- Overview of the global study on the potential for ecosystem restoration and co-benefits for mitigating and adapting to climate change, combating land degradation and contributing to sustainable development through enhanced food and water security.
- Review of relevant national policies, strategies, commitments, and progress (in particular on Target 11 since the eleventh meeting of the Conference of the Parties) in the region related to reducing habitat loss, restoring degraded lands, developing protected area networks and integrating actions into revised NBSAPs.
- Review of geographically explicit information on potential areas for conservation and restoration in the region.
- Lessons learned from case studies of major ongoing ecosystem conservation and restoration initiatives in region, including a study-visit in the vicinity of the workshop.

- Review of relevant spatial planning and policy tools, tools for stakeholder involvement, etc., that are currently used in the country, or could be applied, to support ecosystem conservation and restoration.

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