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DRAFT GUIDELINES FOR THE FIFTH NATIONAL REPORT

Note by the Executive Secretary

INTRODUCTION

1. The draft guidelines for the fifth national report annexed to this note are developed on the basis of the experiences and lessons learned from the fourth and previous rounds of national reporting of the Convention and the proposals for the fifth national report contained in the review of experience and proposals for the fifth national report (UNEP/CBD/WGRI/3/6). They will be further developed in the light of comments received by Parties, including at the third meeting of the Working Group on Review of Implementation of the Convention.

2. In line with the discussions set out in UNEP/CBD/WGRI/3/6, a predominantly narrative format is proposed, similar to that adopted for the fourth national reports. Experience has shown that the adequacy of information was much improved compared with the question-and-answer formats adopted for the second and third national reports. At the same time, additional guidance on the structure of the report could help to improve consistency among reports.

3. Compared to the fourth national report, the following changes are proposed:

(a) Part I (corresponding to Chapter I in the fourth national report) should focus on identifying changes in biodiversity since the fourth report was prepared (or changes that have become known since that time), the causes of these changes, and the consequences for ecosystem services and human well-being. Detailed descriptions of biodiversity would not be necessary, especially as these have generally been provided in the fourth national reports.

(b) Part II would combine the subject matter of Chapter II (implementation of National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans) and III (mainstreaming of biodiversity) of the fourth national report. This is logical given that, consistent with decision IX/8, National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans should be effective instruments for mainstreaming. Focus should again be on actions taken since the fourth national reports were prepared. In addition, Parties would be invited to report on the updating of National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans, and the establishment of national targets, consistent with the updated and revised Strategic Plan of the Convention.

(c) Part III (corresponding to Chapter IV in the fourth national report) would focus on progress made in the implementation of the updated and revised Strategic Plan of the Convention (2011-

* UNEP/CBD/WGRI/3/1.

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2020) particularly in achieving national and global targets. Given that the report will be prepared just ahead of the review, in 2015, of the progress towards the Millennium Development Goals, Parties would also be invited to report on how implementation of the Convention contributes to the achievement of the 2015 targets of those Goals.

(d) Within each of the parts, a number of questions are suggested that could be used to structure the narrative in a logical manner and promote consistency among reports.

4. Following inputs from Parties and stakeholders, including at the third meeting of the Working Group on Review of Implementation, the guidelines will be further developed and refined. This will include, where possible, the use of proposed common formats for tables, charts and other elements to facilitate further consistency among reports and aid the statistical analysis of the reports.

5. In addition, as was the case for fourth national report, supporting material will be developed, including a web portal and a reference manual for the application of the guidelines. These materials will draw heavily upon relevant examples gleaned from the fourth national reports.

6. As in previous cases, it is envisaged that financial support will be provided to support eligible countries in the preparation of their reports.

Annex

DRAFT GUIDELINES FOR THE FIFTH NATIONAL REPORT

I. INTRODUCTION TO THE GUIDELINES

Purposes of reporting and intended use of information from national reports

- (1) In accordance with Article 26 of the Convention and [COP decision X/xx], Parties are required to submit their fifth national report by **31 March 2014**.
- (2) National reports are essential tools in allowing the Conference of the Parties to keep the implementation of the Convention under review, inter alia by providing material for the preparation of the *Global Biodiversity Outlook*. Perhaps more importantly they are important tools for biodiversity planning at the national level, providing the analysis and monitoring necessary to inform decisions on implementation. Finally they are important communication tools.

Structure of the report

- (3) The guidelines for the fifth national report are composed of three main parts:

- Part I - An update on biodiversity status, trends, and threats and implications for human well-being.
- Part II - The national biodiversity strategies and action plans, its implementation, and the mainstreaming of biodiversity.
- Part III - Progress towards the 2020 Biodiversity targets and contributions to the 2015 Targets of the Millennium Development Goals.

- (4) Part III draws upon the information in the first two parts of the report to analyze how national actions taken to implement the Convention are contributing to relevant strategic goals and headline targets of the updated Strategic Plan, including relevant goals and targets included in the Millennium Development Goals. The three parts together form the main body of the report, and should be drawn upon as a whole in preparing the executive summary. This summary should highlight the most important findings and conclusions from the report, and will serve as an important communication tool. In addition, Parties may submit annexes or appendices as part of their national report.

- (5) Throughout the report, Parties are requested to report on latest developments since the last national report without repeating in detail what has been already covered in the earlier national reports, and to provide more analysis than description.

How to use the guidelines

- (6) In the fifth national report, Parties are requested to report on their national implementation of the Convention primarily in narrative form, structured as answers to a number of key questions. In addition, Parties are encouraged to complement narrative reporting with any tables, charts, figures or graphics that might help support or better communicate the information presented. Parties are encouraged to provide substantive information in concise form.

- (7) The length of the fifth national report is expected to be at least 40 pages and no more than 100 pages, including Appendices I to III. If the report must exceed this limit, Parties are encouraged to append additional information as supplementary material.

- (8) Parties are requested to adhere to the headings of the main parts of the reports and also to structure the sub-sections of each part according to the questions set out in the guidelines. The structure of each section is flexible. In cases where there are overlaps in the information provided within and among parts or sections, Parties are encouraged to make cross-references in order to avoid repetition.

(9) Parties are invited to contact the Secretariat for any clarification on the use of the guidelines or the preparation of the fifth national report. The Secretariat would also welcome feedback on any difficulties encountered in using the guidelines, as well as ideas for improvements. Such information will be used in the development of the supporting tools and also contribute to future reporting cycles.

Processes of preparation

(10) Guidance provided in various decisions of the Conference of the Parties requests Parties to involve stakeholders in the preparation of their national reports, including NGOs, civil society, indigenous and local communities, business, and the media. In addition, the national focal point responsible for preparing national reports is encouraged to work closely with national counterparts responsible for implementation of other related conventions. By coordinating report preparation, the focal points for the various conventions can share data and analysis, ensuring consistency among reports and reducing the overall reporting burden for the country. Such coordination could furthermore enhance opportunities for synergy in the national implementation of related conventions. Parties are invited to provide, in Appendix I of their report, a brief summary on the participatory process followed in preparing the report.

Outreach and communication

(11) The preparation of national reports is an important opportunity for communicating achievements made in meeting the Convention objectives to the general public and involving them in national implementation. To this end, in addition to involving stakeholders in the preparation of national reports, it is particularly important for Parties, after having submitted their national report, to communicate to the general public the positive outcomes for biodiversity identified in the report, and the obstacles and challenges that remain. Various means of communication could be used, including: publicly launching national reports on International Biodiversity Day; making national reports accessible to a wider audience through national clearing-house mechanisms or other media; developing and disseminating byproducts of national reports.

(12) At the international level, the fourth edition of the Global Biodiversity Outlook, which will draw upon information provided in the fifth national reports, will also serve as a communication tool.

Submission of the fifth national report

(13) Parties are required to submit their fifth national report to the Executive Secretary by **31 March 2014**, using the format outlined in these guidelines,. The submission of the fifth national report ahead of this deadline is encouraged as this would facilitate the preparation of the fifth edition of the Global Biodiversity Outlook, and of other analyses and syntheses that will be made available to the Conference of the Parties and its subsidiary bodies.

(14) Parties are requested to submit an original signed copy by post and an electronic copy on diskette/CD-ROM, or by electronic mail, to the Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity. Electronic copies should be available in a Word processing software and graphic elements provided in separate files to facilitate the electronic publication of the reports.

(15) Parties that anticipate any difficulty in submitting the report by the deadline mentioned above are invited to advise the Secretariat well in advance.

II. GUIDELINES

The Executive Summary

For the purposes of communicating to stakeholders at various levels, Parties should prepare an executive summary of the fifth national report that provides the main messages of the report. These might be derived from the Questions listed under each Part of the main report. The executive summary should be short and concise, preferably between 6 to 10 pages in length. For example, there could be one (or two) paragraph(s) for each question. It should appeal to the general public and relevant decision-makers. To this end, Parties are encouraged to include illustrative tables, figures and images. While the executive summary can only be finalized after the three main chapters of this report have been completed, an early draft of the executive summary may serve as a useful outline for the development of the report, helping to clarify the main messages.

The Main Parts of the Report

Part I: An update on biodiversity status, trends, and threats and implications for human well-being.

This part should answer the following questions:

Q1: Why is biodiversity important for your country? Highlight contributions of biodiversity and related ecosystem services to human well-being and socio-economic development. Where possible provide estimates of economic value (in monetary terms, or for example in numbers of people supported). Also highlight a few examples of exceptional biodiversity and ecosystems in the country.

Q2: What major changes have taken place in the status and trends of biodiversity in your country? Focus on changes that have occurred, or that have become known, since the fourth national report was prepared. The analysis or synthesis should provide a succinct overview of biodiversity status, trends and threats sufficient to inform decision-makers, rather than an exhaustive assessment of these issues. There is no need to repeat detailed descriptions of your country's biodiversity that were provided in the fourth or previous national reports. Where possible, use quantitative indicators (with technical details of the indicators provided in an annex). Also draw upon expert qualitative assessments. Illustrate trends with charts, graphs, figures and tables.

Q3: Are the positive changes in the status and trends of biodiversity a result of actions taken to implement the Convention? Where possible, analyse how actions taken (i.e actions described in Chapter II) have resulted in changes in biodiversity. Use case studies to illustrate general points. The case studies should demonstrate significant reductions in the loss of biodiversity (or a specific component) within a defined scale, and a clear rationale of how this is linked to the actions taken. The case will be most useful if it contains lessons that are more widely applicable.

Q4: What are the main threats to biodiversity? (Or, what are the main causes of the negative changes described in the answer to question two?). For the main biomes and/or components of biodiversity, describe the main direct drivers of biodiversity loss (pressures) and link them back to the man indirect drivers (underlying causes) and relate these to the relevant economic sectors. Be specific about the direct drivers (e.g. "dynamite fishing", "coastal development"), but also categorise them (habitat change, climate change, overexploitation, invasive species, pollution).

Q5: What are the impacts of the changes in biodiversity for ecosystem services and the socio-economic and cultural implications of these impacts? Describe the impacts of declining biodiversity and ecosystems on human well-being, livelihoods, poverty reduction etc. Consider all relevant and significant ecosystem goods and services.

Q6: What are possible future changes for biodiversity and their impacts? Describe plausible future scenarios of biodiversity in terms of underlying causes, pressures, impacts on biodiversity and implications for human well being. For example compare what might happen under "business as usual" policies with what might happen with greater investment in biodiversity and ecosystems. Such scenarios may be model-based, narrative-based, or both.

Part II: The national biodiversity strategies and action plans, its implementation, and the mainstreaming of biodiversity.

This part should answer the following questions:

Q7: *What are the biodiversity targets set by your country?* Describe the measurable targets (for example, for 2020) that have been developed in line with the Convention's Strategic Plan 2011-2020.

Q8: *How has your national biodiversity strategy and action plan been updated to incorporate these targets and to serve as an effective instrument to mainstream biodiversity?* Provide a brief description of your NBSAP. If the NBSAP has been updated, how does it differ from the previous NBSAP. Describe: how the actions contained therein will achieve the targets outlined in the answer to question 6; how it will contribute to the achievement of Convention's new Strategic Plan; how it will address the threats to biodiversity identified in the answer to question four; and how it addresses the guidance provided in CBD decision IX/8. Describe in particular how the NBSAP will achieve the integration of biodiversity considerations into broader national plans, programmes and policies, economic and social sectors and levels of government.

Q9: *What actions has your country taken to implement the Convention since the fourth report and what have been the outcomes of these actions?* Describe relevant legislation, policies, institutional and cooperative mechanisms, and funding. Where relevant, link these actions to outcomes in terms of the status and trends of biodiversity and implications for human well-being. Use case studies and, as appropriate cross-reference to the answer to question three. Indicate how the actions relate to the various Programmes of Work and cross-cutting issues of the Convention. (with details provided in Appendix III) Note that if your NBSAP has been recently updated, most of the actions reported may relate to the previous version.

Q10: *How effectively has biodiversity been mainstreamed?* Describe how biodiversity is reflected in: Poverty Reduction Strategies and other key cross-cutting policy instruments, and into the various economic sectors (which sectors (and ministries) integrate biodiversity well and which do not)? Describe also how biodiversity is integrated into planning mechanisms. Which tools are used (e.g. the Ecosystem Approach, biodiversity-inclusive environmental impact assessment and strategic environmental assessment, etc.)? Describe also how synergies are achieved at the national level in the implementation of the CBD, the UNFCCC the UNCCD and other relevant conventions.

Q11. *How fully has your NBSAP been implemented?* Analyse the extent to which the NBSAP has been implemented. For example, what proportion of the planned activities have been carried out and to what extent have the objectives been met. Identify the remaining challenges for implementation. (Note that if your NBSAP has been recently updated, this analysis will relate primarily to the previous version of the NBSAP).

Part III: Progress towards the 2020 Biodiversity targets and contributions to the 2015 Targets of the Millennium Development Goals.

This part should draw upon Parts I and II to answer the following questions:

Q12: *What progress has been made by your country towards the implementation of the Convention's Strategic Plan and its 2020 targets?* Drawing upon information in Parts I and II, analyse the progress towards each of the 2020 targets of the Convention's Strategic Plan as well as the overall Mission of the Plan. Also indicate progress towards the national targets referred to in the answer to question seven. Where possible, use quantitative indicators (with technical details of the indicators provided in an annex). Also draw upon expert qualitative assessments. You may wish to use a simple "traffic-light" scheme or similar device to give an overall assessment of progress.

Q13: *What has been the contribution of actions to implement the Convention towards the achievement of the 2015 Targets of the Millennium Development Goals in your country?* Drawing upon information in Parts I and II, analyse the contribution of the actions taken to implement the Convention, and the outcomes in terms of biodiversity protection, and the maintenance of ecosystem services towards each of the 2015 targets of the Millennium Development Goals as well as to the overall Goals themselves.

Q14: What lessons have been learned from the implementation of the Convention in your country?

Provide an analysis of lessons learned from implementation, highlighting examples of successful and less successful actions taken. Also provide suggestions for actions that need to be taken at the national, regional and global levels to further enhance implementation of the Convention at the national level, level and, in particular, to achieve the strategic goals and targets of the updated Strategic Plan

Annexes and Appendices.

Use annexes and appendices to provide detailed or supporting information that is not necessary in the main report. Annexes and appendices may be bound separately to limit the size of the main report. Suggested annexes and appendices are listed here:

Appendix I - Information concerning reporting Party and preparation of national report. Please provide information on the process used to prepare this report, including information on stakeholders involved and material used as a basis for the report.

Appendix II - Further sources of information. Parties should provide sources of information on national implementation, such as website addresses, publications, databases and national reports submitted to other related conventions, forums and organizations.

Appendix III-National Implementation of the CBD Thematic Programmes of Work and Plans or COP Decisions related to Cross-cutting Issues. Parties could use a table or matrix to highlight how national actions taken to implement the NBSAP, mainstreaming and the 2020 targets have contributed or are contributing to goals, targets and activities suggested in the thematic programmes of work and plans or COP decisions related to cross-cutting issues. Parties could focus on those thematic areas and cross-cutting issues that are nationally relevant and important.
