

SBI 2 Highlights: Wednesday, 11 July 2018

On Wednesday, SBI 2 delegates engaged in discussions on:

- cooperation with other conventions, international organizations, and partnerships;
- mechanisms for review of implementation;
- national reporting, and assessment and review, under the Convention and its Protocols;
- enhancing integration under the Convention and its Protocols with respect to provisions related to access and benefit-sharing (ABS), biosafety, and Article 8(j) (traditional knowledge);
- review of the effectiveness of the processes under the Convention and its Protocols; and
- the trust fund for facilitating participation of parties in the Convention process: allocation of resources and possibilities of engaging the private sector.

Delegates then addressed conference room papers (CRPs) on: progress in the implementation of the Convention and its Strategic Plan, including the Gender Plan of Action; assessment and review of the Nagoya Protocol; and biodiversity mainstreaming. A contact group on specialized international ABS instruments, and the Friends of the Chair group on the follow-up to the Strategic Plan met throughout the day, and in the evening.

Cooperation

The Secretariat introduced relevant documents (CBD/SBI/2/10, 10/Add.1 and Add.2, INF/12-14, 18-20, 24, 28, 29, 34, and CBD/WG8J/10/INF/9).

Hesiquio Benítez Díaz (Mexico), Chair of the informal advisory group on synergies among biodiversity-related conventions, reported on the group's work programme and methodology for prioritization of actions, and party-friendly advice. AUSTRALIA, with others, noted that cooperation activities need to take into account national circumstances, and avoid duplication of work. The EU and BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA supported the continuation of the informal advisory group's work to provide advice on optimizing synergies. CANADA expressed concerns regarding the group's mandate.

MOROCCO and SOUTH AFRICA highlighted synergies to reduce forest degradation. SOUTH AFRICA underscored the need for early cooperation for the fifth edition of the Global Biodiversity Outlook and subsequent reports. URUGUAY called for joint implementation of projects on the ground. The IIFB proposed requesting the development of options to strengthen collaboration with IPLCs, youth, women, academia, and local authorities.

Belarus, for CEE, proposed exploring cooperation with agreements focusing on biodiversity in the Antarctic. MEXICO and PERU suggested cooperation with international instruments on agriculture, mining, and infrastructure. Saint Lucia, for SIDS, suggested integration of the Samoa Pathway into other biodiversity-

related conventions. Tonga, for PACIFIC ISLAND COUNTRIES, urged strengthening support for data collection and the development of core indicators in accordance with national priorities.

UNEP drew attention to the InforMEA portal. FAO highlighted the Global Soil Partnership and efforts to streamline forest-related reporting. The ITPGRFA highlighted collaboration with the CBD and the Nagoya Protocol. The CONVENTION ON MIGRATORY SPECIES emphasized its multi-stakeholder platform on reconciling renewable energy developments with conservation of migratory species. A CRP will be prepared.

Mechanisms for Review of Implementation

The Secretariat introduced relevant documents (CBD/SBI/2/11, INF/27, and INF/32). Many supported the draft recommendations, including a process to explore options to enhance review mechanisms.

INDIA noted that national reports must continue to be the primary review mechanism. JORDAN and the EU said that the options need to be further developed for a collaborative, facilitative review process. ARGENTINA and CUBA stressed that new mechanisms and indicators should be accompanied by capacity building and financial resources.

INDIA, NORWAY, the EU, and SWITZERLAND highlighted the effectiveness of the voluntary peer review of national-level implementation. NORWAY and NEW ZEALAND proposed to fully establish the process as part of the review mechanism. SOUTH AFRICA noted that participating in the peer review requires capacity building and resource availability. GYBN, also for the GLOBAL FOREST COALITION and the ICCA CONSORTIUM, called for a stronger compliance mechanism, and inclusion of IPLCs, women, and youth in the peer-review teams.

National Reporting, and Assessment and Review

The Secretariat introduced relevant documents (CBD/SBI/2/12, 13, and INF/22), including a revised format for the fourth national reports and a suggested process for the assessment and review of the Biosafety Protocol.

On aligning national reporting under the Convention and its Protocols, many supported the synchronization of reporting cycles. NORWAY, Tajikistan, for CEE, and SOUTH AFRICA stressed that the Convention and its Protocols are distinct legal instruments with distinct obligations. CANADA urged to clarify that the value of aligning cycles is in reducing the burden on Parties. NEW ZEALAND, while supporting the recommendation, cautioned that aligning reporting may not necessarily increase efficiency because different government departments may be responsible for the different reports. The CEE and JORDAN stressed capacity-building and funding needs. The EU recalled the importance of taking into account the ongoing reporting process under the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda. MEXICO suggested moving the deadline

for synchronized reporting to 2024. SWITZERLAND called for requesting the Executive Secretary to “identify concrete actions” for increasing synergies in national reporting among the biodiversity-related conventions and the Rio conventions.

The GLOBAL BIODIVERSITY INFORMATION FACILITY and the GROUP ON EARTH OBSERVATIONS BIODIVERSITY OBSERVATION NETWORK emphasized making better use of available spatio-temporal data. UNEP highlighted synchronized reporting aimed at simplifying national reporting processes and increasing cost-efficiency. The IIFB proposed preparing national reports through consultative processes, including IPLCs, as well as ensuring the free, prior and informed consent of IPLCs before considering introducing living modified organisms in their territories. UNEP highlighted the development of potential monitoring tools that capture data annually. A CRP will be prepared.

Enhancing Integration under the Convention and its Protocols

The Secretariat introduced relevant documents (CBD/SBI/2/14, 15, and 21), referring to integrating provisions related to ABS, biosafety, and Article 8(j).

Article 8(j): Delegates debated three options: establishing a subsidiary body on Article 8(j); continuing the Working Group on Article 8(j) with an updated mandate; and integrating the enhanced participation mechanisms used by the Working Group on Article 8(j) for the participation of IPLCs, when addressing matters of direct relevance to IPLCs in the Convention’s subsidiary bodies.

GUATEMALA, CANADA, ECUADOR, and the IIFB supported the Working Group on Article 8(j) becoming a permanent specialized or expert advisory subsidiary body. SWITZERLAND, COLOMBIA, BRAZIL, and ARGENTINA opposed. BRAZIL said the Working Group’s mandate should be renewed and enhanced. NEW ZEALAND and SOUTH AFRICA supported integrating the work programme on Article 8(j) into the work of the Convention, with ARGENTINA adding that such integration should be limited to traditional knowledge. CANADA supported applying the enhanced participation processes used in the Article 8(j) Working Group to other subsidiary bodies. COLOMBIA said more information on the financial implications of each option is needed. MEXICO stressed the need to establish clear objectives in order to identify the best institutional options.

ABS: Many supported the draft recommendations. The EU noted its commitment to support, through capacity building, developing countries in the process of ratification and implementation of the Nagoya Protocol.

Biosafety: Many supported the draft recommendations on integrated approaches to issues at the interface between the biosafety-related CBD provisions and the Biosafety Protocol. MALAWI requested that links between the Biosafety and the Nagoya Protocols be highlighted. COLOMBIA suggested referring to the Kuala Lumpur Supplementary Protocol on liability and redress.

A CRP will be prepared.

Review of the Effectiveness of Processes under the Convention and its Protocols

The Secretariat introduced relevant documents (CBD/SBI/2/16 and Add.1, and INF/1 and 2), including procedures for avoiding or managing conflicts of interest in expert groups.

The EU, with BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA, proposed seeking parties’ views on the proposed procedure for avoiding or managing conflicts of interest, for consideration by COP 14. ARGENTINA highlighted that many scientists considered for participation in expert groups are employed by state-funded research institutions, and cautioned against considering this a conflict of interest. NEW ZEALAND suggested requesting nominated experts to disclose how they propose to manage any potential conflicts of interest. Delegates highlighted the sensitive nature of conflicts of interest, and debated whether the Executive Secretary or the Bureau should have the primary responsibility for their management.

GYBN called for identifying measures to reduce the environmental footprint of CBD meetings, including by becoming plastic-free and reducing food waste. ECOROPA urged parties to agree on a procedure to manage conflicts of interest in 2018, so as not to jeopardize the development of the post-2020 biodiversity framework.

Trust Fund for Facilitating Participation

The Secretariat introduced the relevant document (CBD/SBI/2/18). Many supported the draft recommendations, including keeping under review the experiences of other processes in engaging the private sector to contribute to funding developing country delegates’ participation. South Africa, for the AFRICAN GROUP, expressed concern that the declining contributions to the trust fund will affect participation. Cuba, for SIDS, expressed concern regarding the uncertain status of SIDS’ participation at COP 14. NEW ZEALAND noted that limited participation threatens the Convention’s legitimacy. JAMAICA proposed keeping under review other conventions’ practices with regard to supporting participation. NORWAY announced their contribution of one million Norwegian Kroner to the trust fund to facilitate participation at COP 14.

SIDS stressed support from the private sector should only come from entities that fully subscribe to the Convention’s objectives, and should not result in conflicts of interest. ECUADOR said conditions governing private sector engagement should be established first. A CRP will be prepared.

Progress in the Implementation of the Convention and its Strategic Plan

Delegates addressed a CRP. The REPUBLIC OF KOREA proposed that the Secretariat update the analysis of progress on the basis of the sixth national reports, for consideration by SBI 3. The EU suggested requesting the Secretariat to include a discussion on the linkages between gender and biodiversity, and the lessons learned from the implementation of the Gender Plan of Action, within the regional consultations on the post-2020 framework. The CRP was approved as amended. An L document will be prepared.

Assessment and Review of the Nagoya Protocol

Delegates addressed a CRP. They decided to assess relevant elements, including model contractual clauses and other tools to facilitate compliance, and a global multilateral benefit-sharing mechanism, at the second review. On a survey targeting ABS national focal points and users of genetic resources, MEXICO suggested that providers of genetic resources be included. The recommendations were approved as amended.

Delegates then approved, without amendments, two annexes containing the key findings of the first assessment and review of the Nagoya Protocol, and the draft framework of indicators and reference points to measure progress. An L document will be prepared.

Biodiversity Mainstreaming

Delegates addressed a CRP. In a paragraph emphasizing that mainstreaming of biodiversity is critical for implementation and that transformational change is required, parties diverged on whether to refer to the Strategic Plan’s 2050 Vision for Biodiversity. Deliberations on the CRP will resume following informal consultations.

In the Corridors

With the day’s discussions focusing mainly on procedural items, such as cooperation with other conventions, national reporting, and review of implementation, one participant seemed disinterested: “This can by no means be described as exciting,” she commented, making her way into the evening contact group on specialized international ABS agreements. Indeed, the football World Cup semi-final competed for the attention of some participants during the afternoon. Others, however, emphasized the importance of process-oriented topics for implementation of the Convention and its Protocols. As one delegate with experience in national implementation highlighted, “procedural details can make a huge difference: they can either sentence a convention to remain mere lip service, or they can boost implementation and make it a reality at the national and local levels.”