

SIXTEENTH MEETING OF THE SUBSIDIARY BODY ON SCIENTIFIC, TECHNICAL AND TECHNOLOGICAL ADVICE TO THE CONVENTION ON BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY: 30 APRIL – 5 MAY, 2012

The sixteenth meeting of the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice to the Convention on Biological Diversity begins today at the headquarters of the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) in Montreal, Canada.

The meeting will consider several items relating to marine and coastal biodiversity and climate change and biodiversity and a number of other items. On marine and coastal biodiversity, delegates will discuss: ecologically or biologically significant marine areas (EBSAs); adverse impacts of human activities on marine and coastal biodiversity; and marine spatial planning, marine protected areas (MPAs) and voluntary guidelines for the consideration of biodiversity in environmental assessments in marine and coastal areas.

On climate change and biodiversity, SBSTTA 16 will consider: biodiversity safeguards, indicators and mechanisms to monitor impacts of measures to reduce deforestation and forest degradation (REDD+) on biodiversity; integration of biodiversity considerations into climate-change related activities; and impacts of geo-engineering on biodiversity and gaps in regulatory mechanisms.

SBSTTA 16 will also address the following issues: in-depth review of implementation of the work programme on island biodiversity; progress in implementing decisions on the Global Strategy for Plant Conservation (GSPC), biofuels and biodiversity, and incentive measures; capacity building for the Global Taxonomy Initiative (GTI); new and emerging issues; the Global Biodiversity Outlook (GBO); and collaborative work in the areas of agriculture, forests and health.

The meeting is expected to adopt a series of recommendations to be submitted to the eleventh meeting of the CBD Conference of the Parties (COP 11), to be held 8-19 October 2012 in Hyderabad, India.

A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE CONVENTION

The CBD entered into force on 29 December 1993. There are currently 193 parties to the Convention, which aims to promote the conservation of biodiversity, the sustainable use of its components, and the fair and equitable sharing of benefits

arising from the use of genetic resources. The COP is the governing body of the Convention. It is assisted by SBSTTA, which is mandated, under CBD Article 25, to provide the COP with advice relating to the Convention's implementation. COP 7 established the Working Group on the Review of Implementation (WGRI) with the mandate to address a range of implementation-related issues, such as progress in the implementation of the Strategic Plan, and impacts and effectiveness of existing CBD processes.

COPs 1-3: At its first three meetings (November-December 1994, Nassau, the Bahamas; November 1995, Jakarta, Indonesia; and November 1996, Buenos Aires, Argentina), the COP adopted decisions on, *inter alia*: the establishment of the Clearing-House Mechanism (CHM) and SBSTTA; the designation of the Global Environment Facility (GEF) as the interim financial mechanism; the designation of Montreal, Canada, as the permanent location for the Secretariat; and cooperation with other biodiversity-related conventions. The COP also considered CBD Article 8, and emphasized regional and international cooperation, and the importance of disseminating relevant experience.

COP 4: At its fourth meeting (May 1998, Bratislava, Slovakia), the COP adopted thematic programmes of work on inland waters ecosystems and marine and coastal biodiversity, and decided to consider protected areas (PAs) as one of the three main themes at COP 7. It also encouraged the CBD Executive Secretary to develop relationships with other processes to foster good management practices related to PAs, and established an *Ad Hoc* Technical Expert Group (AHTEG) on marine and coastal PAs.

COP 5: At its fifth meeting (May 2000, Nairobi, Kenya), the COP adopted work programmes on dry and sub-humid lands and on agricultural biodiversity, and decisions on access and benefit sharing (ABS), Article 8(j) (traditional knowledge), the ecosystem approach, sustainable use, biodiversity and tourism, invasive alien species (IAS), incentive measures, GTI, and GSPC.

COP 6: At its sixth meeting (April 2002, The Hague, the Netherlands), the COP adopted the Convention's Strategic Plan, including the target to reduce significantly the rate of biodiversity loss by 2010. The meeting also adopted: an expanded work programme on forest biodiversity; the Bonn Guidelines on ABS; guiding principles for IAS; the GSPC; a work programme for the GTI; and decisions on incentive measures and Article 8(j).

COP 7: At its seventh meeting (February 2004, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia), the COP adopted work programmes on mountain biodiversity, PAs, and technology transfer and cooperation, and mandated the Working Group on ABS to initiate negotiations on an international regime on ABS. The COP also adopted: a decision to review implementation of the Convention, its Strategic Plan and progress towards achieving the 2010 target; the Akwé: Kon Guidelines for cultural, environmental and social impact assessments; the Addis Ababa Principles and Guidelines for sustainable use; and decisions on Communication, Education & Public Awareness (CEPA), incentive measures, inland waters, and marine and coastal biodiversity.

COP 8: At its eighth meeting (March 2006, Curitiba, Brazil), the COP adopted a work programme on island biodiversity and decisions on a range of issues including Article 8(j), CEPA, cooperation with other conventions and private sector engagement, PAs, including high seas PAs, incentive measures, biodiversity and climate change, and forest, marine and coastal, and agricultural biodiversity. COP 8 reaffirmed the COP 5 ban on the field-testing of genetic use restriction technologies, and instructed the ABS Working Group to complete its work with regard to an international regime on ABS at the earliest possible time before COP 10, to be held in 2010.

COP 9: At its ninth meeting (May 2008, Bonn, Germany), the COP adopted: a roadmap for the negotiation of the international ABS regime before the 2010 deadline; scientific criteria and guidance for marine areas in need of protection; and the Resource Mobilization Strategy for the Convention. It established an AHTEG on biodiversity and climate change, and adopted decisions concerning a wide range of issues, including biofuels, genetically modified trees, protected areas and language cautioning against ocean fertilization.

COP 10: At its tenth meeting (October 2010, Nagoya, Japan), the COP adopted as a package: the Nagoya Protocol on Access to Genetic Resources and the Fair and Equitable Sharing of Benefits Arising from their Utilization; the CBD Strategic Plan for the period 2011-2020, including a mission, strategic goals and the Aichi Targets aiming to inspire broad-based action by parties and stakeholders; and a decision on activities and indicators for the implementation of the Resource Mobilization Strategy adopted at COP 9. The COP also adopted over 40 decisions, including on: inland water biodiversity, sustainable use, climate change and biodiversity, GTI, IAS, and ways and means to improve SBSTTA's effectiveness.

SBSTTA 15: At its fifteenth session (November 2011, Montreal, Canada) SBSTTA adopted recommendations on: indicators and other tools and guidance for assessing progress in implementing the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020; ways and means to support ecosystem restoration; proposals on ways and means to address gaps in international standards regarding IAS introduced as pets, aquarium and terrarium species, and as live bait and live food; implications of changes in the water cycle and freshwater resources for the implementation of the work programmes on inland water biodiversity; the sustainable use of biodiversity, including revised recommendations of the Liaison Group on Bushmeat, options for small-scale food and income alternatives, and a report on how to improve sustainable use from a landscape perspective; Arctic biodiversity; and ways and means to improve SBSTTA's

effectiveness. The meeting could not reach agreement on the GTI capacity-building strategy, which will be considered again at SBSTTA 16.

INTERSESSIONAL HIGHLIGHTS

CMS COP 10: The tenth COP of the Commission on Migratory Species of Wild Animals (20-15 November 2011, Bergen, Norway) adopted resolutions on, among other issues: synergies and partnerships; the future shape of the CMS; budget; enhanced engagement with the Global Environment Facility (GEF); and climate change and migratory species.

REGIONAL WORKSHOPS ON AREAS MEETING

EBSA SCIENTIFIC CRITERIA: The CBD Secretariat organized three regional workshops to identify areas meeting the scientific criteria for EBSAs for the North-East Atlantic (8-9 September 2011, Hyères, France), the Western and South Pacific (22-25 November 2011, Nadi, Fiji), and the Wider Caribbean and Mid-Atlantic (28 February-2 March 2012, Recife, Brazil). The workshops developed lists of locations and brief descriptions of areas meeting scientific EBSA criteria for consideration by SBSTTA 16 and COP 11.

JOINT EXPERT MEETING ON BIODIVERSITY

CONCERNS IN SUSTAINABLE FISHERIES: Attended by experts from CBD, FAO, UNEP and the IUCN Commission on Ecosystem Management Fisheries Expert Group, the Joint Expert Meeting (7-9 December, Bergen, Norway) reviewed: the extent to which biodiversity concerns are addressed in existing assessments and the impacts on marine and coastal biodiversity of pelagic fisheries of lower trophic levels; and proposed options to address biodiversity concerns in sustainable fishery management and related assessments.

CITES SCIENTIFIC COMMITTEES: The 26th meeting of the Animal Committee (AC) of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES) (15-20 March 2012, Geneva, Switzerland) adopted recommendations on the Review of Significant Trade in specimens of Appendix-II species; the Periodic Review of animal species included in the CITES Appendices. The Joint meeting of the AC and the Plants Committee (PC) (22-24 March 2012, Dublin Ireland) recommended that the second Intergovernmental Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES) clarify CITES participation mechanisms in IPBES. The 20th meeting of the PC (26-30 March 2012, Dublin, Ireland) adopted recommendations on: the progress report on, among other issues: strategic planning; the CBD GSPC; and the Periodic Review of plant species included in the CITES Appendices; timber species, medicinal plants and agarwood-producing species; annotations; and proposals for possible consideration at CITES COP 16.

IPBES 2: At the second plenary meeting on an IPBES (16-21 April 2012, Panama City, Panama), the plenary adopted a resolution formally establishing IPBES as a permanent independent, intergovernmental science-policy platform with its secretariat to be located in Bonn, Germany. The meeting also established two subsidiary bodies, a Bureau, and Multidisciplinary Expert Panel. The meeting also considered the IPBES rules of procedure and the platform's work programme. The meeting left several outstanding issues to be addressed intersessionally, including: certain rules of procedure, particularly on decision making; the possibility of IPBES becoming a UN body; the composition of the Bureau and the Expert Panel and the host institution.