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## SBSTTA 19 HIGHLIGHTS: TUESDAY, 3 NOVEMBER 2015

On Tuesday, SBSTTA 19 delegates met in plenary throughout the day, completing consideration of the agenda items and adopting the first recommendation.

### **BIODIVERSITY AND HEALTH**

The Secretariat introduced the relevant documentation (UNEP/CBD/SBSTTA/19/6 and Add.1). In a video message, Diarmid Campbell-Lendrum, World Health Organization (WHO), presented the highlights and implications of the "State of Knowledge Review: Connecting Global Priorities: Biodiversity and Human Health."

MALAYSIA expressed support, with SAUDI ARABIA, for the One Health Initiative and, with AUSTRALIA, for the promotion of mental health. INDONESIA, with NORWAY, stressed the importance of water quality and marine biodiversity. ISRAEL suggested emphasizing the nature of trade-offs between health and biodiversity.

The UK, supported by AUSTRIA, ISRAEL and BELGIUM, noted that the health-biodiversity link does not have prominence in the current Strategic Plan, calling for more focus after 2020. MOROCCO requested developing guidelines to facilitate the implementation of the One Health Initiative. Ethiopia for the AFRICAN GROUP asked the Secretariat to develop best practice guidance on biodiversity and health, and include this topic under the seventh replenishment of the Global Environment Facility (GEF). BOLIVIA emphasized the role of traditional medicine and cautioned against commodification. BELGIUM proposed that IPBES consider a thematic assessment on biodiversity and health, and parties report on implementation to SBSTTA prior to COP 14.

The REPUBLIC OF KOREA called attention to invasive alien species as a possible source of pathogens. Tonga for PACIFIC ISLANDS recommended further research on public health and oceans. INDIA suggested accompanying reference to sharing knowledge with "fair and equitable sharing of benefits." CHINA called for research on water, air and soil. PERU and SWITZERLAND proposed clarifying that promoting access to genetic resources should be "under the Nagoya Protocol." SOUTH AFRICA emphasized the link with disaster risk reduction (DRR). BURKINA FASO called for more research into habitat loss and transmissible diseases linkages. COLOMBIA recommended consideration of traditional medicinal plants in public health systems and food security policies.

SWITZERLAND, AUSTRIA and NORWAY noted the draft recommendations duplicate or are inconsistent with other decisions. BRAZIL cautioned against exaggerated health-

biodiversity linkages, lamented the broad nature of proposed guidance, and requested a peer review of the State of Knowledge Review.

The IIFB requested recognition of indigenous women's role in biodiversity knowledge and nutrition security. The UNPFII recommended including indigenous practices into good practice guides. BIOVERSITY INTERNATIONAL favored creating a CBD/WHO liaison group to support the implementation of biodiversity and health-related decisions. FUTURE EARTH suggested long-term monitoring of links between ecosystem change and human health. WWF called for an integrated approach toward promoting nature-based solutions to human health and biodiversity conservation.

### **GEOENGINEERING**

The Secretariat introduced the relevant documentation (UNEP/CBD/SBSTTA/19/7). Phillip Williamson (East Anglia University, UK) presented the updated report on potential impacts and regulatory framework (UNEP/CBD/SBSTTA/19/INF/2), highlighting difficulty of assessing impacts on biodiversity and the inability of greenhouse gas removal to fully compensate for earlier emissions.

Egypt for the AFRICAN GROUP stated that COP 10 decision on geoengineering remains valid. The EU recalled COP 10 decision. FRANCE argued that CBD Articles 3 (transboundary damage) and 14.2 (liability and redress) and other conventions on transboundary harm could apply to impacts on biodiversity. The PHILIPPINES, GRULAC, BELGIUM and AUSTRIA invoked the precautionary approach. SOUTH AFRICA pointed out that previous CBD decisions on geoengineering showed leadership, arguing that policy recommendations fall within the CBD mandate. PAKISTAN questioned whether previous CBD decisions had an impact on decision-making elsewhere, requesting legal advice on conflicting decisions under the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) in relation to genetically modified trees.

The EU noted that the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) 5th Assessment Report (AR5) does not consider in detail the impacts of geoengineering on biodiversity. FRANCE and GERMANY suggested inviting the IPCC to study these impacts. The UK recommended reflecting AR5 findings in the documentation, noting that bioenergy with carbon capture and storage (BECCS) is regarded as a component of mitigation. SWEDEN, supported by AUSTRIA, underscored uncertainty around the use of BECCS, especially on a large scale. BRAZIL noted that bioenergy production and reforestation should not be considered geoengineering, emphasizing the need to respect the UNFCCC mandate. Argentina for GRULAC called for a transparent process to develop the scientific basis to understand the impacts of geoengineering, and recalled international

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obligations on transboundary damage, on environmental impact assessments and under the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea.

The ETC GROUP: urged SBSTTA 19 to reaffirm the CBD COP 10 moratorium; objected to inviting the IPCC and IPBES to address biodiversity-related impacts of geo-engineering, as available research is already covered by the CBD update; and stated that BECCS is technically unproven and extremely costly, and will have negative impacts on biodiversity and livelihoods. The GLOBAL YOUTH BIODIVERSITY NETWORK expressed concern about: the AR5 consideration of BECCS as a mitigation opportunity; geo-engineering as a diversion for parties and sectors from emission reduction efforts; and the lack of common understanding on how international regulatory and control mechanisms should address geoengineering. They urged parties to support ecosystem-based approaches to mitigation and make the COP 10 moratorium permanent.

### **FOREST BIODIVERSITY**

The Secretariat introduced relevant documentation (UNEP/CBD/SBSTTA/19/8). JAPAN underscored the importance of the UN Forum on Forests (UNFF). MEXICO urged strengthening the UNFF as a catalyst for debate to help achieve forest-related Aichi targets. COLOMBIA, supported by the GLOBAL FOREST COALITION, called upon the CBD to play a lead role in coordinating activities on forests. NORWAY drew attention to joint activities between the CBD, the Collaborative Partnership on Forests (CPF) and the International Tropical Timber Organization (ITTO), and, with FINLAND, to partnerships beyond the CPF. GERMANY, FRANCE, FINLAND and the UK noted that national forest policies should address both Aichi targets and other forest-related multilateral commitments. NEW ZEALAND recommended seeking synergies, rather than redefining goals, for the CPF members. SRI LANKA supported a synergistic approach among UN forest-related programmes and enhanced collaboration among CPF members in line with the Global Objectives on Forests. ARGENTINA suggested eliminating a specific list of tasks addressed to the CPF.

MOROCCO suggested improving the knowledge base for forest ecosystem management. BRAZIL called for open-data platforms for synthesizing information. SAINT LUCIA called for global mitigation efforts that keep emissions below 1.5 degrees threshold. BOLIVIA recommended a more holistic approach to sustainable forest management, including consideration of poverty eradication, fair trade, stakeholder participation, community forestry, agroforestry and IPLCs' collective role.

FAO recommended identifying critical needs and gaps in supporting countries to achieve the forest-related Aichi targets. WWF requested parties to invite the CPF to open its membership to other organizations with substantial work on forests. The IIFB argued for a definition of forest that excludes monocultures, and called for respect of indigenous peoples' rights to land and territories, free, prior informed consent (FPIC), and fair and equitable benefit-sharing. The GLOBAL FOREST COALITION lamented the lack of consideration of potential negative effects of afforestation and reforestation, including invasive alien species, and expressed concern about SDG target 15.2 on promoting a substantial increase in afforestation and reforestation globally.

### **IPBES**

The Secretariat introduced the relevant document (UNEP/CBD/SBSTTA/19/9). Anne Larigauderie, IPBES Executive Secretary, reported on progress in implementing the IPBES work programme (UNEP/CBD/SBSTTA/19/INF/11), pointing to: the finalization of the assessment on pollinators, pollination and food production; four ongoing regional assessments; and consultations on a draft scoping study for the global assessment of biodiversity and ecosystem services. David Cooper, CBD Secretariat, provided an overview of GBO-5 preparations in the context of the IPBES work programme.

Egypt for the AFRICAN GROUP, requested SBSTTA and the Secretariat to continue to collaborate with IPBES. ETHIOPIA, supported by PERU and BRAZIL, suggested clarifying that SBSTTA work is guided by CBD Article 25 and the Multi-Year Programme of Work. Mexico for GRULAC, the UK, NORWAY and BELGIUM called for an analysis of the contributions of the Strategic Plan to the SDGs and the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda. The UK and NORWAY cautioned against duplication of work while considering technical and scientific needs under the Strategic Plan, with JAPAN seeking clarification on the SBI's role in this respect. The UK recommended the SBI look closely into the format of sixth national reports to ensure timely consolidation of information.

SWITZERLAND called for transparent and replicable technical analysis of implementation of the Strategic Plan and Aichi targets, and invited other biodiversity-related conventions and organizations, including FAO and UNDP, to produce their own assessments in achieving the Aichi targets to contribute to the CBD global analysis. BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA and SAUDI ARABIA called for capacity building to produce national reports. BELGIUM suggested mandating the Secretariat to prepare requests to IPBES to be considered prior to COP 14. NORWAY called for further work on dashboards showing progress on the Aichi targets.

INDIA recommended GBO-5 draw on IPBES outcomes and lessons learnt from GBO-4. The NETHERLANDS said GBO-5 should be based on IPBES outcomes. CHINA said GBO-5 should focus on sixth national reports, and IPBES should take into account the SDGs. FRANCE suggested a process whereby the COP can submit proposals to IPBES for their upcoming work programme. SOUTH AFRICA expressed concern about the independence and quality of IPBES assessments. UNPFII underscored the need to involve indigenous researchers, scientists and traditional experts.

### **POLICY EFFECTIVENESS**

The Secretariat introduced a revised recommendation on tools to evaluate the effectiveness of policy instruments for Strategic Plan implementation (UNEP/CBD/SBSTTA/19/CRP.1). On a compilation and analysis of information submitted by parties on effectiveness, the EU proposed deleting "as an input to IPBES assessments." BRAZIL proposed including "for consideration by SBSTTA." Delegates adopted the recommendations with these amendments.

### **INDICATORS**

The Secretariat introduced a revised recommendation on indicators for the Strategic Plan (UNEP/CBD/SBSTTA/19/CRP.2). ARGENTINA proposed using indicators for "informing," but not for "influencing," decision-making. MEXICO, supported by COLOMBIA and SWEDEN, proposed using indicators for "informing and supporting" decision-making, which was agreed. Deliberations on the recommendation will continue on Wednesday afternoon.

### **IN THE CORRIDORS**

On Tuesday, the frantic pace of deliberations allowed no time for SBSTTA delegates to enjoy the nice weather outside ICAO Headquarters - in fact, some set off the fire alarm for smoking in the restrooms! Amidst a flurry of agenda items, deliberations on geoengineering, expected by many to be controversial, proved surprisingly smooth. Still, numerous participants brooded over the lack of attention given to biodiversity concerns in the IPCC Fifth Assessment Report. Notwithstanding those recalling or reiterating the CBD COP 10 moratorium on geoengineering, including a passionate call from youth representatives to make it permanent, some delegates were troubled that the influence of the CBD on the climate process remains doubtful.