



## SBSTTA 17 HIGHLIGHTS: WEDNESDAY, 16 OCTOBER 2013

Delegates met in plenary throughout the day to hear a report on Tuesday evening's informal session and engage in panel discussions, followed by delivery of statements, on: Strategic Goal D on enhancing the benefits to all from biodiversity and ecosystem services, and on ecosystem restoration; new and emerging issues; preparations of the fourth edition of the Global Biodiversity Outlook (GBO-4); and the CBD contribution to the IPBES intersessional process. Two Friends of the Chair groups met in the evening.

### INFORMAL SESSION REPORT

In the morning, Alexander Shestakov (Russian Federation) reported on Tuesday evening's informal session he co-chaired with Hesiquio Benitez Diaz (Mexico), noting that it produced a draft on identifying scientific and technical needs for the attainment of the Strategic Goals and Aichi Targets. He proposed establishing a drafting group comprising two representatives from each region to draft key findings and some recommendations, and an open-ended informal group to produce an annex on individual Strategic Goals. FINLAND raised concerns over representation and transparency.

In the afternoon, Shestakov reported on a lunch-time Bureau meeting and additional regional consultations, and proposed holding: a "small" Friends of the Chair group comprised of two representatives per region, tasked with addressing the structure of SBSTTA 17 outcome and listing summarized findings arising from plenary discussions; a "big" Friends of the Chair group to consider cross-cutting views and specific elements related to individual Strategic Goals; and plenary on Thursday afternoon to consider the drafts produced by these groups.

### PANEL DISCUSSION ON STRATEGIC GOAL D

Brigitte Baptiste (Colombia) chaired the panel discussion on Strategic Goal D. Ben Ten Brink (Netherlands) presented on land restoration in terms of trade-offs, illustrating the dilemma of competing claims on land and assets over the next decades. Xu Jing (China) presented on China's experiences in ecosystem restoration, applying a top-down approach and involving local governments in phased project implementation. Malta Qwathekana (South Africa) presented South Africa's experience with linking conservation, water security and social responsibility through programmes focusing on skill development, job creation, gender empowerment and poverty eradication. Maria Yolanda Teran Maigua (Ecuador) presented examples on how indigenous peoples and local communities develop traditional knowledge and practices to protect biodiversity.

In ensuing discussions, IRAQ drew attention to land rehabilitation and enquired about experiences in management of shortfalls in water flows. YEMEN and others raised questions

about technology for, and costs of, land restoration. BOLIVIA suggested reflecting in the meeting outcome the challenge of putting goods from communities' production systems on the market.

### STATEMENTS ON STRATEGIC GOALS

The Secretariat introduced documents on Strategic Goal D and ecosystem restoration (UNEP/CBD/SBSTTA/17/Add.4 and 7). LITHUANIA and FINLAND supported using tools already developed under the CBD and other conventions. AUSTRALIA underlined the relevance of monitoring soil microbial communities and further understanding land-use impacts on soil ecosystems. The CBD ALLIANCE hoped for more regionally balanced expert selection and further stakeholder integration in future meetings. The IIFB recommended acknowledging ecosystems' contribution to cultural values and the contribution of such values to the maintenance of ecosystem services; and addressing the effects of nuclear energy on biodiversity, particularly marine species. The RAMSAR CONVENTION noted the need for global comprehensive wetland mapping.

On Target 14 (ecosystem restoration), NEPAL suggested using tools and methodologies developed under Target 11 (PAs), and urged specific work on mountain ecosystems. SOUTH AFRICA described ecosystem restoration as an indispensable complement to conservation in achieving the Aichi Targets. The UK called for integrating ecosystem restoration with poverty alleviation. GUATEMALA highlighted the need to improve capacity in ecosystem restoration. JAPAN drew attention to the Satoyama Initiative, promoting sustainable use in socio-ecological production landscapes and seascapes. LITHUANIA noted challenges in identifying and prioritizing ecosystem services essential for human well-being, and, with BELGIUM, called for focusing on socioeconomic benefits of ecosystem restoration. FINLAND and the UK recommended enhancing understanding of how ecosystem services provide benefits for human health. THAILAND lamented lack of attention to monitoring ecosystem functions. PACIFIC ISLANDS called attention to the cultural and spiritual value of ecosystems and their role in climate change adaptation. UGANDA explained restoration would benefit from up-scaling ecosystem payments, capacity building and involvement of local communities. MADAGASCAR highlighted the restoration needs of mining and oil exploration sites.

On Target 15 (ecosystem resilience), MEXICO pointed to lack of experience in restoration work, particularly with regard to marine and coastal ecosystems, and urged SBSTTA Chair's involvement in IPBES thematic assessment of degradation and restoration. LITHUANIA noted the need for further development of tools and taking into account the location and extent of degraded lands. FINLAND urged further development of tools to assess benefits for human well-being. THAILAND called for criteria for degraded ecosystems. SOUTH AFRICA said the biodiversity sector needs to address adaptation and vulnerability



of ecosystems to climate change. CANADA urged developing additional indicators on combating desertification and better understanding degraded ecosystems. NORWAY recommended better understanding ecosystem resilience in terms of stocking carbon over time, including an indicator on resilience. BELGIUM suggested compiling restoration methods and best practices.

On Target 16 (Nagoya Protocol), ARGENTINA underscored national efforts to develop an adequate legal framework, as well as progress towards ratifying the Protocol.

On Strategic Goal B (sustainable use), TANZANIA highlighted the need for transfer of technologies complemented by traditional knowledge. INDONESIA questioned proposed indicators under several targets. GUATEMALA called for sharing experiences in biocultural landscape management.

On Target 11, COSTA RICA reported on improving representativity of its PA network and reviewing management strategies. NEPAL highlighted community-managed forests and successes in transboundary landscape management. SOUTH AFRICA stressed the need to enhance synergies between the CBD and other biodiversity-related conventions.

On Target 12 (threatened species), THAILAND urged protection of habitats. CONSERVATION INTERNATIONAL suggested using camera traps as a low-cost and effective means to monitor biodiversity. UGANDA urged support to update an inventory of threatened species. PACIFIC ISLANDS called for building capacity to utilize at the national level tools developed under the CBD, and exploring innovative ways to address Target 12. WWF expressed concern about the global crisis in species reduction. The IUCN NATIONAL RED LIST GROUP recommended creating and updating national red lists.

On Target 13 (agricultural genetic diversity), THAILAND highlighted the need for further guidance on conservation of resources of socioeconomic importance, and advising farmers on conservation of biodiversity. The PHILIPPINES stressed the importance of smallholder farmers, pastoralists, indigenous peoples and local communities in safeguarding genetic diversity.

#### **NEW AND EMERGING ISSUES**

The Secretariat drew attention to a submission on the impacts of neonicotinoid pesticides on pollinators (UNEP/CBD/SBSTTA/17/2). MEXICO, with BRAZIL, suggested either addressing the issue under the pollinator initiative of the work programme on agricultural biodiversity or forwarding it to IPBES for consideration under its proposed fast-track assessment on pollination and food production. LITHUANIA and Liberia, for AFRICA, agreed that IPBES could address the issue, with CANADA and BELGIUM also drawing attention to the work of the IUCN Task Force on Systemic Pesticides.

#### **GLOBAL BIODIVERSITY OUTLOOK 4**

Jean-Patrick Le Duc (France) chaired the afternoon's panel discussion. Paul Leadley, University of Paris, presented on the state of work on GBO-4 from the perspective of the Scenarios Consortium, pointing out that the analysis suggests opportunities to protect biodiversity, mitigate climate change and increase human well-being simultaneously. Jan Plesnik (Czech Republic) reported on the second meeting of the GBO-4 Advisory Group held on 13 October 2013 in Montreal, Canada (UNEP/CBD/SBSTTA/17/INF/17). Plesnik explained that the main findings will be presented at the World Water Forum, World Forestry Congress and World Conference on Indigenous Peoples.

The Secretariat introduced documents on progress on the preparation of GBO-4 (UNEP/CBD/SBSTTA/17/5) and EBSAs (UNEP/CBD/SBSTTA/17/6). JAPAN and FRANCE supported including in the GBO a compilation of national reports to assess progress towards the Strategy. GERMANY suggested SBSTTA evaluate the GBO process in light of GBO-4 and ongoing work by IPBES, noting, with NORWAY, the NETHERLANDS and LITHUANIA, that a decision on future GBOs is premature.

#### **CONTRIBUTION TO IPBES**

Jerry Harrison, UNEP World Conservation Monitoring Centre, on behalf of the IPBES Interim Secretariat, updated participants on the Platform's conceptual framework and initial work programme. Anne-Helene Prieur-Richard (DIVERSITAS) presented on the international programme for biodiversity science "Future Earth," as a key scientific partner to generate new knowledge for the CBD and IPBES. Robert Lamb, UNEP, presented on the Biodiversity Mapping Tool developed by the Environment Management Group, bringing together contributions from various UN agencies to achieve the Aichi Targets in a collaborative manner.

The Secretariat introduced the relevant documentation (UNEP/CBD/SBSTTA/17/4/Rev.1). BOLIVIA recommended that IPBES: take into account approaches involving balance with Mother Earth; and focus on new management dynamics, sustainable use of biodiversity and assessing relevant tools and methodologies, taking into account a holistic perspective. The UK, with NORWAY, recalled that IPBES work should be policy-relevant, not prescriptive, and serve multiple demands beyond those of the CBD. The NETHERLANDS supported taking a bottom-up approach in the global assessment of ecosystem services; creating links with regional stakeholders; and prioritizing land use, food security and ecosystem restoration. BRAZIL preferred prioritizing: global assessment of the ecological and socioeconomic implications of trends in pollinator populations and assessment of options to achieve Strategic Goal A; development of policy support tools for promoting awareness and change towards sustainable consumption, for integrating soil biodiversity issues into agricultural policies, and for integrating biodiversity values into development and poverty reduction strategies; and research on biodiversity and ecosystem functions and services, and their relationship to human well-being. The RAMSAR CONVENTION, speaking for the Meeting of the Chairs of Scientific Advisory Bodies of Biodiversity-related Conventions, supported prioritization so that IPBES can "speak out to the different MEAs." MEXICO argued that the CBD should prevent important issues, including migratory species, pollinators and insecticides, from "slipping off the page." THAILAND suggested further work on terminology to ensure wider use of ecosystem assessments.

#### **IN THE CORRIDORS**

Mid-way through the week, the corridors of the ICAO Headquarters continued to buzz with remarks and concerns about the new format of SBSTTA 17. Certain delegations voiced their uncertainty regarding the proposed outcomes: "What will the conclusions be like? Are we negotiating them? And if we are, why not negotiate recommendations? Should we just identify 'key findings' instead?" One seasoned negotiator observed: "It would have helped if such a radical change in our working method had been planned more in advance." Whereas some showed uneasiness at finding themselves outside their comfort zone, others enjoyed experimenting with a "learning environment." They preferred hearing lively and practical accounts of implementation experiences on the ground, rather than having to find them "buried in dry meeting documents." Smaller delegations also appreciated the opportunity to follow the discussions with greater ease.

As participants of the evening informal groups finally warmed up their drafting and negotiating muscles, delegates were left wondering whether the new SBSTTA format may or may not be the beginning of an actual shift in the science-and-policy interface of the Convention and if it has simply been met with resistance to behavioral change from veteran SBSTTA delegates.