Unfted Nations Decade on Biodiversity

Ref.: SCBD/SAMIDC/JL/JG/84 173

Dear Ms. Goettsche-Wanli,

6 February 2015

I would like to refer to the letter of Mr. Miguel de Serpa Soares, Under-Secretary-General for Legal Affairs and United Nations Legal Counsel, dated 10 December 2014,

Annex

Part I. Developments and issues under the CBD relating to ocean affairs and the law of the sea, and oceans and sustainable development

INTRODUCTION

I. This note contains brief descriptions of the work carried out under the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) related to ocean affairs and the law of the sea, focusing on work relating to the integration of the three dimensions of sustainable development. It addresses the following: (i) Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 and the Aichi Biodiversity Targets; (ii)

biodiversity is valued, conserved, restored and wisely used, maintaining ecosystem services, sustaining a healthy planet and delivering benefits essential for all people.” The Strategic Plan aims to achieve this vision through five Strategic Goals and twenty Aichi Biodiversity Targets (http://www.cbd.intlsp/targets/), which provide guidance on the measures and enabling conditions needed to improve conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity. The integration of the three dimensions of sustainable development, in the context of oceans, can be supported through the achievement of the vision of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 and the Aichi Biodiversity Targets.

4. Aichi Biodiversity Targets. There are a number of Aichi Targets that are especially relevant to oceans and sustainable development. Under Strategic Goal B (“Reduce the direct pressures on

5. Twelfth meeting of the Conference of the Parties. The twelfth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the CBD (COP 12) was held from 6 to 17 October 2014 in Pyeongchang, Republic of Korea. The theme of COP 12 and its High-Level Segment was “Biodiversity for Sustainable Development”, COP 12 conducted a mid-term review of progress towards the Aichi Biodiversity Targets and outlined future steps needed to achieve the Targets. This includes two decisions on marine and coastal biodiversity (decision X11122 on ecologically or biologically significant marine areas; and decision X11123 on impacts on marine and coastal biodiversity of anthropogenic underwater noise and ocean acidification, priority actions to achieve Aichi Biodiversity Target 10 for coral reefs and closely associated ecosystems, and marine spatial planning and training initiatives), and a number of other decisions relevant to the integration ofcoastalcoastal

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e. Arctic (Helsinki, Finland, 3 to 7 March 2014);

f. North-West Atlantic (Montreal, Canada, 24 to 28 March 20 14); and

g. Mediterranean (Malaga, Spain, 7 to 11 April 2014).2

Combined with the outputs of the two regional EBSA workshops that were considered by the COP at its eleventh meeting, a total of 204 areas have been described as meeting the EBSA criteria and requested by COP to be included in the CBD EBSA repository. Pursuant to a request by the COP, the summary reports on the outputs of the seven regional EBSA workshops considered by COP at its twelfth meeting will be submitted to the General Assembly and its relevant Working Groups. The scientific information used in the description of these areas will be made available online through the EBSA website and repository (http://www.cbd.intJebsa). The Secretariat will convene additional regional EBSA workshops for the North-East Indian Ocean region in Colombo, Sri Lanka, from 22 to 27 March 2015, and the North-West Indian Ocean and Adjacent Gulf Areas in Dubai, United Arab Emirates, from 19 to 24 April 2015.

10. Synthesis of the impacts of ocean acidification on marine and coastal biodiversily. In decision X1118, the Conference of the Parties requested the Executive Secretary to collaborate with the thtergovernmental Oceanographic Commission of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, relevant scientific groups, other relevant organizations, and indigenous and local communities on the preparation of a systematic review document on the impacts of ocean acidification on biodiversity and ecosystem functions, which will provide a targeted synthesis of

convened, in collaboration with FAO, UNEP and the Fisheries Experts Group of the IUCN Commission of Ecosystem Management, a Joint Expert Meeting on Addressing Biodiversity Concerns in Sustainable Fisheries, held in Bergen, Norway, from 7 to 9 December 2011. The meeting reviewed the extent to which biodiversity concerns are addressed in fishery assessments and proposed options to address biodiversity concerns in sustainable fishery management. The report of this expert meeting (available at: (httix//www.cbd.intldoc/meetings/mar/jem-bcsf-01/official/jem-bcsf-0 1 -sbstta- 1 6-inf- I 3-en.pdf) was welcomed by the COP at its eleventh meeting in 2012.

12. Addressing impacts of anthropogenic underwater noise on marine and coastal biodiversity. Pursuant to decision X1I1 8, the Executive Secretary convened an Expert Workshop on Underwater Noise and its Impacts on Marine and Coastal B iodiversity at the headquarters of the International Maritime Organization, London, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, from 25 to 27 February 2014. The workshop focused on improving and sharing knowledge on underwater noise and its impacts on marine and coastal biodiversity, and discussed practical guidance and toolkits to minimize and mitigate the significant adverse impacts of anthropogenic underwater noise on marine and coastal biodiversity, including marine mammals, in order to assist Parties and other Governments in applying management measures, as appropriate (workshop report available at: http://www.cbd.intldoclmeetings/mar/mcbem 2014-0l/officiallmcbem-2014-01-02-en.pdf). At its 12th meeting, CBD COP welcomed the report of the expert workshop and encouraged Parties, other Governments and other relevant stakeholders to take appropriate measures to minimize and mitigate the potential significant adverse impacts of noise. COP also requested the Secretariat to further facilitate collaboration among Parties, other Governments and relevant organizations on measures to minimize and mitigate the potential significant adverse impacts of anthropogenic underwater noise on marine and coastal biodiversity, and to compile and synthesize relevant scientific and technical information on underwater noise, as well as information on related measures taken by Parties, other Governments and competent organizations.

13. Addressing impacts of marine debris on marine and coastal biodiversity. Pursuant to decision X1118, the Executive Secretary convened an Expert Workshop to Prepare Practical Guidance on Preventing and Mitigating the Significant Adverse Impacts of Marine Debris on Marine and Coastal Biodiversity in Baltimore, United States of America, from 2 to 4 December 2014. The workshop reviewed the impacts of marine debris on marine and coastal biodiversity and prepared practical guidance on preventing and mitigating significant adverse impacts on marine and coastal biodiversity and habitats. The outcomes of this workshop will be submitted to the CBD Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice (SBSTI’A) for its consideration at its twentieth meeting in 2016.

FACILITATING INTEGRATED

temperatures and ocean acidification) as well as local stressors (overfishing, destructive fishing practices, coastal development, tourism and recreational use). The priority actions focus on maintaining sustainable livelihoods and food-security in reef-dependent coastal communities, including indigenous and local

communities.

COLLABORATION, PARTICIPATION, PARTNERSHIPS AND CAPACITY-BUILDING

16. Inter-agency collaboration. COP 12 addressed the importance of cooperation among various
bodies with regards to marine and coastal biodiversity, including on the use of the scientific information regarding the description of areas meeting the EBSA criteria (decision X11J22), anthropogenic underwater noise, priority actions to achieve Aichi Biodiversity Target 10 for coral reefs and closely associated ecosystems and marine spatial planning (decision XIL/23), among other topics. COP 12 also adopted a decision focused on improving cooperation with other conventions, international organizations and initiatives (decision XIL/6). As well, COP adopted decision X1118 in 2012, which noted the need for further improvement and implementation of the ecosystem approach in fisheries management by

enhancing constructive inter-agency collaboration.

17. Full and effective participation. In decision X11122, COP encouraged Parties to promote the use
of the traditional, scientific, technical and technological knowledge of indigenous and local communities at the national level, with their full and effective participation, in support of the description of areas meeting the EBSA criteria and requested the Executive Secretary to facilitate the participation of indigenous and local communities, including fisheries communities, with a view to ensuring their full and effective participation in regional or subregional workshops on the description of areas meeting the criteria for EBSAs. In decision Xlll 8, COP noted the need for further improvement and implementation of the ecosystem approach in fisheries management by enhancing the full and meaningful participation by a wide range of experts on biodiversity, indigenous and local communities, taking into consideration Article 8(j) and 10(c) of the Convention, and relevant stakeholders, as appropriate, in the fisheries management

process.

18. Sustainable Ocean Initiative. In response to the need for training and capacity-building of
developing country Parties called for in various COP decisions, the Sustainable Ocean Initiative (SOT) was formed on the margins of the tenth meeting of the COP in 2010 as a global platform to engage partnerships and facilitate capacity development in order to help accelerate countries’ efforts toward the achievement the Aichi Biodiversity Targets for marine and coastal biodiversity. SOT, which is being coordinated by the SCBD in collaboration with various partners, is focused especially on facilitating information-sharing, creating partnerships for targeted capacity-building to support implementation, enhancing interactive communication among stakeholders in different sectors, and facilitating the monitoring of progress on the Aichi Biodiversity Targets related to marine and coastal biodiversity. In 2013, CBD Secretariat convened, within the framework of SOT and in collaboration with FAO and many other global and regional partners, a regional capacity-building workshop for the West African region (4-8 February, 2013, Dakar, Senegal) and a regional capacity-building workshop for the East Asian, South Asian and Southeast Asian region (9-13 December, 2013, Guangzhou, China) focused on building capacity to achieve Aiàhi Biodiversity Targets related to marine and coastal biodiversity. In 2014, the CBD Secretariat convened the SOT Global Partnership Meeting in Seoul, Republic of Korea from 3 to 4 October. This meeting prepared the SOT Action Plan 2015-2020, which was subsequently launched at the SOT High-level Meeting held during COP 12 on 16 October 2014 (SOT Action Plan 2015-2020 available at: http://www.cbd.intldoc/meetings/mar/soiom-20 14-02/official/soiom-201 4-02-actionplan-en.pdf). The SOT Action Plan 2015-2020 outlines a number of capacity-building activities to be held in the coming years, including regional- and national-level capacity-building workshops, training of trainers and an online information-sharing mechanism. In particular, the CBD Secretariat is co-organizing, together with the Ministry of Environment of the Government of Peru, the SOI Capacity-building Workshop for South America, which will be held in Lima, Peru from 23 to 27 February 2015. The Secretariat will convene additional regional capacity-building workshops for the South Pacific, the Western Indian Ocean and the

Caribbean regions in 2015 and 2016.

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SUPPORTING INTERGOVERNMENTAL DISCUSSIONS ON SUSTAINABLE
DEVELOPMENT

19. COP 12 decision on the post-2015 development agenda and the sustainable development goals.
At its twelfth meeting, COP welcomed the integration of biodiversity and ecosystem aspects into the sustainable development goals developed by the Open Working Group on Sustainable Development Goals and requested the Executive Secretary to continue the collaboration, with key partners, to actively contribute to the discussions on the post-2015 United Nations development agenda and the sustainable development goals (decision XHJ4). Furthermore, the High-Level Segment of COP 12 adopted the Gangwon Declaration on Biodiversity for Sustainable Development, which, among other items, reaffirms the commitment of the Parties to the CBD to provide financial resources and incentives to expedite implementation of the Convention and the Strategic Plan at the national or sub-national level.
20. Scientific and technical supportfor the discussions ofthe Open Working Group on Sustainable
Development Goals. The CBD Secretariat provided scientific and technical support to the discussions of the Open Working Group on Sustainable Development Goals throughout its deliberations. Marine and coastal biodiversity is reflected in the various ways throughout the proposal of the Open Working Group
for Sustainable Development Goals.

21. Scientific and technical support for the discussions of the Ad Hoc Open-ended Informal
Working Group to study issues relating to the conservation and sustainable use of marine biological diversity beyond areas of national jurisdiction. The CBD Secretariat has also provided scientific and technical support to the discussions of the Ad Hoc Open-ended Informal Working Group to study issues relating to the conservation and sustainable use of marine biological diversity beyond areas of national jurisdiction throughout its deliberations. The Secretariat will continue to provide scientific and technical support to future discussions on this topic under the UN General Assembly (UNGA) and other relevant processes under the UNGA, as appropriate.
22. Input to UN Technical Support Team (TST) issue briefs. The CBD Secretariat also provided
input to the UN Technical Support Team (TST) in the development of thematic briefs developed to support the discussions of the Open Working Group on Sustainable Development Goals, including issue briefs on biodiversity and on oceans and seas (available at: https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/index. php?page=view&type=400&nr=1 554&menu=35).

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