



UNITED NATIONS

ENVIRONMENT MANAGEMENT GROUP



4th Meeting of the EMG Consultative Process on Biodiversity Date and time: 29 June 2021, 15.00-17.00	Participants: See Annex 2
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Report of the meeting

Agenda

Subject	Objective
1. Opening remarks by EMG Secretariat	for information
2. Election of the chairs of the meeting	for agreement
3. Adoption of the agenda	for discussion
4. Presentation and feedback on revised draft ToR for an Issue Management Group on Biodiversity along with draft 2021-2022 Workplan a. Sebastian Winkler, EMG Consultant Biodiversity b. Jan Cherlet, EMG Consultant Strategy for environmental and social sustainability in the United Nations system, 2021-2030	for discussion and agreement
5. Update and Information sharing from Agencies on UN Quadrennial Comprehensive Policy Review (QCPR) monitoring framework (Cornelia Pretorius, UNEP - WCMC-)	for information
6. Possible contribution of the Consultative process to key events such as the 3rd CBD OEWG (23 Aug – 3 Sep), IUCN WCC (3-11 Sep), CBD COP15 (11 – 24 Oct 2021). (Neil Pratt, Secretariat Convention of Biological Diversity)	for discussion and agreement
7. Next steps on EMG Consultative Process on Biodiversity	for information and agreement
8. AOB	for discussion

1 & 2. Welcome and Election of the chairs

The meeting was opened by Mr. Fadaei, Head of the Environment Management Group (EMG) Secretariat, who reminded participants that the prime focus of this meeting is to obtain updates from each agency on the 2021/22 Workplan and on the revised draft Terms of Reference (ToR) for an EMG Issue Management Group on Biodiversity to deliver on the outputs of the EMG Consultative Process on Biodiversity and the UN Common Approach on Biodiversity and Nature Based Solutions. He thanked the agencies that have already provided written input on the previous ToRs and noted that these were included in the revised Tor which were made available [online](#) prior to this meeting. Mr. Fadaei noted that given the focus of this meeting and the request of several EMG members that this meeting was a closed meeting for EMG Agency Members only and not the wider Biodiversity Network.

He then asked participants to confirm the co-chairs of the meeting by proposing Mr. Neil Pratt, CBD Secretariat and Ms. Meriem Bouamrane, UNESCO. There were no objections to the proposed chairs.

3. Adoption of the agenda

Ms. Bouamrane, UNESCO and Mr. Pratt, CBD Secretariat presented the agenda which was approved with no amendments. The co-chairs thanked all agencies for their comments on the first draft of the ToR presented at the third meeting of the Consultative Process on the 28th April (summary available [here](#)) which were incorporated and subsequently distributed. Mr. Pratt, CBD Secretariat then introduced Mr. Sebastian Winkler, EMG Biodiversity Consultant.

4. Presentation and feedback on revised draft ToR for an IMG on Biodiversity along with draft 2021-2022 Workplan

a. Mr. Sebastian Winkler, EMG Biodiversity Consultant:

- Mr. Winkler thanked all agencies for contributions and assistance with the public launch of the [EMG Biodiversity Report](#) and the [UN Common Approach](#) on the 25th May, with supporting documentation available on the [EMG website](#).
- He informed participants of the major changes to the previous ToR based on the feedback received from five agencies, most notably reducing the proposed four workstreams to two, namely: awareness raising/knowledge sharing and accountability/ global reporting (See Annex 1).
- This provided the basis for the future 18-month workplan, proposing two workstreams to carry out eleven initial activities. On the first workstream, several agencies have already been identified to take the lead while the other taskforces still require lead and supporting agencies to carry forward the activities proposed in the work plan. He encouraged participants to contact the EMG Secretariat if they would be interested in leading or supporting the implementation of the respective activities contained in the workplan.
- The revised ToR for the Issue Management Group foresees that the ToR and workplan will be reviewed on a biannual basis and proposes quarterly meetings per annum. It foresees two co-chairs to facilitate these meetings and it was suggested that at least for the first year UNEP and UNDP should be assigned to this role in order to ensure continuity with the outcomes of the UN Common Approach on Biodiversity.
- The results of this meeting will be reported to the SOM EMG Mid-Term Meeting (30/06/2021) for information and to the SOM27 Meeting (October 2021) for approval of the final ToRs and 2020-21 workplan. Until October the group will continue to operate as a Consultative Process on Biodiversity.
- Mr. Winkler concluded his presentation by once more encouraging agencies to volunteer for leading or supporting the activities proposed in the 2021-22 workplan.

b. Mr. Jan Cherlet, EMG Consultant for Social and Environmental Sustainability

- The Mr. Cherlet introduced the work he will be presenting on the IMG for developing the UN Environmental and Social Sustainability Strategy (information available on the [EMG website](#)) in order to already ensure synergies and alignment with the proposed reporting activities included in the 2020-2021 IMG Biodiversity workplan as described above

- In 2019 the [Phase I of the Strategy for Sustainability Management 2020-2030](#) was endorsed by the CEB, which contained a commitment for the EMG creating a broader and more comprehensive Environmental and Social Sustainability Strategy developing a vision and addressing governance, support and delivery functions.
- Phase II of the Strategy elaborates a Theory of Change (ToC) to realise this vision.
- Existing action plans, strategies and frameworks will be integrated into one framework by the new Strategy to foster coherence and stimulate an expansion of scopes of current initiatives.
- The Strategy contains ten high-level sustainability principles inspired by the 2030 Agenda and the EMG [Model Approach to Environmental and Social Standards in UN Programming](#).
- The vision of the Strategy is that by 2030 the UN becomes a leader in integrating environmental and social sustainability principles across its work by achieving outputs organised per functional area (governance, delivery and support functions). It is proposed that these will be assessed using a scorecard that outlines milestones leading towards outcome achievement.
- On the timeline, the first draft is currently being circulated for comments. Further comments will be invited in July, finalising the strategy for August. This will be presented at the EMG 27 SOM in September/October and the CEB in November for endorsement.
- Entities will be invited to revise the baselines for the scorecard that assess the milestones. When the Strategy is rolled out, all UN entities will contribute to a system-wide report which ideally and to the extent possible should also reflect the biodiversity reporting requirements developed by the IMG on Biodiversity as outlined by Mr. Winkler.

The Chair thanked both Mr. Winkler and Mr. Cherlet for their presentation and mentioned strong efforts on building synergies between the IMG on Biodiversity and the IMG on Environmental and Social Sustainability. The floor was then opened to comments on the presentations, draft ToR and workplan.

UNDP agreed on the importance of synergies and suggested synergies need to be established with other IMGs including human rights and the environment and green recovery among others. These groups are reaching out to UNSDG and UNDCO to explore options around training, guidance and information sharing.

OHCHR raised concerns about some issues being overlooked in the draft ToR, particularly references to local communities and suggests this should be restored. The Chair agreed that this is a challenge of editing an iterative document and this point will be considered going forward.

UNEP thanked the entities for addressing previous comments in the current draft. UNEP agreed that the national commitments need further fine-tuning in the ToR for clearly established roles and responsibilities. UNEP-WCMC agreed that the implementation is an important point. EMG must provide a visibility of existing resources for knowledge sharing, also being operationalized for discussions at regional levels.

RAMSAR suggests more references to reporting flexibility need to be included in the ToR to allow for further alignment with their internal reporting cycles. The Chair confirmed that an EMG focus is obtaining system-wide support amongst all agencies towards the implementation of multilateral environmental agreements, including as it relates to reporting and monitoring framework in order to support the post-2020 global biodiversity framework.

FAO agreed that it is important to report on implementation, but the burden of reporting becomes heavy at national levels so reporting systems must be in line and communicated to ensure synergies can be realised. Entities should help countries by providing them with tools that can enhance national reporting systems to ensure that synergies are actually promoted for national reporting.

The Chair agreed that the EMG could have an important role in to play in addressing the reporting burden at the national level. The Chair requested that agencies should consider the two workstreams and four task teams identified in the workplan of the ToR and consider whether they have an interest in helping to lead on such elements.

UNESCO agreed with other colleagues on the reporting burden and the points raised by FAO on implementation, ownership and addressing the gaps. The change for the next years will come from entities working together on biodiversity to create transformative change with the EMG supporting this. UNESCO suggests a rotation of agencies to take the lead on chairing could be beneficial for greater ownership and buy-in.

The Chair noted that the proposal in the draft ToR for UNDP and UNEP to co-chair in the initial year would be beneficial for continuity with the UN Common Approach on Biodiversity while noting the importance to consider a rotational co-chairing as proposed by UNESCO.

Several participants raised concerns about additional coordination and reporting obligations being a burden, suggesting responsibilities could be moved to an agency level such as EMG creating a biodiversity mainstreaming page where it is easy to access the information on which agencies have knowledge and information on particular topics. On implementation, several participants raised concerns on the national level about implementation and cooperation gaps between organisations, which is where a focus should be. The ToR should be analysed for realistic implementation gaps and facilitation gaps that EMG can fill. The Chair agreed that information mainstreaming would be beneficial, and the national level gap issue is of importance, but perhaps this should be more explicitly captured in the draft.

The EMG Secretariat suggested another round of commenting on the ToR would be beneficial, including for colleagues that did not have the time to consult internally during the first round. The technical SOM segment will meet in September with the 27 SOM in October to approve the recommendations for establishing an IMG on Biodiversity to support the post 2020 Global Biodiversity Framework and implement the UN Common Approach on Biodiversity up to 2030. The IMG aims to create vertical and horizontal collaboration and share knowledge, resources and expertise and create synergies with other processes through a biannual workplan.

5. Update and Information sharing from Agencies on UN Quadrennial Comprehensive Policy Review (QCPR) monitoring framework

Ms. Cornelia Pretorius, UNEP-WCMC, informed participants that the development of the Quadrennial Comprehensive Policy Review (QCPR) monitoring framework is underway and agencies have been invited to contribute to this framework with proposed indicators. This should be finalised by mid-July. UNEP-WCMC invited entities not currently involved to engage with their respective focal points and

involve themselves in the process to ensure the integration of biodiversity considerations into the OCPR. The QCPR process provides an opportunity for reviewing indicators related to environmental sustainability including the integration of biodiversity.

6. Possible contribution of the Consultative process to key events

Mr Neil Pratt, CBD Secretariat, informed the meeting that options and modalities for COP15, scheduled for October, are currently being considered by the CBD COP Bureau. The third meeting of the open-ended working group on the post-2020 global biodiversity framework will take place virtually from 23 August to 3 September, addressing consideration of the first full draft of the post-2020 global biodiversity framework to be published on 12 July, as well as the issue of digital sequence information.

During the meeting of the open-ended working group, the government of Colombia, which was to have hosted the in-person meeting, will convene a high-level event on 30 August. This will comprise of a panel discussion amongst ministers and heads of states and governments with a view to promoting the development of an effective post-2020 global biodiversity framework.

Preparation of the first draft of the post-2020 global biodiversity framework is taking account of views expressed at the meetings of the subsidiary body on scientific, technical and technological advice (SBSTTA) and the subsidiary body on implementation (SBI), which convened over six weeks from May to June 2021 virtually. The meetings were convened on the basis that the final decisions of these subsidiary bodies, i.e. the adoption of their recommendations to COP, would not be conducted virtually but in face-to-face meetings to be held prior to COP 15, and therefore the meetings have been suspended until they resume in physical setting. The subsidiary bodies were able to make considerable progress.

SBI-3 prepared and approved several draft recommendations for decisions by COP 15 related to the post-2020 global biodiversity framework, knowledge management, the clearing-house mechanism, planning, reporting and review, and the financial mechanism, as well as matters related to the protocols. In some cases, the review and approval of conference room papers was deferred to the resumption of the meeting in its physical setting, including items on capacity building, technical and scientific cooperation and technology transfer, resource mobilisation, mainstreaming, engagement with subnational governments and local authorities, and cooperation with other conventions, international organisations and initiatives.

SBSTTA-24 approved several conference room papers with recommendations for COP, including among others on:

- IPBES, including requests for a second global assessment for 2030 and an assessment on ecological connectivity;
- synthetic biology;
- the review of the international initiative for conservation and sustainable use of soil biodiversity and an updated plan of action;
- conservation and sustainable use of marine and coastal biodiversity, and;
- Invasive alien species.

A synthesis of views expressed concerning scientific and technical advice on the updated goals, targets, related indicators and baselines of the updated zero draft and the post-2020 global

biodiversity framework was also prepared in order to support the co-chairs of the working group in the preparation of the first draft of the framework.

Like the subsidiary bodies, the working group on the post-2020 global biodiversity framework is also convening virtually on the understanding that final negotiations will be undertaken in a physical session prior to COP15.

The CBD Secretariat closed by inviting entities to look at the first draft of the post-2020 global biodiversity framework when it's published on 12 July. The EMG could collate comments and consider preparing a joint statement for delivery at the third meeting.

Several participants noted that the format of the virtual negotiations of SBSTTA and SBI made it difficult for observers to provide statements due to the limited time. The EMG could consider preparing a joint statement for the upcoming OEWG3. The CBD Secretariat acknowledged that this had indeed been a challenge and that if there are significant observations and points of common interest among a number of UN entities, then it would be effective and more streamlined to be able to deliver such points through consolidated statement(s) from EMG on behalf of entities. The CBD Secretariat also noted the new practice adopted at the virtual sessions of SBSTTA and SBI of publishing statements on the meeting page, including statements that could not be delivered owing to lack of time.

7. Next steps on EMG Consultative Process on Biodiversity

The EMG Secretariat informed participants there are currently no set deadlines for the input on the revised ToR and the 2021-22 workplan, but that the final documents would need to be ready by early September for timely submission to the technical meeting of the 27 SOM. The EMG Secretariat would follow up by email, providing some flexibility given the holidays.

The deadline for a possible joint EMG statement to CBD OEWG3 would be 22 July with a proposal put forward by the EMG Secretariat to the group for input on 15 July.

It was suggested to organise the next meeting of the Consultative Process on Biodiversity prior to the technical segment of the SOM in late September and in time for the 27 SOM in October so as to ensure the approval of the final ToR for an Issue Management Group on Biodiversity and of the 2021-22 workplan. This should however not prevent this group to start working on the implementation of the proposed workplan and to put forward their names for the areas of work they wish to lead or support.

8. AOB

No further comments and the Chair closed the meeting by thanking all participants for their active participation and input.

Annex 1: Proposed Workstreams & Activities

Activities	Outputs	Existing processes/ mechanisms for alignment
#1: Awareness raising and knowledge sharing		
Guidance, knowledge products and advocacy material in support of the 15 medium-term objectives (ref Annex 2)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Source and share existing technical guidance, knowledge products and training materials, as well as communications materials / narratives. 2. Encourage EMG members to develop and share succinct internal advocacy pieces to support national and regional engagement. 	Work with EMG members: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Global Divisions and Regional Offices • Secretariats to the UN Decades • Thematic coordination mechanisms
Access to biodiversity-related knowledge products	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. Increase the availability of knowledge products to regional and national teams, as well as other coordination mechanisms. 	Collaborate with: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • UNSDG • Regional Collaborative Platforms • Thematic coordination mechanisms
#2: Accountability & global-level reporting		
Common Approach indicators for the QCPR ¹ Monitoring framework	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Share individual entity inputs and map indicators and potential gaps in reporting on QCPR operational paragraphs related to biodiversity in policy and programming. 2. Liaise with facilities and operations reporting: assess indicators in collaboration with SUN Team and IMG on Sustainability Management; 3. Liaise with DCO and UNSDG representatives on UNCT reporting related to indicators at the national level as part of UN INFO 4. Promote internally a limited number of measurable targets and related indicators to include in the QCPR monitoring framework 	Link with <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • UN INFO • Greening the Blue • Sustainability Strategy Phase I and Phase II
Common Approach reporting framework development	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Produce an overview of the reporting mechanisms relevant to biodiversity; 	Coordinate with <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • UN entities-specific reporting mechanism • CEB/HLCP

¹ DESA is initiating a full overhaul of the current [QCPR Monitoring and Reporting Framework](#). This work is being organized by DESA in its role as custodian of the QCPR, under the overall guidance of the Executive Office of the Secretary-General, and in close collaboration with the UN development system. The data collection instruments that populate the framework, in particular the DESA QCPR surveys, will be revised to enable their (re-)launch in the third and fourth quarter of 2021.

	<p>2. Produce a synthesis of existing data availability, baselines and periodicity of submission of reporting;</p> <p>3. Produce a reporting framework for the Common Approach to biodiversity.</p> <p>3. Report at the global level on collective action on biodiversity to the relevant mechanisms (EMG SOM, CEB/HLCP), as well to the drafting process of the SG's reports on the QCPR.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • QCPR reporting framework
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Annex 2: Participants of the meeting

Name	Organisation	Designation
Ms. Anna Kaplina	EMG Secretariat	Programme Management Officer
Ms. Ariane Joab-Cornu	IMF	Senior Liaison Officer to the United Nations
Ms. Chantal Robichaud	SCBD	Programme Management Associate and Officer
Ms. Corli Pretorius	UNEP-WCMC	Deputy Director
Mr. Daniel Ramos	WTO	Legal Officer
Mr. David Morgan	CITES	Chief of Governing Bodies and Meeting Services
Ms. Elena Mendoza	UNU	Sustainability Coordinator.
Mr. Emanuele Brancati	ILO	Climate Change Adaptation and Green Works Officer
Ms. Fatema Johara	EMG Secretariat	Staff Assistant
Ms. Federica Pesce	UNEP-WCMC	Junior Professional Officer
Ms. Federica Pietracci	CEB Secretariat	Programme Officer, HLCP
Ms. Gita Parihar	EMG Secretariat	Consultant
Ms. Helene van Rossum	UN SDU	Associate Environment and Sustainable Development Officer
Mr. Hossein Fadaei	EMG Secretariat	Head of Secretariat

Ms. Irene Maria Hoffmann	FAO	Secretary of the Commission on Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture
Mr. Jacob Halcomb	UNEP	Sustainable UN Team
Mr. Jan Cherlet	EMG/WFP	Consultant
Ms. Jen Stephens	UNICEF	Disaster Risk and Climate Change Specialist
Mr. Jose Dallo	UNEP	Senior Environmental and Sustainable Development Officer
Ms. Katrin Ehlert	WMO	Agricultural Meteorology, Associate Expert
Ms. Laura Cerasi	CMS	Economic Affairs Assistant
Ms. Lika Sasaki	UNCTAD	Programme Management Officer
Ms. Liliana Annovzzi-Jakab	UNECE	Economic Affairs Officer
Ms. Lisa Farroway	UNDP	Regional Ecosystems Technical Advisor
Ms. Maria Rivera	RAMSAR	Senior Advisor
Ms. Marieta Sakalian	UNEP	Senior Programme Management Officer, Coordinator Healthy and Productive Ecosystems
Ms. Matilda Dunn	Imperial College London	PhD Student
Ms. Meriem Bouamrane	UNESCO	Chief of Section Research and Policy
Mr. Michael Williams	EMG Secretariat	Communications Consultant
Ms. Midori Paxton	UNDP	Head of Ecosystems and Biodiversity
Ms. Monica Iyer	OHCHR	Human Rights Officer
Mr. Neil Pratt	SCBD	Senior Environmental Affairs Officer
Mr. Neville Ash	UNEP-WCMC	Director
Mr. Niels Schulz	UNIDO	Environmental Consultant
Ms. Nina Arden	EMG Secretariat	Sr. Nexus Dialogue Consultant
Ms. Nives Costa	UNOPS	Sustainable procurement consultant
Ms. Nora Adam	UNU	Partnerships and Liaison Officer

Mr. Olana Bezuayehu	WFP	Programme Officer
Mr. Olivier Rukundo	FAO	International Treaty on Plants and Genetic Resource for Food and Agriculture Secretary
Mr. Samuel Sinclair	EMG Secretariat	Intern
Mr. Sasha Alexander Juanteguy	UNCCD	Policy Officer
Mr. Sebastian Winkler	EMG Secretariat	Consultant
Ms. Sofia Gutiérrez	UNWTO	Deputy Director, Sustainable Development and Tourism
Mr. Teo Karayannis	IMO	Head, Marine Biosafety
Mr. Tim Scott	UNDP	Policy Advisor, Environment, Natural Capital and the Environment
Mr. Tsung-Ping Chung	UNIDO	Chief of Strategic Planning and Coordination
Ms. Xin Feng	DESA	Secretariat