

3rd Meeting of the Issue Management Group on Biodiversity

27 October 2022 14.30-16.00 (CET)

Summary Report

1. Welcoming remarks, adoption of the agenda

UNEP introduced the meeting and agenda, to which no amendments were made.

2. EMG Senior Officials Meeting

a) Overview of 28th Senior Officials Meeting (SOM28) of the EMG and main results from the Technical Segment

The Technical Segment of the SOM28 took place on 13 October 2022. The work of the IMG on Biodiversity was the 1st agenda point of the meeting and UNDP, as a co-chair of the IMG on Biodiversity, provided a brief overview of the work undertaken by the IMG and its outcomes over the year. The draft [Accountability and Monitoring Framework](#) was submitted as an information document.

The discussion on this agenda item was very lively with an important number of participants providing comments and feedback. This reflects the importance given to the topic of biodiversity given to the current and future work of the EMG.

The SOM28 will take place on 3 November 2022 from 14h00 – 15h30 CET. As per the discussion note ([EMGSOM.28_5](#)): Under agenda item 3, Senior Officials will consider for adoption the recommendations from the Technical Segment of the meeting on the 2022-2023 EMG work plan. The proposed actions are presented in document [EMGSOM.28_3c](#), and include cooperation on biodiversity, sustainable infrastructure, pollution, environmental rights, and UN sustainability. The Senior Officials will be requested to agree on a one-year extension of the mandate of the IMG on Biodiversity.

Building on the outcome of agenda item 3, under agenda item 4 Senior Officials are invited to consider the overall strategic directions for the work of the EMG. Three questions will guide this reflection: how can the EMG become more future ready; how can the EMG strengthen partnerships to address the environmental dimensions of the SDGs; and how can the UN continue to be a leading example in integrating sustainability across its work?

IMG members are encouraged to review the [SOM documents](#) and to facilitate their Senior Officials' participation in the meeting. Minutes of both the Technical Segment and SOM28 will be made available.

3. Looking ahead

a) EMG events and activities at CBD COP15 (7-19 December 2022, Montreal)

The EMG Secretariat will be participating in COP15 with three main activities/events.

-) A Heads of Agencies dialogue will be organized during the High-level Segment of the COP, with focus on biodiversity mainstreaming and how the collective action of UN System can effectively support Member States in integrating biodiversity into productive sector policies in order to contribute to the achievement of the objectives of the CBD and the post-2020 global biodiversity framework. The dialogue will also look at ongoing implementation of the UN Common Approach to Biodiversity and in particular the integration of biodiversity into the work and policies of UN entities. Further information, including the time, date and venue will be communicated to members in due course.
-) The IMG on Human Rights and the Environment has proposed a multi-stakeholder event on integrating human rights into biodiversity action. This event will present key messages relating to the connection between biodiversity and human rights, as well as guidance on integrating human rights into NBSAPs, to inform an interactive discussion on the UN's role in championing human rights-based action on biodiversity. Confirmation for this event is still pending.
-) The CBD Secretariat has set aside a dedicated space within the Action Zone of the COP for a UN Pavilion. The pavilion will provide a space and the possibility to organize a limited number of interactive sessions to highlight and showcase the work of the UN System on biodiversity. Organization of this space will be coordinated in the coming weeks.

b) Overview of main events / issue areas at COP15, IMG members delegations

At the request of the Chair, the CBD Secretariat provided updates on COP15 preparations.

COP15 will be preceded by the 5th meeting of the Open-ended Working Group on the Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework taking place from 3 to 5 December 2022.

The opening ceremony will be held on 6 December 2022 and will be either an evening or an all-day event, depending on whether a meeting of Heads of State also occurs on the same day.

The high-level segment of COP15 will be held from 15 to 17 December 2022.

There has been a high level of interest in COP15, with many side and parallel events set to occur. Parallel events include the Finance and Biodiversity Day, 7th Summit for Sub-national Governments & Cities, Nature and Culture Summit, Business and Biodiversity Forum, 5th Science Policy Forum, CEPA Fair, and Rio Conventions Pavilion.

Over 800 side event applications were received by the CBD Secretariat, so IMG members that submitted more than one request are encouraged to communicate which of their side events should be prioritized, as only one request is expected to be confirmed per organization.

In response to questions made from members addressed to the CBD Secretariat, the follow information was provided: Facilities will be equipped for hybrid side events. Outcomes from UN side events can be presented in the UN Pavilion through the above-mentioned interactive sessions. UN agencies can also have their own, individual exhibition space, which is not mutually exclusive with the UN Pavilion. Agencies planning to attend COP15 should share

relevant information documents with the Secretariat as soon as possible. Delegates planning to attend in-person should also ensure that, if required, they have the necessary visas.

An initial number of IMG members shared who would be heading their delegations to COP15:

-) IFAD Associate Vice-President
-) Minamata Convention on Mercury Executive Secretary
-) UN-Habitat Executive Director
-) UNDP Administrator
-) UNEP Executive Director
-) UNECE Executive Secretary
-) UNESCO Director General

A number of IMG members also shared information on events they are planning for COP15:

-) WHO running an event on 6-7 December on mainstreaming biodiversity for health. Both IFAD and FAO expressed interest in the event.
-) IFAD also expressed interest in the potential for joint exhibition space.
-) UNDP has planned high-level discussions.
-) UN-Habitat will be launching a white paper that picks up on the Common Approach.
-) UNEP has discussed with FAO a restoration day event. Will run a presentation on best practices contributing to sustainable food systems. Set to provide ad-hoc support and facilitate negotiations during COP15.
-) UNECE to run a high-level event on 15 December and participate in the Cities Summit.
-) FAO confirmed the restoration day event. No official date set, but likely to be on 13 December. Will be in the Rio Conventions Pavilion.
-) UNESCO is highly involved in the co-organization of the Nature & Culture Summit, alongside SCBD and IUCN, to be held on 11 and 12 December.
-) UNESCO facilitated the exhibition of a major art piece within the COP15 venue, developed by the artist Thijs Biersteker from The Netherland. The artwork "Econario" will grow or decline on the biodiversity accomplishment of everyday, as the "thermometer of the conference".

Overall, many IMG members submitted requests for side events and are waiting for a final confirmation.

c) IMG on Biodiversity stock taking and work going forward into 2023

Following the SOM28 and the expected extension of the mandate of the IMG on Biodiversity for an additional year, a draft work plan will be developed during the time between the SOM28 and COP15.

Important considerations for the discussions into the 2023 work plan include a swift approval process for the Accountability and Monitoring Framework so that work in that area can begin; the potential organizations of a number of webinars for information and knowledge sharing; engagement opportunities related to the UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration.

Next steps

With regards to COP15, the following next steps were agreed:

- 1) The EMG Secretariat will facilitate the compilation of key messages from UN Agencies and explore opportunities for sharing common key messages from the UN System at the COP15.
- 2) A form will be distributed to members to compile information on the head and focal points of each agency delegation.
- 3) A digital shared space will be set up for members to update information on the events that each member will be organizing.

The EMG Secretariat will continue to share updates on logistics and other relevant information on the COP and the UN Pavilion.

Close of meeting

With no further comments, UNEP thanked the attendees and closed the meeting.