

Annex. Information on other relevant developments within the Convention on Biological Diversity relating to ocean affairs and the law of the sea

Executive Summary

This note summarizes the work of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) on marine and coastal biodiversity, which has been undertaken in response to requests made by the 11th and 12th meetings of the Conference of the Parties to CBD (decisions XI/17, XI/18, XII/21, XII/22 and XII/23). It is also related to UNGA Resolutions 69/245 and 69/109.

The CBD Secretariat has undertaken a series of regional workshops to facilitate the description of ecologically or biologically significant marine areas (EBSAs). Through nine regional workshops convened by the CBD Secretariat between November 2011 and April 2014 around the world, the EBSA process has compiled a substantial amount of scientific information and described 204 areas meeting the EBSA criteria. The Executive Secretary is presently working with Parties, other Governments and relevant scientific bodies to further advance the application of the EBSA criteria, including compiling information on national exercises on the application of EBSA criteria or similar criteria, further developing the EBSA repository and information-sharing mechanism, developing training materials on the use of traditional knowledge in applying the EBSA criteria, and developing practical options to further enhance scientific methodologies and approaches on the description of areas meeting the EBSA criteria.

The Convention's work on marine and coastal biodiversity also promotes the understanding of the impacts of major threats to marine biodiversity and identifying means to mitigate impacts. This work, which currently focuses on ocean acidification, anthropogenic underwater noise, marine debris, and stressors on coral reefs and associated ecosystems, is carried forward through expert workshops, scientific syntheses, and developing practical guidelines with a view to informing actions to address the identified impacts.

Additionally, the Convention's work on marine and coastal biodiversity also addresses area-based management. Through an expert workshop, compilation of experiences and development of practical guidance, the CBD Secretariat is facilitating the application of integrated marine spatial planning as well as development and effective management of marine and coastal protected areas toward achieving Aichi Biodiversity Target 11.

The Secretariat has also undertaken capacity development through the Sustainable Ocean Initiative (SOI), including a series of regional capacity-building workshops to address regional priority challenges related to achieving the Aichi Targets in marine and coastal area as well as a training-of-trainers workshop, national-level training, and the development of web-based information-sharing mechanism.

The CBD Secretariat has also contributed inputs to the process of developing the proposed Sustainable Development Goals.

INTRODUCTION

1. Building upon the contribution to Part I of the Secretary-General's Report on Oceans and the Law of the Sea, sent by the CBD Secretariat on 6 February 2015, this note consists of brief descriptions of the work carried out under the CBD in the following areas related to ocean affairs and the law of the sea: (i) ecologically or biologically significant marine areas; (ii) addressing threats to marine and coastal biodiversity; (iii) tools and capacity development; and (iv) supporting the intergovernmental process related to Sustainable Development Goals.

2. This contribution includes a detailed description of the work carried out under the CBD, within the framework of the elaborated programme of work on marine and coastal biological diversity (annex I to decision VII/5), related to ocean affairs and the law of the sea. As per the guidance provided, each section indicates the paragraphs of UNGA Resolutions 69/245 (“Oceans and the law of the sea”) and 69/109 (“Sustainable fisheries, including through the 1995 Agreement for the Implementation of the Provisions of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea of 10 December 1982 relating to the Conservation and Management of Straddling Fish Stocks and Highly Migratory Fish Stocks, and related instruments”) to which these activities are most relevant.

Moreover, as recognized in decision XI/17, additional workshops for the further description of areas already described may be held where new information becomes available, subject to the availability of financial resources.

Addressing knowledge gaps and lack of scientific information regarding the description of areas meeting the EBSA criteria

6. Pursuant to decision XII/22, the Executive Secretary is presently working with Parties and other Governments to develop practical options to further enhance scientific methodologies and approaches on the description of areas meeting the EBSA criteria, ensuring that the best available scientific and technical information and traditional knowledge of various users of marine resources, including fishers, are used and that the products are scientifically sound and up-to-date, and will report on progress in this work to

(b) Scientific and technical information and experience relating to the application of the EBSA criteria, or of other relevant compatible and complementary nationally and intergovernmentally agreed scientific criteria, in areas within national jurisdiction (for those Parties and other Governments that have specified that the information is to be included in the repository, consistent with paragraph 18 of decision XI/17 and paragraph 7 of decision XII/22).

10. The EBSA information-

(d) Detailed and practical case studies from different regions of the world to provide insights on various contexts in integrating traditional knowledge in the application of the EBSA criteria.

ADDRESSING THREATS TO MARINE AND COASTAL BIODIVERSITY

Addressing impacts of anthropogenic underwater noise on marine and coastal biodiversity

Relevant to UNGA Resolution 69/245 (paragraphs 176 and 237)

15. Pursuant to decision XI/18, the Executive Secretary convened, with financial support from the European Commission, an Expert Workshop on Underwater Noise and its Impacts on Marine and Coastal Biodiversity at the headquarters of the International Maritime Organization, London, from 25 to 27 February 2014. This 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

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 the biodiversity implications of ocean acidification for marine and coastal systems, building upon the synthesis provided in CBD Technical Series No. 46. Pursuant to this request, the Secretariat published CBD Technical Series No. 75: An Updated Synthesis of the Impacts of Ocean Acidification on Marine Biodiversity, which was originally made available as an information document to the eighteenth meeting of SBSTTA; following additional revision, it was subsequently published as CBD Technical Series report

33. Further to COP decision XII/4 on integrating biodiversity into the post-2015 United Nations development agenda and the sustainable development goals, the CBD Secretariat has collaborated with other UN bodies and MEA secretariats to contribute to the intergovernmental process to develop a set of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Various aspects of the Aichi Biodiversity Targets are reflected in the proposal of the Open Working Group for SDGs. Further information on work within the CBD relevant to the development of SDGs is described in further detail in part 1 of the Secretariat's contribution to the Secretary-General's report on ocean affairs and the law of the sea.