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# COMMITTEE ON FISHERIES

## Thirty-second Session

Rome, 11-15 July 2016

## MAINSTREAMING OF BIODIVERSITY WITHIN AND ACROSS SECTORS

### Executive Summary

This information paper provides background information on FAO's approach for mainstreaming of biodiversity within and across sectors, in particular in fisheries and aquaculture.

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## I. Introduction

1. The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) has a longstanding history of collaborating with the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), as evidenced by a number of decisions and joint work programmes adopted or endorsed by the CBD Conference and Governing and Statutory Bodies of FAO. The CBD Programme of Work on Agricultural Biodiversity,<sup>1</sup> adopted in the follow-up to a joint FAO/ CBD assessment of instruments in this area, identifies assessments, adaptive management, capacity building and mainstreaming as important cornerstones of this collaboration. Since 2006, FAO and the CBD have been collaborating on cross-cutting global initiatives on pollinators, food and nutrition and soil biodiversity.
2. At various occasions, COFI has addressed topics on sustainability that are relevant for biodiversity mainstreaming, for example on the monitoring of the implementation of the Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries and the State of World Fisheries and Aquaculture and the progress in the implementation of the Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries and related instruments<sup>2</sup> and on Combatting illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing<sup>3</sup>. In the 32nd session, CBD related matters are addressed under Agenda Item 10, Global and regional processes, including the indicators for Aichi Biodiversity Target 6.
3. The Conference of the Parties (COP) to the CBD will consider at its 13th meeting, to be held from 4 to 17 December 2016 in Cancun, Mexico, strategic actions to enhance the implementation of its Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 “including with respect to mainstreaming and the integration of biodiversity within and across sectors.”<sup>4</sup> Mexico, in its role as the host of COP-13, intends to highlight the importance of biodiversity mainstreaming for the achievement of the Aichi Biodiversity Targets and the Sustainable Development Goals and will convene a high-level ministerial segment with the aim of facilitating the adoption of a declaration on biodiversity mainstreaming within and across agriculture, forestry, fisheries and tourism. Mexico recently circulated, through the Executive Secretary of the CBD, a non-paper outlining some possible elements of the declaration.<sup>5</sup>
4. FAO’s commitment to mainstreaming and integrating biodiversity within and across agriculture and its derivatives which includes fisheries, marine products, forestry and primary forestry products<sup>6</sup>, is reflected in its Goal 3 on Sustainable management and utilization of natural resources, including land, water, air, climate and genetic resources for the benefit of present and future generations. Under the current Programme of Work and Budget<sup>7</sup>, biodiversity forms an integral part of Strategic Priority 2, Increase and improve provision of goods and services from agriculture, forestry and fisheries in a sustainable manner. COP-13 is expected to recognize FAO’s Reviewed Strategic Framework 2010-19 as an important contribution to the implementation of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 and to the achievement of the Aichi Biodiversity Targets<sup>8</sup>.
5. The CBD Executive Secretary, as well as representatives of the host government of COP-13 have repeatedly stressed the need for FAO’s involvement in (the preparation of) COP-13. The CBD secretariat and FAO consult regularly and closely collaborate in the preparation of COP-13.

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<sup>1</sup> COP decision V/5, Annex.

<sup>2</sup> COFI/2016/2; COFI/2014/2/Rev.1

<sup>3</sup> COFI/2016/5 Rev.1; COFI/2014/4.2/Rev.

<sup>4</sup> UNEP/CBD/COP/13/1.

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.cbd.int/cop/preparation/cop13-hls/default.shtml>

<sup>6</sup> Constitution, Article I.1.

<sup>7</sup> CL 153/3 Medium Term Plan 2014-17 (reviewed) and Programme of Work and Budget 2016-17. Adjustments to the Programme of Work and Budget 2016-17.

<sup>8</sup> UNEP/CBD/SBI/REC/1/4 Strategic actions to enhance implementation of the Convention and the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 including the mainstreaming of biodiversity within and across sectors.

6. This document identifies some of the challenges and opportunities for mainstreaming biodiversity within the fisheries sector and summarizes recommendations adopted in the run-up to COP-13 by the Subsidiary Body on Implementation (SBI) of the CBD.

## **II. Challenges and opportunities for biodiversity mainstreaming**

7. Agriculture, including fisheries and aquaculture, crop and livestock production and forestry, depend heavily on biodiversity and its components, as well as on the ecosystem functions and services that they underpin. The loss of biodiversity can impact these sectors negatively, potentially threatening food security and the provision of ecosystem functions and services that are vital to humanity.

8. However, these sectors also impact on biodiversity through various direct and indirect drivers. The Global Biodiversity Outlook 4<sup>9</sup> singles out agriculture “as the major global threat to biodiversity.” Mainstreaming biodiversity across agriculture means to recognize the essential role of agriculture for world food security, on the one hand, and the essential role of biodiversity which provides the basis of all our food and which is threatened by unsustainable production methods, on the other. Mainstreaming biodiversity across the different sectors of food and agriculture production requires intensification of production based on ecological processes and biodiversity, improved diversity in farming systems and landscapes, including through increased connectivity in area-based conservation systems, and sustainable consumption.<sup>10</sup> Without this transformation, food and agriculture production will continue to destroy biodiversity and thus threaten world food security.

## **III. BIODIVERSITY MAINSTREAMING IN FISHERIES AND AQUACULTURE**

9. The SBI, at its first session, adopted a series of recommendations to COP-13<sup>11</sup> related to mainstreaming biodiversity.<sup>12</sup> It recommended, inter alia, that COP-13:

- Recognize the opportunities that arise from an integrated and mutually supportive implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020, the 10-year strategic plan and framework to enhance implementation of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (2008-2018), and the Reviewed Strategic Framework 2010-2019 of FAO for the achievement of internationally agreed goals and targets;
- Urge Parties to the CBD, and invite other Governments to strengthen their efforts to mainstream conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity within and across various sectors, including agriculture, forestry, fisheries and aquaculture, and tourism at all levels and scales, including by involving relevant stakeholders and by taking into account relevant standards and best practice guidance related to biodiversity in these sectors;
- Urge Parties to the CBD to use, as appropriate, existing guidance relating to the Food and Agriculture Organization’s Sustainability Assessment of Food and Agriculture Systems Guidelines and the Policy Support Guidelines for the Promotion of Sustainable Production Intensification and Ecosystem Services, take note of the voluntary guidance on Building a

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<sup>9</sup> Global Biodiversity Outlook 4.

<sup>10</sup> UNEP/CBD/SBSTTA/20/15 Mainstreaming of Biodiversity across sectors including Agriculture, Forests and Fisheries.

<sup>11</sup> Strategic actions to enhance implementation of the Convention and the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 including the mainstreaming of biodiversity within and across sectors.

<sup>12</sup> UNEP/CBD/SBI/REC/1/4,

Common Vision for Sustainable Food and Agriculture and encourage Parties and invite other Governments to apply this guidance, as appropriate;

- Take note of the Voluntary Guidelines on the Responsible Governance of Tenure of Land, Fisheries and Forests in the Context of National Food Security, endorsed by the Committee on World Food Security and encourage Parties and invite other Governments to make use of this guidance, as appropriate, to promote secure tenure rights and equitable access to land, fisheries and forests;
- Encourage Parties to the CBD and invite other Governments, as appropriate:
  - to reduce and reverse biodiversity loss, through the implementation, as appropriate, of sectoral and cross-sectoral strategies and integrated landscape and seascape management that foster sustainable practices, identify potential measures to contribute to the health and resilience of ecosystems and consider spatial and regional approaches as well as appropriate measures to promote the conservation and restoration of areas of particular importance for biodiversity and ecosystem services, habitats of threatened species, and recovery of endangered species;
  - To create and strengthen cross-sectoral coordination mechanisms that enable biodiversity mainstreaming across agriculture, forestry, fisheries and aquaculture, tourism and other sectors, and to establish milestones for the mainstreaming of biodiversity in national agendas;
  - To enhance monitoring of the use of natural resources, such as land, soil and water in all sectors, including agriculture, forests, fisheries and aquaculture, among others, and to improve public access to monitoring data.
- Request the Executive Secretary, subject to the availability of resources, to prepare and disseminate to Parties, in collaboration with the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations and other relevant partners, further guidance on the concept of “sustainability” in food and agriculture with regard to biodiversity, and to promote and strengthen support for relevant information-sharing and technology transfer among Parties, in particular for developing countries, building on existing initiatives, where feasible, such as the Satoyama Initiative, consistent with decisions X/32 and XI/25, and consistent with international obligations.

10. More specifically, the SBI adopted recommendations to COP-13 on fisheries and aquaculture, that COP-13:

- Recognize that healthy marine, coastal and inland waters ecosystems and biodiversity are essential to achieving sustainable increases and improved resilience in the provision of food and livelihoods;
- Also recognize that there are currently a number of fisheries that are not sustainably managed and aquaculture operations and practices with significant negative impacts on biodiversity and habitats;
- Further recognize Sustainable Development Goal 14 and its targets 2, 4 and 6, which refer to sustainable management and restoration of marine ecosystems, to effective regulation of harvesting, and to prohibition of certain forms of perverse incentives in fisheries, respectively;
- Recall decision XI/18 and encourage fisheries management organizations to further consider biodiversity-related matters in fisheries management in line with the ecosystem approach, including through inter-agency collaboration and with the full and meaningful participation of indigenous peoples and local communities;
- Recall decisions X/29 and XI/18, in which it emphasized the importance of collaborating with the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, regional fisheries bodies and the regional seas conventions and action plans with regard to addressing biodiversity considerations in sustainable fisheries and aquaculture;
- Recognize that various relevant international instruments, including the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, the 1993 FAO Compliance Agreement, 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, with respect to their Contracting Parties, and the 1995 FAO Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries, together with accompanying guidelines and plans of

- actions, represent, for their Contracting Parties, a comprehensive global framework for fisheries policy and management and support mainstreaming of biodiversity in fisheries and aquaculture;
- Encourage Parties, and invite other Governments and relevant organizations to use available instruments to achieve Aichi Biodiversity Target 6;
  - Recall paragraph 55 of decision X/29 and encourage Parties and invite other Governments to ratify the FAO Agreement on Port States Measures to Prevent, Deter and Eliminate Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated Fishing, adopted in 2009, which provides a means of addressing such fishing activities;
  - Also recall decisions X/29, XI/17 and XII/22, and calls for further collaboration and information-sharing among the Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, and regional fishery bodies regarding the use of scientific information on areas meeting the criteria for ecologically or biologically significant marine areas and vulnerable marine ecosystems in support of achieving various Aichi Biodiversity Targets;
  - Urge Parties and invite other Governments to use, as appropriate, existing guidance related to the ecosystem approach to fisheries and aquaculture;
  - Encourage Parties and invite other Governments to improve synergies in managing pressures in marine and freshwater environments, including through the implementation of the Priority Actions to Achieve Aichi Biodiversity Target 10 for Coral Reefs and Closely Associated Ecosystems;
  - Urge Parties and invite other Governments to establish, if necessary, or strengthen existing mechanisms of governance of fisheries, and take biodiversity considerations, in particular the precautionary approach, in line with the preamble of the Convention, fully into account when designing and implementing policies for fishing capacity management and reduction, including measures and regulations with a view to promoting the conservation and recovery of endangered species;
  - Also urge Parties and invite other Governments to provide access for small-scale artisanal fishers to marine resources and, if appropriate, markets;
  - Encourage competent intergovernmental organizations to further strengthen collaboration regarding marine biodiversity and fisheries;
  - Welcome the ongoing cooperation between the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, the International Union for Conservation of Nature and the Executive Secretary, to improve reporting and support for the implementation of Aichi Biodiversity Target 6;
  - Invite the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations and the Committee on Fisheries to consider and further support the development and implementation of measures, guidance and tools for promoting and supporting the mainstreaming of biodiversity in the fisheries and aquaculture sectors; and
  - Request the Executive Secretary of the CBD and invite the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations to compile, in collaboration, the experiences in mainstreaming biodiversity in fisheries, including through the ecosystem approach to fisheries, and make this compilation available prior to the Conference of the Parties at its fourteenth meeting.

#### **IV. Conclusion**

11. The Committee may wish to consider the above recommendations with a view to guide the integration of biodiversity within the fisheries and aquaculture sector and across the different sectors.