



Convention on Biological Diversity

BUREAU OF THE SUBSIDIARY BODY ON SCIENTIFIC,
TECHNICAL AND TECHNOLOGICAL ADVICE
8h00 to 10h00 Montreal
Via teleconference (Microsoft Teams)
13 October 2020

MINUTES

1. A meeting via teleconference of the Bureau of the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice (SBSTTA) was held on Tuesday 13 October 2020, from 8:00 to 10:00 (Montreal time).
2. The meeting was attended by the following members of the Bureau: Mr. Hesiquio Benitez Diaz (Mexico), Chair, Mr. Moustafa Fouda (Egypt), Mrs. Marie-May Muzungaile (Seychelles), Mr. Larbi Sbai (Morocco), Mrs. Senka Barudanovic (Bosnia-Herzegovina), Mr. Dzmitry Lukashanets (Belarus), Mr. Adams Toussaint (Saint-Lucia), Mrs. Helena Brown (Antigua & Barbuda), Mrs. Marina von Weissenberg (Finland), Mrs. Tia Stevens (Australia) and Mr. Gaute Voigt-Hanssen (Norway). Apologies were received from Mr. Volodymyr Domashlinets (Ukraine), Mrs. Kongchay Phimmakong (Lao People's Democratic Republic) and Ms. Gwen Sisor (Palau).
3. The meeting was supported by the CDB Secretariat including Mr. Alexander Shestakov, Mr. David Cooper, Mrs. Jyoti Mathur-Filipp and Mrs. Véronique Allain.

1. OPENING OF THE MEETING

4. The meeting was opened at 8:00 a.m. on Tuesday, 13 October 2020 by the SBSTTA Chair.

2. ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

5. The SBSTTA Chair presented the only agenda item for the meeting - Proposal for the organisation of online Meeting of the Subsidiary Body.

3. PROPOSAL FOR ORGANISATION OF ONLINE MEETING OF THE SUBSIDIARY BODY

6. The SBSTTA Chair shared his expectations for the meetings and questions to be considered during the meeting including:

- (a) Decision on organisation of the formal online SBSTTA-24 meeting in December 2020;
- (b) Organisation and modalities for the informal online session prior to the formal meeting to test the format and modality;
- (c) Topic for the online informal meeting;
- (d) Selection of agenda items for the formal online SBSTTA-24 meeting;
- (e) Organisation of the information briefing session on SBSTTA-24 agenda items other than item 3.

Decision on organisation of the formal online SBSTTA-24 meeting in December

7. The Chair and some Bureau members reflected on the last meeting between the SBSTTA and COP Bureaux (8 October 2020) where no decision was taken on the option for the organisation of the online meetings of the subsidiary bodies.

8. Bureau members exchanged opinions on the organisation of the SBSTTA-24 online formal meeting. Bureau members highlighted the importance of keeping the momentum and making progress towards COP-15. They also recalled positions expressed by leaders of governments around the world at the UN Biodiversity Summit on 30 September 2020 and stressed that the Convention should be in line with the messages from the Summit including the urgency in taking action.

9. Bureau agreed and decided to organise online a formal SBSTTA-24 meeting in the period 10-17 December 2020.

10. While agreeing on going ahead with the online formal meeting, the Bureau made it clear that the organisation of the meeting should follow the updated note presented to both Bureaux prior to their meeting held on 8 October 2020 and in particular reiterated the following elements:

- (a) The online SBSTTA-24 meeting will include **only the first reading** of pre-session documents for agenda items;
- (b) No CRPs will be considered at the meeting;
- (c) All Parties will have an opportunity to speak on each agenda item;
- (d) All statements will be recorded and all written submissions will be made available online.

11. The Bureau agreed to proceed with the formal online meeting under the following condition to be clearly expressed in the decision of both Bureaux:

“Decision to organise a formal session of the twenty-fourth meeting of the SBSTTA in an online format is without prejudice for the modalities for the subsequent sessions of the meeting in 2021. The modalities for the resumed and any subsequent sessions would be decided through an explicit decision, case by case, by the Bureaux, in light of the experience of the first session.”

12. The Bureau further discussed the issue of preparing CRPs as an outcome of the meeting. Some members expressed a concern from their regions about developing CRPs as an outcome of the formal online meeting. Others reiterated the need to follow existing rules of procedure and legal requirements to formal meeting of the subsidiary body when CRP as an in-session document need to be prepared as an outcome of the first reading. The Chair further reiterated that the CRPs as per procedure will be developed only when a high level of convergence in views will be observed on the basis of interventions. Also all written submissions will be used for the preparation of CRPs as per standard practice (all submissions will be

available online). It was also mentioned that the CPRs are NOT FOR DISCUSSION at the online meeting in December 2020. CRPs could only be issued on resumption of the meeting in 2021.

13. The Bureau agreed on the importance to have informal online session prior to the formal meeting to test all modalities which are planned for the formal meeting. And decided on a two-day's meeting.

14. The Representative of the EU stressed that the EU is ready to provide necessary funding for organisation of informal session as well as making funding available for having longer formal meetings (number of days or hours per day).

15. The Secretariat and Chair will consult with representatives of regions, and as appropriate, organize regional meetings, to clarify the procedures and address any concerns they may have concerning the virtual arrangements. status of the first reading and subsequent CRPs (of alternative) for better understanding of the procedure. The Bureau members raised a concern that if CRPs are both prepared this will mean the second round of the first reading later and this will be significant waste of efforts, money and time with significant financial implications for the Convention.

Informal online session prior formal meeting

16. The Secretariat presented key points on the nature and modalities for the organisation of informal session based on consultations between SBSTTA and SBI Chairs and the Secretariat last week including:

(a) Session will be informal, with no negotiations, no outcomes or any type of conclusions or documents coming out of the meeting. A procedural report may be prepared;

(b) The meeting will fully replicate the modalities proposed in the Updated proposal on Online Meetings of the CBD Subsidiary Bodies previously presented to and discussed by COP and SBSTTA Bureaux including being held in all 6 languages;

(c) One specific topic, as decided by both Bureaux, will be discussed at the meeting;

(d) All Parties will be provided with an opportunity to speak with the priority given first to the regions and groups, then individual delegations. Good number of observers will also be accommodated;

(e) SBI or SBSTTA Chair will open the informal meeting followed by sort (5 min) introduction of the agenda item (any topic as selected for the informal session from agenda items of a subsidiary body(es)) by the SCBD similar to the ordinary session of the physical meeting;

(f) As appropriate, the Chair will invite an identified expert to deliver a keynote statement (7-15 min) similar to the ordinary session of the physical meeting. The statement would be pre-recorded and played during the meeting with translation into all 6 UN languages. The pre-recorded statement will also be available 5 days ahead of the session;

(g) The Chair would first call for Party representatives of regional and other groups to speak for 6 min each (in alphabetical order) followed by other participants following the usual sequence: Parties, other governments, IGOs, IPLC, women's organizations, youth, NGOs. Every speaker will have 3 min for an intervention;

(h) If there are still Parties in the queue at the end of the two hours on the first day, they will be carried over to the second day (as per usual practice during physical meetings);

(i) The meeting will be closed on the first day if there will be no more request for the floor.

17. The Bureau while reiterating the importance of having the session highlighted the following points to be considered when organising the session:

(a) To a maximum extend include all elements which are planned for the formal meeting;

(b) Have pre-session document(s) on topic of the session available prior to the meeting to facilitate preparations of statements;

- (c) Key note presentation to the topic to be pre-recorded, be available in advance of the meeting and ready to be played during the meeting;
- (d) Encourage Parties and observers to provide their statements in advance to facilitate translation;
- (e) Respect time limits for interventions;
- (f) Test organisation of regional groups meetings;
- (g) Invite Parties with technical issues around connectivity to prepare and send to the Secretariat the pre-recorded statements which can be used by the Secretariat as a backup option in case of technical issues for these Parties during the meeting;
- (h) Need to explore technical option for an opportunity to have the list of several upcoming speakers in sequence being available to speakers to be better prepared and avoid any disruptions in the flow of interventions.

Topic for online informal meeting

18. Topic of the informal meeting should be:

- (a) Related but not identical to any formal agenda items;
- (b) Interesting for all;
- (c) Documents to be prepared in advance.

19. Based on considerations above the Bureau decided to choose the topic on the interlinkages between COVID-19, biodiversity and One Health approach as a theme for the informal session. The Bureau requested the Secretariat to develop a simple concept note for organising the sessions around this topic. The Bureau agreed to have informal session in two days.

20. The Bureau had no time to discuss the last two elements of the agenda item related to the selection of agenda items for the online formal meeting and organisation of information briefing sessions. The Bureau decided to take these topics for consideration at its next meeting. Some Bureau members expressed their desire to cover all SBSTTA-24 agenda items during on-line meeting in December.

4. CLOSURE OF THE MEETING

21. The Bureau meeting closed at 10:15 hrs.

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