



## NOTIFICATION

### **Submission of new descriptions, and modifications to existing descriptions, of ecologically or biologically significant marine areas, and webinar and handbook regarding the process for these submissions**

Dear Sir or Madam,

In its decision 16/16, the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity adopted the modalities for the modification of descriptions of ecologically or biologically significant marine areas (EBSAs) and the description of new areas, and requested the Executive Secretary to facilitate the implementation of the modalities.

This notification is to (i) inform Parties and other Governments that the Secretariat is now able to receive submissions of new EBSA descriptions and modifications of existing EBSA descriptions, in line with the modalities provided in the annex to decision 16/6, (ii) announce a webinar to provide an overview of the EBSA modalities, and (iii) announce the publication of a handbook intended to enhance understanding of the modalities.

As noted above, eligible proponents may submit to the Secretariat descriptions of new EBSAs and modifications to descriptions of existing EBSAs, in line with the modalities contained in the annex to decision 16/16. Proponents should consult the decision as well as the handbook referred to below for information regarding the modalities. The EBSA website ([www.cbd.int/ebsa](http://www.cbd.int/ebsa)) is currently being updated in line with the modalities.

The Secretariat is convening an information webinar on 9 April 2025 to provide an overview of the modalities for the modification of existing descriptions of EBSAs or the description of new EBSAs. The webinar will be held twice, from 9:00 a.m. to 10:30 a.m. EDT (GMT-4) and from 9:00 p.m. to 10:30 p.m. EDT (GMT-4), to accommodate participants from different time zones.

In addition, the Secretariat has recently produced a handbook on the modalities for the modification of existing EBSA descriptions and the description of new EBSAs that is intended to provide clarity and understanding regarding the steps and procedures involved in this process (available at: <https://www.cbd.int/marine/ebsa/ebsa-handbook-en.pdf>). Please note, however, that this handbook has no formal status and is not intended to be a substitute for the text contained in decision 16/16.

I wish to note some important points regarding submissions:

- Submissions intended to be included in the EBSA repository must be prepared using the [template for ecologically or biologically significant marine areas](#); the template is optional for submissions intended for the information-sharing mechanism;

To: CBD National Focal Points, Marine and Coastal Biodiversity Focal Points, SBSTTA Focal Points, indigenous peoples and local communities and relevant global and regional organizations and initiatives

- Regarding eligible proponents:
  - Submissions addressing areas beyond national jurisdiction may be provided by any State, individually or collectively, including through competent intergovernmental organizations.
  - Submissions addressing areas within national jurisdiction can only be provided by the State within whose jurisdiction the modification or description is proposed.
  - Submissions must be sent to the Secretariat by the CBD National Focal Point (with respect to States) or by the head of the Secretariat (with respect to competent intergovernmental organizations).

Please accept, Sir, Madam, the assurances of my highest consideration.

(*Signed*) Astrid Schomaker  
Executive Secretary