

BirdLife International

Position on selected agenda items for CBD COP13

Cancun, Mexico, 2016

COP13 challenges CBD Parties to take biodiversity beyond the environmental arena, to deliver conservation solutions in the sectors that depend most heavily upon healthy natural ecosystems: agriculture, forestry, fisheries and tourism.

This is an important step towards effective implementation of the Convention and one that can be considered as the starting point of a synergistic and integrative implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals.

BirdLife International urges Parties to increase focus on enhanced implementation of the *Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020*, and to reach agreement on measures to accelerate progress towards the Aichi Biodiversity Targets.

This document presents the position of BirdLife International in relation to the following agenda items:

- Interim review of progress towards the implementation of the *Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020* and the achievement of the Aichi Biodiversity Targets
- Progress towards the achievement of Aichi Biodiversity Targets 11 and 12
- Indicators for the *Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020* and the Aichi Biodiversity Targets
- Marine and coastal biodiversity: ecologically or biologically significant marine areas
- Resource mobilisation

BirdLife International has also prepared a position statement on 'Mainstreaming of biodiversity across sectors, including agriculture, forests and fisheries', which is available on request.

KEY RECOMMENDATIONS:

STRATEGIC PLAN FOR BIODIVERSITY: NATIONAL BIODIVERSITY STRATEGIES AND ACTION PLANS (NBSAP)

- Parties should promote cross-sectoral involvement in NBSAP implementation and designate NBSAPs as national policy instruments to be implemented across sectors.

PROGRESS TOWARDS THE ACHIEVEMENT OF AICHI TARGETS 11 AND 12

- Parties are urged to develop and implement road maps to address all elements of Target 11, including conservation of areas of particular importance for biodiversity.

- Parties are encouraged to use the global list of Key Biodiversity Areas (KBA) – which includes Important Bird and Biodiversity Areas (IBA) – as a tool for identifying and conserving areas of particular importance for biodiversity.

INDICATORS FOR THE STRATEGIC PLAN FOR BIODIVERSITY 2011-2020 AND THE AICHI BIODIVERSITY TARGETS

- BirdLife welcomes the results of the AHTEG on indicators and calls Parties' attention to the utility of the indicative list for: measuring progress and reporting; providing baseline information for planning; and, informing and building synergies with the 2030 Sustainable Development agenda.

MARINE AND COASTAL BIODIVERSITY: ECOLOGICALLY AND BIOLOGICALLY SIGNIFICANT MARINE AREAS (EBSA)

- BirdLife welcomes the three new EBSA reports presented: North-East Indian Ocean, North-West Indian Ocean and Adjacent Gulf Areas, and Seas of East Asia
- BirdLife welcomes the report 'Options regarding procedures for modifying the description of EBSAs or facilitating the process of making descriptions of new ones'
- Parties are encouraged to utilise the list of Important Bird and Biodiversity Areas (IBA) as a key input into the EBSA process.
- Parties should ensure that EBSAs are incorporated into the discussions of the UN-led process on the conservation and sustainable use of marine biological diversity of areas beyond national jurisdiction.

RESOURCE MOBILIZATION:

- BirdLife encourages Parties to develop, implement and exchange information about effective measures to enhance resource mobilisation and efficiency by mainstreaming biodiversity across sectors at all levels of government
- Parties should report on their investment in biodiversity conservation to improve transparency and accountability, and provide baseline information for future planning.

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STRATEGIC PLAN FOR BIODIVERSITY: ASSESSING PROGRESS AND ENHANCING IMPLEMENTATION / NATIONAL BIODIVERSITY STRATEGIES & ACTION PLANS

Recommendation SBI I/1 and UNEP/CBD/COP/13/8

The results of the assessment conducted by the CBD Secretariat of the revised NBSAPs raise important concerns about the prospects for successful delivery of *Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020* and achievement of national and global conservation goals.

While there is evidence of positive progress on a number of Aichi Targets, the overall picture is poor, with inadequate progress to date in most countries and levels of future ambition that will result in a failure to meet the Aichi Targets.

While there is no 'one size fits all' type of measure that results in successful implementation of the Convention, it is widely agreed that NBSAPs are key for guiding and delivering effective national action.

BirdLife compliments all Parties that have revised their NBSAP, and encourages Parties to take further action to scale up and accelerate national implementation efforts in line with the *Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020*.

However, we remain concerned that very few countries have addressed resource mobilisation, mainstreaming and the role of other ministries in their NBSAP process.

Parties should promote cross-sectoral involvement in the implementation of NBSAPs, and designate NBSAPs as national policy instruments to be implemented across sectors.

BirdLife's contribution to NBSAP revision and implementation

The BirdLife Partnership has participated in the revision and implementation of NBSAPs in many countries. BirdLife is a recognised partner of the NBSAP Forum, and contributes expertise and scientific information to support NBSAP implementation. BirdLife is a member of the CBD-led Aichi Biodiversity Targets Task Force.

PROGRESS TOWARDS AICHI TARGET 11: PROTECTED AREAS AND KEY BIODIVERSITY AREAS

SBSSTA Recommendation XX/1

Protecting important sites has been a key priority for many of the CBD Parties. While the recent GBO4 and CBD Secretariat assessments show significant progress against the first element of Target 11 (percentage of terrestrial and freshwater areas protected), additional effort is needed to meet the remaining elements of the target, including: protection of coastal and marine areas, areas important for biodiversity and ecosystem

services; ecological representation; effective and equitable management; and, integration of protected areas into the wider landscape and seascape.

BirdLife congratulates the CBD Secretariat for its outstanding efforts to collate baseline information and support Parties to identify gaps and design road maps with priority actions on protected areas and threatened species towards 2020.

BirdLife urges Parties to develop and implement road maps to address all elements of Target 11, including conservation of areas of particular importance for biodiversity and increased protection of the marine environment.

BirdLife encourages Parties to use the list of Key Biodiversity Areas (KBA) – which includes Important Bird and Biodiversity Areas (IBA) and Alliance for Zero Extinction (AZE) sites – as a tool for identifying and conserving areas of particular importance for biodiversity.

KBAs are identified using the *Standard for the Identification of Key Biodiversity Areas*, documented and supported by the best available scientific information, with standardised criteria and thresholds. Systematic conservation of KBAs has the potential to contribute to achievement of Targets 2, 4, 11, 12, 14, 20 (for more information see: [UNEP/CBD/COP/13/INF/xx](#))

BirdLife contribution to the protected areas agenda

Since 1970, BirdLife has identified over 13,000 Important Bird and Biodiversity Areas (IBAs), both on land and at sea. These are sites of international significance for the conservation of the world's birds and other biodiversity that provide essential benefits to people, including products and services.

BirdLife has been working with the CBD Secretariat and Parties to guide the establishment of protected areas, with a focus on identification and conservation of areas of particular importance for biodiversity and ecosystem services.

Over the past year, BirdLife has assisted with preparation of country dossiers for regional capacity building workshops on Targets 11 and 12 organised by the CBD Secretariat, and is prepared to support the development and implementation of regional road maps for achieving these Targets.

BirdLife hosts the secretariat of the recently launched KBA Partnership and has worked with IUCN on the development of the *Standard for the Identification of Key Biodiversity Areas*. The World Database of Key Biodiversity Areas™ is managed by BirdLife International on behalf of the KBA Partnership.

INDICATORS FOR MEASURING PROGRESS

SBSTTA Recommendation XX.13 and UNEP/CBD/COP/13/20

BirdLife recognises the importance of a regular process to monitor progress of the *Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020*, and welcomes the Global Biodiversity Outlook approach of combining multiple strands of evidence to assess implementation of the *Strategic Plan*.

BirdLife welcomes the results of the AHTEG on indicators and call Parties' attention to the utility of the indicative list for:

- **measuring progress and reporting;**
- **using the results as baseline information for planning; and**
- **informing and building synergies with the Sustainable Development Goals.**

BirdLife welcomes the work of the Biodiversity Indicators Partnership (BIP) in developing guidance on the use of the national indicators and monitoring progress towards the Aichi Targets. BirdLife calls for the support of Parties to allow further work by the Partnership to fill gaps, develop national indicators and disaggregate global indicators.

BirdLife contribution to the indicator agenda

BirdLife is a leader in indicator development, and produces indicators based on extensive datasets relating to:

- extinction risk of species – the Red List Index
- trends in population abundance – the Wild Bird Index
- protected area coverage of Key Biodiversity Areas.

During COP13, BirdLife International, IUCN, UNEP-WCMC and Conservation International will launch a new version of the Integrated Biodiversity Assessment Tool (IBAT) which will, for the first time, produce tailored *Country Profiles* to support national conservation planning and reporting.

Each *Country Profile* presents information on *species* from the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species™, *protected areas* from the World Database of Protected Areas (WDPA) and on *Key Biodiversity Areas* (KBAs) from the World Database on Key Biodiversity Areas. This information is highly pertinent for NBSAP implementation, monitoring and reporting.

BirdLife encourages Parties to utilise, as appropriate, global datasets built upon nationally provided information, such as the [World Database of Key Biodiversity Areas](#) and [Integrated Biodiversity Assessment Tool \(IBAT\)](#).

MARINE AND COASTAL BIODIVERSITY: ECOLOGICALLY OR BIOLOGICALLY SIGNIFICANT MARINE AREAS (from SBSTTA Recommendation XX/3 and UNEP/CBD/COP/13/18)

BirdLife congratulates the CBD Secretariat on successfully leading participatory, science-based workshops to identify and describe ecologically or biologically significant marine areas (EBSA). BirdLife welcomes the three new EBSA reports recommended by SBSTTA20 to COP13: North-East Indian Ocean, North-West Indian Ocean and Adjacent Gulf Areas, Seas of East Asia.

We consider that biodiversity conservation policies should be adjusted as new information becomes available. **In this regard, BirdLife calls on Parties to welcome the report 'Options regarding procedures for modifying the description of EBSAs or facilitating the process of making descriptions of new ones' (UNEP/CBD/COP/13/18) and append it to the draft decision presented in SBSTTA Recommendation XX/3.**

BirdLife encourages Parties to utilise marine Important Bird and Biodiversity Areas (as the most comprehensive network of Key Biodiversity Areas) to inform the description of EBSAs and marine protected areas.

BirdLife congratulates the CBD Secretariat and the Sustainable Ocean Initiative (SOI) for leading the 'Dialogue with Regional Seas Organizations and Regional Fisheries Bodies on Accelerating Progress Towards the Aichi Biodiversity Targets' (Republic of Korea, Sept. 2016), and recommends that the identification and management of EBSAs is prioritised as a focus for practical cooperation among these bodies and organisations.

BirdLife is committed to supporting Parties in the process of describing EBSAs within and beyond national jurisdiction with the scientifically sound and up to date IBA information, and:

- **Calls on Parties to adopt the proposed options for further enhancing scientific methodologies and approaches, for the description of areas meeting the criteria for EBSAs.**
- **Welcomes the creation of an informal advisory group on EBSAs to discuss practical options for scientific methodologies and approaches.**
- **Calls on Parties to designate focal points for the Programme of Work on Marine and Coastal Biodiversity.**
- **Calls on Parties to invite the Executive Secretary to submit EBSAs reports to the UNEP Regional Seas Organisations, in addition to those bodies mentioned in parag. 4 of SBSTTA Recommendation XX/3 and encourage their use in regional biodiversity conservation planning, including marine protected areas, environmental impact assessment and marine spatial planning.**

- **Encourages Parties that have described areas meeting EBSA criteria to undertake assessments of their status to inform decisions on management to address impacts.**
- **Encourages CBD national focal points to connect with national counterparts in order to ensure that EBSAs are incorporated into the discussions of the United Nations Preparatory Committee to discuss an international legally binding instrument under UNCLOS for the conservation and sustainable use of marine biological diversity of areas beyond national jurisdiction.**

BirdLife contribution to the EBSA agenda

BirdLife has been an active stakeholder in the EBSA process, having provided robust scientific information to guide the description of EBSAs in CBD led regional workshops. BirdLife compiled and analysed all available seabird data for the regions addressed, to develop a list of marine Important Bird and Biodiversity Areas (IBAs) for consideration within the EBSA process. BirdLife has also contributed to the EBSA process through its extensive Marine IBA toolkit, developed in consultation with BirdLife Partners and leading seabird researchers around the world.

Seabirds have a worldwide distribution and are the best studied group of pelagic species, meaning they can act as critical proxies for the many oceanic areas where few or no other data exist. This data has shown that areas used by seabirds fulfil a number of the EBSA criteria.

RESOURCE MOBILISATION

SBI Recommendation I/6 and UNEP/CBD/COP/13/11

BirdLife commends the significant political statements on resource mobilization for biodiversity made since the *Strategy for Resource Mobilization* (SRM) was adopted (Decision IX/11). Over the past seven years, there has been a series of positive commitments, including agreement on doubling international financial resource flows to developing countries, mobilisation of national resources; approval of SRM indicators, reporting framework and modalities and milestones for Aichi Target 3.

However, limited substantive progress has been made beyond political commitments. Every year that passes without adequate investment in improving, conserving and restoring our natural capital will increase the future costs of addressing the biodiversity crisis that we are currently confronting.

BirdLife recalls that using resources more effectively can reduce the need for additional funding and calls on Parties to monitor effectiveness of use of resources and conservation outcomes.

The High Level Panel on Resource Mobilisation has recognised mainstreaming as an important strategy for delivering increased finance and improved efficiency. **BirdLife encourages Parties to develop, implement and exchange information about effective measures for enhancing resource mobilisation and efficiency by mainstreaming biodiversity across sectors at all levels of government.**

On financial reporting, BirdLife recognises that much progress has been made in elaborating a framework with indicators, and **calls on parties to strengthen financial reporting to increase transparency and accountability, and to provide baseline information for future planning.**

BirdLife notes with concern the information as reported by SCBD (UNEP/CBD/COP/13/11) that only five of the 20 OECD countries individually met the target to double international flows and just over one fourth of the Parties submitted their financial reporting framework (20 OECD countries, 37 non- OECD- members).

On '*Strengthening biodiversity finance information systems*': BirdLife encourages Parties to request the Executive Secretary to further promote discussions, including through workshops, to address methodological guidance on biodiversity reporting, particularly on biodiversity expenditure, with a view of improving transparency and enabling replicability.

On '*Safeguards in biodiversity financing mechanisms-mainstreaming biodiversity into the financial sector*': BirdLife would like to recall COP Decision XII/3 in which Parties are called to taking into account voluntary guidelines on safeguards in biodiversity financing mechanisms when selecting, designing and implementing biodiversity financing mechanisms, and when developing instrument-specific safeguards for them.

BirdLife contribution to the resource mobilization agenda

BirdLife contributes to the CBD resource mobilisation process through scientific work on assessing the costs of conservation and was part of the scientific group informing the *First Report of the High-Level Panel on Global Assessment of Resources for Implementing the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020*.

BirdLife International is the world's largest conservation partnership, with 120 national Partners, and the pre-eminent international authority on bird conservation. For more information, please visit www.birdlife.org.

