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CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES TO THE  
CONVENTION ON BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY

Fifteenth meeting – Part II  
Montreal, Canada, 7-19 December 2022  
Agenda item 16B

**Engagement with subnational governments, cities and other local authorities to enhance  
implementation of the post-2020 global biodiversity framework**

**Draft decision submitted by the Chair of Working Group I**

*The Conference of the Parties,*

*Recalling* decisions [X/22](#) and [XII/9](#),

*Recalling* the 2011-2020 Plan of Action on Subnational Governments, Cities and Other Local Authorities for Biodiversity,<sup>1</sup> adopted in 2010, and welcoming progress in its successful implementation,

*Noting* that, while responsibilities for implementation of the Convention rest with the Parties, there are multiple reasons for promoting the engagement of subnational governments, cities and other local authorities in the implementation of the Convention,

*Also noting* that subnational governments, cities and other local authorities are a constituent part of many Parties and other Governments, and that the implementation and monitoring of the post-2020 global biodiversity framework needs to involve all levels of government as appropriate,

*Recognizing* the important role of subnational governments, cities and other local authorities in the implementation of the objectives of the Convention on Biological Diversity as well as monitoring and reporting, mainstreaming, resource mobilization, capacity-building and communication, education and public awareness, social participation and public access to information,

*Recalling* principle 2 of the Ecosystem Approach adopted in decision V/6,

1. *Adopts* the updated plan of action on subnational governments, cities and other local authorities for biodiversity, as set out in the annex, as a flexible framework to support Parties in accordance with national legislation;

2. *Invites* Parties, other Governments and relevant organizations to facilitate, as appropriate, the implementation of the updated plan of action referred to in paragraph 1, above, according to national legislation, including by:

(a) Involving subnational governments, cities and other local authorities in the revision, implementation and update of their national biodiversity strategies and action plans, respecting the competencies of each level of government;

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<sup>1</sup> Decision X/22

(b) Supporting subnational governments, cities and other local authorities to develop, implement and evaluate their local biodiversity strategies and action plans, in accordance with national biodiversity strategies and action plans and global commitments;

(c) Ensuring the engagement of subnational governments, cities and other local authorities in the mainstreaming of biodiversity, in line with the long-term strategic approach to mainstreaming guided by the Conference of the Parties in decision 15/--;

(d) Allocating human, technical and financial resources, as appropriate to national circumstances, and in a manner supportive of principle 2 of the ecosystem approach,<sup>2</sup> adopted in decision [V/6](#);

3. *Invites* Parties to communicate and report on the implementation of the updated Plan of Action on Subnational Governments, Cities and Local Authorities for Biodiversity, as appropriate, in their national reports under the Convention;

4. *Encourages* Parties, and invites other stakeholders, including entities engaged in development finance, to invest resources, support technology and knowledge transfer, and build capacity, at the level of governance where they can be most effective;

5. *Urges* Parties to support subnational governments, cities and local authorities in strengthening their capacities to improve the implementation of the global framework;

6. *Invites* the Global Environment Facility to consider further expanding and strengthening its sustainable cities initiatives in its future replenishments, and piloting land- and seascape level initiatives targeted at subnational and local governance, infrastructure, biodiversity-inclusive spatial and land-use planning, and urban-rural linkages, in accordance with the priorities identified in national biodiversity strategies and action plans;<sup>3</sup>

7. *Requests* the Executive Secretary, subject to availability of resources, to undertake a review of the role of subnational governments, cities and other local authorities in the implementation of the objectives of the Convention and its Protocols and the post-2020 global biodiversity framework, and to submit the report to the Subsidiary Body on Implementation for consideration at its fifth meeting;

8. *Also requests* the Executive Secretary, subject to the availability of resources, to facilitate the work of the Global Partnership on Subnational and Local Governments for Biodiversity for the implementation of the plan of action as adopted below.

*Annex*

**PLAN OF ACTION ON SUBNATIONAL GOVERNMENTS, CITIES AND OTHER  
LOCAL AUTHORITIES FOR BIODIVERSITY (2021-2030)**

**A. Background**

1. The Plan of Action on Subnational Governments, Cities and Other Local Authorities for Biodiversity under the Convention on Biological Diversity (2021-2030) is intended to support Parties, subnational governments, cities and other local authorities and their partners in implementing the post-2020 global biodiversity framework. The Plan of Action is intended to be implemented in accordance with national legislation. The elements contained in the updated Plan of Action have been identified through a series of consultations with Parties, subnational governments, cities and

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<sup>2</sup> Principle 2 of the ecosystem approach, adopted in decision V/6, is “Management should be decentralized to the lowest appropriate level.”

<sup>3</sup> This paragraph, which addresses support from the Global Environment Facility, will eventually be reflected in a decision on the financial mechanism which will consolidate the guidance of the Conference of the Parties to the Global Environment Facility.

other local authorities and their networks and stakeholders, including the “Edinburgh Process”, and culminating with the 7th Global Biodiversity Summit of Cities and Subnational Governments.<sup>4</sup>

## **B. Objectives**

2. The Plan of Action has the following objectives:

(a) To increase the engagement of subnational governments, cities and other local authorities, to support the successful implementation of, and reporting on, national biodiversity strategies and action plans, the post-2020 global biodiversity framework and the programmes of work under the Convention on Biological Diversity;

(b) To improve regional and global coordination and exchange of lessons learned between Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity, regional and global organizations, United Nations and development agencies, academia, and donors on ways and means to encourage and support subnational governments, cities and other local authorities to manage biodiversity sustainably, provide ecosystem services to citizens and integrate biodiversity concerns into urban and territorial planning and development;

(c) To identify, enhance and disseminate policy tools, guidelines, financial mechanisms or instruments, and programmes that facilitate subnational and local action on biodiversity and build the capacity of subnational governments, cities and other local authorities to support their national Governments in implementing the Convention on Biological Diversity, with respect to the competencies of each level of government;

(d) To facilitate the development of awareness-raising programmes on biodiversity in line with communication, education and public awareness strategies.

## **C. Activities to engage subnational government, cities and other local authorities**

3. The catalogue of activities, grouped into seven interrelated and complementary action areas, presented below provides a framework based on which Parties, their subnational governments, cities and other local authorities and all stakeholders can develop their own actions to implement the Plan of Action. As such, any activity is offered as a complement to their post-2020 biodiversity strategies, action plans and targets. It is understood that activities will be implemented with respect to the competencies of each level of government and according to each Party’s national and subnational context and circumstances.

### **Action area 1**

#### **Development and implementation of biodiversity strategies and action plans reflecting the involvement of subnational governments, cities and other local authorities**

(a) Involve subnational governments, cities and other local authorities in the process to revise and update national biodiversity strategies and action plans, for alignment with the post-2020 global biodiversity framework and its subsequent implementation;

(b) Encourage subnational governments, cities and other local authorities to develop biodiversity strategies and action plans in harmony with national biodiversity strategies and action plans.

### **Action area 2**

#### **Collaboration between levels of government, and mainstreaming**

(a) Collaborate with subnational governments, cities and other local authorities to improve harmonization of strategic planning, coordination and implementation between levels of government;

(b) Collaborate with subnational governments, cities and other local authorities to support the implementation of measures to mainstream biodiversity in line with relevant decisions of the Conference of the Parties;

(c) Engage the Advisory Committee on Local Governments and Biodiversity and the Advisory Committee on Subnational Governments and Biodiversity<sup>5</sup> to provide input and support to the implementation of the Plan of Action from the point of view of local and subnational governments, cities and other local authorities.

### **Action area 3**

#### **Resource mobilization**

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<sup>4</sup> This updated plan of action builds on the Plan of Action adopted in decision X/22.

<sup>5</sup> Referred to in paragraph 7 of the Plan of Action adopted in decision X/22, and paragraph 0 of the present Plan of Action.

(a) Collaborate with subnational governments, cities and other local authorities to support the application of principle 2 of the ecosystem approach in resource mobilization, where appropriate;<sup>6</sup>

(b) Collaborate with subnational governments, cities and other local authorities, to create enabling conditions for significantly increased private sector investment, and reforms that can introduce new revenue streams for biodiversity conservation and ecosystem restoration at the subnational and local levels.

#### **Action area 4**

##### **Capacity development**

(a) Support subnational governments, cities and other local authorities in implementing capacity development and technology transfer initiatives that contribute to the implementation of biodiversity strategies and action plans and the post-2020 global biodiversity framework.

#### **Action area 5**

##### **Communication, education and public awareness**

(a) Support subnational governments, cities and other local authorities in developing inclusive and action-oriented communication, education and public awareness, public access to information and participation initiatives at the subnational and local levels, reconnecting nature and people in and around cities and regions.

#### **Action area 6**

##### **Assessment and improved information for decision-making**

(a) Invite the use of the Singapore Index on Cities' Biodiversity as a self-assessment tool for city and local governments to benchmark and monitor the progress of their biodiversity conservation efforts against their own individual baselines;

(b) Support subnational governments, cities and other local authorities in co-producing data and gaining and also offering better access to data and scientific evidence and expertise to improve decision-making, enabled by improved capturing, analysis and reporting of local and landscape-based biodiversity data.

#### **Action area 7**

##### **Monitoring and reporting**

(a) Encourage subnational governments, cities and other local authorities to use online commitment and reporting platforms, such as *RegionsWithNature* and *CitiesWithNature*,<sup>7</sup> where subnational governments can report on, and track progress against, their commitments to contributing to the implementation of the post-2020 global biodiversity framework and national biodiversity strategies and action plans;

(b) Involve subnational governments, cities and other local authorities in the regular monitoring and review of progress against targets specified in national biodiversity strategies and action plans;

(c) Include contributions made by subnational governments, cities and other local authorities in national reports under the Convention on Biological Diversity;

(d) Coordinate inputs from subnational governments, cities and other local authorities on their contributions to achieving the objectives of the Convention and its Protocols and the post-2020 global biodiversity framework for the purposes of its mid-term review, including on the implementation of measures to mainstream biodiversity in line with relevant decisions of the Conference of the Parties.

### **D. Implementation of the Plan of Action**

4. Parties and other Governments are urged to implement the Plan of Action, as appropriate, with the support of the Secretariat of the Convention and other key partners that convene subnational governments, cities and other local authorities, such as ICLEI – Local Governments for Sustainability, Regions4 Sustainable Development (Regions4), the Group of Leading Subnational Governments toward Aichi Biodiversity Targets, and the European Union's Committee of the Regions, considering national priorities, capacities and needs.

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<sup>6</sup> Principle 2 of the ecosystem approach, adopted in decision V/6, is "Management should be decentralised to the lowest appropriate level."

<sup>7</sup> Linked with the CBD Sharm El-Sheikh to Kunming to Montreal Action Agenda for Nature and People.

5. Implementation of the Plan of Action will also be supported by the Global Partnership on Subnational and Local Governments for Biodiversity, an informal cooperative platform composed of United Nations agencies and programmes, academic networks and institutions, and networks of subnational governments, cities and local authorities, and facilitated by the Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity.

6. The Advisory Committee on Local Governments and Biodiversity<sup>8</sup> and the Advisory Committee on Subnational Governments and Biodiversity,<sup>9</sup> will provide input and support to the Plan of Action from the points of view of cities and local authorities and subnational governments, respectively, in recognition of their critical, complementary and distinct role in the implementation of the Convention. Both committees, recognized in the Plan of Action endorsed through decision X/22, are open and free platforms with the sole objective of coordinating the contribution and participation of government at these levels in processes under the Convention on Biological Diversity.

7. The Plan of Action recognizes the need to maintain flexibility in its approach to implementation in order to accommodate changing national, subnational and local priorities, as well as future decisions of the Conference of the Parties.

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<sup>8</sup> The current Terms of Reference for this Advisory Committee can be found at: <https://www.cbd.int/subnational/partners-and-initiatives/global-partnership/advisory-committee-on-sub-national-governments>; however, they are currently being revised by ICLEI-Local Governments for Sustainability acting as its Secretariat.

<sup>9</sup> The current Terms of Reference for this Advisory Committee can be found at: <https://www.cbd.int/subnational/partners-and-initiatives/global-partnership/advisory-committee-on-sub-national-governments>; however, they are currently being revised by Regions4.