



ROYAL NORWEGIAN MINISTRY OF
CLIMATE AND ENVIRONMENT

Submission from Norway - An implementation mechanism in the Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework (GBF)

There is general agreement that the Aichi Biodiversity Targets were ambitious and relevant, but that *insufficient implementation* was a reason for its inability to succeed. There are several implementation gaps, including limited capacity and financial resources, challenges in aligning national targets with global targets, and translating global targets into effective national actions tailored to local context.

It is Norway's view that there is an urgent need for a more structural approach to implementation, including measures to enhance transparency and comparability of national action, monitoring, reporting and review of implementation at the national and global levels. Such a structure would guide parties to improve individual and collective performance, without putting undue burden on them. A robust implementation mechanism should increase visibility of Parties' actions, enhance mutual learning and trust, sharing of best practices, and create a collective push for steady progress against the achievement of the goals and targets in the framework.

An improved implementation structure does not require "re-inventing" the wheel. Rather, it needs to build on and enhance existing processes Parties are familiar with, and strengthen synergies with other relevant multilateral environmental agreements and processes. It is understood that we would benefit from a step-wise approach, recognizing that Parties' starting points and capabilities differ. At the same time, the structure should regularly track progress towards achieving the goals and targets in the framework in order to enhance expectation that Parties will increase and adjust measures necessary to enhance achievement of the goals and targets, taking into account national circumstances. In Norway's view, the implementation mechanism should consist of the following elements that interact, and creates a "logical flow":

1. **NBSAP** are the central instrument to implement the Convention and the post 2020 goals and targets. To make them more effective, they need to:

- a. Contain the **clear commitment** to reflect the post 2020 goals and targets
- b. Contain **information** necessary to increase clarity, understanding, transparency, aggregation and comparability
- c. Be submitted at **coordinated, common intervals**
- d. For each successive NBSAP, take stock of progress (ex post), as a basis for strengthened action to enhance the achievements of the global goals.

2. **Enhance transparency** on individual progress in implementation and achievement of each Party's NBSAP through National Reports (NRs) and Biennial Update Reports (BURs):

- a. **Common, regular reporting intervals and formats,**
- b. Development of reporting guidelines, incl. methodologies and **headline indicators;**

3. **Technical Expert Review:** Independent, objective technical review of national reports for their consistency with guidelines, methodologies and indicators, which is:

- a. Mandatory for all Parties to ensure equal up-take,
- b. Facilitative, non-intrusive and non-punitive,
- c. Periodic (e.g. every four years),
- d. Results in a written report and an open meeting among parties for the facilitative sharing of view (FSV) to enhance mutual learning.

4. **Global Biodiversity Stocktake:** Establish a regular process to assess the collective progress towards the post 2020 goals and targets, based on synchronized reports by the IPBES, and the latest progress report by each Party. The outcome of the Global Biodiversity Stocktake informs the next round of NBSAPs ("feed-back loop").

Elements explained in more detail:

1. National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans (NBSAPs)

NBSAPs under art. 6 CBD have proven valuable as a framework tool for all biodiversity-related commitments and actions at the national level. It addresses not only the CBD and its Protocols, but also other biodiversity-related conventions and obligations, and other conventions and process that impact on and benefit from biodiversity, such as the SDGs. By building on existing processes, NBSAPs would still be the central vehicle for Parties to develop and bring forward their biodiversity commitments and actions, and to implement the post 2020 goals and targets.

While the NBSAPs process is a good starting point, they need to be revised to reflect the post-2020 goals and targets. An implementation manual agreed by Parties at COP 16 could provide basic guidance. The following elements should be considered:

- (i) Which information Parties need to include in their NBSAPs in order to enhance their transparency, clarity, understanding, comparability and aggregation, respecting national circumstances.
- (ii) When and at what intervals Parties need to submit synchronized, updated NBSAPs.
- (iii) A successive approach, taking stock of progress (as expressed eg. in National Reports) in order to improve and strengthen action in each successive NBSAP and possible guidance on how the outcome of the GBS should inform Parties in updating and enhancing the next NBSAPs.

Norway considers that all parties should align their NBSAPs with this guidance by 2023; either by communicating a new NBSAP or updating their existing one (e.g. by providing an annex), and to communicate a new NBSAP every 4 years thereafter. Submitting a new NBSAP, each party's should include a rationale, explaining the degree to which the NBSAP contributes towards achieving the global goals and targets of the GBF.

2. Enhanced transparency in national reporting (NR)

National reports (NRs) under art. 26 CBD are the main tool for parties to provide information on action and support measures taken for the implementation of CBD and on their effectiveness. NRs should remain the starting point for the reporting procedures of the GBF. Transparency through NRs should be enhanced and strengthened through various improvements:

- (i) Reports should be submitted in regular intervals, allowing timely and updated information on all Parties' performance.
- (ii) NR and BURs should be submitted in standard templates to ease national processes.
- (iii) More detailed reporting requirements should be developed as part of an Implementation manual and agreed by parties at COP 16. Taking into account,
 - a. the need for NRs to include information on the progress in economy-wide implementing and achieving national biodiversity objectives in NBSAPs, including on non-state and sub-national action, if appropriate and applicable,
 - b. the importance of facilitating improved reporting and transparency over time, and the need to provide flexibility for those developing countries that need it in light of their capacities,
 - c. the need to promote transparency, accuracy, completeness, consistency and comparability,
 - d. the need to avoid duplication as well as undue burdens on parties and the secretariat,
 - e. the need for detailed headline indicators for each post 2020 target. Guidance should include concepts and methodology for complex issues such as drivers of biodiversity loss, incentives and other whole-of-society issues.

In Norway's view, a full NR should be submitted every 4 years with shorter Biennial Update Reports (BURs) every other year in between. NBSAPs and reports (NRs and BURs) should be published in the CBD Clearing House. Parties should further aim at synchronizing reporting under the CBD and its protocols. NR should provide input to the Global Biodiversity Stocktake.

3. Technical Expert Review of National Reports (NRs)

The review of NR on national implementation of the post 2020 goals and targets should be strengthened in order to create trust and confidence by enhancing the visibility of Parties' performance, and to track progress towards the GBF.

The review should be carried out by independent, objective technical experts against agreed standards. The expert review teams should be set up by the secretariat and chosen from a roster of experts with complementary expertise. Reviews of Parties should not be viewed as an approach to single out parties for criticism, but rather to gather experiences and lessons learned as well as facilitating better implementation by highlighting the need for capacity building and the value of shared approaches. Importantly, review will also contribute to continuous monitoring of CBD implementation.

A Voluntary Peer-Review (VPR) mechanism is currently being facilitated by the SBI, and a trial phase of an voluntary open-ended forum on review of implementation is scheduled to take place at SBI-3. Based on these experiences, the SBI could make recommendations on practical modalities for a technical review process, which is periodic and mandatory for all Parties in order to secure inclusive participation. A Technical Expert Review could take place during each SBI, based on an alphabetical list (or other order) of countries, with the aim of each country undergoing a review once every four years. The Technical Expert Review would result in a report and an open session for the facilitative sharing of views (FSV), in order to give Parties the possibility to learn from each other.

4. A regular Global Biodiversity Stocktake (GBS)

With regular intervals, e.g. every 5 years, there should be a Global Biodiversity Stocktake (GBS) overseen by the SBI to measure collective progress towards the post 2020 biodiversity goals and targets, capacity-building and resource mobilization. This stocktake should be done in a comprehensive and facilitative manner,. National reports should feed into the GBS and it should be based on scientific input from IPBES (e.g. synchronized with IPBES Global Assessment reports). The purpose is to inform the next round of coordinated NBSAP revisions by Parties. A Global Biodiversity Stocktake process should be expected to have a duration of about one year.

There should be a "feed-back loop" to the next round of NBSAPS: the outcome of the GBS should inform Parties in updating and enhancing the next NBSAPs, as well as enhancing

international cooperation under the Global Biodiversity Framework and the CBD and its protocols. More specific guidance should be adopted by COP16, as part of an implementation manual.

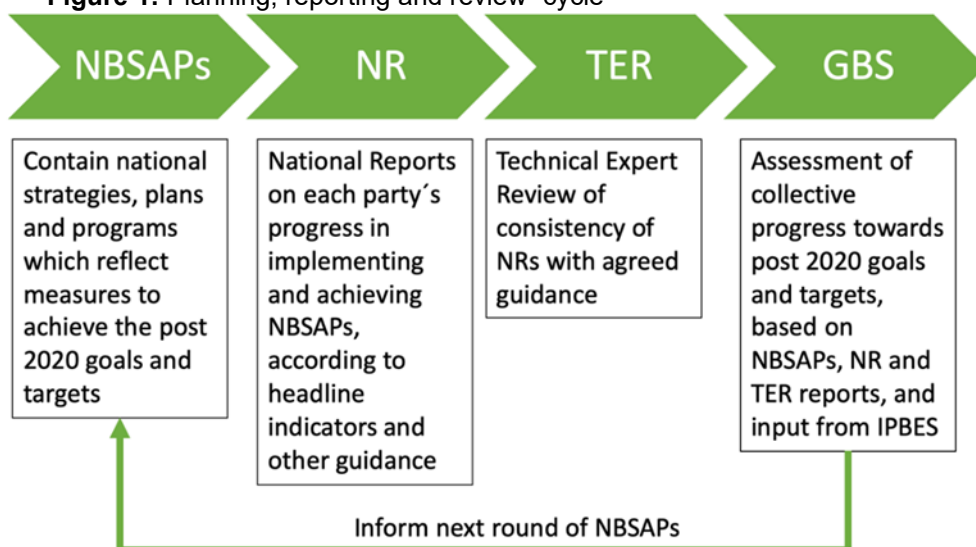
Synchronized, iterative processes for NBSAPs, Reporting, Review and GBS

Each element of the “implementation mechanism” in itself is important to enhance parties’ capacities to effectively implement the post 2020 GBF. It is, however, in the interplay and iterative cycles of those processes where the real value for effective implementation lies. The various elements are interlinked, feed into each other, stimulate concerted action, and set up a “continuum of information and action”. The processes are periodic and their repetition at common intervals. This procedural predictability and build-up expectation are important for keeping biodiversity high on the political agenda and ensure necessary collective action, as well as increasing and adjusting measures.

Work towards the 2050 vision must *at all times* happen on different levels of the framework, providing both the short-term, intermediate and overall direction of travel, and be based on best available science.

Enhancing transparency, visibility, accuracy, comparability, comprehensiveness and consistency of Parties’ actions and support could enhance mutual trust and confidence, as well as learning and sharing of experience. More concrete international guidance could help ease and simplify national processes by providing help, input and direction for what needs to go into planning and reporting. This could enable Parties to carry out better, clearer and leaner national planning and reporting processes, supporting also the mainstreaming of biodiversity into all sectors.

Figure 1: Planning, reporting and review “cycle”



Explanation: NBSAP(national biodiversity strategies, plans, art. 6 CBD); NR(national implementation reports, art. 26 CBD); TER(technical expert review); GBS(global biodiversity stocktake)

Figure 2: Timeline 2020-2050

Planning:			NBSAPs: (Update or new)				NBSAPs: (Update or new)				
Reporting:				BUR		NR		BUR		NR	
Review:				TER	TER	TER	TER	TER	TER	TER	TER
Global Biodiv. Stocktake					GBS						GBS
2 0 2 0	2 0 2 1	2 0 2 2	2 0 2 3	2 0 2 4	2 0 2 5	2 0 2 6	2 0 2 7	2 0 2 8	2 0 2 9	2 0 3 0	2 0 5 0
COP15 Adoption of post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework	COP16 Adoption of «Rule Book»		COP17		COP18		COP19		COP20		

Explanation: NBSAP (national biodiversity strategies, plans and programmes, according to art. 6 CBD); NR (national implementation reports, according to art. 26 CBD); BUR (biennial update report of the NR); TER (technical expert review); GBS (global biodiversity stocktake); COP (conference of the parties to the CBD).

Procedural sequence of a new implementation mechanism

Given the limited amount of time that remains until COP15, and the expected effort required to develop and agree on the details of an implementation mechanism, it is useful to envision a procedural sequence where the main elements and structure are agreed on at COP 15. In addition, COP15 would agree to set up a non-permanent ad-hoc expert group with the mandate to develop more detailed guidance (an “Implementation manual”) for the effective implementation of the GBF, to be adopted by COP 16. The sequence could be set up as follows:

COP15:

1. Agreement on new global post-2020 goals and targets
2. Agreement on the main elements of an implementation framework
 - a. NSBAPs to be reviewed and updated to take into account post-2020 goals and targets
 - b. Need for more detailed guidance on NBSAPs to increase clarity, transparency and understanding
 - c. Basic elements of enhanced transparency (guidance on national reporting, incl. on headline indicators, and technical expert review)
 - d. Establishment of a regular Global Biodiversity Stocktake

3. Agreement on guiding principles
 - a. Gradually scaling up of national efforts to strengthen achievement for each successive NBSAP
 - b. Increased transparency over time
 - c. Feedback-loop from Global Biodiversity Stocktake to next NBSAP
 - d. Based on best available science, as provided by the IPBES
4. Agreement on mandate for a 2-year work program and an ad-hoc expert group to develop further guidance (implementation manual) to be adopted by COP16

COP16:

1. Adoption of further guidance, informed by intersessional work by the non-permanent ad-hoc expert group
2. Launch of processes: NBSAP update; preparation of first BUR/next NR,
3. Facilitative dialogue on status of national implementation (“where are we/where do we need to go?”)

Textual suggestions

The following decision text seek to incorporate the suggestions outlined in this submission:

Draft decision text on requesting parties to implement the [GBF 2021-30]:

1. *Adopts* the [Global Biodiversity Framework 2021-30]¹
2. *Decides that* Parties should implement the [GBF 2021-30], and invites other Governments to do the same;
3. In order to implement the [GBF 2021-30] to achieve its global targets, each Party should in particular:

On inclusive, society-wide, synergistic implementation:

4. Enable participation at all levels and all sectors, and foster the full and effective contributions of women, youth, indigenous peoples and local communities, civil-society organizations, the private sector including businesses, relevant stakeholders from all sectors and the whole of society in the full implementation of the objectives of the Convention and the [GBF 2021-30];
5. Use NBSAPs as effective instruments for the integration of biodiversity targets into national development and poverty reduction policies and strategies, national financial planning and accounting.
6. Support the updating of NBSAPs as effective instruments to promote the implementation of the [GBF 2021-30] and mainstreaming of biodiversity at the national level, creating synergies

¹ This can be done in a separate decision with reference to this decision on the implementation framework, as proposed in the Zero Draft.

among the biodiversity-related conventions and SDGs in a manner consistent with their respective mandates and objectives;

On NBSAPs, periodic revision and progressive increase of contribution:

7. Communicate and maintain successive NBSAPs, building on art. 6 CBD, with national targets that it intends to achieve, in accordance with the global targets [included in the GBF] and its national conditions and capabilities; and to pursue national measures with the aim of achieving those targets;
8. Review, revise and submit NBSAPs successively, where each NBSAP will improve action and efforts beyond the Party's then current one, reflecting national contributions and aspirations to achieve the global goals and targets, with the first submission due in 2023 and thereafter every 4 years [in accordance with the guidance adopted by COP16];
9. Provide information to enhance the transparency, clarity and understanding of NBSAPs, in accordance with the guidance adopted by COP16;
10. Take into account, in determining their national contribution through the submission of successive NBSAPs, the outcomes of the Global Biodiversity Stocktake referred to in [Article 5-10];

On monitoring, National Reports and review:

11. Monitor and review the implementation of its NBSAPs in accordance with [GBF 2021-30] and to report to the COP on the progress in implementing and achieving the NBSAP through National Reports and biennial update reports (BURs), in accordance with the guidance, including, *inter alia*, headline indicators and methodology, adopted by COP16, with the first submission of a biennial update report in 2024 and NR in 2026;
12. National reports submitted by each Party under paragraph x of this Article should undergo a technical expert review, in accordance with guidance adopted by COP16;
13. The technical expert review under this paragraph should consider the consistency of information provided with the modalities, procedures and indicators for reporting, and should consist of a consideration of the Party's progress in implementation and achievement of its NSBAP. The review should also identify areas of improvement for the Party, taking into account its respective national capabilities and circumstances.

On enabling conditions:

14. Take into account, in the context of national implementation of NBSAPs, methods and guidance provided under the CBD;
15. Promote the generation and use of scientific information, develop methodologies and initiatives to monitor status and trends of biodiversity and ecosystem services, share data,

develop indicators and measures, and undertake regular and timely assessments, to underpin the Global Biodiversity Stocktake and IPBES

On transparency

16. Requests the Executive Secretary of the CBD to use the existing Clearing House where all national commitments made through submitted NBSAPs as well as all National Reports are recorded.

On Global Biodiversity Stocktake:

17. *Requests* the [SBI] [COP] to periodically take stock of the implementation of [GBF 2021-30] to assess the collective progress towards achieving the [2030 and 2050] goals and targets (referred to as the “global biodiversity stocktake”). It should do so in a comprehensive and facilitative manner, considering all objectives of the CBD and the means of implementation and support, and in the light of the [latest IPBES report] [best available science].
18. *Requests* the [SBI] to undertake its first global stocktake in 2025 for submission to COP18 and every five years thereafter.
19. *Urges* Parties to take the outcome of the global biodiversity stocktake into account, in a nationally determined manner, in the periodic revision of their NBSAPs to improve actions and efforts.
20. *Requests* the SBSTTA to identify the sources of input for the global biodiversity stocktake and to report to the Conference of the Parties for consideration and adoption at COP16, including, but not limited to:
 - a. Information on the overall effect of the NBSAPS communicated by Parties
 - b. Information on the mobilization and provision of support for implementation
 - c. Reports of the technical expert review teams
 - d. The latest reports of IPBES
 - e. Reports of the subsidiary bodies
21. *Requests* the SBSTTA to provide advice on how the assessments of IPBES can inform the global biodiversity stocktake and to report on this matter at COP16
22. *Requests* the SBI to develop modalities for the global biodiversity stocktake and to make recommendation with a view to adoption at COP16.

On the development of an implementation manual

23. *Decides* to establish a non-permanent expert Group on the Implementation of the [GBF 2021-30] to develop a suggestion for an implementation manual for the implementation framework of the [GBF 2021-30] resulting from the relevant requests contained in [this decision] [the annex to the present decision], for consideration by SBI, and to be adopted by COP16;
24. *Requests* the Executive Secretary to support the non-permanent expert group.