



Intergovernmental consultations on nature-based solutions

Note from the Co-Chairs in advance of the final round of the consultations (Nairobi, 9-13 October)

25 September 2023

Introduction

The aim of this note is to enable participants to prepare for the consultations. It sets out the purpose of these consultations, highlights certain features of the agenda for the Nairobi meeting and how the meeting will be conducted, and outlines the elements that will comprise the Co-Chairs' Summary of the overall consultation process. The note builds on three previous documents (all available on the consultation webpages: <https://www.unep.org/about-un-environment/intergovernmental-consultations-nbs>):

- Note from the Co-Chairs 27 March 2023
- Co-Chairs' Summary – First Global Consultations on nature-based solutions (16-17 May 2023)
- Co-Chairs' Summary – First Regional Consultations on nature-based solutions (June – July 2023)

Purpose of the intergovernmental consultations

The purpose of the consultations is set out in UNEA Resolution 5/5 (Nature-based solutions for supporting sustainable development) OP5, and is: ‘..to further support the implementation of nature-based solutions, as defined in the present resolution..’. The resolution also sets out three specific tasks for the consultations, which are described in OP5 (a) – (c). The full text of these sub-paragraphs is important, but in summary these tasks are to:

- Compile examples of best practice in nature-based solutions;
- Assess existing and discuss potential new proposals, criteria, standards and guidelines to address divergences, with a view to achieving a common understanding among Member States for the implementation of nature-based solutions; and
- Identify options for supporting sustainable investment in nature-based solutions.

Some of the language in the three sub-paragraphs amplifies the purpose of the consultations. There are references to: ‘address divergences’, ‘achieving a common understanding’, ‘support Member States in designing, implementing and evaluating nature-based solutions’ and ‘enable developing countries to develop and deploy nature-based solutions’.

In addition to these three tasks, three other issues have also emerged clearly from the consultations so far. These are:

- Opportunities and obstacles: NbS and climate mitigation
- Policy for NbS
- Measuring benefits and costs of NbS

The Nairobi consultations

The first two days (9-10 Oct) will comprise plenary sessions and regional consultations. The last three days (11-13 Oct) will be made up of global consultations. Because the regional consultations will be running in parallel, the Co-Chairs have invited two government representatives from each of the regions to co-facilitate their respective regional meetings. The agenda for the regional and global consultations is organized around six key issues: the three tasks set out in the resolution, plus the additional three issues that have emerged from the earlier rounds of consultation, listed above.

During the week there will be six panel discussions that are intended to inform the consultations. Each panel is devoted to one of the six key issues. The panels comprise individual experts, and representatives of Member States and other organizations. Each panel will begin with questions from the panel moderator to the panelists. The discussion will then be opened for questions and comments from the floor.

In chairing the consultations, we, as the Co-Chairs, recognize that it is not within the remit of the consultations to revise the definition of nature-based solutions or to re-write any other part of the resolution. We would also emphasize that these are consultations, not negotiations. One implication of this is that, while we will be seeking to build a common understanding of nature-based solutions, we do not need to achieve unanimity on all issues. We wish to ensure that the breadth of opinion finds expression in the consultations. Where there are clear differences of opinion, we will encourage participants to explore ways in which such differences can be narrowed or bridged, but we will not require consensus where it does not exist.

In line with the overall aim of the consultations, we, as the Co-Chairs, expect to develop a limited number of recommendations for supporting the implementation of nature-based solutions. These recommendations will be put forward in the name of the Co-Chairs. We anticipate that these recommendations will focus on further actions that would facilitate the implementation of nature-based solutions. They may be focused on issues such as undertaking analyses, developing guidance, and providing technical support and finance. The recommendations will be for general information/guidance and will not be directed at particular actors. They will not be focused on UNEP alone, nor only the participants in UNEA. We will present an outline of these recommendations in the first session on the morning of Friday 13 October and seek responses from participants.

Co-Chairs' Summary

We anticipate that the Co-Chairs' Summary – which will cover the entire consultation process, not just the Nairobi consultations – will consist of three elements:

- Summary of the consultations
- Co-Chairs' recommendations on supporting the implementation of nature-based solutions

- Annex – A guide to resources prepared by UNEP.

In the summary, we will seek to represent the breadth of opinion expressed across all the consultation meetings. We will note differences as well as areas of common understanding and consensus. We will aim to reflect the balance of opinion. If there is clear majority support for a particular view, this will be indicated, while opinions that are less widely shared will also be acknowledged.

The Guide to Resources, which will be included as an Annex, will be focused on resources that can support the implementation of nature-based solutions. It will draw on the earlier 'Background paper' that was published on the consultation webpages (<https://www.unep.org/about-un-environment/intergovernmental-consultations-nbs>) at the start of the consultation process. The Guide will take account of inputs made during the consultations that relate to resources that can support the implementation of nature-based solutions.