

Information Note on Digital Sequence Information (DSI) on genetic resources

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In recent years, DNA sequencing technologies have become faster, cheaper and more accurate. Digital sequence information, or DSI, on genetic resources is used in a range of activities commercial and non-commercial such as taxonomy and monitoring for invasive species, pharmaceutical products development or improved crops breeding. However, questions persist about the role that DSI should play, if any and why, as it relates to access to genetic resources and benefit-sharing.

Mandate: At its fourteenth meeting held in December 2018, the Conference of the Parties adopted [decision 14/20](#) Parties committed to working towards resolving divergence through a science- and policy-based process, with the aim of strengthening the fulfilment of the third objective of the Convention and Article 15, paragraph 7. In addition, under decision 14/34 it requires the Global Biodiversity Framework preparation to consider DSI.

A significant progress has been made so far:

Intersessional activities : Parties, non-Parties, indigenous peoples and local communities (IPLCs) and organizations provided views and information, [four studies](#) were commissioned, and an Ad Hoc Technical Expert Group (AHTEG) meeting led to a [report](#) that included options for operational terms to provide conceptual clarity on DSI, and key areas for capacity-building.

Additionally, during the extended inter-sessional period, the Co-Chairs of the Open-Ended Working group on the Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework, supported by the Secretariat, organized a [series of webinars](#) and an [online forum](#) on DSI to facilitate informal information exchange. These informal activities were considered helpful by the Working Group.

Finally, the Working Group established the Informal Co-Chairs' Advisory Group (IAG) on DSI which include Parties, IPLC representatives and representative from various stakeholder groups. This group has been successful at creating a certain measure of consensus on some of the key divergences, thus facilitating the move towards a potential solution on DSI. The group carries out its work in a very positive, respectful and mutually accommodating spirit of collaboration between delegates and stakeholders, even when they discuss highly contentious and divergent issues.

The Open Ended Working Group: At the second part of its third meeting, the Working Group adopted [recommendation 3/2](#) on DSI, setting out some principles regarding a benefit-sharing solution on DSI, the recognition that monetary and non-monetary benefits arising from the use of DSI should in particular, be used to support conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity and *inter alia* benefit IPLCs. At its fourth meeting, the Working Group continued its work and incorporated relevant points from the outcomes of the IAG and adopted [recommendation 4/2](#), which sets out some elements of a decision for COP15 to consider, as well as some proposed policy options.

There are still some key Milestones needed before reaching an outcome:

Intersessional activities: The co-leads of the IAG will produce a new report on the outcomes from their work following the fourth meeting of the Working Group. These documents will be made available mid October, six weeks in advance of the fifth meeting of the Open-Ended Working Group and may also inform discussions on DSI to take place at COP15.2.

The UN Biodiversity Conference: 2nd part of the 15th meeting of the Conference of the Parties to CBD or COP15.2, to be held in Montreal, in December 2022, will look at the draft decision on DSI contained in [recommendation 4/2](#) of the Working Group, which recalls recommendation 3/2 presented above. Further negotiations will be needed during COP 15.2 to arrive to a decision on the way forward on this important issue.

DSI will also be considered at the COP 15.2, as part of the post-2020 global biodiversity framework under Goal C and Target 13, access and benefit sharing, biodiversity and health, resource mobilization.
