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Delivering on the 2030 Agenda
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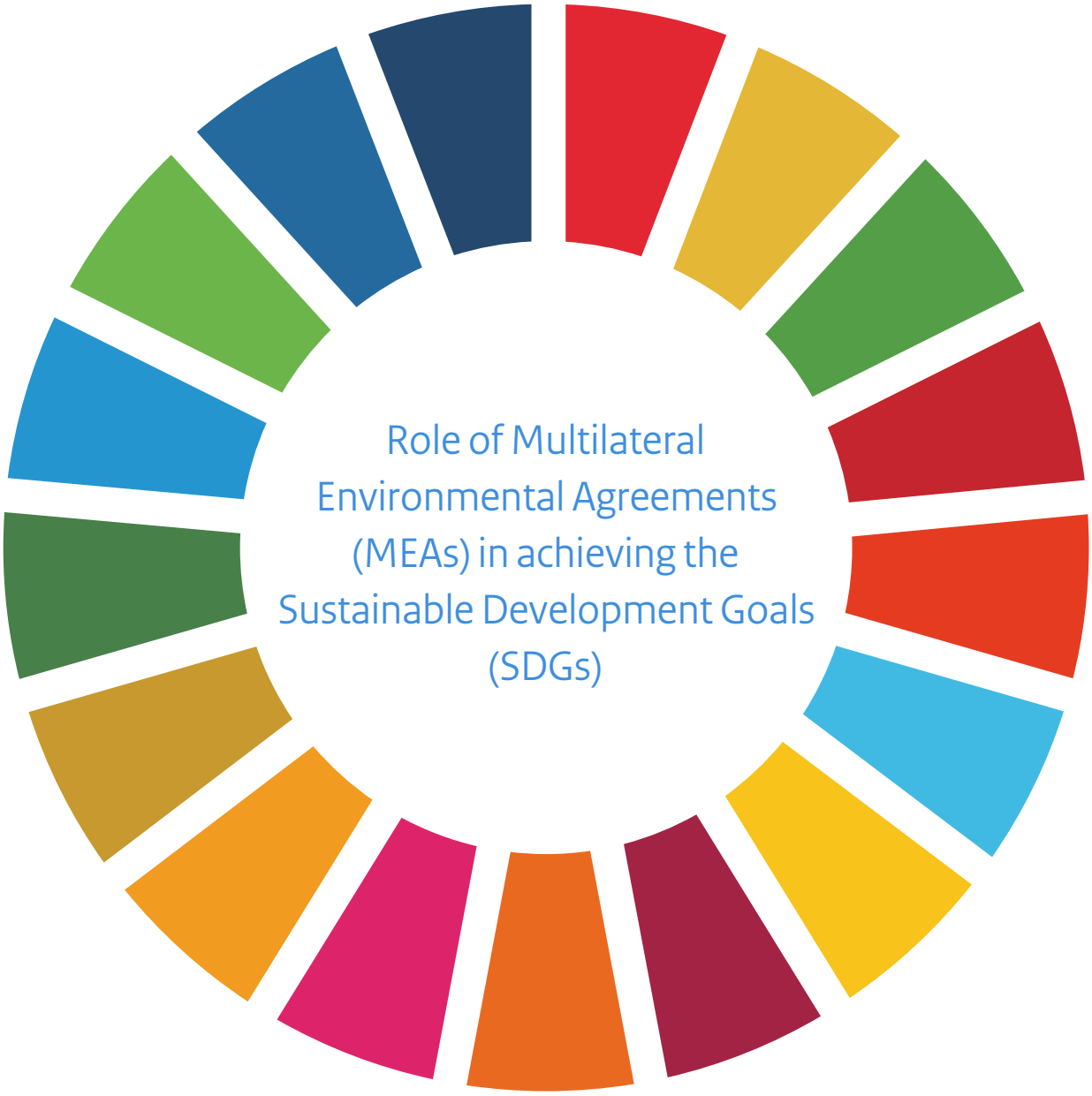

Role of Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEAs) in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

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Role of the multilateral environmental agreements in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals

With a special focus on biodiversity-related multilateral environmental agreements

Rôle des accords multilatéraux sur l'environnement dans la réalisation des objectifs de développement durable

En s'attachant particulièrement aux accords multilatéraux sur l'environnement relatifs à la biodiversité

El papel de los acuerdos ambientales multilaterales en los esfuerzos por lograr los Objetivos de Desarrollo Sostenible (ODS)con especial atención en los acuerdos ambientales multilateralesrelativos a la diversidad biológica

Роль многосторонних природоохранных соглашений (МПС) в достижении Целей в области устойчивого развития (ЦУР)

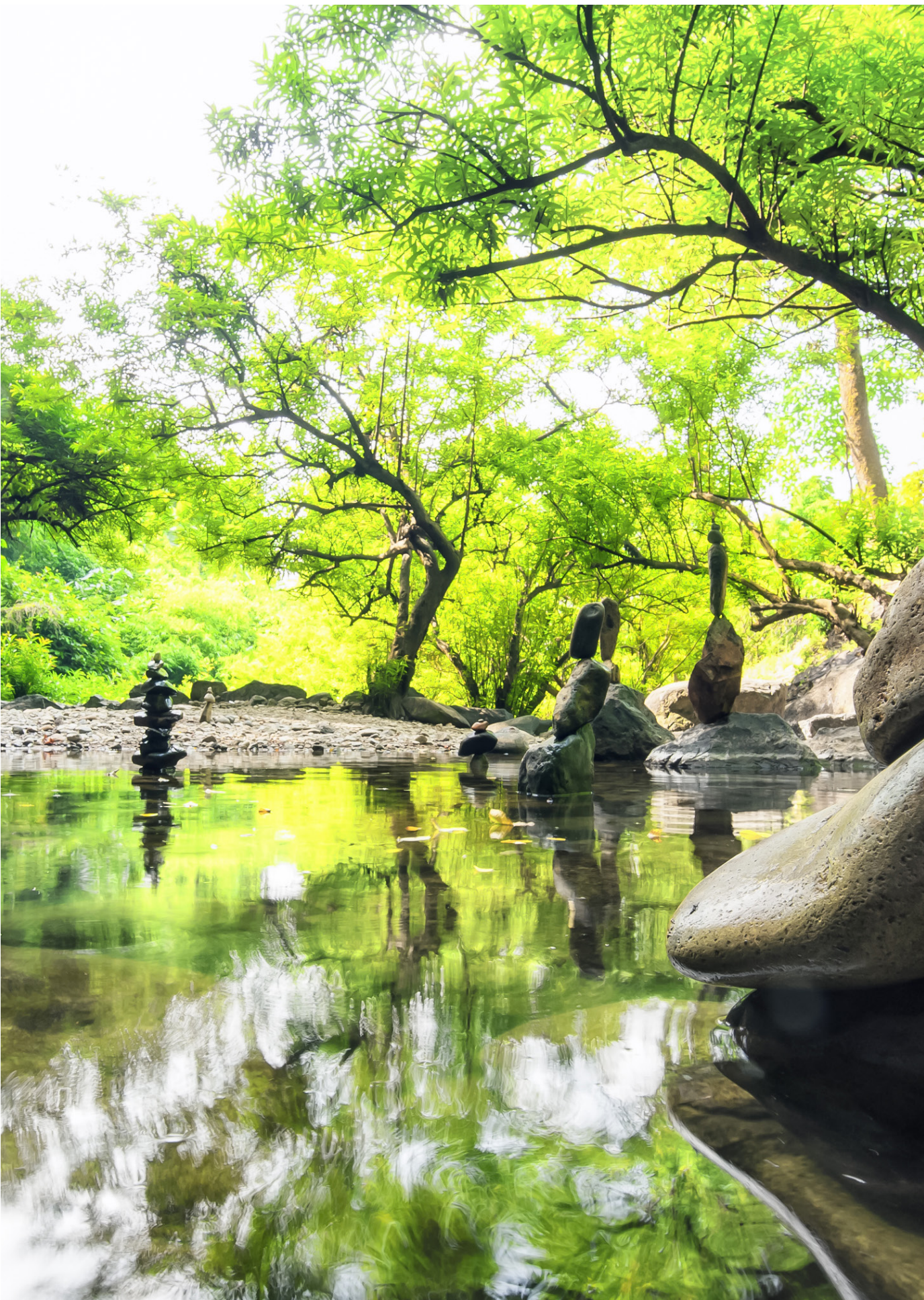
С особым акцентом на МПС, связанные с биоразнообразием

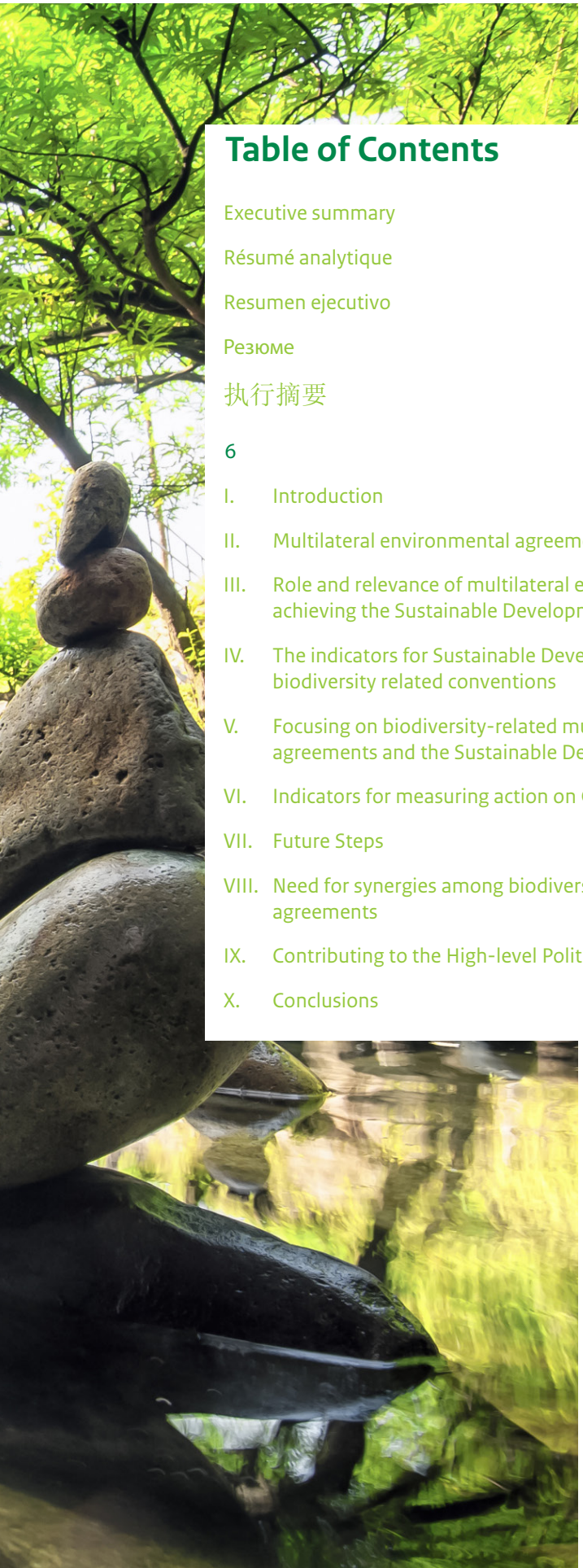
多边环境协定为实现可持续发展目标所发挥的作用

特别关注生物多样性领域的多边环境协定

دور الاتفاقيات البيئية المتعددة الأطراف تجاه تحقيق أهداف التنمية المستدامة

مع التركيز بشكل خاص على الاتفاقيات البيئية المتعددة الأطراف ذات الصلة بالتنوع البيولوجي





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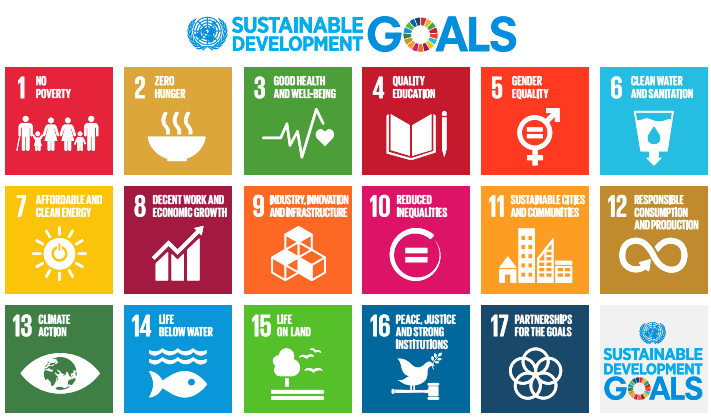
Executive summary

Discussions related to realizing the Sustainable Development Goals have now shifted to developing appropriate indicators for measuring progress in implementation at the national, regional and global levels. The role and relevance of multilateral environmental agreements in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals have long been recognized. However, current discussions in developing the Sustainable Development Goal indicators seem to be challenged by appropriateness of data and information emanating from the implementation of multilateral environmental agreements. The present paper outlines the links between the Sustainable Development Goals and multilateral environmental agreements in general and biodiversity-related multilateral environmental agreements in particular, with a special focus on Sustainable Development Goal targets and indicators in an attempt to inform discussions within the Inter-Agency and Expert Group on Sustainable Development Goal Indicators of the United Nations Statistical Commission and at the multilateral environmental agreement level.

Résumé analytique

Les discussions concernant la réalisation des objectifs de développement durable se polarisent actuellement sur l'élaboration d'indicateurs appropriés pour mesurer les progrès accomplis en matière de mise en œuvre aux niveaux mondial, régional et national. Le rôle et l'importance des accords multilatéraux sur l'environnement (AME) dans la réalisation des objectifs de développement durable sont reconnus depuis longtemps. Cependant, les discussions en cours sur l'élaboration des indicateurs relatifs aux objectifs de développement durable semblent s'enliser dans la question de la pertinence des données et des informations émanant de la mise en œuvre des AME. Le présent document esquisse les liens entre les AME et les objectifs de développement durable en général et les AME relatifs à la biodiversité en particulier, en tenant compte des problématiques liées aux cibles et indicateurs des objectifs de développement durable. Il analyse les enjeux et les possibilités de relier, dans les discussions et les actions, les cibles et indicateurs des objectifs de développement durable et les cibles et indicateurs des AME relatifs à la biodiversité, en vue d'éclairer les discussions au sein du Groupe d'experts interinstitutions de la Commission de statistique de l'ONU et au niveau des AME.



Resumen ejecutivo

Los debates relacionados con la consecución de los Objetivos de Desarrollo Sostenible (ODS) se han desplazado a la elaboración de indicadores apropiados para medir el progreso de la aplicación en los planos mundial, regional y nacional. El papel y la pertinencia de los acuerdos ambientales multilaterales en la consecución de los ODS quedaron establecidos desde hace mucho tiempo. Sin embargo, al parecer los debates actuales en relación con el desarrollo de los indicadores de los ODS se ven limitados por la falta de idoneidad de los datos y la información resultantes de la aplicación de esos acuerdos. En el presente documento se señalan los vínculos existentes entre los acuerdos ambientales multilaterales y los ODS, en general, y entre los acuerdos ambientales multilaterales relacionados con la diversidad biológica, en particular, teniendo en cuenta las cuestiones relativas a las metas y los indicadores de los Objetivos de Desarrollo Sostenible (ODS). El presente documento se centra en las cuestiones y oportunidades para vincular los debates y acciones entre las metas e indicadores de los ODS y las metas e indicadores de los acuerdos ambientales multilaterales relacionados con la diversidad biológica en un intento por orientar los debates en el marco del Grupo Interinstitucional de Expertos (GIE) de la Comisión de Estadística de las Naciones Unidas y a nivel de los acuerdos ambientales multilaterales.

Резюме

Обсуждение вопросов реализации Целей в области устойчивого развития (ЦУР) в настоящее время касается разработки соответствующих показателей для оценки хода осуществления на глобальном, региональном и национальном уровнях. Давно признаны роль многосторонних природоохранных соглашений (МПС) в достижении ЦУР и взаимосвязь с ними. Однако в ходе нынешних дискуссий, связанных с разработкой показателей ЦУР, как представляется, возникают трудности, обусловленные вопросом о правильности данных и информации, получаемых в результате осуществления МПС. В настоящем документе освещаются взаимосвязи между МПС и ЦУР, в целом, и связанными с биоразнообразием МПС, в частности, при рассмотрении вопросов о задачах и показателях ЦУР. Документ посвящен вопросам и возможностям взаимной увязки обсуждений и мер в отношении задач и показателей ЦУР и задач и показателей связанных с биоразнообразием МПС в попытке предложить обоснование для обсуждений в рамках Межучрежденческой группы экспертов (МУГЭ) Статистической комиссии Организации Объединенных Наций и на уровне МПС.

执行摘要

与可持续发展目标有关的讨论目前已转向为衡量全球、区域和国家各级的实施进展而制定合适的指标。多边环境协定在实现可持续发展目标方面的作用和相关性很早就得到认可，但目前围绕制定可持续发展目标各项指标的讨论似乎面临挑战，这些挑战与多边环境协定实施过程中产生的数据和信息的合适性有关。本文件概述了一般性多边环境协定与可持续发展目标之间的联系，以及与生物多样性有关的多边环境协定与可持续发展目标之间的特定联系，同时考虑到可持续发展目标的各项具体目标和指标。本文件重点审查将实现可持续发展目标的各项具体目标和指标与实现生物多样性领域多边环境协定的各项目标与指标的相关讨论与行动相联系的问题和机会，以期为联合国统计委员会机构间专家组内的讨论和多边环境协定一级的讨论提供参考。

موجز تنفيذي

تحولت في الوقت الحالي المناقشات المتعلقة بتحقيق أهداف التنمية المستدامة إلى وضع مؤشرات مناسبة لقياس التقدم المحرز في التنفيذ على الصعيد العالمي والإقليمي والوطني. وقد جرى التسليم منذ مدة طويلة بدور وأهمية الاتفاقات البيئية المتعددة الأطراف في تحقيق أهداف التنمية المستدامة. بيد أنه يبدو أن المناقشات الحالية على صعيد وضع مؤشرات أهداف التنمية المستدامة تواجه تحديات تتمثل في ملاءمة البيانات والمعلومات المنبثقة عن تنفيذ هذه الاتفاقات. وتحدد هذه الورقة الروابط بين الاتفاقات البيئية المتعددة الأطراف وأهداف التنمية المستدامة بشكل عام والاتفاقات البيئية المتعددة الأطراف ذات الصلة بالتنوع البيولوجي بشكل خاص مع مراعاة المسائل المتعلقة بغايات ومؤشرات أهداف التنمية المستدامة.

وتركز الورقة على المسائل والفرص لربط المناقشات والإجراءات بين غايات ومؤشرات أهداف التنمية المستدامة وغايات ومؤشرات الاتفاقات البيئية المتعددة الأطراف ذات الصلة بالتنوع البيولوجي في محاولة لإثراء المناقشات داخل فريق الخبراء المشترك بين الوكالات التابع للجنة الإحصائية في الأمم المتحدة وعلى مستوى الاتفاقات البيئية المتعددة الأطراف.

Role of the multilateral environmental agreements towards achieving the Sustainable Development Goals

With special focus on biodiversity-related multilateral environmental agreements

I. Introduction

During the United Nations Summit for the adoption of the post-2015 development agenda, held in New York in September 2015, Member States agreed on a global agenda, entitled "Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development", with the overarching goal of eradicating poverty and achieving sustainable development. In paragraphs 72 and 73 of the 2030 Agenda, Governments also stressed that a robust, voluntary, effective, participatory, transparent and integrated follow-up and review framework would make a vital contribution to implementation and promote accountability to citizens; support active international cooperation in achieving the 2030 Agenda; and foster exchange of best practices and mutual learning. A set of 17 Sustainable Development Goals were agreed as part of the Agenda.[1]

Member States also agreed on a series of global frameworks to support the realization of the 2030 Agenda, including the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015–2030, the Addis Ababa Action Agenda of the Third International Conference on Financing for Development and the outcomes of the twenty-first session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. In December 2015, the United Nations Statistical Commission published the report of the Inter-Agency and Expert Group on Sustainable Development Goal Indicators (see E/CN.3.2016/2). The indicators, which are critical to measuring progress in implementation of the Goals, were discussed by the United Nations Statistical Commission and agreed to in March 2016.[2,3]

In response to paragraph 90 of the 2030 Agenda, on 15 January 2016, the Secretary-General of the United Nations issued a report on critical milestones for coherent, efficient and inclusive follow-up on and review of the Agenda at the global level (A/70/684). The report states that Member States have the primary responsibility for implementing the Agenda at the national level, with full and informed participation by all relevant stakeholders. Section II of the report outlines the key responsibilities of Member States in determining the means of implementation of the Agenda, including the Sustainable Development Goals. The report also outlines the key functions of the High level Political Forum on Sustainable Development, which meets under the Economic and Social Council to discuss issues such as voluntary national reviews[4] and provides recommendations on voluntary common reporting guidelines (sect. VII (g)). In accordance with paragraph 99 of the report, in 2017, the High-level Political Forum is expected to cover the review of key environment related Goals 2, 13, 14, 15 and 17.

1 The United Nations General Assembly 2015 Resolution 70/1 Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. http://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/sustainable-development-goals/ (accessed on 20 December 2015).
2 http://unstats.un.org/unsd/statcom/47th-session/documents/Decisions_final_unedited.pdf.
3 http://unstats.un.org/unsd/statcom/47th-session/documents/2016-2-IAEG-SDGs-Rev1-E.pdf.
4 The 2030 Agenda does not specify at what intervals the reviews should be conducted.

With progress made on various fronts, ranging from proposing a set of indicators to measure progress in implementing actions towards the 2030 Agenda to suggesting specific reviews of Goals by the High-level Political Forum, responsibility for responding to these outcomes now shifts to the national level. Therefore, countries need to focus on identifying appropriate targets for prioritizing, adopting and designing suitable indicators for measuring progress; use available platforms, mechanisms and forums to support implementation; and respond to the global commitments made to implement the 2030 Agenda and other multilateral processes, such as the multilateral environmental agreements, trade agreements, social and economic frameworks and others.

II. Multilateral environmental agreements

Multilateral environmental agreements play a critical role in the overall framework of environmental laws and conventions. Complementing national legislation and bilateral or regional agreements, multilateral environmental agreements form the overarching international legal basis for global efforts to address particular environmental issues. The role of multilateral environmental agreements in achieving sustainable development has long been recognized.[5]

Some multilateral environmental agreements focus on particular themes. Examples include the biodiversity-related multilateral environmental agreements (Convention on Biological Diversity, Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Flora and Fauna, Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals, Convention concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage, International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture and International Plant Protection Convention) and the chemicals-related multilateral environmental agreements (Basel Convention on the Control of Transboundary Movements of Hazardous Wastes and their Disposal, Rotterdam Convention on the Prior Informed Consent Procedure for Certain Hazardous Chemicals and Pesticides in International Trade and Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants). Others are outcomes of international conferences; examples include the Rio Conventions (Convention on Biological Diversity, United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification). Still others, such as the Regional Seas Conventions and Action Plans, deal with specific regions.

The terms “multilateral environmental agreements” and “conventions” are occasionally used interchangeably.

Multilateral environmental agreements guide global, regional and national action on environmental issues and are a result of multilateral processes, which makes them key elements of environmental, legal and governance regimes. Scholars and practitioners also refer to them as “soft laws” to indicate the nature of the instruments and compliance issues related to them.

In recent years, several multilateral environmental agreements have focused on linking their mandates to the development agenda, and strategies have been developed

5 Balakrishna Pisupati, 2012, Biodiversity Governance: Lessons for International Environmental Governance, National Biodiversity Authority (Chennai, Government of India).

to contribute to sustainable development. For example, the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity for the period 2011–2020 addresses issues of sustainable development contributions to the Convention on Biological Diversity through its governing body.[6] Similarly, the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Flora and Fauna, the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals, the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, the Basel and Rotterdam conventions and others have developed action programmes and strategic links connecting their mandates to sustainable development, thus strengthening the link between the multilateral environmental agreements and the 2030 Agenda.[7]

In paragraph 89 of the outcome document of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development, entitled "The future we want", Member States recognized the significant contributions of the multilateral environmental agreements to sustainable development. Additionally, paragraphs 197–204 of the outcome document focused on the need to deal with biodiversity issues in order to achieve the objectives of the 2030 Agenda.

The present paper provides an overview of ongoing debates regarding the links between the Sustainable Development Goals and multilateral environmental agreements in general, and conventions belonging to the biodiversity cluster in particular, namely the Convention on Biological Diversity, the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Flora and Fauna, the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals, the Convention on Wetlands, the Convention concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage, the International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture and the International Plant Protection Convention, with a view to appropriately linking targets and indicators.

III. Role and relevance of multilateral environmental agreements in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals

The role of multilateral environmental agreements in achieving the 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals is indisputable. There are direct and indirect references to the multilateral environmental agreements in the Goals and targets adopted, including in Goals 12 and 17, which are applicable across the board, and in specific Goals such as Goal 12, on chemicals and wastes, Goal 13, on climate change, and Goals 14 and 15, on ecosystems and biological diversity.

Table 1 outlines the links between the Sustainable Development Goals and their targets and key multilateral environmental agreements.

Multilateral environmental agreements have a key role in fulfilling the need for the Goals to be appropriately understood and support putting in place mechanisms for implementing the Goals.

6 Decisions XII/4 and XI/22 of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity.

7 Decisions 16.6, 16.17 and 16.25 of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Flora and Fauna and resolution 11.2 of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals.

Table 1: Links between Sustainable Development Goals and targets and key multilateral environmental agreements

Multilateral environmental agreement	Focus	Link to Sustainable Development Goals and targets
Convention on Biological Diversity	Conservation of biodiversity; sustainable use of biodiversity; fair and equitable sharing of benefits arising from the use of genetic resources	**Goal 1,** *targets 1.4 and 1.b;* **Goal 2,** *targets 2.3, 2.4, 2.5, 2.a and 2.b;* **Goal 3,** *target 3.8;* **Goal 6,** *target 6.6;* **Goal 8,** *target 8.4;* **Goal 9,** *target 9.5;* **Goal 11,** *targets 11.4 and 11.a;* **Goal 12,** *targets 12.2 and 12.8;* **Goal 13,** *targets 13.3 and 13.b;* **Goal 14,** *targets 14.1 to 14.7, 14.a, 14.b and 14.c;* **Goal 15,** *targets 15.1, 15.2, 15.4, 15.5, 15.6, 15.7, 15.8, 15.9 and 15.b;* **Goal 16,** *targets 16.7, 16.8 and 16.b;* **Goal 17,** *targets 17.3, 17.6, 17.7, 17.8, 17.9, 17.10, 17.14, 17.15, 17.17, 17.17 and 17.19*
Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Flora and Fauna	Monitoring trade in endangered species to ensure survival of species is not threatened	**Goal 12,** *target 12.2;* **Goal 16,** *targets 16.7, 16.8 and 16.b;* **Goal 14,** *targets 14.2 and 14.4;* **Goal 15,** *targets 15.7 and 15.b;* **Goal 17,** *targets 17.3, 17.6, 17.7, 17.8, 17.9, 17.10, 17.14, 17.15, 17.17, 17.17 and 17.19*
Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals	Conservation of terrestrial, aquatic and avian migratory species, their habitats and migration routes, to ensure their favourable conservation status across their migratory ranges	**Goal 12,** *target 12.8;* **Goal 16,** *targets 16.7, 16.8 and 16.b;* **Goal 13,** *target 13.b;* **Goal 14,** *targets 14.2, 14,4 and 14.5;* **Goal 15,** *targets 15.8 and 15.9;* **Goal 17,** *targets 17.3, 17.6, 17.7, 17.8, 17.9, 17.14, 17.15, 17.17, 17.17 and 17.19*

Multilateral environmental agreement	Focus	Link to Sustainable Development Goals and targets
Convention on Wetlands of International Importance especially as Waterfowl Habitat	Framework for national action and international cooperation for the conservation and use of wetlands and their resources	**Goal 2,** *target 2.4;* **Goal 6,** *target 6.6;* **Goal 12,** *target 12.2;* **Goal 13,** *target 13.b;* **Goal 2,** *target 2.4;* **Goal 6,** *target 6.6;* **Goal 12,** *target 12.2;* **Goal 13,** *target 13.b;* **Goal 15,** *target 15.1;* **Goal 16,** *targets 16.7, 16.8 and 16.b;* **Goal 17,** *targets 17.3, 17.6, 17.7, 17.8, 17.9, 17.14, 17.15, 17.17, 17.17 and 17.19*
International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture	Conservation and sustainable use of plant genetic resources for food and agriculture and the fair and equitable sharing of benefits derived from their use for sustainable agriculture and food security	**Goal 2,** *targets 2.3, 2.4 and 2.5;* **Goal 12,** *target 12.2;* **Goal 13,** *target 13.b;* **Goal 15,** *targets 15.5, 15.6 and 15.9;* **Goal 16,** *targets 16.7, 16.8 and 16.b;* **Goal 17,** *targets 17.3, 17.6, 17.7, 17.8, 17.9, 17.14, 17.15, 17.17, 17.17 and 17.19*
Convention concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage	Protection of the world's cultural and natural heritage	**Goal 11,** *target 11.4;* **Goal 12,** *target 12.8;* **Goal 13,** *target 13.b* **Goal 15,** *targets 15.1, 15.4, 15.5 and 15.9;* **Goal 16,** *targets 16.7, 16.8 and 16.b;* **Goal 17,** *targets 17.3, 17.6, 17.7, 17.8, 17.9, 17.14, 17.15, 17.17, 17.17 and 17.19*
International Plant Protection Convention	Secure coordinated, effective action to prevent and control the introduction and spread of pests of plants and plant products	**Goal 12,** *target 12.2;* **Goal 13,** *target 13.b;* **Goal 15,** *targets 15.1 and 15.8;* **Goal 16,** *targets 16.7, 16.8 and 16.b;* **Goal 17,** *targets 17.3, 17.6, 17.7, 17.8, 17.9, 17.14, 17.15, 17.17, 17.17 and 17.19*

Multilateral environmental agreement	Focus	Link to Sustainable Development Goals and targets
United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change	Stabilize greenhouse gas concentrations in the atmosphere at a level that would prevent dangerous anthropogenic interference with the climate system	**Goal 2,** *target 2.4;* **Goal 9,** *target 9.4;* **Goal 11,** *targets 11.6 and 11.b;* **Goal 12,** *targets 12.8 and 12.c;* **Goal 13,** *targets 13.1, 13.2, 13.3, 13.a and 13.b;* **Goal 14,** *target 14.2;* **Goal 15,** *targets 15.1, 15.2, 15.4, 15.5, 15.8 and 15.b;* **Goal 16,** *targets 16.7, 16.8 and 16.b;* **Goal 17,** *targets 17.3, 17.6, 17.7, 17.8, 17.9, 17.14, 17.15, 17.17, 17.17 and 17.19*
United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification	Combat desertification and mitigate the effects of drought through national action programmes that incorporate long-term strategies supported by international cooperation and partnership arrangements	**Goal 1,** *target 1.5;* **Goal 2,** *target 2.4;* **Goal 13,** *target 13.b;* **Goal 12,** *target 12.8;* **Goal 15,** *target 15.3;* **Goal 16,** *targets 16.7, 16.8 and 16.b;* **Goal 17,** *targets 17.3, 17.6, 17.7, 17.8, 17.9, 17.14, 17.15, 17.17, 17.17 and 17.19*
Regional Seas Conventions and Action Plans	Legal frameworks for protecting oceans and seas at the regional level	**Goal 12,** *target 12.8* **Goal 14,** *targets 14.1, 14.2, 14.3, 14.5, 14.7, 14.a, 14.b and 14.c;* **Goal 16,** *targets 16.7, 16.8 and 16.b;* **Goal 17,** *targets 17.3, 17.6, 17.7, 17.8, 17.9, 17.14, 17.15, 17.17, 17.17 and 17.19*
Chemicals conventions (Basel Convention on the Control of Transboundary Movements of Hazardous Wastes and their Disposal, Rotterdam Convention on the Prior Informed Consent Procedure for Certain Hazardous Chemicals and Pesticides in International Trade, Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants and others)	Sound management of chemicals and wastes and related impacts on the environment and human health	**Goal 3,** *target: 3.9* **Goal 12,** *targets 12.4; 12.5 and 12.7;* **Goal 14,** *target 14.1;* **Goal 15,** *targets 15.1, 15.3 and 15.5;* **Goal 16,** *targets 16.7, 16.8 and 16.b;* **Goal 17,** *targets 17.3, 17.6, 17.7, 17.8, 17.9, 17.14, 17.15, 17.17, 17.17 and 17.19*

IV. The indicators for Sustainable Development Goals and the biodiversity related conventions

In 2002, the parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity adopted a focused strategic plan for biodiversity and a set of global biodiversity targets, along with a set of global indicators to measure progress in implementation of the targets.[8] One key lesson learned in the process of achieving the 2010 Biodiversity Target was that countries should be allowed to design indicators in line with national needs and priorities. Building on experience with implementation, the contracting parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity in 2010 adopted the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity for the period 2011–2020 and the Aichi Biodiversity Targets[9] with the understanding that global targets and indicators would guide parties in setting national targets and indicators. The response has been positive, to the extent that countries have started to prioritize national options for achieving the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity.[10] However, differential priority setting at the national level has impeded the assessment of progress in achieving the global targets.

In addition to the Convention on Biological Diversity, several key multilateral environmental agreements have developed specific strategic plans and a set of targets and indicators. Many of the targets are addressed through action programmes at the national and regional levels, and indicators relevant to the targets are regularly reviewed and updated.

There is keen interest among stakeholders working on multilateral environmental agreements in ensuring that there are appropriate links to actions at the national level to achieve the dual goals of conservation and development. As table 1 show, the implementation of actions related to the multilateral environmental agreements at various levels will significantly influence the extent to which the Goals and their targets are achieved.

However, the types of indicators considered by the Inter-Agency and Expert Group on Sustainable Development Goal Indicators appear to be inadequate for measuring progress towards achieving the Goals and for leveraging the contribution of the multilateral environmental agreements in measuring progress in sustainable development (see E/CN.3.2016/2). One such example is target 14.7, on increasing the economic benefits to small island developing States and least developed countries of the sustainable use of marine resources, including through sustainable management of fisheries, aquaculture and tourism, all of which are to be measured using one indicator described as “fisheries as a percentage of gross domestic product”. In failing to consider the environmental and resource management dimension of fisheries, the indicator could easily be interpreted at the national level as simply encouraging more fishing, thus falling short of achieving the target and the Goal.

The Inter-Agency and Expert Group seems to lack appropriate data and information on options for better indicators. In addition, its members are officials of national statistical

8 https://www.cbd.int/2010-target/about.shtml (accessed on 15 January 2016).
9 https://www.cbd.int/sp/ (accessed on 15 January 2016).
10 Balakrishna Pisupati and Christian Prip, 2015, Interim Assessment of Revised National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans. UNEP-WCMC, Cambridge, United Kingdom and Fridtjof Nansen Institute, Lysaker, Norway.

offices and may not fully understand the ongoing implementation of several key multilateral environmental agreements that have adopted robust, well-tested targets and indicators developed over a longer period.

Unless the gap between Goal indicators and other indicators under the multilateral environmental agreements is closed and the multilateral environmental agreements play an active role in ensuring adoption of relevant indicators for the Sustainable Development Goal framework, there may be a disjointed interpretation of what national-level actions are needed to achieve the 2030 Agenda.

V. Focusing on biodiversity-related multilateral environmental agreements and the Sustainable Development Goals

The role and relevance of biodiversity and ecosystems in securing the well-being of current and future generations, both urban and rural, cannot be overstated. The loss of biodiversity and ecosystems warrants a series of actions by countries and stakeholders to protect biodiversity through legal, policy and regulatory mechanisms.

In addition to CBD, the Rio Conventions, the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification[11] have direct links to the realization of biodiversity mandates, goals and targets, each of which focuses on a specific set of issues, ecosystems and species, with different but complementary mandates for dealing with their protection and use and for sharing the resulting benefits for humankind while ensuring that the planet's health is preserved. Given the common but differentiated mandates for implementing actions, guided by the respective governing bodies and assisted by scientific mechanisms, national implementation of multilateral environmental agreements needs additional impetus to coordinate actions (see UNEP/EA.2/12/Add.1).

The Sustainable Development Goals are a new entrant in the policy space aimed at contributing to the objectives of the multilateral environmental agreements in general and the biodiversity agenda in particular. Of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals, two refer specifically to biodiversity: Goal 14 (conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development) and Goal 15 (pprotect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss).

The multilateral environmental agreements contributed significantly to the design and development of the Goals. With a global mandate to promote sustainable development, the Goals will be used in political, social, scientific and policy processes in the months to come, and such processes will affect implementation of the multilateral environmental agreements at the national level.

Although conventions such as the Convention on Biological Diversity are mentioned in the preamble to the 2030 Agenda, the wording of Goals 14 and 15 reveals the need to link with a

11 Ibid.

larger number of multilateral environmental agreements, such as the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification and the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea. The targets outlined under the Goals and the suggested indicators for measuring progress towards implementation of the Goals show the need for synergies between biodiversity related and Rio multilateral environmental agreements. An example can be found in target 15.1 (by 2020, ensure the conservation, restoration and sustainable use of terrestrial and inland freshwater ecosystems and their services, in particular forests, wetlands, mountains and drylands, in line with obligations under international agreements). Thus, achievement of the Goals requires enhanced synergies and better coordination and cooperation between the multilateral environmental agreements, which in turn requires parties to the multilateral environmental agreements to move away from convention- and agreement-specific debates and decisions, and towards overarching discussions on how sustainable development could benefit the implementation of individual multilateral environmental agreements.

The multilateral environmental agreements can contribute in various ways to achieving the 2030 Agenda – by improving governance; bringing in partnerships to contribute to the Goals in general and to Goals 14 and 15 in particular; creating enabling conditions for local development; coordinating actions for synergies; and enhancing the role of law, equity and natural justice in promoting development.

The focus of the Goals in dealing with the environmental dimension of sustainable development is reflected in the kinds of targets and indicators proposed. It is heartening to note that, unlike the Millennium Development Goals, which only incorporated a sub-target on biodiversity five years after their adoption, the Goals include two goals directly related to biodiversity.

While Goals 12 and 17 are directly linked to the multilateral environmental agreements, Goals 2, 14 and 15 also have specific links to biodiversity-related multilateral environmental agreements.

The adoption of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity for the period 2011–2020[13] and the agreement reached in 2011 by the Liaison Group of Biodiversity-related Conventions to use the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity as overarching guidance[14] for key biodiversity-related multilateral environmental agreements are a step towards synergistic action among biodiversity-related multilateral environmental agreements and towards national and global implementation of Goals related actions.

Governments at the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Diversity affirmed the importance of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity for the period 2011–2020 and the Aichi Biodiversity Targets, while the United Nations General Assembly encouraged consideration of the Strategic Plan and Targets in developing the post-2015 development agenda, taking into account the three dimensions of sustainable development (see A/RES/67/212).

The role and importance of using the objectives of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity for the period 2011–2020 and the Aichi Biodiversity

12 https://www.cbd.int/sp/ (accessed on 11 January 2016).
13 https://www.cbd.int/cooperation/doc/blg-08-02-en.pdf (accessed on 11 January 2016).

Targets in further developing the Sustainable Development Goals have been widely analysed in the Report of the High-level Panel of Eminent Persons on the Post-2015 Development Agenda,[14] the Global Thematic Consultation on Environmental Sustainability in the Post-2015 Development Agenda[15] and other contexts.[16,17]

The focus should now shift to developing action programmes to translate the links between the multilateral environmental agreements and the Sustainable Development Goals into reality. One key opportunity is to incorporate Goal-related issues into the revised/updated post 2010 National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans. As of 15 January 2016, a total of 70 contracting parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity had submitted their Strategies and Action Plans,[18] and 126 parties were either preparing or finalizing theirs.

A review of completed Strategies and Action Plans undertaken in 2015[19] and 2016[20] reveals that they have little or no focus on dealing with the Sustainable Development Goals. Although this is understandable given the timelines for the completion of the Strategies and Action Plans and the fact that the General Assembly adopted the Sustainable Development Goals only in September 2015, countries finalizing their Strategies and Action Plans cannot afford to overlook the need to provide specific policy and programmatic links between implementing the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity for the period 2011–2020 and achieving the Aichi Biodiversity Targets and the Sustainable Development Goals.

VI. Indicators for measuring action on Goals 14 and 15

In its resolution 70/1, the General Assembly mandated the United Nations Statistical Commission to develop and implement a global indicator framework. The Inter-Agency and Expert Group on Sustainable Development Goal Indicators was established to develop a set of indicators for measuring progress in achieving the Goals and to present the outcomes by March 2016 to the UN Statistical Commission and then to the UN Economic and Social Council and the General Assembly. In the same resolution, the General Assembly called for a framework that was simple yet robust, addressed all Sustainable Development Goals and targets, including for means of implementation, and preserved the political balance, integration and ambition contained therein. Accordingly, in December 2015, the Inter-Agency and Expert Group developed a set of indicators for consideration (see E/CN.3/2016/2).

To date, a total of 231 indicators have been proposed, categorized as indicators for which an internationally agreed methodology and standards exist and data are easily available; indicators for which a methodology has been established but data are not readily available; and indicators for which no internationally agreed methodology has yet been developed. Of the 231 indicators proposed, 151 are in the first and second categories, while 80 are in the third category.

14 http://www.post2015hlp.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/05/UN-Report.pdf.
15 http://www.iisd.ca/download/pdf/sd/crsvol208num7e.pdf.
16 http://unsdsn.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/02/TG10-Final-Report.pdf.
17 http://www.cbd.int/sbstta/doc/trondheim-full-paper-2-sdgs-en.pdf.
18 https://www.cbd.int/nbsap/ [accessed 15 January 2016].
19 Balakrishna Pisupati and Christian Prip, 2015, Interim Assessment of Revised National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans, UNEP-WCMC, Cambridge, United Kingdom and Fridtjof Nansen Institute, Lysaker, Norway.
20 https://www.cbd.int/sbi01/review/ (accessed on 21 January 2016).

Table 2 provides links between the SDG targets and indicators as well as the Aichi biodiversity tagets and indicators.

Some biodiversity-related multilateral environmental agreements (for example, the Convention concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage and the International Plant Protection Convention) have not yet developed convention specific targets or indicators. They could benefit from aligning their approach with the Goal-related targets and indicators, taking into account their areas of focus and mandates.

Table 2: Suggested Sustainable Development Goal indicators

Sustainable Development Goal target	Suggested SDG indicator	Relevance to the Aichi Biodiversity Targets	Selected Aichi Biodiversity Target-related indicator[21]
Target 14.1 By 2025, prevent and significantly reduce marine pollution of all kinds, in particular from land based activities, including marine debris and nutrient pollution	Index of coastal eutrophication and floating plastic debris density	**Target 8** By 2020, pollution, including from excess nutrients, has been brought to levels that are not detrimental to ecosystem function and biodiversity	Trends in incidence of hypoxic zones and algal blooms Trends in nitrogen footprint of consumption activities
Target 14.2 By 2020, sustainably manage and protect marine and coastal ecosystems to avoid significant adverse impacts, including by strengthening their resilience, and take action for their restoration in order to achieve healthy and productive oceans	Proportion of national exclusive economic zones managed using ecosystem-based approaches	**Target 6** By 2020 all fish and invertebrate stocks and aquatic plants are managed and harvested sustainably, legally and applying ecosystem based approaches, so that overfishing is avoided, recovery plans and measures are in place for all depleted species, fisheries have no significant adverse impacts on threatened species and vulnerable ecosystems and the impacts of fisheries on stocks, species and ecosystems are within safe ecological limits	Trends in fishing effort capacity Trends in population of target and bycatch aquatic species Trends in proportion of utilized stocks outside safe biological limits

21 https://www.cbd.int/sp/indicators/ (accessed on 18 January 2016).

Sustainable Development Goal target	Suggested SDG indicator	Relevance to the Aichi Biodiversity Targets	Selected Aichi Biodiversity Target-related indicator[21]
Target 14.3 Minimize and address the impacts of ocean acidification, including through enhanced scientific cooperation at all levels	Average marine acidity (pH) measured at agreed suite of representative sampling stations	**Target 10** By 2015, the multiple anthropogenic pressures on coral reefs, and other vulnerable ecosystems impacted by climate change or ocean acidification are minimized, so as to maintain their integrity and functioning	Trends in climate change impacts on extinction risk
Target 14.4 By 2020, effectively regulate harvesting and end overfishing, illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing and destructive fishing practices and implement science-based management plans, in order to restore fish stocks in the shortest time feasible, at least to levels that can produce maximum sustainable yield as determined by their biological characteristics	Proportion of fish stocks within biologically sustainable levels	**Target 6** By 2020 all fish and invertebrate stocks and aquatic plants are managed and harvested sustainably, legally and applying ecosystem based approaches, so that overfishing is avoided, recovery plans and measures are in place for all depleted species, fisheries have no significant adverse impacts on threatened species and vulnerable ecosystems and the impacts of fisheries on stocks, species and ecosystems are within safe ecological limits	Trends in proportion of depleted target and bycatch species with recovery plans Trends in population of target and bycatch aquatic species Trends in proportion of utilized stocks outside safe biological limits

Sustainable Development Goal target	Suggested SDG indicator	Relevance to the Aichi Biodiversity Targets	Selected Aichi Biodiversity Target-related indicator[21]
Target 14.5 By 2020, conserve at least 10 per cent of coastal and marine areas, consistent with national and international law and based on the best available scientific information	Coverage of protected areas in relation to marine areas	**Target 11** By 2020, at least 17 per cent of terrestrial and inland water, and 10 per cent of coastal and marine areas, especially areas of particular importance for biodiversity and ecosystem services, are conserved through effectively and equitably managed, ecologically representative and well connected systems of protected areas and other effective area-based conservation measures, and integrated into the wider landscapes and seascapes	Trends in coverage of protected areas Trends in extent of marine protected areas, coverage of key biodiversity areas and management effectiveness Trends in protected area condition and/or management effectiveness including more equitable management Trends in representative coverage of protected areas and other area based approaches, including sites of particular importance for biodiversity, and of terrestrial, marine and inland water systems Trends in the delivery of ecosystem services and equitable benefits from protected areas

Sustainable Development Goal target	Suggested SDG indicator	Relevance to the Aichi Biodiversity Targets	Selected Aichi Biodiversity Target-related indicator[21]
Target 14.6 By 2020, prohibit certain forms of fisheries subsidies which contribute to overcapacity and overfishing, eliminate subsidies that contribute to illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing and refrain from introducing new such subsidies, recognizing that appropriate and effective special and differential treatment for developing and least developed countries should be an integral part of the World Trade Organization fisheries subsidies negotiation	Progress by countries in the degree of implementation of international instruments aiming to combat illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing	**Target 3** By 2020, at the latest, incentives, including subsidies, harmful to biodiversity are eliminated, phased out or reformed in order to minimize or avoid negative impacts, and positive incentives for the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity are developed and applied, consistent and in harmony with the Convention and other relevant international obligations, taking into account national socio economic conditions	Trends in identification, assessment and establishment and strengthening of incentives that reward positive contribution to biodiversity and ecosystem services and penalize adverse impacts Trends in the number and value of incentives, including subsidies, harmful to biodiversity, removed, reformed or phased out

Sustainable Development Goal target	Suggested SDG indicator	Relevance to the Aichi Biodiversity Targets	Selected Aichi Biodiversity Target-related indicator[21]
Target 14.7 By 2030, increase the economic benefits to small island developing States and least developed countries from the sustainable use of marine resources, including through sustainable management of fisheries, aquaculture and tourism	Sustainable fisheries as a percentage of GDP in small island developing States, least developed countries and all countries	**Target 6** By 2020 all fish and invertebrate stocks and aquatic plants are managed and harvested sustainably, legally and applying ecosystem based approaches, so that overfishing is avoided, recovery plans and measures are in place for all depleted species, fisheries have no significant adverse impacts on threatened species and vulnerable ecosystems and the impacts of fisheries on stocks, species and ecosystems are within safe ecological limits	Trends in fishing effort capacity Trends in population of target and bycatch aquatic species

Sustainable Development Goal target	Suggested SDG indicator	Relevance to the Aichi Biodiversity Targets	Selected Aichi Biodiversity Target-related indicator[21]
Target 14.a Increase scientific knowledge, develop research capacity and transfer marine technology, taking into account the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission Criteria and Guidelines on the Transfer of Marine Technology, in order to improve ocean health and to enhance the contribution of marine biodiversity to the development of developing countries, in particular small island developing States and least developed countries	Proportion of total research budget allocated to research in the field of marine technology	**Target 19** By 2020, knowledge, the science base and technologies relating to biodiversity, its values, functioning, status and trends, and the consequences of its loss, are improved, widely shared and transferred, and applied	Number of maintained species inventories being used to implement the Convention Trends in coverage of comprehensive policy-relevant sub-global assessments including related capacity-building and knowledge transfer, plus trends in uptake into policy

Sustainable Development Goal target	Suggested SDG indicator	Relevance to the Aichi Biodiversity Targets	Selected Aichi Biodiversity Target-related indicator[21]
Target 14.b Provide access for small-scale artisanal fishers to marine resources and markets	Progress by countries in the degree of application of a legal/regulatory/ policy/ institutional framework which recognizes and protects access rights for small-scale fisheries	**Target 18** By 2020, the traditional knowledge, innovations and practices of indigenous and local communities relevant for the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity, and their customary use of biological resources, are respected, subject to national legislation and relevant international obligations, and fully integrated and reflected in the implementation of the Convention with the full and effective participation of indigenous and local communities, at all relevant levels	Trends in degree to which traditional knowledge and practices are respected through: full integration, participation and safeguards in national implementation of the Strategic Plan Trends in the practice of traditional occupations

Sustainable Development Goal target	Suggested SDG indicator	Relevance to the Aichi Biodiversity Targets	Selected Aichi Biodiversity Target-related indicator[21]
Target 14.c Enhance the conservation and sustainable use of oceans and their resources by implementing international law as reflected in the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, which provides the legal framework for the conservation and sustainable use of oceans and their resources, as recalled in paragraph 158 of "The future we want"	Number of countries making progress in ratifying, accepting and implementing through legal, policy and institutional frameworks, ocean-related instruments that implement international law, as reflected in the United Nation Convention on the Law of the Sea, for the conservation and sustainable use of the oceans and their resources		
Target 15.1 By 2020, ensure the conservation, restoration and sustainable use of terrestrial and inland freshwater ecosystems and their services, in particular forests, wetlands, mountains and drylands, in line with obligations under international agreements	Forest area as a proportion of total land area; Proportion of important sites for terrestrial and freshwater biodiversity that are covered by protected areas, by ecosystem type	**Target 5** By 2020, the rate of loss of all natural habitats, including forests, is at least halved and where feasible brought close to zero, and degradation and fragmentation is significantly reduced	Trends in area of degraded ecosystems restored or being restored Population trends and extinction risk trends of species that provide ecosystem services Trends in biocapacity Trends in delivery of multiple ecosystem services Trends in the condition of selected ecosystem services

Sustainable Development Goal target	Suggested SDG indicator	Relevance to the Aichi Biodiversity Targets	Selected Aichi Biodiversity Target-related indicator[21]
Target 15.2 By 2020, promote the implementation of sustainable management of all types of forests, halt deforestation, restore degraded forests and substantially increase afforestation and reforestation globally	Progress towards sustainable forest management	**Target 5** By 2020, the rate of loss of all natural habitats, including forests, is at least halved and where feasible brought close to zero, and degradation and fragmentation is significantly reduced **Target 14** By 2020, ecosystems that provide essential services, including services related to water, and contribute to health, livelihoods and well-being, are restored and safeguarded, taking into account the needs of women, indigenous and local communities, and the poor and vulnerable	Trends in extent of selected biomes, ecosystems and habitats Trends in fragmentation of natural habitats Trends in proportion of degraded/threatened habitats Trends in primary productivity Trends in area of degraded ecosystems restored or being restored Trends in benefits that humans derive from selected ecosystem services Trends in delivery of multiple ecosystem services
Target 15.3 By 2030, combat desertification, restore degraded land and soil, including land affected by desertification, drought and floods, and strive to achieve a land degradation-neutral world	Proportion of land that is degraded over total land area	**Target 15** By 2020, ecosystem resilience and the contribution of biodiversity to carbon stocks has been enhanced, through conservation and restoration, including restoration of at least 15 per cent of degraded ecosystems, thereby contributing to climate change mitigation and adaptation and to combating desertification	Trends in area of degraded ecosystems restored or being restored Trends in biocapacity Trends in natural resource conflicts Trends in the condition of selected ecosystem services

Sustainable Development Goal target	Suggested SDG indicator	Relevance to the Aichi Biodiversity Targets	Selected Aichi Biodiversity Target-related indicator[21]
Target 15.4 By 2030, ensure the conservation of mountain ecosystems, including their biodiversity, in order to enhance their capacity to provide benefits that are essential for sustainable development	Coverage by protected areas of important sites for mountain biodiversity Mountain Green Cover Index	**Target 5** By 2020, the rate of loss of all natural habitats, including forests, is at least halved and where feasible brought close to zero, and degradation and fragmentation is significantly reduced **Target 11** By 2020, at least 17 per cent of terrestrial and inland water, and 10 per cent of coastal and marine areas, especially areas of particular importance for biodiversity and ecosystem services, are conserved through effectively and equitably managed, ecologically representative and well connected systems of protected areas and other effective area-based conservation measures, and integrated into the wider landscapes and seascapes	Trends in condition and vulnerability of ecosystems Trends in proportion of degraded/threatened habitats Trends in primary productivity Trends in protected area condition and/or management effectiveness including more equitable management

Sustainable Development Goal target	Suggested SDG indicator	Relevance to the Aichi Biodiversity Targets	Selected Aichi Biodiversity Target-related indicator[21]
Target 15.5 Take urgent and significant action to reduce the degradation of natural habitats, halt the loss of biodiversity and, by 2020, protect and prevent the extinction of threatened species	Red List Index	**Target 12** By 2020 the extinction of known threatened species has been prevented and their conservation status, particularly of those most in decline, has been improved and sustained	Trends in extinction risk of species Trends in abundance of selected species
Target 15.6 Promote fair and equitable sharing of the benefits arising from the utilization of genetic resources and promote appropriate access to such resources, as internationally agreed	Number of countries that have adopted legislative, administrative and policy frameworks to ensure fair and equitable sharing of benefits	**Target 16** By 2015, the Nagoya Protocol on Access to Genetic Resources and the Fair and Equitable Sharing of Benefits Arising from their Utilization is in force and operational, consistent with national legislation	
Target 15.7 Take urgent action to end poaching and trafficking of protected species of flora and fauna and address both demand and supply of illegal wildlife products	Proportion of traded wildlife that was poached or illicitly trafficked	**Target 12** By 2020 the extinction of known threatened species has been prevented and their conservation status, particularly of those most in decline, has been improved and sustained	Trends in distribution of selected species Trends in extinction risk of species

Sustainable Development Goal target	Suggested SDG indicator	Relevance to the Aichi Biodiversity Targets	Selected Aichi Biodiversity Target-related indicator[21]
Target 15.8 By 2020, introduce measures to prevent the introduction and significantly reduce the impact of invasive alien species on land and water ecosystems and control or eradicate the priority species	Proportion of countries adopting relevant national legislation and adequately resourcing the prevention or control of invasive alien species	**Target 9** By 2020, invasive alien species and pathways are identified and prioritized, priority species are controlled or eradicated, and measures are in place to manage pathways to prevent their introduction and establishment	Trends in policy responses, legislation and management plans to control and prevent spread of invasive alien species Trends in invasive alien species pathways management Trends in the impact of invasive alien species on extinction risk trends
Target 15.9 By 2020, integrate ecosystem and biodiversity values into national and local planning, development processes, poverty reduction strategies and accounts	Progress towards national targets established in accordance with Aichi Biodiversity Target 2 of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020	**Target 2** By 2020, at the latest, biodiversity values have been integrated into national and local development and poverty reduction strategies and planning processes and are being incorporated into national accounting, as appropriate, and reporting systems	Trends in guidelines and applications of economic appraisal tools Trends in integration of biodiversity and ecosystem service values into integrated in sectoral and development policies Trends in number of countries incorporating natural resource, biodiversity, and ecosystem service values into national accounting systems Trends in number of countries that have assessed values of biodiversity, in accordance with the Convention Trends in policies considering biodiversity and ecosystem service in environmental impact assessment and strategic environmental assessment

Sustainable Development Goal target	Suggested SDG indicator	Relevance to the Aichi Biodiversity Targets	Selected Aichi Biodiversity Target-related indicator[21]
Target 15.a Mobilize and significantly increase financial resources from all sources to conserve and sustainably use biodiversity and ecosystems	Official development assistance and public expenditure on conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity and ecosystems	**Target 20** By 2020, at the latest, the mobilization of financial resources for effectively implementing the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity for the period 2011–2020 from all sources, and in accordance with the consolidated and agreed process in the Strategy for Resource Mobilization, should increase substantially from the current levels. This target will be subject to changes contingent to resource needs assessments to be developed and reported by Parties	Trends in mobilization of financial resources

Sustainable Development Goal target	Suggested SDG indicator	Relevance to the Aichi Biodiversity Targets	Selected Aichi Biodiversity Target-related indicator[21]
Target 15.b Mobilize significant resources from all sources and at all levels to finance sustainable forest management and provide adequate incentives to developing countries to advance such management, including for conservation and reforestation	Official development assistance and public expenditure on conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity and ecosystems	**Target 20** By 2020, at the latest, the mobilization of financial resources for effectively implementing the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity for the period 2011–2020 from all sources, and in accordance with the consolidated and agreed process in the Strategy for Resource Mobilization, should increase substantially from the current levels. This target will be subject to changes contingent to resource needs assessments to be developed and reported by Parties	Trends in mobilization of financial resources

Sustainable Development Goal target	Suggested SDG indicator	Relevance to the Aichi Biodiversity Targets	Selected Aichi Biodiversity Target-related indicator[21]
Target 15.c Enhance global support for efforts to combat poaching and trafficking of protected species, including by increasing the capacity of local communities to pursue sustainable livelihood opportunities	Proportion of traded wildlife that was poached or illicitly trafficked	**Target 18** By 2020, the traditional knowledge, innovations and practices of indigenous and local communities relevant for the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity, and their customary use of biological resources, are respected, subject to national legislation and relevant international obligations, and fully integrated and reflected in the implementation of the Convention with the full and effective participation of indigenous and local communities, at all relevant levels	Trends in the practice of traditional occupations

*Sustainable Development Goal indicators that are yet to be developed and agreed on.

As was mentioned above, while the Sustainable Development Goals and related targets focus on issues of biodiversity and ecosystems in general, they have limited links specific to key biodiversity related multilateral environmental agreements. Each of the key biodiversity-related multilateral environmental agreements, in addition to the Convention on Biological Diversity, provides opportunities and tools for achieving the Goals.

Table 3 is a sample compilation of Sustainable Development Goal targets and related indicators finalized by the United Nations Statistical Commission. Various issues covered under key biodiversity-related multilateral environmental agreements, such as those related to species conservation, have not yet been incorporated into a number of indicators developed by the Inter-Agency and Expert Group on Sustainable Development Goal Indicators under the aegis of the United Nations Statistical Commission.

Multilateral environmental agreement secretariats and experts should provide further guidance and advice to the Expert Group on the relevance and usefulness of the indicators currently being used by the multilateral environmental agreements.

Table 3: Sample compilation of Sustainable Development Goal targets and related indicators

Biodiversity-related multilateral environmental agreement	Relevant Sustainable Development Goal and target	Relevant Indicator under SDG
Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Flora and Fauna	**Target 15.1** By 2020, ensure the conservation, restoration and sustainable use of terrestrial and inland freshwater ecosystems and their services, in particular forests, wetlands, mountains and drylands, in line with obligations under international agreements **Target 15.7**. Take urgent action to end poaching and trafficking of protected species of flora and fauna and address both demand and supply of illegal wildlife products **Target 15.c.** Enhance global support for efforts to combat poaching and trafficking of protected species, including by increasing the capacity of local communities to pursue sustainable livelihood opportunities	Proportion of important sites for terrestrial and freshwater biodiversity that are covered by protected areas, by ecosystem type Proportion of traded wildlife that was poached or illicitly trafficked
Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals	**Target 15.1**. By 2020, ensure the conservation, restoration and sustainable use of terrestrial and inland freshwater ecosystems and their services, in particular forests, wetlands, mountains and drylands, in line with obligations under international agreements **Target 15.8.** By 2020, introduce measures to prevent the introduction and significantly reduce the impact of invasive alien species on land and water ecosystems and control or eradicate the priority species	Proportion of important sites for terrestrial and freshwater biodiversity that are covered by protected areas, by ecosystem type Proportion of countries adopting relevant national legislation and adequately resourcing the prevention or control of invasive alien species

Biodiversity-related multilateral environmental agreement	Relevant Sustainable Development Goal and target	Relevant Indicator under SDG
RAMSAR Convention on Wetlands of International Importance	**Target 15.1.** By 2020, ensure the conservation, restoration and sustainable use of terrestrial and inland freshwater ecosystems and their services, in particular forests, wetlands, mountains and drylands, in line with obligations under international agreements; **Target 15.8.** By 2020, introduce measures to prevent the introduction and significantly reduce the impact of invasive alien species on land and water ecosystems and control or eradicate the priority species	Proportion of important sites for terrestrial and freshwater biodiversity that are covered by protected areas, by ecosystem type Proportion of countries adopting relevant national legislation and adequately resourcing the prevention or control of invasive alien species
International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture	**Target 15.1.** By 2020, ensure the conservation, restoration and sustainable use of terrestrial and inland freshwater ecosystems and their services, in particular forests, wetlands, mountains and drylands, in line with obligations under international agreements **Target 15.5.** Take urgent and significant action to reduce the degradation of natural habitats, halt the loss of biodiversity and, by 2020, protect and prevent the extinction of threatened species **Target 15.6.** Promote fair and equitable sharing of the benefits arising from the utilization of genetic resources and promote appropriate access to such resources, as internationally agreed	Proportion of important sites for terrestrial and freshwater biodiversity that are covered by protected areas, by ecosystem type Red List Index Number of countries that have adopted legislative, administrative and policy frameworks to ensure fair and equitable sharing of benefits

Biodiversity-related multilateral environmental agreement	Relevant Sustainable Development Goal and target	Relevant Indicator under SDG
Convention concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage	**Target 15.1.** By 2020, ensure the conservation, restoration and sustainable use of terrestrial and inland freshwater ecosystems and their services, in particular forests, wetlands, mountains and drylands, in line with obligations under international agreements	Proportion of important sites for terrestrial and freshwater biodiversity that are covered by protected areas, by ecosystem type
International Plant Protection Convention	**Target 15.1.** By 2020, ensure the conservation, restoration and sustainable use of terrestrial and inland freshwater ecosystems and their services, in particular forests, wetlands, mountains and drylands, in line with obligations under international agreements **Target 15.8.** By 2020, introduce measures to prevent the introduction and significantly reduce the impact of invasive alien species on land and water ecosystems and control or eradicate the priority species	Proportion of important sites for terrestrial and freshwater biodiversity that are covered by protected areas, by ecosystem type Proportion of countries adopting relevant national legislation and adequately resourcing the prevention or control of invasive alien species.

In addition to Goals 14 and 15, which are closely tied to biodiversity- and ecosystems-related issues, various other Sustainable Development Goals are linked to biodiversity-related multilateral environmental agreements. Table 4 provides an example from CBD and ITPGRFA on their links to SDGs and targets other than goal 14 and 15.

Table 4: Links between biodiversity related multilateral environmental agreements and Sustainable Development Goal targets and indicators

Sustainable Development Goal	Sustainable Development Goal target	SDG Indicator	Relevant biodiversity-related multilateral environmental agreement	Relevant multilateral environmental agreement target and indicator
2. End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture	**Target 2.3** By 2030, double the agricultural productivity and incomes of small-scale food producers, in particular women, indigenous peoples, family farmers, pastoralists and fishers, including through secure and equal access to land, other productive resources and inputs, knowledge, financial services, markets and opportunities for value addition and non-farm employment **Target 2.4** By 2030, ensure sustainable food production systems and implement resilient agricultural practices that increase productivity and production, that help maintain ecosystems, that strengthen capacity for adaptation to climate change, extreme weather, drought, flooding and other disasters and that progressively improve land and soil quality	Volume of production per labour unit by classes of farming/pastoral/forestry enterprise size and Average income of small-scale food producers, by sex and indigenous status Proportion of agricultural area under productive and sustainable agriculture Number of plant and animal genetic resources for food and agriculture secured in either medium or long-term conservation facilities Proportion of local breeds classified as being at risk, not-at-risk or at unknown level of risk of extinction	Convention on Biological Diversity	**Target 7** By 2020 areas under agriculture, aquaculture and forestry are managed sustainably, ensuring conservation of biodiversity Relevant Indicators: Trends in area of forest, agricultural and aquaculture ecosystems under sustainable management Trends in population of forest and agriculture dependent species in production systems Trends in production per input **Target 13** By 2020, the genetic diversity of cultivated plants and farmed and domesticated animals and of wild relatives, including other socio-economically as well as culturally valuable species, is maintained, and strategies have been developed and

Sustainable Development Goal	Sustainable Development Goal target	SDG Indicator	Relevant biodiversity-related multilateral environmental agreement	Relevant multilateral environmental agreement target and indicator
2. End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture	**Target 2.4** By 2030, ensure sustainable food production systems and implement resilient agricultural practices that increase productivity and production, that help maintain ecosystems, that strengthen capacity for adaptation to climate change, extreme weather, drought, flooding and other disasters and that progressively improve land and soil quality **Target 2.5** By 2020, maintain the genetic diversity of seeds, cultivated plants and farmed and domesticated animals and their related wild species, including through soundly managed and diversified seed and plant banks at the national, regional and international levels, and promote access to and fair and equitable sharing of benefits arising from the utilization of genetic resources and associated traditional knowledge, as internationally agreed	Proportion of agricultural area under productive and sustainable agriculture Number of plant and animal genetic resources for food and agriculture secured in either medium or long-term conservation facilities Proportion of local breeds classified as being at risk, not-at-risk or at unknown level of risk of extinction	International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture	

VII. Future Steps

Biodiversity-related multilateral environmental agreements could contribute significantly to achieving several of the Sustainable Development Goals. However, the extent to which that will happen remains unclear given the nature of the indicators being finalized by the United Nations Statistical Commission.

Following are guidelines for enhancing support from biodiversity-related multilateral environmental agreements to the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals.

(a) Each multilateral environmental agreement should set out the manner in which its objectives, strategic plans and work programmes relate to the Sustainable Development Goal targets and indicators. The MEAs should define a set of options for national focal points to consider while planning implementation, and in preparing documents for future governing body meetings that could require a link between the multilateral environmental agreement and the 2030 Agenda and Sustainable Development Goals.

(b) Existing indicators and those under development for the multilateral environmental agreements should be reviewed with a view to informing discussions by the Inter Agency and Expert Group on Sustainable Development Goal Indicators so that the indicators for targets related to Goals 14 and 15 can be finalized.

(c) National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans being finalized should take into account Sustainable Development Goal-related targets and indicators and adjust national targets and indicators to link the Strategies and Action Plans to the Goal related agenda and actions.

(d) Actions at the national level, mostly guided by national statistical offices, should be linked to ensure that Sustainable Development Goal target-related reporting fully considers the targets and indicators of the key multilateral environmental agreements.

VIII. Need for synergies among biodiversity-related multilateral environmental agreements

Synergistic implementation of the multilateral environmental agreements could not only reduce costs and the need for additional expertise and reporting-related work but also effectively integrate principles of conservation, sustainable use and benefits-sharing into development planning.

The difficulties posed by such implementation and integration will present a challenge when countries meet to develop the post-2020 Global Biodiversity Strategy, to ensure that the next 10 years of strategic planning for biodiversity will contribute to the achievement of Goals 14 and 15, as well as other Sustainable Development Goals that rely on effective local and national action to conserve natural resources and ecosystems and ensure their sustainable use of resources

IX. Contributing to the High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development

The High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development is expected to take a holistic view of implementation of the 2030 Agenda. It will provide political guidance and recommendations on the basis of a global appraisal of progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals. The thematic review of the Goals under the High-level Political Forum will be supported by the functional commission of the Economic and Social Council and other intergovernmental bodies and forums. The governing bodies of the multilateral environmental agreements and the United Nations Environment Assembly have an essential role to play in contributing to the thematic review of the Goals under the High-level Political Forum.[22] With the suggested review of Goals 2, 13, 14, 15 and 17 scheduled for 2017 (see A/70/684), meetings such as the second session of the Environment Assembly, the seventeenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Flora and Fauna and the thirteenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity should not miss the opportunity to inform the High level Political Forum about issues related to links between the Goals, its targets and indicators and work under the multilateral environmental agreements.

The High-level Political Forum offers an opportunity to determine whether adjustments are needed to ensure that the agenda remains relevant and ambitious. Discussions are therefore required on streamlining and consolidating the indicator framework under the Sustainable Development Goals. As the present paper shows, the current indicator framework does not appear to appropriately consider the indicators that are available and being used under the multilateral environmental agreement frameworks.

The indicators can be streamlined by improving information sharing and exchanges at the national level between statistical offices and multilateral environmental agreement focal points. Appropriate guidance will be needed from the Environment Assembly and the governing bodies of the multilateral environmental agreements. Otherwise, member States might again face the problem that emerged during review of implementation of the Millennium Development Goals, when there was no or limited reporting regarding Millennium Development Goal 7, target 7 (b) (reduce biodiversity loss, achieving, by 2010, a significant reduction in the rate of loss) at the national, regional and global levels.[23]

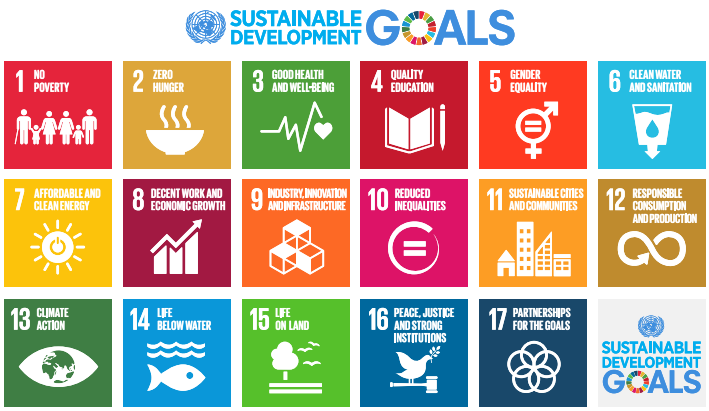
22 "The future we want", para. 85.
23 Balakrishna Pisupati, 2015, Sustaining Sustainable Development, Forum for Law, Environment, Development and Governance, India.

X. Conclusions

The present paper has provided an overview of the links between the Sustainable Development Goals and the multilateral environmental agreements. It has set out the data and information required in order to finalize the Goal indicators by providing a summary of biodiversity-related multilateral environmental agreement targets and indicators.

Further work will be needed to ensure that biodiversity-related multilateral environmental agreements inform the Sustainable Development Goal implementation process at the national level and further the work of the High-level Political Forum. Technical support and capacity-building for national-level action on issues identified in section X of the present paper will assist in achieving the objectives related to conservation and sustainable development.

Given the relevance of implementation-related actions at the national level, consideration should be given to the manner in which countries incorporate the set of indicators proposed by the United Nations Statistical Commission into their reporting.



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