UNCBD NEGOTIATIONS

A RESOURCE BOOK

Forest Foundation Philippines
Let's grow together.

parabukas

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For Ditas,
who fought tirelessly for the most vulnerable.

Bernarditas de Castro-Müller
1942 - 2018

FOREWORD

2018 saw the release of two important scientific studies that have tremendous ramifications for international environmental policy and sustainable development.

The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) Special Report on Global Warming of 1.5C, published in October, stressed the importance of limiting further warming by 2030 through transformational system change.

The Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES) reports released in March, on the other hand, found alarming rates of biodiversity loss all over the world. In the Asia-Pacific region alone, a region of vast biodiversity with a high number of endemic species and unique ecosystem, rapid economic growth and resulting socioeconomic and demographic changes have driven the degradation of habitats, an increasing number of invasive alien species, and pollution.

These represent the interdependence of what have become known as the Rio Conventions, and the urgency for the Philippines – one of the eighteen most megadiverse countries in the world and at the same time one of the most vulnerable to climate impacts – to continue leading in international environmental processes for the sake of our people and the planet.

It is high time to listen to the science and come up with a legacy of transformative policymaking that could be passed on to future generations.

The Philippines has much to gain from participating fully in these international talks. We have a strong foothold in these processes through the paths blazed by veteran Filipino negotiators like Bernarditas Muller, to whom these books are dedicated, who have fought for ecological justice for years.

These resource books are for the next generation of negotiators who dream of creating the change we need toward a sustainable and resilient future for all. The opportunity to shape policy and bring about the just transition we need to achieve an equitable, inclusive, and renewable-energy powered world lies in wait. We hope that these books will prove instrumental in that journey.

ANTONIO G.M. LA VIÑA
Chairperson, Board of Trustees
Forest Foundation Philippines

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1989 – 2nd Ad Hoc Working Group of Experts on Biological Diversity established

1992 – Rio Earth Summit; UNCBD text opened for signatures

1993 – UNCBD entered into force

1994 – Philippines becomes a party to the CBD by ratification

2000 – Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety adopted

2003 – Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety entered into force

2007 – Philippines became a party to the Cartagena Protocol by ratification

2010

- Nagoya Protocol on Access and Benefit Sharing adopted
- Strategic Plan for Biodiversity, with the 2050 Vision for Bibiodiversity and Aichi Biodiversity Targets 2011 - 2020 adopted

2014 – Nagoya Protocol entered into force

2015 – Philippines became a party to the Nagoya Protocol by accession

2016 – Philippines finalized and submitted its updated national Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan for 2015-2028

Illustration by Desiree Llanos Dee

SUNRISE AT THE MT. PULAG NATIONAL PARK, PHILIPPINES

UNA

THE HISTORY OF THE CBD AND ITS PROTOCOLS

The United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity traces its roots to a 1987 decision by the Governing Council of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) which requested the establishment of an Ad Hoc Working Group of Experts "to investigate the desirability and possible form of an umbrella convention to rationalize current activities in the field of biodiversity." In line with this, the Ad Hoc Working Group of Experts on Biological Diversity was convened in Geneva on November 1988. Together, they concluded that "there was a need for one or more legally binding mechanisms dealing with the conservation of biological diversity at the international level", agreeing that "the totality of the existing conventions could not cover the full range of biological diversity. "[1]

In May 1989, a second Ad Hoc Working Group of Experts on Biological Diversity was established to prepare an international legal instrument for the conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity, taking into account "the need to share costs and benefits between developed and developing countries and the ways and means to support innovation by local people."[2] This group held seven working sessions which culminated in the agreed text of the Convention on Biological Diversity.

The Convention opened for signature at the Rio Earth Summit in 1992, together with the Framework Convention on Climate Change and the Convention to Combat Desertification. It entered into force on 29 December 1993.

Currently, the UNCBD has 196 parties, including the Philippines. The Philippines signed on to the UN CBD at the Rio Earth Summit in December 1992. The country formally became a party by ratification in January 1994.

The Philippines has since enacted more than 20 national laws and regulations on that contribute to biodiversity conservation and sustainable use, including the Expanded National Integrated Protected Areas System (E-NIPAS) Act, Wildlife Act, Indigenous Peoples Rights Act and Executive Order 514, or the Philippine Biosafety Guidelines. The Convention's National Focal Points for the Philippines are currently the DFA-UNIO and DENR.

A.

COMPONENTS OF THE CONVENTION

The principal objectives of the Convention articulated in Article 1 are the:

1. Conservation of biological diversity
2. Sustainable use of its components and
3. Fair and equitable sharing of the benefits arising out of the utilization of genetic resources

THE UNCBD IS ALSO COMPOSED OF:

A Preamble

that affirms that the Parties are conscious of the intrinsic value of biological diversity and of the ecological, genetic, social, economic, scientific, educational, cultural, recreational and aesthetic values of biological diversity and its components, that the conservation of biological diversity is a common concern of humankind and that States have sovereign rights over their own biological resources, among others.

42 articles covering:

- The declaration of its **ultimate objectives** (see above);

- A **definition of terms** for key words and phrases, as used in the context of the Convention;

- A declaration of the Convention's **central principle:** that States have the sovereign right to exploit their own resources pursuant to their own environmental policies;

- Articles defining **jurisdictional scope** and committing countries to **cooperation** with other contracting Parties;

- **General measures for conservation and sustainable use** that commit contracting parties to develop national strategies and integrate conservation and sustainable use in relevant sectoral or cross-sectoral policies;
- The **identification and monitoring** of components of biological diversity;

- **In-situ conservation**, which enjoins Parties to establish a system of protected areas, develop guidelines for the selection of these, regulate resources important for the conservation of biological diversity within or outside protected areas, promote the protection of ecosystems, rehabilitate and restore degraded ecosystems, establish means to regulate risks associated with the use and release of living modified organisms resulting from biotechnology, prevent the introduction of alien species which threaten ecosystems, all while respecting, preserving and maintaining knowledge innovations and practices of indigenous and local communities embodying traditional lifestyles relevant for the conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity, among others;

- **Ex-situ conservation**, which enjoins Parties to adopt measures for the ex-situ conservation of components of biological diversity, establish and maintain facilities for ex-situ conservation, adopt measures for the recovery and rehabilitation of threatened species and for their reintroduction into their natural habitats, cooperate in providing financial and other support for ex-situ conservation, among others;

- The **sustainable use** of components of biological diversity, enjoining parties to integrate consideration of conservation and sustainable use of biological resources into national decision-making, protect and encourage customary use of biological resources in accordance with traditional cultural practices that are compatible, support local populations to develop and implement remedial action in degraded areas, among others;
- Articles that commit Parties to the adoption of **incentive measures, research and training and the promotion of public education and awareness.**

- **Impact assessment and minimizing adverse impacts**, wherein parties are enjoined to introduce appropriate procedures requiring environmental impact, ensure the environmental consequences of its programmes and policies that are likely to have significant adverse impacts on biological diversity are duly taken into account, promote the exchange of information and consultation on activities under their jurisdiction of control, and tasking the Conference of Parties to examine the issue of liability and redress, including restoration and compensation, for damage to biological diversity, among others;

- **Access to genetic resources,** recognizing again the sovereign right of States over their natural resources as well as their authority to determine access to genetic resources, the creation of conditions to facilitate access, the carrying out of scientific research based on genetic resources and the creation of legislative, administrative or policy measures in accordance with a financial mechanism, among others;

COP 14 PLENARY IN SHARM EL SHEIKH, EGYPT
Photo by
IISD/ENB/Francis Dejon

- **Access to and Transfer of Technology**, wherein Parties recognize that technology includes biotechnology, and that both access to and transfer of technology among contracting parties are essential elements for attainment of the objectives of the Convention, among others;

- The promotion of **exchange of information and technical scientific cooperation;**

- The **handling of biotechnology and distribution of its benefits,** wherein parties are tasked to take measures to provide for the effective participation in biotechnological research activities and to take all practicable measures to promote and advance priority access on a fair and equitable basis by Contracting Parties, especially developing countries, to the results and benefits arising from biotechnologies based upon genetic resources provided by those Contracting Parties, on mutually agreed terms;

- **Financial resources,** wherein developed countries are tasked to provide new and additional financial resources to enable developing country Parties to meet the agreed full incremental costs to them of implementing measures which fulfill the obligations of the Convention; and a **Financial Mechanism** which is for the provision of resources on a grant or concessional basis;

- **Relationship with Other International Conventions,** that stipulate that the provisions of UN CBD shall not affect the rights and obligations of any Contracting Party;

- Articles that establish the **Conference of Parties, Secretariat, and Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice;**

- Articles that guide reports, the settlement of disputes, the adoption of protocols, the amendment of the Convention or Protocols, the adoption and amendment of Annexes, the right to vote, the opening for signature, the ratification, acceptance and approval, accession, entry into force, reservations, withdrawals, financial interim arrangements, secretariat interim arrangements, depositary and authentic texts.

B.

THE CARTAGENA PROTOCOL

PHILIPPINE DELEGATES AT CARTAGENA PROTOCOL MOP 6
Photo by IISD / ENB

Discussions on the need for and modalities of a protocol for the safe transfer, handling and use of living modified organisms began at COP 2. Four years of work by the Open-Ended Ad Hoc Working Group on Biosafety from 1996 to 2000 resulted in the text of the Protocol, which was adopted by the COP in January 2000. It officially entered into force on 11 September 2003.

The Protocol seeks to protect biological diversity from potential risks posed by living modified organisms resulting from modern biotechnology. By establishing an advanced informed agreement (AIA) procedure,[3] it ensures that countries are provided with information necessary to make decisions before agreeing to the importation of such organisms in their territory. This is consistent with Principle 15 of the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development's precautionary approach.[4]

Under the protocol, a "living modified organism" (LMO) is defined as any organism that possesses a "novel combination of genetic material obtained through the use of modern biotechnology, and 'living organism' means any biological entity capable of transferring or replicating genetic material, including sterile organisms, viruses and viroids.[5] Common LMOs include agricultural crops, like tomatoes, cassava and corn.

At COP/MOP 5, Parties also adopted the Nagoya-Kuala Lumpur Supplementary Protocol on Liability and Redress. This supplementary agreement aims to provide international rules and procedures in the field of liability and redress relating to LMOs.[6] Parties are required to undertake response measures in the event of damage resulting from LMOs, or where there s sufficient likelihood that damage will result if timely response measures are not taken.[7]

C.

THE NAGOYA PROTOCOL

The Nagoya Protocol on Access and Benefit Sharing was adopted at COP 10 on 29 October 2010 in Nagoya, Japan. It entered into force on 12 October 2014.

The Nagoya Protocol specifically responds to the third objective of the Convention – the fair and equitable sharing of the benefits arising out of the utilization of genetic resources. It also pertains to Article 8(j) on traditional knowledge and Article 15 on genetic resources.

As used in the Protocol, utilization of genetic resources covers research and development on the genetic and/or biochemical composition of genetic resources, including through the application of biotechnology.[8] The Nagoya Protocol also applies to traditional knowledge associated with genetic resources and the benefits arising from the utilization of such knowledge.[9]
Under the Protocol, monetary or non-monetary benefits arising from the utilization of genetic resources and their subsequent applications and commercialization shall be shared in a fair and equitable way with the Party that is the source of these resources – whether it is the country of origin or one that has acquired the genetic resources in accordance with the Convention. Sharing of benefits shall be in accordance with mutually agreed terms.[10]

D.

OTHER PRINCIPLES, GUIDANCE AND VOLUNTARY GUIDELINES

In addition to the Convention and its Protocols, several guidance documents and voluntary guidelines on various issues have also been developed during the negotiations.

These documents may serve as resources for States in their implementation of specific aspects of the Convention and its Protocols. While States are not required to use these documents as basis for crafting or implementing their national-level plans or policies, they provide helpful references that reflect internationally-accepted standards.

E.

STRATEGIC PLAN ON BIODIVERSITY AND THE AICHI TARGETS

At COP 10 in 2010, parties also adopted an updated Strategic Plan for Biodiversity which included the 2050 Vision for Biodiversity and the Aichi Biodiversity Targets for 2011 to 2020. Using these as an overarching framework, Parties likewise agreed to translate the targets into national strategies and action plans.

The Philippines finalized its updated Philippine Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (PBSAP 2015 -2028) in 2016. The PBSAP is anchored on the Philippine Development Plan and also complements other existing national plans such as Women's Empowerment, Development and Gender Equality Development Plan, National Action Plan to Combat Desertification, Drought and Poverty, National Ecotourism Strategy, National REDD+ Strategy, and the Master Forestry Development Plan.[11]

AICHI BIODIVERSITY TARGETS

Strategic goal A:

Address the underlying causes of biodiversity loss by mainstreaming biodiversity across government and society

Awareness of value of biodiversity and conservation

Integration of biodiversity values into development strategies

Elimination of biodiversity-harmful subsidies and development of incentives for conservation

Implementation so plans for sustainable production and consumption

Strategic goal B:

Reduce the direct pressures on biodiversity and promote sustainable use

At least 50% reduction of the rate of loss of all natural habitats, and reduction of degradation & fragmentation

Sustainable management and harvesting of fisheries and aquatic resources, application of ecosystem-based approaches to avoid over fishing and recovery measures for depleted species

Sustainable management of areas under agriculture, aquaculture and forestry

Reduction of pollution

Management of invasive alien species and pathways

Reduction anthropogenic pressures on coral reefs and other vulnerable ecosystems impacted by climate change or ocean acidification

Strategic goal C:

Improve status of biodiversity by safeguarding ecosystems, species, and genetic diversity

Conservation of biodiversity-rich and ecosystem services-providing areas through systems of protected areas or area-based measures

Prevention of extinction of threatened species and improvement of their conservation status

Maintenance of genetic diversity of cultivated plants and farmed and domesticated animals, and thier wild relatives

Strategic goal D:

Enhance the benefits to all from biodiversity and ecosystem services

Restoration and safeguarding of ecosystems, taking into account the needs of women, indigenous and local communities, and the poor and vulnerable

Enhancement of ecosystem resilience and contribution to climate change mitigation and adaptation

Operationalization of Nagoya Protocol through national legislation

Strategic goal E:

Enhance implementation through participatory planning, knowledge management and capacity building

Implementation of effective, participatory and updated national biodiversity strategies and action plans

Integration and reflection of traditional knowledge and practices of indigenous and local communities in the implementation of the Convention, with IPLC participation at all levels

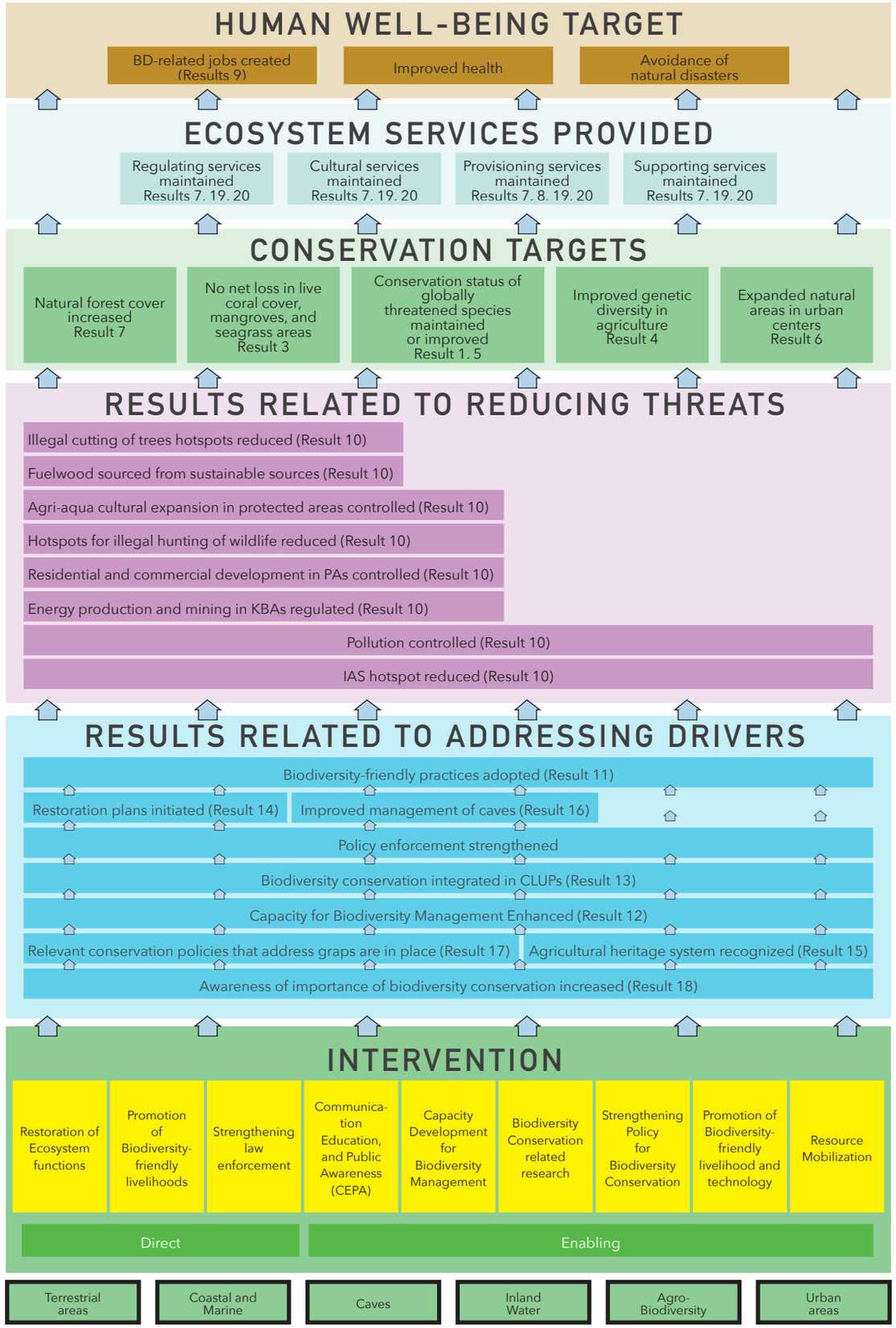
Improvement of knowledge, science base and technologies relating to biodiversity

Increase in the mobilization of financial resources for the effective implementation of the Strategic Plan

DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENT AND NATURAL RESOURCES -
BIODIVERSITY MANAGEMENT BUREAU (2015)
PHILIPPINE BIODIVERSITY STRATEGY AND ACTION PLAN 2015-2028, 106

PHILIPPINE BIODIVERSITY STRATEGY AND ACTION PLAN TARGETS

The overall goal of the PBSAP is improved human well-being. It identifies direct and enabling interventions to address and reduce the five major pressures of biodiversity loss, namely habitat loss and degradation, overexploitation, invasive alien species, climate change and pollution.



HUDDLE WITH DELEGATES FROM THE PHILIPPINES, MALAYSIA AND SAMOA AT COP 10
Photo by
IISD/ENB/Franz Dejon

IKALAWA

THE BIODIVERSITY NEGOTIATIONS

A.

INSTITUTIONAL AND NEGOTIATION STRUCTURES

The United Nations Convention on Biodiversity established institutional structures in the implementation of its provisions. Parties have also come up with structures and blocs to organize themselves in order to negotiate various issues.

The Conference of Parties

Article 23 of the CBD provided for the establishment of a supreme body called the Conference of Parties (COP) for the Convention on Biological Diversity. The COP is composed of state parties to the Convention. Non-party stakeholders like civil society organizations and various arms of the United Nations may attend these meetings as observers.

The COP advances implementation of the Convention through its Decisions.[12] In line with this, the COP also reviews advice from the Subsidiary Bodies and Working Groups, adopts Protocols to the Convention or any amendments thereto, and establishes any other bodies that may be necessary for the Convention's implementation.[13]

The COP is supported by a Secretariat that carries out the necessary administrative, coordinative and reportorial tasks.

Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice (SBSTTA)

The SBSTTA was established under Article 25 of the Convention. Its main role is to provide the COP with timely advice relating to the implementation of the Convention.

Its specific functions include a) providing assessments of the status of biological diversity; b) providing assessments of the types of measures taken in accordance with the provisions of the Convention; and c) responding to questions that the COP may put to the body, among others.[14]

Subsidiary Body on Implementation (SBI)

The SBI was established at COP 12 in 2014. It replaced the Ad Hoc Open-ended Working Group on Review of the Implementation of the Convention, which had previously operated from 2005 to 2014.

The SBI's main functions include (a) review of progress in implementation; (b) strategic actions to enhance implementation; (c) strengthening means of implementation; and (d) operations of the convention and the Protocols. [15]

The SBI pays particular attention to resource mobilization, guidance to the financial mechanism, capacity building, national reporting, technical and scientific cooperation and the clearing-house mechanism, and communication, education and public awareness.[16]

Working Groups

Working Groups are similar to subsidiary bodies, in that they are established by the COP to provide advice on particular issues. They differ from SBSTTA and SBI in that they focus on even more specific areas of work.

The Working Group on Article 8(j) was established at COP 4 in 1998. The Group's mandate under its Programme of Work is to enhance the role and involvement of indigenous and local communities in the achievement of the objectives of the Convention.[17]

Among the Working Group's outcomes were the Akwé: Kon Guidelines for the conduct of cultural, environmental and social impact assessments regarding developments proposed to take place or which are likely to impact on sacred sites and on lands and waters traditionally occupied or used by indigenous and local communities. These Guidelines were adopted by COP 7 in 2004.

Ad Hoc Groups

Ad Hoc Groups may be established under the guidance of the COP, to carry out given mandates for a limited duration.

A limited number of Ad Hoc Technical Expert Groups (AHTEGs) may be established to provide scientific and technical advice and assessments. These groups are responsible for consolidating existing knowledge and competence and liaising with relevant organizations and the scientific community, as well as indigenous and local community organizations and the private sector, in their given fields.

AHTEGs are composed of no more than fifteen experts nominated by Parties. These persons should be competent in the relevant field of expertise, and are selected with due regard to geographical representation, gender balance and to the special conditions of developing countries.

THE HALLWAYS ON DAY 1 OF COP 14 AT SHARM EL SHEIKH, EGYPT
Photo by
IISD/ENB/Kiara Worth

AHTEGs are convened under the Modus Operandi of the SBSTTA. As such, these groups must first submit its findings and recommendations to the SBSTTA.

Other bodies, called Ad Hoc Open Ended Working Groups, perform the similar function of advising the COP on specific priority issues.

Unlike AHTEGs, Ad Hoc Open Ended Working Groups may report directly to the COP.

Clearing-house mechanism

A Clearing-house Mechanism (CHM) is a repository of information that is publicly accessible. The CHM for the Convention is provided for under CBD Article 18 paragraph 3, which establishes this mechanism to promote and facilitate technical and scientific cooperation.
Currently, there are three Clearing-houses under the Convention – one for the CBD, one for Biosafety and one for Access and Benefit Sharing.

Open Ended Online Forum

Open Ended Online Fora may be established to support the work of the Ad Hoc Working Groups. These are moderated online discussions that are open to any interested participants for a limited time.

B.

BODIES AT THE CONFERENCE

At the Conference itself, matters are routinely referred to the groups below. These groups are not provided for in the Convention or in decisions but are formed in practice, as it is never easy to address issues in plenary meetings attended by scores of Parties and observers.[18]

Working groups

CBD COPs usually organize two Working Group sessions. Each Working Group is facilitated by a Chairperson, and is assigned a set of draft decisions to discuss.

This ensures that all the issues are considered by a group of interested States while at the same time allowing the Chair to move along the agenda on the understanding that he or she will return to the deferred item once the working group reports back.[19]

Contact groups

Contact groups are set up to deal with hard to resolve issues that could slow down progress. The Chair of the COP, a subsidiary body or a working group might suggest holding a contact group. Usually, this group involves the States that have strongly opposed opinions on an issue.[20]

Contact Groups usually have two Chairpersons – one from a developed country and one from a developing country.

Drafting group

These groups meet in closed sessions upon instruction of the Chair to develop text on specific issues.

The CBD Secretariat usually participates in these groups. When necessary, they may consult with Parties to clarify their interventions and suggested text.

Legal drafting group

During negotiations, legal drafting groups are set up composed of lawyers from different delegations to examine legal issues. They can also review the wording of each article proposed for inclusion in agreements and decisions.

C.

MEETINGS, OUTCOMES AND EVENTS

1. FORMAL MEETINGS

Plenary

Plenary meetings are open to all participants, including observer organizations and the media. Bodies meet in plenaries to adopt agendas, agree on other procedural matters and adopt decisions, which is why all parties must be included.[21]

Sessions usually start with an opening plenary for opening statements and adoption of the agenda. The closing plenary is usually when conclusions or decisions are adopted.

During plenaries, Parties can make statements and interventions. Statements are usually prepared beforehand and read out by the Heads of each country delegation and representatives of UN bodies and civil society organizations. Interventions, on the other hand, are response to what has been said by other Parties and the presiding officers.

Contact group meetings

The contact group meetings are usually aimed towards the crafting or cleaning of the draft decision or Conference Room Paper text, which it then forwards to the respective plenary to be adopted or approved.

2. INFORMAL MEETINGS

If there is particular difficulty in getting through an agenda item due to a contentious issue, informal meetings might be suggested outside of the contact group meetings to find ways forward. Co-facilitators often summarize these to be included at the beginning of the next contact group meetings.

Coordination meetings

Internal group coordination meetings are held daily during the COPs and SB intersessional meetings. These are undertaken to provide members of negotiating blocs with updates and consult for group positions.

Bilaterals

Usually closed meetings, bilaterals are delegation-to-delegation meetings used to clarify positions, acknowledge common interests or find ways to negotiate around points of divergence.

3. OUTCOMES

Decisions

Decisions are the key outcomes of each COP session. They usually start with a preamble that guides the interpretation of the operative text.[22] These are numbered and compiled in the report of each session, searchable on the UNCBD website.

Draft decisions may contain words, phrases or entire paragraphs in square brackets. This means that the text that has not yet been agreed by all Parties, and is open for negotiation. Throughout the COP meetings, the bracketed text will be slowly "unbracketed" as arguments are made for various positions, and as compromises are made. Some negotiations will not open the entire document for discussions, and will only focus on the bracketed text.

4. EVENTS

Side events

Side events are opportunities to share work and views among Parties and non-Party stakeholders, providing also the chance for networking and the exchange of information for participants working on the same issues.

Press conferences

Organized through the Secretariat, CBD press conferences are usually participated in by accredited journalists who are following the negotiations. Organizations and delegations may organize press conferences, but the UNCBD Secretariat organizes regular briefings to update the media on progress.

D.

NEGOTIATING BLOCS

LIKE MINDED MEGADIVERSE COUNTRIES (LMMC)

Composed of the 17 of the world's megadiverse countries – Bolivia, Brazil, China, Colombia, Costa Rica, Democratic Republic of Congo, Ecuador, India, Indonesia, Kenya, Madagascar, Malaysia, Mexico, Peru, Philippines, South Africa and Venezuela. Particularly focuses on access and benefit sharing negotiations.

GROUP OF LATIN AMERICAN AND CARIBBEAN COUNTRIES (GRULAC)

Group of 33 countries from Latin America and the Carribean

AFRICAN GROUP

Group of the 54 countries from the African continent

GROUP OF 77 AND CHINA (G77 AND CHINA)

Originally established as a group of 77 developing countries, but now includes 132 developing States. The Philippines is a member of this negotiating bloc. China sometimes allies with this group, in which case it is referred to as G77 and China. After COP 10, the G77 and China has been less active as a negotiating bloc.

EUROPEAN UNION (EU)

Composed of 27 member States. The EU usually speaks for all of its members, although the individual States participate in the negotiations as well.

UNCBD NEGOTIATING BLOCS

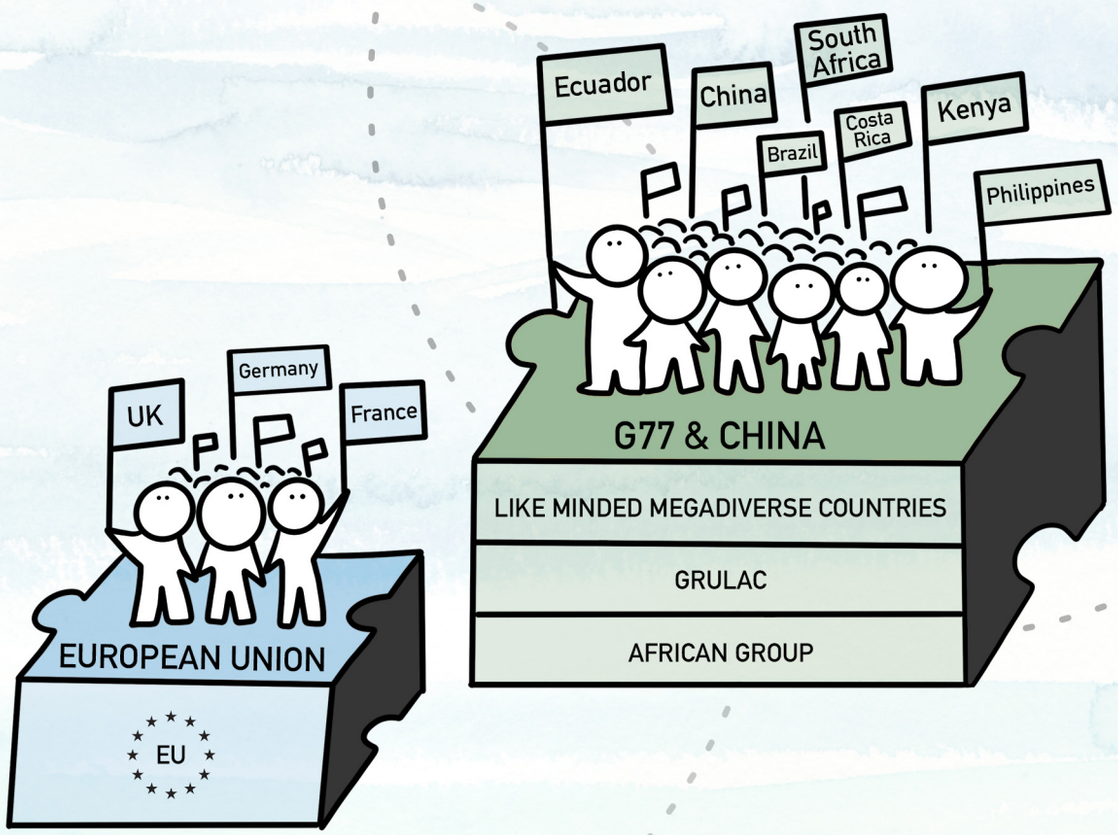


Illustration by
Desiree Llanos Dee

E.

PRACTICAL TIPS

1. PRE-COP

It will be useful to visit the UNCBD website at www.cbd.int regularly before the Conference, to download relevant documents, such as the annotated agenda and information note for participants.

The annotated agenda provides the context for the negotiations ahead. It includes references to other documents that will be relevant for each agenda item, such as draft decisions and SBSTTA or SBI reports that contain additional information like guidelines or studies. The information note for participants, on the other hand, will provide information about the venue, the services for delegates such as shuttle services, and focal points per workstream. It will also be helpful to review the preceding COP's decisions.

In the Philippines, the Multi-stakeholder Sub-Committee on Biodiversity was established in 1994 for the implementation of Philippine Agenda 21. It is chaired by the DENR-BMB, and includes members from other government agencies, such as the DA, DOST and NCIP, relevant civil society organizations, and research and academic institutions with expertise in biodiversity conservation and sustainable use. The Sub-Committee meets to discuss and coordinate negotiating positions and protocols during the COP.

The Philippine delegation to the COP is typically headed by the DENR as the National Focal Point for the CBD. The highest ranking official present historically serves as the Head of Delegation (HOD). The HOD is supported by representatives from the agencies on the Sub-Committee on Biodiversity. Some non-government representatives from civil society organizations are also included to assist the delegation in research and developing positions.

The DENR-BMB, as the Secretariat of the Sub-Committee on Biodiversity, typically schedules pre-COP meetings to discuss agenda items, designations and primary positions. Logistical arrangements, such as flight details, accommodations, and security measures, are also discussed.

2. COP PROPER

Agencies and representatives are designated to follow each workstream until the end of the Conference. Aside from attending sessions under the working groups, they attend other relevant meetings and report back to the delegation through the official reporting sheet or messaging apps, to keep everyone apprised of latest developments.

During the COP, the Philippine delegation communicates primarily through messaging applications (such as Viber and Whatsapp) and secondarily through e-mail. Delegation meetings take place everyday and are usually scheduled in the evening after the sessions or in the morning before sessions begin, subject to the discretion of the head of delegation and the availability of other members. Meetings are announced on the messaging application used. These meetings often include the reporting of head negotiators per work stream, the sharing of views by each agency on relevant agenda items, and the harmonization of views for the development of official country positions.

Conference meetings are scheduled from 10:00 in the morning. Internal coordination meetings of negotiating blocs or regional groups are scheduled prior to these. All meeting schedules are announced on the Conference website or the screens at the venue.

Draft decisions are often the springboard for the negotiations during the COP. It is helpful to review these repeatedly before and during the COP in tandem with intervention drafts presented by the DENR-BMB during the preparatory meetings and delegation meetings.

After a week of taking note of party and observer interventions, the Chair of each session prepares conference room papers (CRP) with the Secretariat. Contact groups are usually develop non-papers based on the draft decision to guide the Chair in preparing the CRP if the need arises, such as when there are contentious issues that need to be decided outside of plenary. Non-papers and conference room papers go through multiple readings, to determine on whether or not they capture parties' views sufficiently.

After approval, conference room papers turn into "L" documents that are adopted by the President of the session during plenary.

All of these papers can be accessed through the CBD website or through document printing stations at the venue.

3. POST-COP

A debriefing session for the Philippine delegation is usually scheduled a few weeks after the COP to discuss key learnings, positions articulated and ways forward. For this meeting, it is useful to review adopted COP decisions to determine ways forward with the relevant agencies.

Some Decisions invite Parties and other stakeholders to send views or additional information on various issues to the CBD Secretariat. Previous decisions have sought information or views on national experiences and best practices, suggested elements for programmes of work and particular country needs.

The delegation may want to consider responding to these calls, especially where the issues involve important national positions or priorities.

CRITTERS ON THE INVASIVE LANTANA CAMARA, BAGUIO CITY, BENGUET

IKATLO

KEY ISSUES

A.

MECHANISMS FOR IMPLEMENTATION

1. RESOURCE MOBILIZATION AND FINANCIAL MECHANISM

At COP 11, the COP raised the concern "that the lack of sufficient financial resources continues to be one of the main obstacles to achieving the Convention's three objectives and implementing the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011–2020 and its Aichi Biodiversity Targets."[23] In the same decision, Parties welcomed the initiation of a preliminary reporting framework and methodological preliminary framework to report on and monitor resources mobilized for biodiversity at the national and global level.

As of 2018, this system is fully operational and has gone online. With contributions from the Parties, it is expected inform scenario analyses on financing the post-2020 global biodiversity framework.

The Philippines has consistently reiterated the need for financial support for developing countries that is adequate, predictable and timely, both in negotiations on the Convention's financial mechanism, and in relation to the various work programmes under it.[24]

At COP 3 in 1996, Decision III/8 laid out the Memorandum of Understanding between the Parties and the Council of the Global Environment Facility (GEF) to give effect to Article 21 of the Convention. Through this, the GEF effectively became the Financial Mechanism for the implementation of the Convention.

Decision XIV/23 from COP 14 welcomed the seventh replenishment of the Global Environmental Facility. The decision also invited parties to support the collective action and contributions of indigenous peoples and local communities towards the Aichi Biodiversity Targets through programmes and projects and activities of indigenous peoples and local communities including the Small Grants Programme of the GEF.

The decision also welcomed the GEF's process to review and upgrade its environmental and social safeguards, noting the ongoing review and updating against criteria of best practice of the GEF's policy on safeguards and rules of engagement with indigenous peoples. The Philippines' intervention at COP 14 reiterated that safeguards should be holistic, with regard to indigenous people's rights to their territories, self-governance and social justice. Questions on these rights were included in the checklist for complying with the Convention's voluntary guidelines on safeguards .

2. CAPACITY-BUILDING

Under the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020, Strategic Goal E eyes "enhanced implementation through participatory planning, knowledge management and capacity-building." This is the overarching goal for Aichi Biodiversity Targets 17 to 20.[25]

At COP 13, Parties recognized "the need for a more integrated and coherent approach to capacity-building and technical and scientific cooperation in supporting the implementation of the Convention and its Protocols as well as other biodiversity-related multilateral environmental agreements."[26] In line with this, a Short-term Action Plan (2017-2020) was adopted as an Annex to Decision XIII/23. The decision also invited Parties, other Governments and relevant organizations in a position to do so to provide financial, technical and human resources to support capacity-building and technical and scientific cooperation for developing country Parties and indigenous peoples and local communities.

The Philippines has emphasized the need for capacity-building on a variety of issues. At COP 6, the country has stressed the need for capacity building approaches and methodologies to enhance stakeholders' participation. More recently, at the negotiations on capacity-building for implementation of the Nagoya Protocol at COP 13, the Philippines also emphasized capacity building on: cooperation between competent national authorities, traditional knowledge associated with genetic resources and technology transfer.[27]

Photo by
Forest Foundation Philippines

B.

THEMATIC AREAS

1. ACCESS AND BENEFIT-SHARING

The fair and equitable sharing of the benefits arising out of the utilization of genetic resources is the third objective of the CBD. Using genetic resources includes "researching their beneficial properties and using them to increase scientific knowledge and understanding, or to develop commercial products."[28] Article 15 of the CBD thus gives the Parties the responsibility "to put in place systems that facilitate access to genetic resources for environmentally sound purposes and to ensure that the benefits resulting from their use are shared fairly and equitably between users and providers."[29]

Gaining access to the genetic resources necessarily depends on the prior, informed consent of the country providing them. Mutually agreed terms must also be negotiated at the bilateral level, between the providing country and the user of the genetic resources, setting out "the conditions of access and use of the resources, and the benefits to be shared between both parties."[30]

The Nagoya Protocol (NP) was adopted at COP 10 to provide the legal framework for implementation of these provisions. Since COP 3, the Philippines had been vocal on the need for a protocol on access and benefit sharing; emphasizing that access should be based on mutually agreed terms.[31]

The NP provides for Access, Benefit-Sharing and Compliance obligations with regard to genetic resources and traditional knowledge associated with genetic resources that are covered by the CBD and the benefits arising from their utilization. Benefits may be monetary, such as access fees, royalties and license fees. These may also be non-monetary, such as through collaboration and cooperation in research, education and capacity building opportunities or contributions to local economies, among others.[32]

Access and benefit sharing is frequently discussed in relation to other substantive agenda items (for example, see the discussions on biodiversity and agriculture below). Other discussions and negotiations focus on specific provisions of the NP, including the following examples:

Creating an Enabling Environment for Research

Access and benefit sharing concerns are especially important to the conduct of scientific research. The Nagoya Protocol recognizes special considerations that may warrant simplified access and benefit sharing processes to respond to urgent needs. For non-commercial research, Article 8 directs Parties to promote and encourage research which contributes to the conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity, including through simplified measures. Expeditious access may also be needed where there are emergencies that threaten or damage human, animal or plant health.

However, Parties, civil society observers and industry representatives have been at odds on research for commercial purposes. There are always new concerns to address, given the "scientific and technological developments evolving markets, and different business and intellectual property models have transformed demand for access to genetic resources and associated traditional knowledge in these sectors."[33]

Many developing country Parties and civil society organizations representing Indigenous Peoples and local communities have called for moratoriums on specific kinds of research, particularly those involving LMOs, geo-engineering and gene drives, citing socio-economic, cultural and ethical grounds. Developed country Parties, on the other hand, have emphasized the value of research in these fields, particularly in the fields of health and agriculture.[34]

Global Multilateral Benefit-Sharing Mechanism

There are times when genetic resources and traditional knowledge associated with genetic resources are found in several countries. Because of this, it is not always possible to trace the country of origin or secure its prior informed consent.

Recognizing this, the Nagoya Protocol directs the Parties to consider the need for and modalities of a global multilateral benefit-sharing mechanism, to respond to these cases. Benefits collected from this mechanism shall be used to support the conservation of biological diversity and the sustainable use of its components globally.[35]

Since the NP was adopted, countries have disagreed on the need for the global multilateral benefit-sharing mechanism. At COP 14, the Philippines and the African Group maintained that there has been sufficient time to decide on the need for this mechanism, but developed countries such as Japan and Switzerland noted that there is still not enough experience with situations that could not be covered by the bilateral approach and as such, discussions on modalities for the mechanism would be premature.[36]

The decision resulting from these negotiations did not address this disagreement squarely. Instead, a study was commissioned to gather more information on specific cases of genetic resources and traditional knowledge associated with genetic resources that occur in transboundary situations or for which it is not possible to grant or obtain prior informed consent.[37]

2. BIODIVERSITY AND AGRICULTURE

At COP 3 in 1998, the Parties adopted Decision III/11 which first formally recognized the close relationship between agriculture and biological and cultural diversity and the COP's role and mandate to address issues relating to agricultural biological diversity within the framework of the Convention. The first programme of activities on agricultural biodiversity was established under this Decision.

Subsequently, at COP 5 in 2002, the Parties adopted an official definition of the scope of Agricultural Biodiversity, covering all components of biological diversity of relevance to food and agriculture, and all components of biological diversity that constitute the agro-ecosystem: the variety and variability of animals, plants and micro-organisms, at the genetic, species and ecosystem levels, which are necessary to sustain key functions of the agro-ecosystem, its structure and processes.[38]

The Philippines has consistently adopted rights-based positions in relation to agricultural biodiversity. Since COP 4 in 1998, the Philippines has emphasized that agricultural biodiversity is closely linked to the rights of indigenous and local communities, particularly the exercise of prior informed consent, and access to technology and capacity building opportunities.[39]

Statements on the involvement of IPLCs in agricultural biodiversity initiatives were made at COP 7. At COP 11, the Philippines pointed out that the implementation of the joint work programme on agricultural biodiversity should take into account farmers' rights.[40]

Recent negotiations on agricultural biodiversity cover several cross-cutting initiatives. Of these, the Philippines has participated most actively in negotiations on the following:

Conservation and Sustainable Use of Pollinators

Various ecosystems depend on pollinator diversity to maintain overall biological diversity, and societies depend on pollinators as well as they increase food security and improve livelihoods. More than 20,000 pollinating bee species and numerous other pollinators are essential for the maintenance of natural resources.

The Philippines recognizes this, and has actively participated in negotiations on this agenda item. At COP 13, the Philippines negotiated for the inclusion of language on risk assessment procedures for pesticides and LMOs.[41] More recently, Decision XIV/6 adopted the Plan of Action 2018-2030 for the International Initiative for the Conservation and Sustainable Use of Pollinators, for Parties to implement according to their national legislation and national circumstances.

RICE TERRACES IN KABAYAN, BENGUET

Genetic Resource Use Restriction Technologies (GURTs)

GURT is the term used for genetically modified plant organisms that can either 1) ensure that subsequent generations of the plant species in question are sterile or 2) ensure that the plant species will not possess particular traits or characteristics that it would normally have. These have also been called "terminator technologies." These are usually developed to prevent the unauthorized use of patented genetic material.[42]

GURTs are of special concern to indigenous peoples, local communities and smallholder farmers. In a Working Group plenary at COP 4 in 1998, the Philippines noted these technologies with concern, pointing out that these could deprive farmers of the ability to reuse their seeds.[43] These concerns were reiterated in COP 6, when the Philippines called for appropriate scientific data before field testing and commercial application of GURTs.

3. MARINE AND COASTAL BIODIVERSITY

Marine and coastal biodiversity has been extensively discussed at the COPs. A programme of work was first adopted at COP 4, and later elaborated at COP 7.

Because of the wide scope involved, there are numerous agenda items that stem from this programme of work. Some of these tackle concerns that pertain to specific ecosystems, such as coral reefs and cold water areas. Other negotiations focus on particular threats, such as underwater noise, ocean acidification and marine debris.

SUNSET IN ABRA DE ILOG, OCCIDENTAL MINDORO

The Philippines has made statements and interventions in the negotiations on the following issues:

Ocean Fertilization

Ocean fertilization refers to the introduction of certain nutrients (often iron) to the ocean to stimulate the growth of phytoplankton that can sequester Carbon Dioxide from the atmosphere.[44] As such, this issue is also closely linked to the discussions on biodiversity and climate change.

At COP 9, the Philippines was among the countries that expressed concern about ocean fertilization, even calling for a moratorium on these activities.[45] Although a moratorium was not explicitly achieved during this Conference, Decision IX/16 on Biodiversity and Climate Change requested Parties to apply the precautionary approach to ensure that ocean fertilization activities do not take place until justified by adequate scientific basis including risk assessments, and until a global, transparent and effective control and regulatory mechanism is in place for large-scale implementation of these activities.[46]

Marine Debris

Marine debris refers to "any persistent, manufactured or processed solid material discarded, disposed of, lost or abandoned in the marine and coastal environment. This includes materials transported into the marine environment from land by rivers, drainage or sewage systems or winds."[47]

At COP 13, Decision XIII/10 was adopted, which urged the Parties to take measures to prevent and mitigate the potential adverse impacts of marine debris on marine and coastal biodiversity and habitats. The Decision also included an Annex providing for Voluntary Practical Guidance on Preventing and Mitigating the Impacts of Marine Debris on Marine and Coastal Biodiversity and Habitats.

In the list of identified suggested priority actions listed in this Annex, the Philippines introduced text to ensure that technology to support marine debris management and monitoring would be accessible to, shared with, and utilized by the most environmentally vulnerable countries.

Ecologically or Biologically Significant Marine Areas (EBSAs)

EBSAs are geographically or oceanographically discrete areas that provide important services to one or more species/populations of an ecosystem or to the ecosystem as a whole, compared to other surrounding areas or areas of similar ecological characteristics. The criteria and guidance for the selection and establishment of these areas were identified in CBD Decision IX/20.[48]

EBSAs within the jurisdiction of the Philippines include the 13 million hectare Benham Rise and the Sulu-Sulawesi Marine Ecoregion located within the Coral Triangle.

At the COP 14 contact group meetings on EBSAs, the Philippines noted with concern the adoption of some of the options for strengthening the scientific credibility and transparency of the EBSA process,[49] in particular, those with regard to the provisions on actors that can propose modifications of EBSA descriptions and modalities for the modification process.

The Philippines pointed out that this process may have a significant impact on the country's biodiversity and biodiversity management, especially since the Philippines is an archipelagic State, which is differentiated from a coastal State under the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea. The COP 14 Decision on EBSAs thus refers to archipelagic and coastal States separately, although there are still bracketed provisions that were not resolved at the Conference.

SCHOOL OF JACK FISH
Photo by
Vanessa Vergara

IKA-APAT

EMERGING ISSUES

A.

BIODIVERSITY AND CLIMATE CHANGE

The most recent Inter-governmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) report on 1.5 °C target projects that failing to hold the global temperature increase to well below 2 degrees Celsius above pre-industrial levels would endanger many species and ecosystems with limited adaptive capacity, such as small island and arctic ecosystems.

In Asia and the Pacific, the consequences of a warming climate are especially dire. Findings of the regional assessment report of the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES) also underscore the adverse impacts of climate change and extreme events on species distribution, population sizes and the timing of reproduction or migration of animals. In addition, climate change increases the frequency of pest and disease outbreaks, negatively impacting agricultural production and human well-being.[50]

The loss of ecosystems due to climate impacts are long-lasting and irreversible. This makes ecosystems-based approaches to climate change adaptation and disaster risk reduction integral to minimizing further biodiversity loss.

The first proposals for the integration of climate change-related activities within the work of the Convention were adopted at COP 9 in 2008 through Decision IX/16. Since then, two AHTEGs have been established to provide advice integration of the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity into climate change mitigation and adaptation activities.

Most recently at COP 14, parties adopted a decision enjoining parties to make use of the voluntary guidelines for the design and effective implementation of ecosystem-based approaches to climate change adaptation and disaster risk reduction, inviting them to provide information on activities for implementation.

B.

SYNTHETIC BIOLOGY

Synthetic Biology has not been authoritatively defined under the Convention or the Cartagena Protocol. Nevertheless, it is generally recognized as the synthesis of genetic material and an engineering-based approach to develop new components, organisms and products.[51] The Philippines has been consistently active in the negotiations on Geo Engineering and Synthetic Biology.

Decision XI/11 from COP 11 identified Synthetic biology as a possible new and emerging issue in the field of conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity. At this COP, the Philippines maintained that the biodiversity aspects of geo-engineering should remain within the competence of the CBD.[52] The country also supported text that urged Parties to ensure that products of synthetic biology are not released into the environment or approved for commercial use until there is adequate scientific basis for such activities.[53]

The compromise text in the adopted decision noted the need to consider the potential positive and negative impacts of products from synthetic biology, based on the precautionary approach.[54]

Subsequently, at COP 12 in 2014, the Philippines again referred to precautionary approaches, and supported the references to effective risk assessment and management procedures and/or regulatory systems for the release of products from synthetic biology into the environment.[55]

An AHTEG and open ended online forum were likewise established at COP 12.

However, the continuing lack of a formal definition laying down which technologies could be said to fall under the purview of Synthetic Biology has resulted in conflicting views from parties, experts and observers. In Decision XIV/19, Parties noted conclusions from the AHTEG that, given the current uncertainties, the free, prior and informed consent of indigenous peoples and local communities might be warranted when considering the possible release of organisms containing engineered gene drives that may impact their traditional knowledge, innovation, practices, livelihood and use of land and water.[56]

Parties thus agreed on a need for regular horizon-scanning of the most recent technological developments for reviewing new information regarding potential impacts of synthetic biology. The decision reiterates the need for a precautionary approach and extends the mandate of the AHTEG.[57]

C.

DIGITAL SEQUENCE INFORMATION ON GENETIC RESOURCES

The negotiations on DSI concern genetic material that has been digitally encoded and stored in public and private databases. These genetic sequences can thus be accessed using a computer and without actually requiring a physical specimen. The term "DSI" itself is only a placeholder, as Parties recognize that it may not be the most appropriate descriptor, and that it is still subject to further discussion.[58]

Aside from COP negotiations, DSI is also considered under the Nagoya Protocol, which provides that any benefits from the utilization of genetic resources and their subsequent commercialization shall be shared with the country of origin of these genetic resources. Where the genetic resources are held by Indigenous Peoples and local communities, these countries of origin shall then take measures to ensure that these benefits are shared with these groups as well.[59]

At COP 13, the Philippines already considered DSI as an issue within the scope of the CBD and the Nagoya Protocol. The Philippines' intervention proposed that the COP/MOP clarify "how," but not "if," the use of digital sequence information relates to access and benefit sharing.[60] Decision XIII/16 from this Conference did not address this definitively, noting DSI as "a cross-cutting issue that may concern the three objectives of the Convention" and starting a process for further study, through the AHTEG.

At COP 14, there was significant disagreement on whether or not DSI fell within the scope of the CBD and the Nagoya Protocol. Developed countries such as the EU Switzerland and Japan maintained that the CBD and NP only apply to tangible genetic resources.[61] They argued that once a physical specimen has been encoded into a digital genetic sequence and uploaded on to a database, that information no longer constitutes a genetic resource within the definition of the CBD and the NP.

The negotiating blocs of the African Group and the LMMC and many civil society groups, countered this. They pointed out that digital genetic sequences come from physical specimens that may or may not be traced back to the countries of origin. Given this, the LMMC in particular stated that use of DSI without benefit sharing would result in misappropriation of genetic resources and would not be in line with the Convention's objectives.[62]

Developing countries are often the source of the physical specimens which are used to create the genetic sequence, and will be heavily impacted if access and benefit sharing provisions are not applied in the case of DSI. Indigenous Peoples and local communities from these countries would be particularly affected, as many physical specimens are found in within their ancestral territories.

OLIVA BACKED SUNBIRD, PALAWAN

COP 14's Decision on DSI recognizes this divergence of views and puts in place a process to work on this divergence by extending the work of the AHTEG, and inviting submissions from Parties and other stakeholders. The AHTEG's work is expected to be valuable, as the decision on DSI was specifically noted in the decision on the preparation of the post-2020 global biodiversity framework.

D.

POST-2020 GLOBAL BIODIVERSITY FRAMEWORK

It is expected that Parties at COP 15 will adopt the post-2020 global biodiversity framework, toward the 2050 vision of living in harmony with nature.

COP 14 put in place a comprehensive and participatory process for the preparation of the post-2020 global biodiversity framework. An open-ended intersessional working group was established for the development of a framework. As a party-led process, this working group will be composed of Parties to the CBD and the Protocols and open to observers, including indigenous peoples and local communities, among other stakeholders. A high level panel may also be convened, subject to the availability of resources.[63]

An Annex to the COP decision also provided for guidance on the framework's characteristics, reflected in a set of overarching principles, organization of work, consultation process, documentation and key information sources.

It is envisaged that the open-ended intersessional working group will meet at least twice in the lead up to COP 15. Online discussion forums and global, regional and thematic workshops, will also be organized as part of the work. In the meantime, Parties and other stakeholders are also invited to organize their own discussions on the framework.

E.

THEMES IN PHILIPPINE NEGOTIATING POSITIONS

Financial Resources for Developing Countries

The Philippines has consistently stressed that financial support to developing countries must be adequate, predictable and timely (COP 10).

Access to Capacity Building and Technology

The Philippines has emphasized capacity building in relation to several agenda items, including biotechnology (COP 4), technology needs (COP 11) and implementation of the NP (COP 13).

The Philippines has also called attention to how intellectual property rights can impede technology transfer (COP 7, 8 and 9) and has proposed language to overcome these barriers.

Rights of Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities

At the high level plenary at COP 1, former DENR Secretary Angel Alcala's statement called for the involvement of communities and NGOs in the implementation of the Convention. At COP 2, his successor, former Secretary Victor Ramos, also highlighted the country's recognition of the rights of IPs.

Since then, the Philippines has emphasized the rights of IPLCs in its statements and interventions on the issues of forest biodiversity (COP 3), biotechnology (COP 4), agricultural biodiversity (COP 6 and 7), Article 8j (COP 8) and Protected Areas (COP 11), among others.

Precautionary Approaches

At COPs 10, 12 and 13, the country joined other States in calling for a precautionary approach before synthetic biology products are released into the environment. The Philippines' position on geoengineering at COP 10 also emphasized the need for sufficient scientific basis and risk assessments before any geoengineering activities are undertaken.

Precautionary approaches have also informed interventions during negotiations on agricultural biodiversity, with the Philippines at COP 6 calling for scientific data before the commercial application of Genetic Use Restriction Technologies.

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GLOSSARY

ABS
Access and Benefit-Sharing

ABS-CH
Access and Benefit Sharing Clearing-House

BCH
Biosafety Clearing-House

BEES
Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services

CBD or UNCBD
United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity

CBD NFP
National Focal Point of the Convention on Biological Diversity

CHM
Clearing-House Mechanism

CIDD
Interdepartmental Commission for Sustainable Development

CITES
Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora

CMS
Convention on Migratory Species

CO
Conference of the Parties

COP/MOP
Conference of the Parties serving as the Meeting of the Parties

CPB NFP
Primary National Focal Point to the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety

CSD
Commission on Sustainable Development

EIA
Environmental Impact Assessment

EU
European Union

FAO
Food and Agriculture Organisation

GBIF
Global Biodiversity Information Facility

GBO
Global Biodiversity Outlook

GM
Genetically modified

GMO
Genetically Modified Organism

IAS
Invasive Alien Species

ILC
Indigenous and Local Communities

ILO
International Labor Organization

IMO
International Maritime Organisation

IPBES
Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services

LMOs
Living Modified Organisms

MDGs
Millennium Development Goals

MEAs
Multilateral Environment Agreements

MPAs
Marine Protected Areas

NBS
National Biodiversity Strategy

NFPs
National Forest Programmes

NGO
Non-Governmental Organisation

SAC
Special Areas for Conservation

SBSTTA
Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice

SFM
Sustainable Forest Management

SIA
Strategic Impact Assessment

SPA
Special Protection Areas

SPI
Science-Policy Interface

UNCBD
United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity (or CBD)

UNCCD
United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification

UNDP
United Nations Development Programme

UNCTAD
United Nations Conference on Trade and Development

UNECE
United Nations Economic Commission for Europe

UNEP
United Nations Environment Programme

UNESCO
United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

UNFCCC
United Nations Framework Convention of Climate Change

UNCLOS
United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea

UNDP
United Nations Development Programme

UPOV
International Union for the Protection of New Varieties of Plants

WHC
World Heritage Convention

WIPO
World Intellectual Property Organization

WSSD
World Summit on Sustainable Development

WTO
World Trade Organisation

WHO
World Health Organisation

Forest Foundation Philippines

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parabukas

Parabukas is a boutique consulting firm seeking to demystify legal and policy issues around climate change, the environment, and sustainable development. Working in international, national, and local contexts, Parabukas contributes to improving inclusiveness and participation in legal and policy decision-making, empowering those most affected by environmental degradation and associated social problems to address them practically and effectively.

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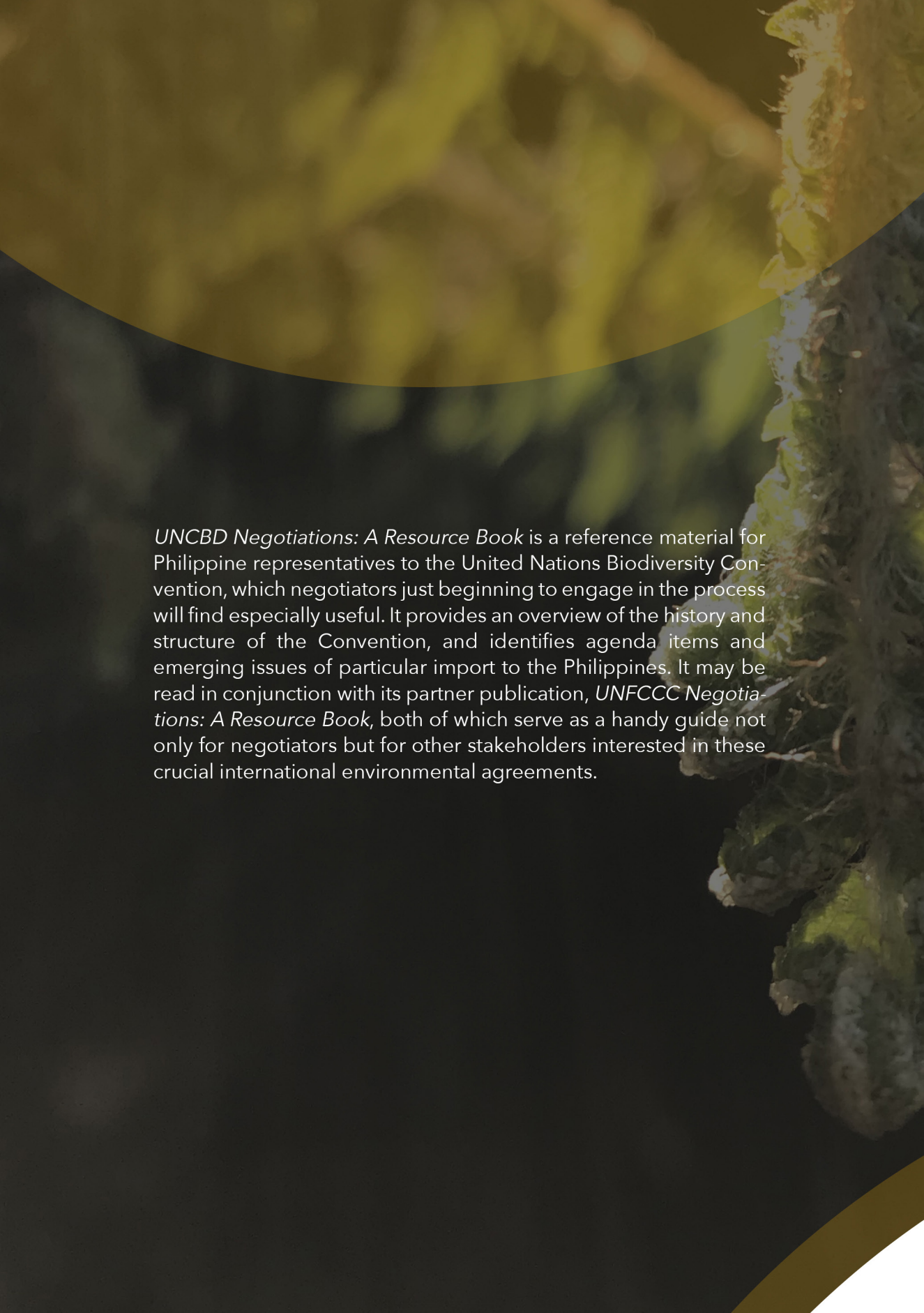

UNCBD Negotiations: A Resource Book is a reference material for Philippine representatives to the United Nations Biodiversity Convention, which negotiators just beginning to engage in the process will find especially useful. It provides an overview of the history and structure of the Convention, and identifies agenda items and emerging issues of particular import to the Philippines. It may be read in conjunction with its partner publication, *UNFCCC Negotiations: A Resource Book*, both of which serve as a handy guide not only for negotiators but for other stakeholders interested in these crucial international environmental agreements.