

## **Governance Structure for the Global Partnership for Business and Biodiversity**

### **A. BACKGROUND**

The Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) have for some time been exploring ways to enhance private-sector collaboration in achieving the goals of the CBD. COP-8 (Brazil, 2006) identified the need for business involvement in biodiversity conservation, and COP-9 (Germany, 2008) invited Parties to improve actions and cooperation for the engagement of the business community through public/private partnerships. In addition, G-8 Environment Ministers (Japan, 2008) discussed ways to promote the conservation and sustainable use of global biodiversity, adopting the *Kobe Call for Action for Biodiversity* to promote international cooperation and engagement of the private sector. The Third Business and the 2010 Biodiversity Challenge Conference (Indonesia, 2009) issued the *Jakarta Charter* which identified ways to include sustainable use and conservation of biodiversity in business operations.

These initiatives were continued at COP 10 (Japan, 2010) where a decision on business engagement (X/21) was issued by the Parties. Amongst other elements, the decision called upon governments to “...*support the establishment of national and regional business and biodiversity initiatives and to strive towards a global partnership on business and biodiversity by inviting ongoing initiatives and other interested stakeholders to be part of the business and biodiversity initiative...*” and the Executive Secretary of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) to “...*encourage establishment of the national and regional business and biodiversity initiatives by facilitating a forum of dialogue among Parties and other Governments, business, and other stakeholders, with a particular focus on the global level*”.

For a more comprehensive document on the background of the initiative please see Addendum “A”.

### **B. ROLE OF THE GLOBAL PARTNERSHIP**

The Global Partnership (Partnership) will be the focal point for the national/regional initiatives that directly interact with business of their respective countries/regions. It will help facilitate the mainstreaming or internalization of biodiversity imperatives into the private sector and provide a forum for national/regional stakeholders in business and biodiversity to share ideas and engage in dialogue.

For a more comprehensive document on the role of the Partnership please see Addendum “B”.

### **C. VISION**

The National/Regional Business and Biodiversity Initiatives are open, inclusive bodies that are designed to help raise awareness of biodiversity and sustainability issues amongst the business community and to encourage dialogue amongst stakeholders in this area. The Vision of the Partnership is:

*By 2020 national/regional business and biodiversity initiatives are active in all countries that have signed onto the Convention on Biological Diversity and the private sector is taking an active lead on biodiversity issues.*

#### D. MISSION

The Mission of the Global Partnership is to add value to the national/regional initiatives by providing a forum to share ideas, raise awareness, engage in dialogue and help leverage the Convention on Biological Diversity Business Program.

#### E. GOALS

The Partnership will help guide and support Member Initiatives (Members) in their efforts. It will act as a conduit between Members as well as a clearing house and intelligence source for those seeking to identify and address issues and challenges concerning business and biodiversity conservation and sustainable use.

The Goals of the Partnership are:

1. To enable Members by providing the knowledge and the tools required to encourage business to integrate biodiversity conservation and its sustainable use into their ongoing business operations.
2. To provide a forum where Members can share ideas and best practices, within and across business sectors, with other national/regional initiatives in the Partnership that will help business in the development and implementation of biodiversity conservation and sustainable use actions.
3. Through the support and guidance of the Members, business will incorporate biodiversity issues and values into their operations so as to reduce the rate of biodiversity loss on a global perspective.
4. Help leverage Business sector participation in the decision making process in the Conference of Parties.
5. Harmonize with other business and biodiversity initiatives such as TEEB for Business.
6. Harmonize methodologies to enable businesses to link actions and results with the Aichi targets.

#### F. ADMINISTRATION

1. Coordination and administration of the Partnership will be the responsibility of the Secretariat for the Convention on Biological Diversity located in at 413, Saint Jacques Street, Suite 800, Montreal, Quebec, Canada, QC H2Y 1N9

## G. MEMBERSHIP

1. Membership in the Partnership is voluntary and does not constitute a legal agreement between the Members and the Secretariat for the Convention on Biological Diversity or between the Members.
2. Members of the Partnership will be national or regional\* in scope and meet the following criteria:
  - i. Membership of the Initiatives will be open to individual businesses and business associations and may include governments, academia and NGOs.
  - ii. Membership of the Initiative will be open to all business sectors.
  - iii. Members of the Initiative may be operational at a national, regional or global scale but must have active operations or trade within the boundaries of the Initiative.
  - iv. National Initiatives will be open to members on a national (country) basis but members are not required to be operational at a national level.
  - v. Regional Initiatives will be open to members operating or trading in that specific region.
  - vi. Initiatives will be managed by a steering committee or board of directors with a secretariat that is the primary point of contact handling day-to-day activities.
  - vii. Initiatives will be endorsed by respective governments.
3. Individual businesses, associations or organizations must belong to a national/regional Initiative to be represented at the Partnership.
4. Members agree to further the objects of the Partnership within the considerations of the 3 main objectives of the Convention on Biological Diversity:
  - i. The conservation of biological diversity.
  - ii. The sustainable use of the components of biological diversity.
  - iii. The fair and equitable sharing of the benefits arising out of the utilization of genetic resources.
5. Membership fees will not be charged for Initiatives to be a Member of the Partnership. Membership fees within the initiatives will be at the discretion of the individual initiatives.
6. Any member may withdraw from the Partnership by delivering a written resignation to the administrative office of the Partnership.
7. Members need to provide official proof that they are incorporated at a national/regional level or function at a national/regional scale.

## H. MEETINGS

1. During COP years, the annual meeting of the Partnership shall be held in the COP host country in conjunction with the COP meetings. The host country will take the leading role in the organization of the meeting.
2. In years between COP meetings, the annual meeting will be hosted by one of the Member Initiatives.

## I. REPRESENTATION in the PARTNERSHIP

1. Representation in the Partnership will be by national or regional Initiative. In instances where multiple Initiatives exist within a country or region, these Initiatives will collectively decide what Initiative will represent their country or region in the Partnership for voting/decision making purposes.
2. Each voting member present at a meeting shall have the right to exercise one vote. A member may, by means of a written proxy, appoint a proxyholder to attend and act at a specific meeting of members in the matter and to the extent authorized by the proxy. A proxyholder must be a member of the Partnership.

## J. EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

1. The role of the executive committee is to manage the business of the Partnership on behalf of the members during the interim times between meetings.
2. The executive committee will be comprised of:
  - i. Designates of national or regional Initiatives who are current members of the Partnership.
  - ii. Advisors that shall be organizations or associations specifically chosen for their knowledge and skills.
  - iii. The Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity.
3. Members of the Executive Committee shall be elected for a term of two (2) years by the members at an annual meeting of members. Half the directors shall be elected or re-elected annually on alternate years for two (2) year terms. Members may be re-elected for one additional two (2) year term.
4. The Executive Committee will consist of:
  - i. Chair: a current member of the Partnership and designate of a national/regional Initiative
  - ii. Vice chair: a current member of the Partnership and designate of a national/regional Initiative
  - iii. Secretary: a representative of the Secretariat for the Convention on Biological Diversity
  - iv. Members
    - a. National /regional Initiatives: up to 8 members
    - b. Advisors: up to 3 members from organisations/associations. Two (2) members will have a global presence while one (1) member will have a national presence.
    - c. Secretariat for the Convention on Biological Diversity: 1 (permanent seat)
5. The Chair will be recommended by a committee of the Executive Committee. Decision of the Chair will be a majority vote of the Executive Committee. If an Executive Committee member is not able to be present at the meeting where the Chair is selected they may vote by proxy.

The Chair will serve for a term of two (2) years under normal circumstances. The past chair will remain on the Committee for one additional year to support and provide context for the current chair.

The chair shall preside at all meetings of the Partnership and Executive Committee. The vice chair shall, in the absence or disability of the chair, perform the duties of the chair and perform such other duties as shall from time to time be imposed upon them by the Executive Committee.

6. The Vice Chair will replace the Chair at the end of the Chair's term. The Vice Chair will be recommended by a committee of the Executive Council. Decision on the Vice Chair will be a majority vote of the Executive Committee. If an Executive Committee member is not able to be present at the meeting where the Vice Chair is selected, they may vote by proxy.
7. The secretary shall attend all meetings and act as clerk thereof and record all votes and minutes of all proceedings in the books to be kept for that purpose. The secretary shall give or cause to be given notice of all meetings of the members and of the Executive Committee and shall perform such other duties as may be prescribed by the Executive Committee.
8. The members shall serve as such without remuneration and no member shall directly or indirectly receive any profit from his position as such; provided that a member may be paid reasonable expenses incurred by him in the performance of his duties. Nothing herein contained shall be construed to preclude any member from serving the Partnership as an officer or in any other capacity and receiving compensation therefor.
9. A retiring member shall remain in office until the dissolution or adjournment of the meeting at which his retirement is accepted and his successor is elected.

#### K. EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETINGS

1. Meetings of the Executive Committee may be held at any time and place to be determined by the members. There shall be at least one (1) face to face meeting and others as needed per year of the Executive Committee. Each member is authorized to exercise one (1) vote at a meeting.
2. A quorum will consist of at least 50% of members but national/regional Initiative members must make up the majority (50% plus 1) of members present for meetings of the Executive Committee. Any meeting of the Members at which a quorum is present shall be competent to exercise all or any of the authorities, powers and discretions of the Partnership.

#### L. COMMITTEES

1. The Executive Committee may appoint committees whose members may consist of Executive Committee members and/or Members of the Partnership. The Executive Committee shall determine the duties of such committees.

#### M. OPERATIONAL GUIDELINES

1. A strategic document and long term work plan for the Partnership will be developed.
2. Work Plans will be developed and reviewed annually based on the strategic document and long term work plan. Operational year will be based on the calendar year.

3. The CBD Secretariat will play a key role in the outreach process. A committee will be established to help with outreach for specific events/workshops/meetings.
4. The CBD Secretariat will act as a facilitator to link opportunities for engagement to individual members or to the Partnership as a whole.

N. DECISION MAKING

1. Consensus will be used as a decision mechanism but may need to be reevaluated as membership increases so as not to be cumbersome.

O. MINUTES OF MEETINGS

1. The minutes of all meetings shall be available to the general membership of the Partnership.
2. Minutes, including action items, will be available to the membership within 10 working days following all meetings.

P. RULES AND REGULATIONS

1. The Executive Committee may prescribe such rules and regulations not inconsistent with these by-laws relating to the management and operation of the Partnership as they deem expedient, provided that such rules and regulations shall have force and effect only until the next annual meeting of the members of the corporation when they shall be confirmed, and failing such confirmation at such annual meeting of members, shall at and from that time cease to have any force and effect.

Q. PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT SYSTEM AND METRICS

1. Performance will be evaluated through the use of an internal reporting system will that will reflect progress made with regards to the work plan that was set at the beginning of each year.

R. INTELLECTUAL OWNERSHIP

1. Any tools or products that are produced by an initiative will be the intellectual property of that initiative. Any use of said tools or products of other initiatives or the Global Partnership as a whole will need the approval of the initiative that produced them.
2. Any tools or products that are produced by the Global Partnership will be available for use by all members.

S. INDEMNIFICATION

1. Each party agrees to indemnify and hold harmless the other parties and its employees, members, successors, and assigns, from any claims, liabilities, losses, damages, and expenses asserted against the other parties and arising out of the indemnifying parties negligence, willful Members conduct, and negligent performance of, or failure to perform, any of its duties or obligations under this Partnership. The provisions of this indemnification are solely for the benefit of the parties hereto and not intended to create or grant any rights, contractual or otherwise, to another person or entity.
2. Membership in the Partnership does not constitute or form any legal agreement or responsibility between the Members and /or the Secretariat for the Convention on Biological Diversity.

*\*Regional refers to a specific geographic region that may encompass several countries and not a specific region, such as a state, province or region within a country.*

## **Addendum A: The Global Partnership for Business and Biodiversity - Strategy and Direction**

### **Overview**

Engagement of the business sector is increasingly seen as an important aspect of the successful implementation of the Convention on Biological Diversity as well as fulfilling the Aichi Biodiversity Targets. Businesses are very often at the “sharp end” of biodiversity impacts, as they are directly involved with extracting, growing, or otherwise producing and processing the items that modern economies depend upon. Even those companies whose business models are not directly dependent upon natural processes (ecosystem services) can have significant indirect impacts, either through financing, selling, or otherwise enabling influential activities of “front-line” industries. Businesses can also have a profound effect on the policies of their home states. If an issue is strongly opposed by the business sector in a given country, it can become politically difficult for a government to support the issue, potentially meaning that it can also be blocked on the international stage. Conversely, if the business sector is behind a given policy or initiative, it can provide a major boost in support and gain political traction.

One of the major challenges in engaging business, however, is the sheer diversity of types, sizes, and sectors of the given companies. Businesses can range from state-owned corporations to publically traded multi-nationals to family-owned micro-enterprises. Virtually every facet of human activity can have a commercial aspect, and therefore businesses will almost inevitably be involved in all types of activities in some fashion or another. Some businesses are more responsive to environmental issues than others (and many have already taken important steps to “Green” their products and processes), but the vast majority have yet to undertake this task in a meaningful way. At present, the majority of global effort is focused on getting the larger corporations to understand and incorporate into their business models the goals of the Convention and the Aichi Biodiversity Targets.

Engaging Small and Medium sized Enterprises (SMEs), which form the bulk of the world’s businesses and thus have the (cumulatively) highest ecological impact, can be particularly daunting. Unlike larger corporations, SMEs often lack the skills and resources to dedicate to this issue. As such, they will require considerably more information and support in their efforts to meaningfully address their impacts upon biodiversity. However, given their sheer number and diversity, making any meaningful impact (beyond some generalized information) through the auspices of the Global Partnership or the national initiatives will be challenging. As is briefly discussed in the companion paper, a “nested-approach”, whereby local stakeholders can be mobilized to help reach the SMEs while benefitting from the exposure and information flow at the national and global levels, could be of tremendous benefit to all parties concerned.

Additionally, the Global Partnership and the national initiatives must be sure to reach out to not only those companies that have done some positive work in the area of biodiversity/ecological protection, or have expressed an interest in doing so, but also to those that are unaware or uninterested in this subject. Despite the progress that has been made to date, with hundreds of companies taking positive action around the world, the vast majority of companies (in the millions) are still not engaged in the process. Leading companies can both act as examples and

(particularly in the case of their own supply chains) prod others to follow eco-friendly principles. However, this must be done in a step-wise fashion that is pragmatic and appropriate for new companies and which presents a convincing business case for conservation and sustainability. An inclusive approach, whereby the service providers are seen to be cooperating and supplying consistent and accessible information will be much more likely to yield positive results in the medium to long term.

The Global Partnership stems from the ongoing engagement of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) with the business sector, and in particular the COP 10 decision on business engagement calling for “*the establishment of national and regional business and biodiversity initiatives and to strive towards a global partnership on business and biodiversity*”. The CBD Secretariat, along with various partners, has been endeavoring to “*encourage establishment of the national and regional business and biodiversity initiatives by facilitating a forum of dialogue among Parties and other Governments, business, and other stakeholders, with a particular focus on the global level*”. However, although the decision calls for the creation of this important platform, it is somewhat less explicit on the role that the Partnership should play in facilitating the other aspects of the decision (X/21) and thus helping businesses move towards a sustainable and ecologically sound future. This paper, which is a companion piece to the “*National Business and Biodiversity Initiatives: Overview Document*”, will describe some of the strategic objectives of the Partnership and how the efforts of the various national initiatives can be leveraged to the benefit all of stakeholders.

As noted in the companion document, the overall mandate of the national initiatives is to “*...encourage dialogue amongst stakeholders...and to help raise awareness of biodiversity and sustainability issues amongst the business community. They should also work to assist companies in understanding and mainstreaming the goals of the Convention and the Aichi Targets*”. This means that, ideally, the vast majority of companies will eventually be on a sustainable ecological footing with a vastly reduced negative impact upon biodiversity (or even a positive impact). In the interim, it will be important to target efforts where they will be maximally beneficial while simultaneously leveraging the work being undertaken by other partner organizations. While each national initiative will have its own unique set of objectives and circumstances, this document will help to outline some overarching themes that the Partnership should be pursuing. This should help make the work of the individual national initiatives more attractive and relevant to potential members.

### **Overall Engagement Strategy**

The CBD Secretariat, along with various partners, is endeavoring to engage the business sector through a number of different avenues and at a number of levels to help create the conditions for greater implementation of the Convention and the Aichi Biodiversity Targets. In order to achieve the engagement objectives discussed above, the overall business strategy is structured as follows:

- ***International Policy/Legislative Issues***: This involves helping to set the international agenda in terms of regulatory issues, such as: the elimination of perverse incentives; the restructuring of tax codes and incentive structures to favour more ecofriendly industries and industrial practices; the enacting of legislation to protect or provide for sustainable use of

certain key areas (and the consequent penalization of those industries that violate these statutes); the setting of standards; etc. In effect, these represent a combination of positive and negative incentives that governments can use to encourage certain types of behavior from the business sector;

- ***Encouragement of Market Pull:*** This has two main aspects, sustainable public procurement and corporate requirements of suppliers. In both cases, the contracting organization (be it a government or a business entity) is encouraged to request of its suppliers that they meet certain ecofriendly requirements. In the case of public procurement, this can be written into legislation. For companies, an awareness raising campaign (i.e. making the business case for sustainability including addressing pressure from consumers) will help to create the conditions for business to make these demands. This “market pull” will create an incentive for supplier companies to enact ecofriendly policies (at competitive prices) such that they can maintain and grow their customer base;
- ***Facilitation of Information Flow:*** There are many examples of companies that have “greened” their operations, directly resulting in improvements to their bottom-line. One aspect of this engagement is therefore to encourage companies to share best-practices and demonstrate that sustainability and profitability need not be mutually-exclusive. Another aspect is to ensure that relevant case studies and effective tools and mechanisms are readily available to companies. Often, the problem is not a dearth of information (although there are gaps with regard to economic valuation (for example) that do need to be addressed) but rather a surfeit of data that companies (especially SMEs) can have trouble navigating through. Information overload and esoteric jargon can mean that companies are not taking advantage of the best tools and other mechanisms available or that they simply get overwhelmed and give up. Streamlining and simplifying the information and ensuring that companies know where to go for non-judgmental assistance and support can help to alleviate this problem and allow for greater uptake, particularly amongst SMEs.
- ***Provision of Information and Services to Companies:*** Many companies will not have the knowledge, time, or resources to take full advantage of the information and tools available to them. To the degree possible, civil society organizations, consultants, and/or local authorities may be able to provide assistance through direct training, resource augmentation, or other services that can help companies take the first necessary steps. The ultimate idea is to create a level-playing field, but not to create an aspirational goal that is beyond the means of the very organizations that the CBD and other partners are trying to reach. Businesses involved in one particular national initiative should feel reasonably confident that the expectations demanded of them will be consistent with those being made of businesses elsewhere in the world. The provision of this targeted assistance will (in theory) allow for more efficient delivery of service and permit companies to effectively reach their business objectives while ensuring that the goals of the Global Partnership are met.

### **Role of the Global Partnership**

The Global Partnership will play a crucial role in the above strategy in that it will be the hub for the national and international initiatives that directly interact with many of the companies. The initiatives will be especially important in the areas of facilitation and provision of information and services, although they will have an impact upon other aspects of the strategy as well. To

ensure that the Global Partnership adds value to the process (and is not simply recreating the wheel) the following areas should be addressed:

### **Targeting**

To begin making progress in this area, it is very important to secure membership from leading companies in a wide range of sectors and industries. These companies lend credibility to the initiative's efforts and can, through their example and guidance, act as leaders and mentors to other businesses similarly engaged in mainstreaming the goals of Convention. Many of these large companies, however, already have the resources and understanding to begin tackling this problem on their own. In addition, many existing international organizations and associations already focus much of their efforts upon key multi-national corporations, as these market leaders will be key drivers for their supply chains and, by their sheer size, large components of their industrial sectors.

The national initiatives can help them in terms of providing publicity for their efforts, networking opportunities, and making them aware of the latest tools and other mechanisms being developed around the world. In addition, the Global Partnership, being connected to the CBD Secretariat, lends a certain cache and legitimacy to these efforts which will be very important for companies working with other stakeholders, particularly governments and civil society. Beyond this, however, an important role of the initiatives should be in the targeting of companies (in particular SMEs) that are embedded in the supply chains of these large corporations. Very often, even in the case of huge multi-nationals, it will be their supply chain that will have the larger impact upon biodiversity. This has been quite clearly illustrated in a study undertaken by Puma which showed (through the creation of an environmental profit and loss account) the impact of their direct operations was only a small fraction of that of their supply chain.

The companies that comprise a supply chain (especially those lower down at the Tier III or Tier IV supply levels) are often smaller firms that may have less of an appreciation of their ecological footprint, and a reduced capacity to deal with it. However, given the dependence of these firms upon their large customers, they will be obliged to respond if they have "greener" practices demanded of them. This will be particularly the case if several primary business leaders in a given sector can be persuaded to make similar demands upon their suppliers. This effect will be further enhanced by encouraging governments to adopt eco-friendly procurement policies. The advantage for companies is that this will help to level the playing field (at least as far as environmental sustainability is concerned) and eventually (in theory at least) create a pre-competitive and cost effective approach to the issue of environmental sustainability.

The role of the national initiatives will be to help guide companies through the plethora of materials that exist, allowing them to quickly and easily select the most appropriate tool(s) for their situation. In addition, through workshops, seminars (web-based and in person) and other materials, the initiatives can help to guide companies through the process of becoming sustainable. In addition, a "matchmaking" service could also eventually be provided where consultants or other experts could be paired with those companies requiring extra resources (the initiatives would generally only be responsible for maintaining the matchmaking database, the

transactions between the company and consultant would be a matter for the two contracting parties).

The Global Partnership can provide additional assistance in this regard by ensuring that the initiatives have the most up-to-date information as well as by ensuring that companies are directed to the appropriate location (i.e. the national initiative secretariat) when searching for information. Optimizing and simplifying the process of finding relevant information, undertaking assessment, and executing appropriate initiatives will afford companies (particularly SMEs) the opportunity to avoid this major hurdle to “greening” their operations. This is an important step, given that the ultimate goal is to have as many businesses as possible undertaking actions resulting in less negative, or even positive, ecological impacts.

An additional benefit of the Partnership is that, through the ongoing contact and dialogue between business, government, civil society, and the CBD, a greater understanding of what is needed to create an enabling policy environment for companies in this area can be achieved. Through this dialogue and the recommendations (i.e. to COP) stemming from these discussions, it is hoped that policies can be continually refined so as to create optimal conditions to motivate companies (through a combination of incentives and disincentives) to undertake these positive activities.

### **Leveraging**

One problem that will be common to all of the national initiatives is that the numbers of people working on these issues (and the resources available) will be limited. This will become especially pronounced if each initiative is trying to create its own materials as well as attempting to respond to the demands of an untold number of companies seeking advice and direction. In addition, the business programme of the CBD Secretariat itself cannot respond to more than a handful of requests from businesses, also in large part due to limited resources.

To address this lack of resources, the various participants in the Global Partnership could begin to coordinate and leverage each other’s efforts. This can be particularly beneficial when looking at the development of materials such as guides and various tools. Each country has its own unique set of needs, and will therefore require appropriately tailored materials (such as local-language translations). Therefore, a great deal of effort, time, and resources could be saved by co-developing these materials (or re-tooling existing materials created by other initiatives).

By the same token, many of the potential questions and issues coming from companies will be similar, especially when coming from businesses operating in the same sectors. Sharing information and examples of best practices amongst the various initiatives will greatly facilitate the provision of service to these companies. In addition, there will be specific sector-based initiatives that will interact with the Global Partnership that can also assist in this dissemination effort. Another way to leverage experiences will be through cooperation between partners in a regional grouping (with common cultural, economic, or political considerations) or those with similar ecological footprints. In both of these cases, the national initiatives may also find areas conducive to direct collaboration, and this can also be facilitated through the Global Partnership.

Through these various forms of cooperation, national initiatives with secretariats of only 1-2 people can successfully leverage the efforts of the entire Partnership which may have scores of people working on similar issues. This will result in more efficient and effective delivery of service to companies.

### **Synergizing**

Related to the issue of leveraging, the Partnership also endeavours to have the various national initiatives working with the maximum degree of coordination possible. Although, as mentioned, each country will have its own individual needs, nevertheless, it should be possible to structure certain areas of work within each initiative such that there is a good degree of synchronization between countries and regions. In addition, this synergizing can help to ensure that the common goals of the Convention and the Aichi Biodiversity Targets are the primary sources of information upon which the national initiatives, and the advice that they dispense, are based.

The advantages to this approach are, for the Partnership itself, a more streamlined way of working together which will allow the common materials (discussed above) to be more universally applicable. In addition, effective synchronization will facilitate the sharing of ideas and best practices as there will already be established foundational similarities between the various initiatives. This would also allow for certain joint projects, such as a common global awards system or business surveys with broadly similar questions, which each initiative could feed into. Furthermore, the synchronization may allow for “common” commitments to be made by businesses which may have cross-initiative applicability. This will allow for a consistency of approach while preventing companies (particularly multi-nationals) from “cherry-picking” amongst differing methods. This will also facilitate the showcasing of company commitments that have been pre-screened by the national initiatives and that are (broadly speaking) comparable.

From the perspective of the companies, the most important element of this type of synchronization will be the sense of the creation of an internationally consistent and level playing field, as discussed above. Additionally, for larger companies (especially multi-nationals) with extensive, international supply chains, this consistency will give them confidence that each supplier is being given guidance that is broadly in line with the global norm, and that they will not have to deal with the effects of wildly divergent approaches. Companies themselves will also be better placed to trade case studies and best practices as the advice will be sure to resonate across national boundaries.

### **Strengthening the Partnership**

For all of these ideas to work there has to be a certain critical mass to the Partnership, both to benefit from an “economy of scale” as well as from credibility with partners and within the business community itself. Having only a handful of countries with very small initiatives can call into question the effectiveness of the Partnership or the initiatives themselves in providing value-added service to the companies. Many of the functions that the national initiatives (and the Global Partnership) are looking to fulfill can be found elsewhere (which is hardly surprising

given that, in many cases, the national initiatives are bringing together pre-existing networks to act as a conduit and clearing house of information). However, a large and engaged Global Partnership will overcome this problem as the value-added (through the leveraging and synergies discussed above) will quickly become apparent.

In terms of credibility, success tends to beget success. The first members of the Global Partnership were only formed around, or shortly before, the COP 10 meeting 2010. Getting the business community and other concerned stakeholders (i.e. WBCSD, WWF, CI, Global Compact, etc.) to understand the purpose of the national initiatives and the Global Partnership will take some time. Once the “business case” is established, there should be a self-sustaining momentum that will see more and more CBD Parties take up the challenges outlined in the business engagement decision.

The success of the Partnership will also be determined by how representative it is seen to be. The initial members were G8 Parties (Canada, France, Germany and Japan plus the EU). However, since COP 10, interest has grown, with new initiatives springing up in Africa, Asia-Pacific, Latin America, and Europe. While an initial focus has been on the larger economies (i.e. the G20), given that this is where the bulk of economic and commercial activity takes place, there is also a significant interest in attracting smaller and developing countries to the partnership as it will greatly benefit their industries and may represent significant areas of future growth.

Additionally, other organizations such as large international and regional business associations, IGOs, and cross-sectorial initiatives should also be encouraged to follow (and, where possible, participate in) the Partnership as they can offer an interesting perspectives on business mainstreaming efforts. Furthermore, as their activities often parallel those of the Partnership, synergizing their efforts with those of the national initiatives should optimize the effectiveness and efficiency of all projects to the mutual benefit of all stakeholders concerned.

## **Addendum B: National Business and Biodiversity Initiatives Overview Document**

### **Background:**

The Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) have for some time been exploring ways to enhance private-sector collaboration in achieving the goals of the CBD. COP-8 (Brazil, 2006) identified the need for business involvement in biodiversity conservation, and COP-9 (Germany, 2008) invited Parties to improve actions and cooperation for the engagement of the business community through public/private partnerships. In addition, G-8 Environment Ministers (Japan, 2008) discussed ways to promote the conservation and sustainable use of global biodiversity, adopting the Kobe *Call for Action for Biodiversity* to promote international cooperation and engagement of the private sector. The Third Business and the 2010 Biodiversity Challenge Conference (Indonesia, 2009) issued the *Jakarta Charter* which identified ways to include sustainable use and conservation of biodiversity in business operations.

These initiatives were continued at COP 10 (Japan, 2010) where a decision on business engagement (X/21) was issued by the Parties. Amongst other elements, the decision called upon governments to “...*support the establishment of national and regional business and biodiversity initiatives and to strive towards a global partnership on business and biodiversity by inviting ongoing initiatives and other interested stakeholders to be part of the business and biodiversity initiative...*” and the Executive Secretary of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) to “...*encourage establishment of the national and regional business and biodiversity initiatives by facilitating a forum of dialogue among Parties and other Governments, business, and other stakeholders, with a particular focus on the global level*”.

This document is meant to provide an overview of the above mentioned initiatives, their purpose, and suggested structure. This is based largely upon the results of discussions with a number of existing and developing initiatives during the first meeting of the Global Partnership for Business and Biodiversity held in Tokyo, Japan on 15-16 December, 2011. The Partnership and initiatives are meant to be as open and inclusive as possible, so the guidelines provided below are suggestions as opposed to directives. However, a key objective of this entire exercise is to bring some coherence to the ever-expanding “ecosystem” of initiatives and bodies, and to help companies (particularly SMEs) easily navigate within this system to find the information they need as quickly and easily as possible. Therefore, these guidelines, it is hoped, will help in this regard.

It is important to place biodiversity in the overall environmental context to enable companies to benefit from the synergies between the various environmental treaties. The objectives of the three Rio Conventions and other environmental treaties should be considered and incorporated where possible to benefit from these synergies. This can be made more effective through partnerships with groups such as WBCSD, UNEP, IUCN, IFC, WWF etc. Additionally, the 2020 Biodiversity Aichi Targets should be a primary basis for formulating actions and advice for businesses in this context.

Finally, a few words with regard to the use of the terminology for these initiatives and the overall Partnership. With respect to the Global Platform, this term has been used rather broadly despite

the wording in the decision that calls for a “Global Partnership”. To resolve this problem, it is suggested that the Secretariat of the CBD (SCBD) business website retain the name “Global Platform for Business and Biodiversity” but the overall grouping of national initiatives, and thus future meetings, be dubbed “the Global Partnership for Business and Biodiversity”. In addition, there has been some confusion in the use of “initiative” or “council” as the name for the national grouping. Obviously, each country is free to call their grouping by any name they wish. However, in keeping in line with the language in the COP 10 decision, these will be referred to as “initiatives” in SCBD documents.

### **Guidelines for the National Business and Biodiversity Initiatives:**

The following guidance reflects both the common elements of structure amongst the existing initiatives and the overall aims expressed by the participants at the Tokyo meeting:

- **Overall Mandate:** The National Business and Biodiversity Initiatives are open, inclusive bodies that are designed to help raise awareness of biodiversity and sustainability issues amongst the business community and to encourage dialogue amongst stakeholders in this area. They should also work to assist companies in understanding and mainstreaming the goals of the Convention and the Aichi Targets.
- **Governance:** These initiatives will be primarily business focused, and as such should be primarily aimed at, and managed by, the business community. There is no fixed design for these initiatives and countries can set them up as best suits their domestic situation. Some of the forms that are possible include:
  - an inclusive business platform that also works to organize a broader stakeholder dialogue;
  - a mixed platform led and managed primarily by business, with opportunity for meaningful involvement by a range of non-business interests;
  - an umbrella organization where business federations, individual companies and other stakeholders join forces to promote this issue.

Generally, the initiative (in whatever form it takes) would be managed by a steering committee or board of directors (i.e. selected companies, government, ongoing national business and biodiversity programmes (i.e. sector based), etc) with a secretariat handling tasks which could include, *inter alia*, day-to-day activities such as national newsletters, planning meetings, and being the primary point of contact with the larger Global Partnership. It is very important to note that if an existing group handles these administrative functions, membership in the overall business and biodiversity initiative should not be dependent upon membership in the particular group. The initiative is meant to be fully inclusive so as to share ideas and best practices as widely as possible. In addition, in countries that have several existing programmes, each existing programme can run its own activities independent of the larger national initiative. However, all these programmes should share the results of such meetings/workshops with the wider national initiative. Engagement with the Government is very important (as the decision calls for a dialogue) and should remain a key aim of the initiative. This can be done through various means, including having government representation on the steering committee.

- **Funding:** There are several different methods for solving this problem, and it will depend upon the composition and circumstances of the particular initiative as to how this is accomplished. Generally, the following are the most common solutions. Likely some mix of the solutions below will be optimal.

- **Membership fees** (scaled depending on the size of the company). This is the most stable source of income, but may take some time to develop. Drawbacks to this include a reluctance of companies to pay for another association membership fee and the risks of the group become somewhat “exclusive” or being seen as a “members-only” club. It is also important to note that this sort of funding may be seen to be in “competition” with other associations, so links with other programmes and purpose of the initiative must be made very explicit to potential members;
  - **Government funding**. This can provide good start-up funds, but may not be sustainable over the long-term;
  - **Support from associations/large companies**: Similar to the above, this can create a good infusion of funds. However, it is important that the initiative not be fully subsumed into a given association, thus making the association and initiative one and the same. This could also be received as “in-kind” support;
  - **Project based funding**: Garnering support for specific activities from sponsors and/or workshop participation fees. This can allow for interesting activities, but can raise questions about funding for day-to-day administrative functions. As above, this could also be received as “in-kind” support.
- **Areas of Focus**: The business membership should, ideally, be multi-sectorial but information should be focused upon common issues concerning biodiversity. While each business sector is different in its needs and approaches, the multi-sector approach allows common elements of concern to be raised and best practices, with respect to biodiversity mainstreaming, across the various sectors to be shared. There should also be some efforts made to address larger sustainability issues and determine how biodiversity fits in with climate change, water and land management, pollution etc. The activities of the initiative should allow companies to understand biodiversity in context, and make their efforts at protecting biodiversity and being sustainable as easy and comprehensive as possible.
- **Role of the Initiatives**: In line with the COP business engagement decision X/21:
- The primary role of the initiatives is to bring national stakeholders in business and biodiversity together to share ideas and engage in dialogue. In addition, the initiatives should:
    - Be involved in the development and provision of tools, resources, benchmarks/pilot-studies, and advice to businesses looking to mainstream biodiversity issues. This should be done in consultation with the national membership, and not be designed as competing projects.
    - Share ideas and best practices with other national and regional initiatives in the Global Partnership, adapting them to particular domestic circumstances as required. This does not in any way preclude individual associations or companies cooperating across boundaries. It is simply another conduit to ensure that information is communicated as widely as possible.
    - Play a key role in encouraging and enabling companies to understand and mainstream the objectives of the Convention and the Aichi Targets (this flows from decision X/21/2). To this end, the initiatives should encourage their member companies (as well as those companies` suppliers, customers, and competitors) to commit to certain measurable actions that will allow them to improve their level of sustainability and reduce their footprint on biodiversity. This commitment

should be in line with other sustainability activities such that companies are not subject to a burden of reporting that will undercut the desired effects or discourage smaller enterprises from participating. Ideally, this commitment should be relatively consistent amongst the various national and regional initiatives (although reflecting national issues and economic/environmental situations). The SCBD can assist in designing a template of this type of commitment.

- Help to raise the level of compliance, if appropriate, of companies with respect to biodiversity/environmental laws and provide technical assistance where feasible and appropriate.
  - Assist in the communication of biodiversity issues and advice on how businesses and related stakeholders can help to deal with these issues while taking into account domestic needs and circumstances.
- **Key Partners:** While each initiative will have its own unique mix of participants, there are certain key players with global reach that can help make the various initiatives more effective:
- These include, *inter alia*: IUCN, WWF, WBCSD, UNEP, IFC and Conservation International;
  - In addition, the SCBD is an important partner as the coordinator of the Global Partnership;
  - Another important set of partners can be found at the sub-national, municipal, and/or local level. In many cases, the national initiatives themselves will be unable to reach down to the level of local SMEs and micro-companies. In this case, adopting a “nested-approach” where local service providers, NGOs, etc are involved in the national initiatives will allow for better access to these companies. Additional, the local players will then benefit from the information flows and exposure that comes with being associated with the national initiative and, through them, the Global Partnership.

### **Ongoing Role of SCBD**

As per the COP 10 decision, the SCBD will continue to encourage the development of national business and biodiversity initiatives and will offer guidance where possible. It should be noted that while the SCBD will coordinate the Global Partnership (i.e. through the organization of meetings) the SCBD is not the steering body. The Global Partnership is composed of the initiatives who will decide policy and direction. The SCBD exists to provide advice and support within the mandate granted by the Parties to the Convention. Some of the support functions the SCBD can provide include:

- Regular interaction and sharing of best practices through conference calls. In addition, the SCBD can try to answer questions or direct initiatives to expert advice as required;
- Organization of annual meetings for the initiatives. Ideally, every second year, these meetings will coincide with the Conference of the Parties;
- Hosting the Global Platform for Business and Biodiversity website, which will include information on national initiatives as well as up-to-dates lists of tools and mechanisms and case studies;

- The SCBD, through the various national focal points and other partners, will compile lists of existing groups and associations dealing with business and biodiversity on a national level. This will help to inform new and existing initiatives about potential members and activities that they should be following;
- The SCBD can also help to design the commitment that companies would be expected to follow through national/regional initiatives, and could post profiles on the Global Platform website of those companies that are actively following through on their commitments;
- The SCBD can also sit on the steering committees of the national initiatives (in an *ex-officio* fashion) if so requested.

More information about the Global Partnership can be found in the companion document “*The Global Partnership for Business and Biodiversity: Strategy and Direction*”.

### **Further Information**

More information on the existing business and biodiversity initiatives can be found at the following links:

Canada: <http://www.businessbiodiversity.ca/>

Japan: <http://www.bd-partner.org/english/>

Germany: <http://www.business-and-biodiversity.de/en/homepage.html>

France: [www.oree.org](http://www.oree.org)

European Union: [http://ec.europa.eu/environment/biodiversity/business/index\\_en.html](http://ec.europa.eu/environment/biodiversity/business/index_en.html)

In addition, if you have any questions or require further clarification, you can contact the business unit at the SCBD: General mailbox ([businessandbiodiversity@cbd.int](mailto:businessandbiodiversity@cbd.int))

