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SUBMISSIONS: *Welcome from all civil society groups. Email to just.tasneem@gmail.com*

Opening Statement of the CBD Alliance

The common good and wellbeing of all humanity depends upon healthy and biodiverse ecosystems, for which we have common but differentiated responsibilities. Less than two months before the Rio+20 summit, biodiversity is under unprecedented threat as a result of an economic system that depends on growth without limits in a planetary system with limits. We strongly reject market-oriented "green economy" approaches that promote the commodification, privatization and financialization of nature. They undermine the rights of Indigenous peoples, local communities, women, small-scale food providers, and other marginalized groups. The Biodiversity Convention enshrines the precautionary principle and must place this principle at the core of decision-making about new technologies.

The CBD Alliance is greatly encouraged by the appointment of the new Executive Secretary, Dr. Bráulio Ferrreira de Souza Dias, and we pledge to work with him to strengthen the role of SBSTTA and the entire CBD. Science has a vital role in addressing the threats to biodiversity, but science without an ethical context can be destructive. Civil society has a critical role in advocating all dimensions of knowledge, science and technology in SBSTTA's deliberations. We raise, therefore, the following major concerns:

SBSTTA and IPBES

Rio + 20 needs the CBD and SBSTTA. As the CBD's scientific advisor, SBSTTA must be

strengthened, not weakened. New initiatives such as IPBES must not be allowed to undermine SBSTTA's role and important work.

Financial Incentives and REDD

We call on Governments to take into account the uncertain, volatile and inequitable nature of private funding sources for biodiversity conservation. We reject the financialization of nature and other market-based "green economy" approaches to biodiversity conservation, like REDD+, offsets, and other incentive schemes, which benefit corporations to the detriment of the rights and needs of Indigenous Peoples, local communities, small farmers, women, and other marginalized groups. Non-binding safeguards will not address the risks inherent in market mechanisms.

The CBD Alliance will hold daily strategy meetings every morning at 9:00 a.m, room D during the SBSTTA meetings. Members of civil society are welcome to join.

Marine

We endorse the work on marine and coastal biodiversity, specifically the listing of ecologically and biologically significant areas (EBSAs) and the development of guidelines for environmental and strategic impact assessments. We take note, however, of the on-going lack of governance on the high seas which hinders implementation.

SBSTTA must ensure that traditional, scientific, technical and technological knowledge of indigenous and local communities, as well as their social and cultural criteria, are used for identification and description of EBSAs and are fully incorporated into the marine and coastal work of the CBD.

Synthetic Biology

The commercial creation of artificial life forms through synthetic biology is clearly a new and emerging issue for this convention. It endangers biodiversity, health, livelihoods, culture and traditional knowledge. Threats include the creation and spread of novel invasive species, synthetic genetic contamination, the replacement of natural botanical products such as vanilla, saffron and rubber. We will also see increased demands for biomass, land, energy, and water. SBSTTA should call for a moratorium on the environmental release and commercial use of synthetic organisms and their products.

Geoengineering

Despite the adoption of the *de facto* moratorium on geoengineering in COP10 we are deeply concerned that some governments and corporations still believe they have the right to manipulate the planetary thermostat. As the Secretariat reports show, there is no global, transparent and effective regulatory oversight

structure. There is also no science-based justification to conduct geoengineering experiments. Indigenous and local communities still haven't been fully consulted.

We call upon SBSTTA to: (1) reaffirm the moratorium decision; (2) to adopt a test ban on all form of geoengineering outside of the laboratory; and (3) to ensure full consultation and free, prior and informed consent of all indigenous peoples, local communities and other affected stakeholders.

Biofuels

The CBD has acknowledged some of the overwhelming evidence that large scale biofuels and biomass have profound negative impacts on biodiversity. They do not mitigate, and in fact, can exacerbate Green House Gas emissions. SBSTTA must not consider sustainability criteria to be the answer. Biofuels are a false solution based on politically expedient mandates, targets, and subsidies.

Agricultural Biodiversity

SBSTTA appears to be treating the Global Taxonomy Initiative as a key strategy for biodiversity conservation. This approach ignores the importance of in-situ conservation and the central role of small-scale food providers in the conservation of plant, animal and aquatic genetic resources. SBSTTA must ensure that this in-situ conservation is given higher priority and the support it deserves.

Please note the CBD Alliance has produced a number of briefings elaborating on these points that can be downloaded from <http://www.cbdalliance.org/sbstta-wgri-briefings-montreal>

The CBD Alliance thanks Swedbio for their ongoing support.

Social and cultural criteria of EBSAs: Now you see me, now you don't!

- Ramya Rajagopalan, ICSF

The information paper on the social and cultural criteria for the identification of Ecologically or Biologically Significant Areas (EBSAs) and for the establishment and management of marine protected areas (MPAs), clearly acknowledges the linkages that exist between biological and social success. It is important to recognize indigenous people and local communities as rights-holders with inherent, proprietary and inalienable rights to their traditional knowledge and resources. While there has been enough focus on the scientific criteria for the identification and description of EBSAs beyond national jurisdiction, there has been not much effort taken to integrate the social and cultural criteria. It is equally important that Parties focus on identification and description of EBSAs within national jurisdiction using scientific, cultural and social criteria, with full and effective participation of indigenous and local communities. Parties need to take into account the positive experience in co-management and community based management, where community rights are recognized, especially while identifying EBSAs, declaring MPAs and in marine spatial planning processes.

Rio – an Opportunity to Accelerate the Protection of the High Seas

- Richard Page, Greenpeace

Our oceans, including the waters of the high seas are in crisis. Urgent action is needed. Encouragingly the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) has begun to take some initial

CBD Alliance SBSTTA Briefings!!

The CBD Alliance has produced a set of briefing for SBSTTA 16. These briefings were developed by representatives of civil society facilitated by the CBD Alliance. The briefings are on:

1. [Global Biodiversity Outlook \(Agenda item 4\)](#)
2. [Marine and Coastal Biodiversity \(Agenda item 6\)](#)
3. [Geoengineering and Climate Change \(Agenda item 7\)](#)
4. [Synthetic Biology as an Emerging Issue \(Agenda item 10\)](#)
5. [Biofuels and Biodiversity \(Agenda item 11\)](#)

It should not be understood as representing the position of the CBD Alliance nor civil Society in general. Rather it is meant to provide background and current information, as well as some viewpoints on key issues for SBSTTA 16 and WGRI 4. The views represented in this paper are those it's contributors.

Hard copies will be available at the venue. These are also available on <http://www.cbdalliance.org/sbstta-wgri-briefings-montreal>

steps that will help arrest the rapid demise of our oceans. In particular, the commencement of the identification of marine areas that are of ecological and biological significance, EBSAs, is a significant development towards high seas protection. However the identification of an area as an EBSA does not itself confer protection, measures need to be put in place in order to make the area a marine protected area or marine reserve.

This is not straightforward. For a start, there is a serious shortfall in the implementation of existing agreements. But, even if all relevant agreements are implemented, massive gaps and loopholes in existing governing activities in international waters would still hamper effective protection. These oceans governance gaps include no explicit rules on what

protection of international waters should look like , little coordination between relevant organisations, no means of establishing marine reserves or assessing the impact of human activities, poor monitoring, surveillance, compliance and enforcement and no mechanisms to assess and regulate new and emerging human activities.

We need to address these issues by providing a new framework for protecting the biodiversity of the high seas. Political urgency must be raised and the Rio summit offers an extraordinary opportunity to make a wholesale change in how we manage the high seas.

At Rio governments must give the green light to start negotiations on an agreement that implements the relevant marine conservation provisions under the UN Convention on Law of the Sea (paragraph 80 of the Zero Draft). This implementing agreement under UNCLOS should ensure that ocean resources are sustainably used, benefits derived from their use are equitably shared, and that it enables governments to act on their long-standing commitments to create a global network of MPAs. We urge all government to ensure that Rio becomes a critical milestone in safeguarding our oceans for now and future generations.

Geoengineering – Time for a test ban?

- *Jim Thomas, ETC group*

The verdict is in : When farsighted delegates at COP10 agreed a de-facto moratorium on climate-related geoengineering they set a welcome precedent for common sense. At SBSTTA 16 Parties will review new studies that clearly vindicate the precautionary stance taken in Nagoya. Headline findings include:

- No geoengineering approach meets basic criteria for effectiveness, safety and affordability. Few have been well researched. Most are problematic to deploy or govern. Several are unlikely to work.

- So-called Solar Radiation Management techniques would have uncertain regional impacts on weather and the hydrological cycle, would not address the root causes of climate, would mask ongoing warming and would introduce a novel climate dynamic with no paleo-precedent.
- Several Carbon Dioxide Removal techniques are highly speculative, of doubtful effectiveness and may have significant unintended impacts on terrestrial and /or ocean ecosystems.



It is also clear that no other body or regime is stepping up to the challenge of these new risky planetary technologies:

- "The current regulatory mechanisms that could apply to climate-related geoengineering relevant to the Convention do not constitute a framework for geoengineering as a whole that meets the criteria of being science-based, global, transparent and effective" explains the Secretariat's summary document.

Parties should use this opportunity to reaffirm and deepen the moratorium: Options include a ban on experiments outside of a laboratory, establishing a register of geoengineering activities and ensuring full consultation with all affected stakeholders – which in the case of manipulation of the entire planet is, let's face it, all of us. ETC Group will be hosting a Policy Dialogue on Geoengineering as a side event On Tuesday lunchtime 1.15 - room 3 - level 1. Fresh local lunch will be available. All welcome