

NOTIFICATION**Further operationalising the voluntary peer review of national biodiversity strategies and action plans: call for reviewees and reviewers and updating the methodology**

Dear Sir or Madam,

The process of voluntary peer review (VPR) was developed in response to decisions [IX/8](#) and [XI/2](#) and its methodology was noted in decision [XIII/25](#) of the Conference of the Parties. In its decision [14/29](#), the Conference of the Parties included VPR as an element of a multidimensional approach to review and, in decision [15/6](#), included it as a component of the Convention's enhanced multidimensional approach to planning, monitoring, reporting and review.

The VPR is a process by which the development and implementation of the national biodiversity strategy and action plan of one Party is reviewed by a team from other Parties. Parties that have participated in the VPR exercise to date have expressed strong appreciation. Further information on the VPR, including in its relation to the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (KMGBF), is provided on the Convention website at: <https://www.cbd.int/nbsap/vpr>.

In decision 14/29, the Executive Secretary was requested to facilitate further voluntary peer reviews and to invite Parties to volunteer for a review and to nominate candidates for the review teams. In order to facilitate the further operationalization of the VPR, the Secretariat would like to invite Parties to contribute in one or more of the following ways:

1. **Volunteer to have the development and implementation of your country's NBSAP reviewed.** Parties are invited to submit an expression of interest in having their NBSAP development and implementation reviewed through a VPR exercise between COP 16 and COP 18. The Secretariat will select countries on a rolling basis, taking into account the resources available (the governments of Japan and of Switzerland have generously provided funding to support VPR). For this round of expressions of interest, the deadline for submission is 25 April 2025. Details for submitting an expression of interest are provided in annex to this notification.
2. **Nominate Reviewers.** Parties are invited to nominate reviewers available to conduct voluntary peer reviews of NBSAPs of other Parties. The Secretariat will compile a list of potential reviewers which will be matched with VPR countries based on expertise and language skills and aiming for gender balance. The deadline for nominations is 25 April 2025. Details for submitting an expression of interest are provided in annex to this notification.
3. **Review of an updated VPR methodology.** The Secretariat has reviewed and updated the VPR methodology developed in 2016 and contained in [CBD/COP/13/INF/2](#), in order to align it with the KMGBF and recent decisions of the Conference of the Parties. The updated methodology is available for review. The submission of views should be made using the template provided and submitted through the central portal of the clearing-house mechanism. Documents and instructions are available at this link: <https://www.cbd.int/nbsap/vpr>. Parties are invited to submit their views by 25 April 2025. Submissions may also be sent through an official letter addressed to the Executive Secretary by e-mail to secretariat@cbd.int. Views received will be made available on the website

To: CBD national focal points, ABS focal points, Cartagena Protocol focal points, SBSTTA national focal points, indigenous peoples and local communities and relevant organizations

and an updated version of the methodology will be provided for information of the Subsidiary Body on Implementation at its sixth meeting. While the methodology is being updated, the existing methodology will continue to be used.

I am confident that Parties to the Convention will find that VPR can be of great support in the revision, updating and implementation of their NBSAPs towards the goals and targets of the KMGBF.

I look forward to your participation in this process and thank you for your support for the implementation of the Convention and the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework.

Please accept, Sir, Madam, the assurances of my highest consideration.

(Signed) Astrid Schomaker
Executive Secretary

Annex

Procedure for expressions of interest in participating in a VPR

Volunteer to have the development and implementation of your country's NBSAP reviewed:

Nominations for participating as a reviewee should be sent to secretariat@cbd.int accompanied by [Appendix 1](#) of the VPR methodology duly filled out. The eligibility of Parties to have their NBSAP development and implementation reviewed will be based on the following criteria:

- (a) Evidence of high-level government support for the voluntary peer-review to be conducted;
- (b) Submission of its national biodiversity strategy and action plan (NBSAP) aligned with the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework or of an advanced draft of its NBSAP or policy equivalent; and
- (c) Submission of its sixth national report.

Parties whose NBSAP is under review are required to support logistic and administrative arrangements for the in-country part of the review. Travel funding (flights and daily subsistence allowance) for reviewers from developing countries will be provided by the Secretariat.

Nominating a reviewer: Expressions of interest should be sent to secretariat@cbd.int. Nominations for participating as a reviewer should be accompanied by the nominee's curriculum vitae and should indicate experience in working on biodiversity management and implementation of the Convention on Biological Diversity, either within or in partnership with the national government. Preference will be given to nominees with experience in project monitoring and/or evaluation. Reviewers will serve in their individual capacity in the review of an NBSAP and will be put on a roster of reviewers for three years for possible future reviews.

Please note that reviewers will be expected to be able to contribute a minimum of 80 hours of desk work towards the review of documents and writing the report; and they will also be expected to attend a one week in-country mission to the country whose NBSAP is under review. Reviewers from developed countries should be able to cover their own expenses and travel. Reviewers are expected to be fully familiar with the roles and responsibilities for reviewers outlined in the [updated VPR methodology](#).

Parties applying for their NBSAP development and implementation to be reviewed may also nominate reviewers who could participate in the review of the NBSAP of other Parties. This would be particularly useful for sharing experiences after the review.