

Statement read by Jean Lemire, Government of Quebec, at the Open-Ended Working Group 2 meeting in Rome, Italy, on 25 February 2020, on behalf of ICLEI, the Advisory Committee of Subnational Governments for Biodiversity (coordinated by Regions4 Sustainable Development and the Government of Quebec), the European Committee of Regions, and the Group of Leading Subnational Governments toward Aichi Biodiversity Targets

I am taking the floor on behalf of the Advisory Committee on Subnational Governments and Biodiversity, coordinated by Regions4 and the Government of Québec, ICLEI, the Group of Leading Subnational Governments towards Aichi Biodiversity Targets and the European Committee of Regions. This intervention is our common position on the zero-draft

We congratulate the co-chair and the Secretariat for producing this zero-draft, which is well structured, and provides a useful, clear and concise basis for negotiation going forward.

We also welcome the zero draft's consideration to local and subnational governments' role as enabler of the implementation on the ground. The acknowledgement of the key role we can play for the protection of biodiversity and other societal objectives is important, yet insufficient.

We salute the early mention of the local and subnational government implementation into the GBF, and strongly believe such valuable inclusion will reinforce the sense of appropriation of the plan by all levels of governments. However, this inclusion also has to remain present in the rest of the GBF.

Regarding the implementation of the 20 action-oriented targets, we feel that more work has to be done to capture and mainstream the essential contributions by local and subnational governments to the implementation of the GBF. We would like the Parties to consider the crucial role of all levels of subnational governments, particularly in the implementation of nature-based solutions and mainstreaming biodiversity, as well as the crucial link between the 20 global targets, national commitments and subnational and local implementation. All the 20 targets may increasingly recognize the involvement of local and subnational governments, and we've provided some specific wording to the co-chair that we also submitted in writing.

We welcome the inclusion of local and subnational governments in the enabling conditions. However, we suggest that the role of local and subnational

governments, as part and parcel of governments, as well as their networks, notably the Advisory Committee on Cities and on the Advisory Committee on Subnational Governments and Biodiversity, also be included in the implementation support mechanisms to better reflect the critical contributions to be made at these levels in ensuring the effective implementation of the GBF.

Regarding the Open-ended Working Group's recommendation on the implementation of the framework in line with decisions on resource mobilization, capacity building and the long-term strategic approach to mainstreaming; we would like to add a recommendation on a Decision 15/ - on a renewal of the Plan of Action on Subnational Governments, Cities and Other Local Authorities for Biodiversity (2010-2020) – which expires this year - as a major milestone in the implementation process of the new framework. We are currently working on recommendations for a renewed and stepped-up Decision giving local and subnational governments the fullest opportunity to contribute and ensure optimal implementation of the GBF, and we will present its review to the co-chairs in time to be considered by SBI-3.

We've said it before: if we really want to raise the ambition for this next global biodiversity framework, we have to attain this “whole of governments and society approach”, to allow all stakeholders to recognize themselves as enablers of its implementation. Subnational governments and cities can play a major role in raising this awareness and inclusiveness of civil society and other stakeholders, including the private and financial sector.

We also have to reiterate the essential need to create a clear message not only understandable for us, but also, and more importantly, to the public. This will be of primal importance if we want this new Deal for Nature and People to be carried out by all citizens of this world.

We therefore recommend more specificity on the means of participation of local and subnational governments, within the Global Biodiversity Framework and its Action Targets. We look forward to discuss these points further, and suggest how local and subnational governments can contribute concretely to the Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework with you. Thank you.