

Thai delegates prepare to commit to global 30 by 30 protections on land and ocean at major nature meeting in Montreal

BANGKOK, 25TH NOVEMBER 2022 – Thai delegates, together with other state members, are preparing to participate in the fifth meeting of the Open-Ended Working Group on the Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework (GBF) during 3-5 December 2022, followed by the United Nations Biodiversity Conference COP-15 Part 2 during 7-19 December 2022 in Montreal, Canada. The two meetings are significant to establish a global strategy and to accelerate collaboration and implementation in safeguarding global biodiversity, which plays an important role in various ecosystem functions and services, as well as securing human well-being and sustainable livelihoods.

The first draft of the Global Biodiversity Framework released in July 2021 envisions a world of living in harmony with nature where: *“By 2050, biodiversity is valued, conserved, restored and wisely used, maintaining ecosystem services, sustaining a healthy planet and delivering benefits essential for all people”* and aims to halt the biodiversity loss caused by the five key drivers: the changing use of sea and land, overexploitation, pollution, climate change and invasive species. There are twenty-one targets for urgent action to be achieved by 2030, covering three themes: 1) reducing threats to biodiversity; 2) meeting people’s needs through sustainable use and benefit-sharing; and 3) tools and solutions for implementation and mainstreaming. Considering the 2030 action targets, expansion of protected areas is one of the key priorities calling for at least 30 percent of global land and ocean areas, *especially areas of particular importance for biodiversity and its contributions to people, to be protected and conserved by 2030.*

The final version of the Post-2020 Biodiversity Framework (GBF) will be adopted at the 15th Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity from December 7-19, 2022, in Montreal, Canada. These negotiations will build on five previous negotiating rounds and other relevant meetings, such as the Monitoring Framework discussion held in Bonn, Germany, from 29 June to 1 July 2022.

In Thailand, biodiversity loss has become a critical topic. Thus, it is very encouraging to see the Thai government agree to join The High Ambition Coalition (HAC) for Nature and People. HAC includes over 110 member nations all committing to protecting and conserving at least 30 percent of the global land and ocean areas by 2030. We also look forward to seeing support from Thailand toward the adoption of the overall GBF when they attend COP15 in December. Our planet needs this framework.

In Thailand, expansion of protected areas has been found in the strategic and implementation plans of relevant government agencies but obstacles and challenges remain, and often result in a delay to the designation process of protected areas. Only 5% is currently protected in Thailand’s marine areas, and many in the domestic scientific community, government, and NGOs support expansion of this coverage to safeguard marine and coastal biodiversity and key ecosystems. Global commitment of resources toward this type of increase in protected and conserved area coverage is becoming possible through significant commitment of

resources. Much of this is documented in an important tracker regularly updated by NGOs, located here: www.naturefinance.info. We urgently call for the adoption of the Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework that will initiate transformative changes in Thailand and beyond.

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About Marine Science Association of Thailand (MSAT)

Marine Science Association of Thailand (MSAT) was registered in 1993 as a non-profit organization and it is a consortium of Thai scientists and young scientists who work on different fields of marine science and management from different government agencies, universities and research institutes. Currently, there are more than five hundred members. The association aims to be a knowledge hub and research dissemination on marine science and related fields, to provide academic consultation and supports on marine science and related fields to society, and to publicize honour and excellence of marine scientists who dedicate and contribute to the development of marine science in Thailand.

About Marine Biodiversity Research Group, Ramkhamhaeng University (MBRG-RU)

Established in 1995, MBRG-RU is a research unit, based in Bangkok, under the Faculty of Science, Ramkhamhaeng University, consisting of scholars, researchers, graduate, and undergraduate students. Initially, the MBRG-RU conducted the project on coral recruitment in the Gulf of Thailand, supported by the Thailand Research Fund. Since then, we have been working on a wide range of research aspects, i.e., marine biology and ecology, coral reef conservation, marine fisheries ecology, marine tourism management, marine and coastal management etc.