

**CONVENTION ON
BIOLOGICAL
DIVERSITY**

Distr.
GENERAL

UNEP/CBD/COP/6/13
12 December 2001

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

**CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES TO THE
CONVENTION ON BIOLOGICAL
DIVERSITY**

Sixth meeting

The Hague, 7-19 April 2002

Item 18 of the provisional agenda*

PROGRESS REPORT ON THE MECHANISMS FOR IMPLEMENTATION

Note by the Executive Secretary

I. INTRODUCTION

1. In decisions V/12, V/14, V/17 and other previous decisions, the Conference of the Parties requested the Executive Secretary to report on the mechanisms for implementation, including financial mechanism, clearing house mechanism, education and public awareness, for consideration at its sixth meeting. The present note has been prepared by the Executive Secretary in response to these requests.
2. Section II of the note provides an overview of the mechanisms for implementation. Section III reports on the activities that have been undertaken to prepare for the second review of the financial mechanism. Section IV addresses the operation of the clearing-house mechanism. Information concerning the development of the Global Initiative on Biological Diversity Education and Public Awareness is contained in section V. The final section contains a set of recommendations for the consideration of the Conference of the Parties on further advancing the mechanisms for implementation.

II. OVERVIEW OF THE MECHANISMS FOR IMPLEMENTATION

3. The mechanisms for the implementation of the Convention have evolved rapidly around the following five areas:
 - (a) Financial resources and mechanism;
 - (b) Clearing-house mechanism;

* UNEP/CBD/COP/6/1 and Corr.1/Rev.1.

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- (c) National reports;
 - (d) Library, documentation and publication services;
 - (e) Education and public awareness.
4. Each of these areas is briefly reviewed in the present section.

A. *Financial resources and mechanism*

5. The question of financial resources and mechanism has been elaborated on two fronts: relationship with the Global Environment Facility as the institutional structure operating the financial mechanism of the Convention, and additional financial resources from sources other than the financial mechanism. This subsection first addresses the relationship with the Global Environment Facility, in particular, guidance to the financial mechanism and the second review of its effectiveness, and then additional financial resources.

1. Financial mechanism

6. The relationship between the Global Environment Facility and the Convention was arranged through the Memorandum of Understanding between the Conference of the Parties and the Council of the Global Environment Facility contained in decision III/8. The Memorandum of Understanding provides for, among others, guidance from the Conference of the Parties, reporting, monitoring and evaluation, determination of funding requirements, and inter-secretariat cooperation.

7. *Guidance from the Conference of the Parties.* The Conference of the Parties has provided several pieces of guidance contained in decisions I/2, II/6, III/5, IV/13 and V/13. To assist the Conference of the Parties in considering further guidance to the financial mechanism, the Executive Secretary has prepared a note (UNEP/CBD/COP/6/INF/3) that provides a compilation of past guidance to the financial mechanism by relevant item of the provisional agenda. Additional priority areas on which the Conference of the Parties might consider developing further guidance may be identified in the compilation of draft recommendations to be presented to the Conference of the Parties at its sixth meeting (UNEP/CBD/COP/6/1/Add.2). The Parties should also consider draft guidance, including practical arrangements, to be implemented by the financial mechanism suggested by the Intergovernmental Committee on the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety.

8. *Reporting.* Since the second meeting of the Conference of the Parties, the Global Environment Facility has submitted a report for each ordinary meeting of the Conference of the Parties. The Executive Secretary has invited the Global Environment Facility to provide a report concerning the implementation of the previous guidance and detailed information on the GEF biodiversity focal area for consideration by the Conference of the Parties at its sixth meeting. The Conference of the Parties is invited to consider the information provided in the report (UNEP/CBD/COP/6/9) when deciding upon the need for further guidance to the financial mechanism.

9. *Monitoring and evaluation.* The Conference of the Parties completed its first review of the effectiveness of the financial mechanism at its fourth meeting, and adopted a set of actions to improve the effectiveness of the financial mechanism. In decision V/12, the Conference of the Parties agreed that an experienced independent evaluator should prepare a second review. Section III of the present note provides a brief on the action undertaken in response to that decision. At its sixth meeting, the Conference of the Parties will before it the report of the evaluator (UNEP/CBD/COP/6/INF/4), as well as the executive summary and conclusions (UNEP/CBD/COP/6/13/Add.1). The Conference of the Parties is

invited to review the effectiveness of the financial mechanism based on the conclusions of the independent evaluator.

10. *Determination of funding requirements.* To give full effect to the Memorandum of Understanding, the Conference of the Parties needs to make an assessment of the amount of funds that are necessary to assist developing countries in fulfilling their commitments under the Convention over the next GEF replenishment cycle. Parties may wish to request the Executive Secretary to prepare such an assessment for their consideration at the seventh meeting of the Conference of the Parties based on submissions from Parties. Such an assessment should enable the Parties to provide precise and demand-based guidance to the financial mechanism.

11. *Inter-secretariat cooperation.* The secretariats of the Convention and the Global Environment Facility have been cooperating and collaborating with each other not only on guidance-related matters but also on other issues. Both sides have demonstrated comparative advantages in terms of expertise and other resources. The Executive Secretary has communicated various guidance and other relevant developments under the Convention through his communications and statements to the meetings of the GEF Council. The Secretariat has participated in GEF policy development and project review, as well as its Operational Committee and task forces, with a view to promoting the consistency of the GEF biodiversity policy and projects with the guidance of the Conference of the Parties. The GEF secretariat participated actively in the inter-sessional meetings of the Convention and provided very useful inputs, not only in terms of institutional relations but also in terms of expertise, to the convention process. The practice of the GEF presentations during the meetings of the Convention has been very much welcomed. It has provided an excellent opportunity for dialogues between the financial mechanism and Parties, both developed and developing, on the development and implementation of policy guidance and relevant operational policies and projects.

2. *Additional financial resources*

12. The question of financial resources has been considered by the Conference of the Parties at each of its ordinary meetings. In decision V/11, the Conference of the Parties called for a range of actions to be implemented by the Executive Secretary, the Global Environment Facility, Parties and Governments, and other stakeholders. In response, the Secretariat has further developed the database on biodiversity-related funding information, which can provide an interactive platform for donors and recipients to share funding information. The Secretariat, in collaboration with the Global Environment Facility, also convened a Workshop on Financing for Biological Diversity in Havana on 16-17 July 2001, which provided a useful forum for donor Parties and Governments, bilateral, regional and multilateral funding institutions to share experience and information and to promote cooperation, collaboration and synergies. The summary of the Workshop (CBD-GEF/WS-Financing/2) may be found on the website of the Convention. The Executive Secretary has also prepared a full report on additional financial resources, as requested in decision V/11 (UNEP/CBD/COP/6/14), which provides information on the implementation of decision V/11 and contains a number of recommendations for the consideration of the Conference of the Parties for further progress on this issue.

B. *The clearing-house mechanism*

13. At each of its ordinary meetings, the Conference of the Parties has reviewed progress in the establishment and development of the clearing-house mechanism, and adopted decisions II/3, III/4, IV/2 and V/14 with a view to promoting and facilitating technical and scientific cooperation. By decision V/14, the Conference of the Parties endorsed a longer-term programme of work for the clearing-house mechanism and supported the implementation of a strategic plan for the clearing-house mechanism. It

also recommended a set of measures to be undertaken by Parties and Governments in the biennium 2001-2002, and activities to be undertaken by the Executive Secretary in consultation with the informal advisory committee and other relevant bodies. Further information on the operations of the clearing-house mechanism is contained in section IV below.

C. National reports

14. In accordance with Article 26 and decision III/9, some 86 countries submitted their first national reports by 31 March 1998 for consideration by the Conference of the Parties at its fourth meeting. By the end of November 2001, the Secretariat had received a second national report from 62 countries as well as 53 thematic reports on alien species, 12 thematic reports on benefit-sharing and 37 thematic reports on forest ecosystems. Pursuant to decision V/19, the Secretariat has been actively involved in the efforts to streamline national reporting for biodiversity-related treaties through participation in workshops convened by the UNEP and the newly established Environmental Management Group. Based on these submissions and inter-sessional activities, the Executive Secretary already prepared a note on national reports for consideration by the Open-ended Inter-sessional Meeting on the Strategic Plan, National Reports and Implementation of the Convention held in Montreal from 19 to 21 November 2001. The report of the Inter-sessional Meeting, including draft recommendations on national reports (UNEP/CBD/COP/6/5) will be considered by the Conference of the Parties at its sixth meeting.

D. Library, documentation and publication services

15. A Convention library, located at the Secretariat, is now operational. A total of 600 documents have been entered in the bibliographic database. A virtual library on the Internet to help facilitate access to information pertaining to biodiversity is being developed. A web page on publications by the Secretariat has been developed. The library catalogue is now accessible on the intranet site. New pages are being developed on the web to provide links to biodiversity related documents. This activity falls within the collection development policy of the library.

E. Communication, education and public awareness

16. In decision V/17, the Conference of the Parties adopted a range of measures, including the establishment of a Global Initiative on Biological Diversity Education and Public Awareness to promote education and public awareness for purposes of the Convention, pursuant to Article 13 of the Convention. During the inter-sessional period, the Secretariat and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), in collaboration with other institutions, convened three meetings of the Consultative Group Of Experts on Biological Diversity Education and Public Awareness, called for in decision V/17. Progress on the development of the global initiative on biological diversity education and public awareness is outlined in section V below.

17. As part of efforts to implement decision V/17, the Secretariat initiated an information and public awareness subprogramme under the implementation and outreach programme. A number of initiatives have already been developed and/or implemented, e.g.:

(a) *Enhancing contacts with the media.* A press conference was organized prior to the sixth meeting of the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice (SBSTTA) at the Secretariat's premises. Press releases were prepared on alien invasive species and forests, the two main themes considered by SBSTTA in the inter-sessional period, and distributed worldwide. A number of interviews were given by conference officials, delegates, and Secretariat staff members to various television and radio stations in Canada and abroad during both the sixth and the seventh meetings of

SBSTTA. Press kits containing a collection of Convention publications were distributed to journalists before, during and after major meetings of the Convention. A media database is being gradually compiled;

(b) *Enhancing public awareness.* The Secretariat produced a number of publications of various types, including:

- (i) Four issues of the newsletter *CBD News*;
- (ii) Two thematic posters for the International Day for Biodiversity;
- (iii) Seven pamphlets in six languages, on the Convention on Biological Diversity, the Biosafety Protocol; clearing-house mechanism; traditional knowledge; social, economic and legal issues; RIO + 10; Global Taxonomy Initiative;
- (iv) The decisions of the Conference of the Parties at its fifth meeting, in 6 languages;
- (v) A booklet on the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety in six languages;
- (vi) The Global Biodiversity Outlook 2001;
- (vii) The first edition of the Handbook of the Convention on Biological Diversity;
- (viii) Four issues of CBD Technical series;
- (ix) Two New Year cards;
- (x) A biodiversity wall calendar for 2002; and
- (xi) A video on activities under the Convention on Biological Diversity is under consideration.

(c) *Enhancing student participation at the meetings of the Convention:* students have been regularly invited to participate at major Convention meetings (the Conference of the Parties and SBSTTA) through a preparation and coaching program organized by the Secretariat. The programme includes a preparatory conference on the Convention on Biological Diversity, its subsidiary bodies, the Protocol, the clearing-house mechanism and the web site, meetings with key officials, participation at plenary and working-group meetings, etc. Students also receive information kits assembled by the Secretariat. A web page for children is under construction.

18. In paragraph 7 (b) of decision V/17, the Conference of the Parties requested the Executive Secretary to “designate a theme each year for the International Day for Biological Diversity and prepare background information to be placed on the clearing-house mechanism”. Accordingly the theme “alien invasive species” was chosen for the year 2001, and the theme “forests” was chosen for the year 2002. These choices reflected the main themes adopted for the sixth and seventh meetings of SBSTTA, on the understanding that concentrating public awareness efforts on a narrower focus should enhance visibility for the workings of the Convention. Parties were notified on the biodiversity annual theme for 2001 on 10 January 2001.

19. By paragraph 7 (c) of decision V/17, the Executive Secretary was requested to “consult the United Nations Secretariat on the feasibility of changing the designated date of the International Day for Biological Diversity to 22 May and provide advice on this matter to the Parties by February 2001”. This change was made possible through General Assembly resolution late in 2000 and the Biodiversity Day was duly celebrated on May 22, 2001. Parties were informed of this change both in written form and through the Convention’s website. The clearing-house mechanism also developed a page in the website where reports of the different celebrations throughout the world may be assessed.

III. SECOND REVIEW OF THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE FINANCIAL MECHANISM

20. In decision V/12, the Conference of the Parties decided to conduct the second review of the effectiveness of the financial mechanism at its sixth meeting, and adopted terms of reference for the review. The present section provides an overview of activities undertaken in accordance with this decision. The final report of the independent evaluator can be found in document UNEP/CBD/COP/6/INF/4, and the executive summary is contained in document UNEP/CBD/COP/6/13/Add.1.

21. As a result of an international call for tenders, which was posted on the website of the Convention for more than three months, Le Groupe-conseil Baastel Itée was selected to undertake the second review of the effectiveness of the financial mechanism. Due to the lack of voluntary contributions to the Trust Fund specifically earmarked for the second review as called for in decision V/22, the Bureau of the fifth Conference of the Parties authorized the use of \$150,000 from surpluses and savings for the second review.

22. In accordance with the terms of reference for the independent evaluator that were developed in consultation with relevant stakeholders and consistent with decision V/12, the review team with members from both developing and developed countries undertook the following tasks: data collection through written questionnaires, interviews with key stakeholders, desk-studies and field visits; and analysis and report write-up.

23. The questionnaire was developed in consultation with the Global Environment Facility (GEF), and distributed to the focal points for the Convention and GEF in June 2001. In addition to extensive follow-up, the team leader took advantage of the Open-ended Meeting of Experts on Capacity-Building for the Implementation of the Biosafety Protocol held in Cuba from 9 to 12 July 2001 to elicit additional responses to the questionnaire. A total of 62 responses, with a fairly balanced regional distribution, were compiled in the evaluator's database.

24. A series of interviews were conducted, using a slightly modified version of the questionnaire to yield valuable information from other types of stakeholders involved in GEF work and/or knowledgeable of GEF work. These interviews were either conducted in person (through visits in Montreal, Washington DC, or in Cuba), by telephone, or in some cases, through written responses. A good balance and breadth of responses were received from respondents, which met the planned target response quota.

25. Desk-studies were conducted in July-August 2001 using the evaluation matrix developed in consultation with the Convention and GEF secretariats. A wide range of documentation, either identified by the evaluation team itself or provided by the different actors covered by the review, was analysed. Types of documents reviewed included but were not limited to: Project Implementation Reports; the GEF 2001 biodiversity programme study, reports of the GEF Council meetings, GEF Lesson Notes, operational reports on GEF programs, various internal reports outlining specific operational programme components in response to key decisions of the Conference of the Parties, project-related documents for field-visit projects, relevant GEF monitoring and evaluation documents such as the inception report of the second GEF's overall performance study, the second independent evaluation of the GEF Small Grants Programme, relevant decisions of the Conference of the Parties and policy documents from the Convention website, the report of the first review of the financial mechanism, and quarterly reports on the administration of the Convention.

26. Field visits were conducted in a selection of projects and countries. This selection reflected: the type and range of guidance from the Conference of the Parties; geographical distribution over the four developing regions (including one small island developing State); a representative range of GEF operational programmes and types of projects; a representative range of Implementing Agency involvement; and a representative range of project size and stages of implementation, duration and level of co-financing. From August to October 2001, the review team conducted field visits in the following countries: Jordan (for Asia and the Pacific); Ecuador (for Latin America and the Caribbean); Russian Federation (for Eastern Europe and Central Asia); and Seychelles (for Africa).

27. On the basis of the information collected, the evaluator prepared his draft final report and an executive summary. The draft report and the executive summary were then submitted to the Bureau, the GEF Secretariat and Implementing Agencies for review and comments. Taking into account all comments received, the evaluator finalized and submitted to the Executive Secretary the final report and the executive summary as scheduled. Parties are invited to pay particular attention to the recommendations furnished by the independent evaluator, and consider action, if any, that needs to be taken to improve the effectiveness of the financial mechanism.

IV. OPERATION OF THE CLEARING-HOUSE MECHANISM

A. Overview

28. The clearing-house mechanism was created pursuant to Article 18, paragraph 3, of the Convention to promote and facilitate technical and scientific cooperation between Parties. As identified in its strategic plan (UNEP/CBD/COP/5/INF/3), the clearing-house mechanism focuses upon three primary objectives: cooperation, promotion and facilitation of technical and scientific cooperation; information exchange, and network development. The conference of the Parties requested the Executive Secretary to take a leadership role in facilitating the implementation of the clearing-house mechanism, and also created an informal advisory committee to provide the Executive Secretary with feedback and advice throughout the clearing-house development process. The original mandate of the clearing-house mechanism has been widened to include matters pertaining to information exchange (Article 17 of the Convention) and to the Biosafety Clearing-House, pursuant to Article 20, paragraph 1 of the Cartagena Protocol.

29. By decision V/14, paragraph 3, the Conference of the Parties requested the Executive Secretary, in consultation with the informal advisory committee, to monitor and review the operation of the clearing-house mechanism and report to the Conference of the Parties at its sixth meeting on any recommended adjustments to the operation of the clearing-house mechanism or to the strategic plan. While the operation of the clearing-house mechanism involves a full range of stakeholders, the present section focuses on national-level operations drawing upon the information from the second national reports as well as on its operations at the Secretariat, the strategic plan of the clearing-house mechanism and recommendations from the informal advisory committee (IAC).

30. The information exchange and network development phase of the clearing-house mechanism has been completed successfully parallel with the creation of the human and technological infrastructure necessary for the implementation of initiatives and programs in support of technical and scientific cooperation. Past achievements are reflected through the creation of 143 designated clearing-house mechanism focal points with staff and resources dedicated to obtaining and sharing information on biological diversity; 114 of which have e-mail and 54 have websites (see: <http://www.biodiv.org/chm/stats.asp>).

31. The clearing-house mechanism is envisaged as the primary global resource and system for promoting and facilitating technical and scientific cooperation for the conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity. Facilitation and promotion of technical and scientific cooperation is achieved at the local, national, sub regional, regional and international levels through:

- (a) Better and more cost-effective decision-making;
- (b) International cooperation and sharing of related technology, training, education, research, information and expertise;
- (c) Reduced duplication of related efforts;
- (d) Quicker, better and more cost-effective implementation of biodiversity-related initiatives and of the Convention overall (see strategic plan of the clearing-house mechanism, (UNEP/CBD/COP/5/INF/3)).

32. Under Article 20.1 of the Cartagena Protocol, a Biosafety Clearing-House was established as part of the clearing-house mechanism under Article 18, paragraphs 3, of the Convention, in order to:

- (a) Facilitate the exchange of scientific, technical, environmental and legal information on, and experience with living modified organisms;
- (b) Assist Parties to implement the Protocol, taking into account the special needs of developing country Parties, in particular the least developed and small island developing States among them, and countries with economies in transition as well as countries that are centres of origin and centres of genetic diversity.

33. The report of the independent review of the pilot phase of the clearing-house mechanism (UNEP/CBD/COP/5/INF/2) and the strategic plan of the clearing-house mechanism (UNEP/CBD/COP/5/INF/3), and recommendations from the informal advisory committee meeting of 11 November 2001, identify the promotion and facilitation of technical and scientific cooperation within and between countries, for the effective implementation of the Convention, as the primary goal of the clearing-house mechanism. Technical and scientific cooperation involves use of the clearing-house mechanism for identifying, developing, promoting opportunities for collaboration. In the strategic plan of the clearing-house mechanism, this is articulated through six key areas of work:

- (a) Decision-making tools and processes;
- (b) Training and capacity-building;
- (c) Research;
- (d) Funding;
- (e) Access to and transfer of technology;
- (f) Repatriation of information.

34. Using the strategic plan of the clearing-house mechanism as its road map, and working in collaboration with the informal advisory committee, the clearing-house mechanism, having completed its information exchange and network development phase, is able to plan for future initiatives in support of

technical and scientific collaboration. This will be achieved through greater participation in programmes and initiatives pertaining to the thematic areas, crosscutting issues and social, legal and economic affairs of the Convention.

B. Progress report

35. This sub-section contains an analysis of the responses under the section on Article 18 of the Convention (Technical and scientific cooperation) in the second national reports. The analysis is followed by an overview of initiatives undertaken by the Executive Secretary in support of technical and scientific cooperation and Article 20, paragraph 1, of the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety. The overview of initiatives undertaken by the Executive Secretary is organized according to annex II of decision V/14 of the Conference of the Parties, which lists activities to be undertaken by the Executive Secretary, in consultation with the informal advisory committee and other relevant bodies, subject to available resources. It is supplemented by references to the goals and strategies of the strategic plan and decisions of the informal advisory committee. Section VI of this report contains a recommendation pertaining to the future development of the clearing-house mechanism.

Analysis of the second national reports

36. Preliminary analysis of responses under the second national report suggests that Parties place high priority in the implementation of Article 18 (36 Parties total), although developing countries, countries with economies in transition and least developed countries placed greater relative priority to implementation of Article 18 than industrialized countries. This may indicate the need for greater clearing-house mechanism activity and effort in capacity building and technology transfer initiatives and workshops.

37. Forty-two Parties out of 58 have limiting or severely limiting resources to meet obligations under Article 18. Of interest is that, despite limited resources, approximately 37 Parties have taken measures to promote international technical and scientific cooperation. Furthermore, 39 Parties have taken measures to the development and strengthening of national capabilities by means of human resource development and institution building. This may suggest the need for a more proactive role by the clearing-house mechanism in assisting Parties at the international level to implement measures.

38. Most Parties—46 out of 58—are still developing or have not yet developed methods of cooperation for the development and use of technologies, including indigenous and traditional technologies. The clearing-house mechanism can assist these Parties by focusing on technology transfer initiatives and by promoting joint initiatives and projects.

39. Cooperation in the development and operation of the clearing-house mechanism (decisions II/3, III/4 and IV/2 of the Conference of the Parties) was undertaken by 47 Parties. Results are mixed only for countries with economies in transition, suggesting the need for greater attention in the region by the clearing-house mechanism. Most Parties—42 to a limited extent and 9 to a significant extent—are also helping to develop national capabilities through the exchange and dissemination of information on experiences learned in implementing the Convention. This may suggest the need for the clearing-house mechanism to place greater emphasis on the need for adherence to common information exchange protocols and to assist Parties in implementing and using these protocols.

40. A total of 51 Parties have designated a national focal point for the clearing-house mechanism and most Parties are providing resources (30 Parties are providing resources at the national level and 13 at the national and international level) for its development and implementation. Of particular interest to the clearing-house mechanism is that 41 Parties are participating in workshops and other meetings to further

the development of the clearing-house mechanism. Furthermore, 24 national clearing-house mechanisms are operational, 22 are under development and approximately 35 are linked to the Internet. Only 17 Parties, however, have established a multi-sectoral and multi-disciplinary clearing-house mechanism steering committee.

41. With regard to decision V/14, the responses were mixed as to whether Parties reviewed priorities identified in annex I to the decision, and sought to implement them (24 Parties have not undertaken reviews, 21 Parties have undertaken reviews but have not implemented priorities and 12 have undertaken reviews and implemented as appropriate). This may indicate the need for the clearing-house mechanism to work with the informal advisory committee to highlight priorities under annex I.

Developing a broader understanding of the clearing-house mechanism

42. In support of decision V/14, annex II (a), the clearing-house mechanism launched a new re-designed web site on the Convention of Biological Diversity. This new page is based on eXtended Markup Language (XML) and database technologies; giving the Secretariat the ability to more easily create information exchange systems and interconnect distributed databases. It also published a new pamphlet explaining the role and mandate of the clearing-house mechanism. Finally, it assisted in the development and research of new web pages pertaining to programme areas and cross-cutting issues of the Convention. This has more effectively integrated the services of the clearing-house mechanism within thematic programme areas of the Convention thus fulfilling recommendations identified in the strategic plan and recommended by the informal advisory committee. These achievements also met goal 3, objective 7.14 of the strategic plan of the clearing-house mechanism 1999-2004 (UNEP/CBD/COP/5/INF/3).

Further development of non-Internet-based tools and training packages

43. The clearing-house mechanism, pursuant to decision V/14, annex II, item (b), and goal 3, objective 7.1.5 of the strategic, updated the clearing-house mechanism toolkit with new interoperability standards, metadata recommendations and information exchange protocols. This achievement will assist Parties to better understand the clearing-house mechanism, and to more effectively participate in the work of the Convention. It also implemented non-web and non-electronic information dissemination systems to facilitate equitable regional participation in the work and initiatives under the Convention.

Cooperative arrangements with international thematic focal points

44. In response to decision V/14, annex II, item (c), and strategy 7.2.4 of the strategic plan, the clearing-house mechanism established two international thematic focal points, the Global Invasive Species Program (GISP) and the Global Taxonomy Initiative (GTI). Through this development, technical and scientific cooperation can be made more effective and viable. As well, under this initiative, the clearing-house mechanism accepted to assume the co-chair of the GISP Information Management Committee, and organized a meeting to develop a work plan to develop a global invasive species network. The clearing-house mechanism is discussing with other international biodiversity initiatives, such as BirdLife International and NatureServe, the establishment of additional thematic focal points. These initiatives offer the clearing-house mechanism the ability to focus on international cooperation and sharing of related technology, training, education, research, information and expertise.

Regional workshops to support capacity-building for clearing-house activities, training and awareness

45. In support of decision V/14, annex II (d) and goal 3, objectives 7.2.1 and 7.2.2, one regional workshop on the Biosafety Clearing-House and the clearing-house mechanism was presented in Africa, and one regional workshop on the clearing-house mechanism was presented for the Latin American and Caribbean region. Furthermore, a capacity-building workshop was co-hosted with the Commonwealth Science Council in the Southern Africa region. The clearing-house mechanism also participated in a GISP capacity-building workshop for the South American region. These workshops are a key activity in assisting regions to better use and understand the clearing-house mechanism. It also offers the clearing-house mechanism a more balanced regional perspective of needs thereby guiding its efforts to develop initiatives to facilitate technical and scientific cooperation.

Pilot initiative to assist work on the thematic issues

46. The clearing-house mechanism is implementing, together with GISP, a platform for a global invasive species network, in response to decision V/14, annex II (e) and goal 1 of the strategic plan. This platform will link experts, allow for the sharing of expertise and initiatives, and begin to assist in the development of projects to control and monitor invasive alien species. It also stands as a model for future clearing-house mechanism activities to promote technical and scientific collaboration.

Access to and transfer of technology

47. In its efforts to facilitate access to and transfer of technology, as requested under decision V/14, annex II (f) and (g) and (j) and recommended under strategic plan goals 1-3, objective 5.1.5 and strategies 5.2.1, 5.2.3, 6.2.1, 6.2.2, 6.23, 7.25, the clearing-house mechanism is signing a Memorandum of Understanding with the GEF/UNEP Sustainable Alternatives Network for the further development of a mechanism to disseminate information on new green technologies, and to link regions with needed expertise. It also developed a cooperation projects database on its website (<http://www.biodiv.org/financial/projects.asp>).

Formats, protocols and standards for improved exchange of biodiversity information

48. To improve the exchange of biodiversity information, in response to decision V/14, annex II (h) and goals 23, strategies 6.2.1, 6.2.2, 6.2.4, 7.2.4, the clearing-house mechanism created a controlled vocabulary for use with the clearing-house mechanism web site and adopted the Dublin Core as the metadata standard. The clearing-house mechanism added metadata to all pages of the Secretariat website to assist in the searching, location and retrieval of Convention-related information. A meeting on formats, protocols and standards was convened in further support of this decision. In this manner, it will become possible to more effectively integrate and share information held in other convention web site and databases.

Cooperative arrangements to overcome language barriers

49. The new website was designed to accommodate all six United Nations languages per decision V/14, annex II (i) and goal 3, strategies 7.2.2, 7.2.3 of the strategic plan.

Mirror sites of the Convention's website

50. Increased bandwidth to the Secretariat website eliminated the need for the establishment of mirror sites as requested under decision V/14, annex II (k) and goal 2, strategies 6.2.1, 6.2.3, 6.3.4.

The informal advisory committee

51. Pursuant to decision III/4, the Executive Secretary reconstituted the informal advisory committee and convened two meetings to seek advice and guidance on actions to be taken in support of the clearing-house mechanism's new focus on technical and scientific cooperation.

The second national reports analyser

52. The Secretariat presented, at the seventh meeting of the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice, in November 2001, a new feature of the Convention's website, known as entitled "the National Reports Analyser". It consists of an electronic device that analyses the data received from Parties through their national reports and transferred to a database. The analyser allows any interested person to aggregate data by issue, by cluster of countries and by country groups. It also generates graphics and statistical results. The analyser can be viewed at <http://www.biodiv.org/reports/nr-02.asp>.

The pilot phase of the Biosafety Clearing-House

53. Pursuant to Article 20, paragraph 1, of the Cartagena Protocol, which establishes a Biosafety Clearing-House as part of the clearing-house mechanism, the clearing-house mechanism assumed responsibility for the technical development and implementation of the Pilot Phase of the Biosafety Clearing-House. The pilot project was launched on 5 April 2001.

54. The clearing-house mechanism also designed a toolkit to assist users to understand and navigate the Biosafety Clearing-House, and to register information on the Biosafety Clearing-House from remote locations.

55. During the technical development phase of the Biosafety Clearing-House, the clearing-house mechanism assisted in the development of controlled vocabularies and metadata. It also assisted in the development of non-web, non-electronic information dissemination and notification mechanisms.

56. In response to Article 20.1 of the Cartagena Protocol and general capacity building initiatives, the clearing-house mechanism participated in four Biosafety Clearing-House Regional Workshops—in Africa, GRULAC, Eastern and Central Europe and Asia.

**V. PROGRESS ACHIEVED IN DEVELOPING THE GLOBAL INITIATIVE
ON BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY EDUCATION AND PUBLIC
AWARENESS**

57. Through decision V/17, paragraph 7(d), the Conference of the Parties requested the Executive Secretary to report on progress achieved in developing the global initiative to its sixth meeting. The current section is prepared in response to this request. It also contains a brief on national implementation of Article 13 on public education and awareness drawing upon the information from the second national reports, which provides essential country-level information for further advancing the global initiative.

Global Initiative on Education and Public Awareness

58. In compliance with decision V/17, on education and public awareness, a first meeting of the Convention on Biological Diversity/UNESCO Consultative Working Group of Experts on Biological Diversity Education and Public Awareness was held in Paris from 11 to 13 July 2000. Twenty-five experts from Parties and representatives of the main institutions and organizations involved in education and public awareness participated. The Group of Experts reviewed relevant existing and planned initiatives, and discussed further steps in the development of the initiative. The group of experts concluded that both short-term and long-term strategies for the implementation of the initiative were required. The report of this meeting is contained in document UNEP/CBD/GEEPA/1/1.

59. The Group of Experts convened a second meeting in Bergen, Norway, on 16-17 November 2000, sponsored by Norway and The Netherlands. The report is contained in document UNEP/CBD/GEEPA/2/3. A third meeting took place in Bilbao, Spain, from 5 to 7 November 2001. The report of the meeting is contained in document UNEP/CBD/GEEPA/3/3. The report of the three meetings are posted at www.biodiv.org/awareness/global-initiative.asp. Its main conclusions are as follows:

(a) Education and public awareness should be integrated in all the thematic and cross-cutting programmes of work under the Convention;

(b) Education and public awareness should be considered as one cluster of education and communication;

(c) Education and public awareness should form a basic element in the Strategic Plan to be developed and prepared for the sixth meeting of the Conference of the Parties;

(d) Education and public awareness should be a basic consideration in funding biological diversity projects.

60. The Executive has prepared an in-depth analysis of the proceedings of the EPA group of experts, as well as recommendations for future action, for the consideration of the Conference of the Parties at its sixth meeting (UNEP/CBD/COP/6/13/Add.2). Parties are invited to endorse the findings of the group of experts as contained in that document.

Summary of the submissions on public education and awareness in the second national reports

61. Preliminary analysis of responses submitted under the second national report on the implementation of Article 13 suggests that the majority of Parties recognize education and public awareness issues as a priority, particularly among developed countries. In fact, countries in general have indicated that they promote and encourage understanding of the importance of, and the measures required for, the conservation of biodiversity through the media, although mostly indicated that they do so to a limited extent. It is encouraging that the vast majority of Parties report that they have integrated biodiversity concerns into education strategies. Support to local, national, sub-regional and regional education and awareness programmes is limited, though, but less so in industrialized countries. The need seems to be recognized but the means are not available, especially for developing and least developed countries.

62. Adequate resources for meeting obligations and recommendations are, indeed, limited or severely limited to Parties, especially among developing and least developed countries. It is worth noting that only half of the industrialized countries report good and adequate resources. A majority of Parties have limited

resources for the strategic use of education and communication instruments at each phase of policy formulation, implementation and evaluation. The remaining Parties report significant but not adequate resources and only very few report adequate resources. This pattern holds true even among industrialized countries.

63. Cooperation with other States and international organizations in developing relevant education and public awareness programmes is reported by a majority of Parties to a limited extent, but many are those who have limited cooperation or no cooperation at all. There is also a clear difference between developed and developing countries in this respect, the latter cooperating significantly less with other States on education and public awareness than the former.

64. Education and public awareness needs are covered in the national biodiversity strategies and action plans to a significant extent in over half of the countries and to a limited extent in the rest. Developing countries report, however, that education and public awareness concepts and initiatives are not a prominent feature of their national biodiversity strategies and action plans. More than half of the countries have limited or no support in capacity building for education and communication in biological diversity as part of their national biodiversity strategies and action plans. Surprisingly, industrialized countries seem to find themselves in the same situation, as opposed to small island countries, which report almost unanimously that they receive the necessary support. The majority of countries with economies in transition report limited support as well.

65. Most Parties support initiatives by major groups that foster stakeholder participation and that integrate biological diversity conservation matters in their practice and education programmes. This seems to be a sound and widespread way to enhance public awareness and education activities.

66. Almost half of the Parties report that they have made available case-studies on public education and awareness and public participation, or otherwise sought to share experiences, whereas the other half did not. Results by different groups of countries suggest the same almost half/half distribution, except for the small island developing States where almost all have made available such case-studies.

67. Very few Parties have illustrated and translated the provisions of the Convention into local languages to promote public education and awareness of relevant sectors. This is most probably related to the lack of financial resources mentioned before, especially for developing, least developed countries and countries with economies in transition. Some countries do not find the issue at all relevant, possibly because their official language is one of the six United Nations languages in which the Convention documents are published.

68. More than half of the eligible countries proposed projects that promote measures for implementing Article 13 of the Convention when requesting assistance through the GEF; which indicates that the importance of the education and public awareness issue is being widely recognized. The majority of small island developing States reported positively to this.

69. Overall, more funds, more practical and concrete solutions, strategies and ideas, more focus (many projects mentioned just relate to environment in general and not especially to biodiversity) and better understanding of the issues seem generally required.

VI. RECOMMENDATIONS

70. Based on the above information regarding the progress on the mechanisms for implementation, the following recommendations are proposed for consideration by the Conference of the Parties at its sixth meeting:

The Conference of the Parties,

A. Further guidance to the financial mechanism

Taking note of the document UNEP/CBD/COP/6/INF/3 that provides a compilation of past guidance to the financial mechanism as well as the report from the Global Environment Facility contained in document UNEP/CBD/COP/6/9,

1. *Considers* the need for an assessment of the amount of funds that are necessary to assist developing countries, in accordance with the guidance provided by the Conference of the Parties, in fulfilling their commitments under the Convention over the next replenishment cycle for the Global Environment Facility;

2. *Commends* the secretariats of the Convention and the Global Environment Facility on their excellent collaboration in promoting the implementation of the decisions of the Conference of the Parties;

3. *Decides* to provide additional guidance on priority areas emerged from its sixth meeting and to adopt elements of recommendation II/4 agreed upon by the Intergovernmental Committee on the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety.

B. Second review of the effectiveness of the financial mechanism

Taking note of the executive summary and the final report of the independent evaluator commissioned for purposes of the second review (UNEP/CBD/COP/6/13/Add.1 and UNEP/CBD/COP/6/INF/4),

4. *Decides* to request the Global Environment Facility to take the action identified by the Conference of the Parties based on the conclusions of the second review of the financial mechanism with a view to further improving the effectiveness of the financial mechanism.

C. Scientific and technical cooperation and clearing-house mechanism

5. *Invites* Parties to establish or strengthen national, subregional or regional focal points for the clearing-house mechanism, if they have not done so already;

D. Education and public awareness

6. *Endorses* the recommendations contained in note by the Executive Secretary on implementation of the Global Initiative on Biological Diversity Education and Public Awareness (UNEP/CBD/COP/6/13/Add.2);

7. *Invites* to Parties to strongly and effectively promote biodiversity related issues through the press, the various media, and public relations and communications networks at national levels.

E. National reporting

8. *Endorses* the recommendations on national reporting developed by the Inter-sessional Meeting on the Strategic Plan, National Reports and the Implementation of the Convention;

F. Library and publications

Welcoming the significant increase in the number and variety of publications prepared by the Secretariat, in particular the Global Biodiversity Outlook, the Handbook of the Convention, the Technical Series and the various brochures;

9. *Invites* Parties to stimulate the increase in number of biodiversity-related publications in their national libraries in order to facilitate further dissemination of knowledge on biodiversity issues among the general public;

10. *Requests* the Executive Secretary to:

(a) Develop appropriate partnerships with public and private research and academic institutions for the exchange of publications related to biodiversity;

(b) Examine the possibility of establishing formal liaison with schools of environmental education to further disseminate decisions of the Conference of the Parties to future specialists;

11. *Invites* United Nations bodies and other international and regional organizations to send copies of their biodiversity-related publications to the library of the Secretariat.
