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CBD



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CBD News is published by:

**Secretariat of the
Convention on
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393 Saint-Jacques St.
Suite 300
Montreal, Quebec
H2Y 1N9 Canada

Phone: (+1) 514 288-2220
Fax: (+1) 514 288-6588
E-mail: secretariat@biodiv.org
Website: www.biodiv.org

FEATURE ARTICLE

Forest biological diversity: work programme expanded

Due to the vital role of forest ecosystems, the fifth meeting of the Conference of the Parties (Nairobi 2000) decided to consider expanding the work programme on forest biological diversity from research to practical action. This was achieved at its sixth meeting (COP 6, The Hague, April 2002), after long and difficult discussions, by adopting the programme, a result of the SBSTTA 7 meeting (Montreal, November 2001).

The main source for many elements in the expanded work programme is the detailed review on the status and trends of, and major threats to Forest biological diversity by the Ad Hoc Technical Expert Group on Forest Biological Diversity (published in CBD Technical Series no. 7).

In decision VI/22 on forest biological diversity, the COP expressed the need for action to ensure conservation and sustainable

use of biological diversity of all types of forests, considering that urgent action is needed for forests that are ecologically significant and/or most important for biological diversity on national and regional scales and according to national priorities, where forest biodiversity loss is significant or are of great concern, and in areas with greatest potential for conservation, sustainable use and benefit-sharing.

The expanded work programme has three programme elements: 1) conservation, sustainable use and benefit-sharing, 2) institutional and socio-economic enabling environment, and 3) knowledge, assessment and monitoring. This programme has altogether 130 activities, which as a package contribute significantly to the conservation and sustainable use of forests.

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Focus

The Global Taxonomy Initiative

The Global Taxonomy Initiative (GTI) was developed by the Conference of the Parties (COP) in order to address the shortage of expertise, resources and information on taxonomy that hinders implementation of the CBD. Over the past year a number of exciting developments have taken place. Most recently, of course, is the decision by the COP endorsing the programme of work of the GTI. This sets out in some detail priority activities to move the GTI forward, and identifies some of the likely actors in the process. COP 6 opened with a strong call for movement from process to implementation, and in this spirit

there were pledges on implementation from numerous initiatives in two side events following the discussion of the GTI programme of work.

One of the strong points that has been made in all decisions on the GTI is that regional action is often necessary to deal with national issues. Not all countries will be able to invest in sufficient taxonomic resources to deal with their problems, and species and ecosystems tend not to observe national boundaries. Coordination of activities on a regional basis is a scientifically and economically sound way of dealing with these issues. There are a number of initiatives working regionally, and

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EDITORIAL

The sixth meeting of the Conference of the Parties of the Convention on Biological Diversity (COP 6) was held in the city of The Hague, the Netherlands, in April 2002. This meeting was crucial not only because of its heavy agenda and the significance of the decisions that it was called upon to make, but also because of its timing against the backdrop of the broader international agenda, particularly the build-up to the World Summit on Sustainable Development.

The meeting set a new record in terms of participation: it was attended by some 125 ministers and vice ministers and a total of 2,100 participants from over 176 countries as well as some 500 intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations. The progress made at the meeting was impressive, with major advances on a number of fronts, including access and benefit-sharing, forest biodiversity and invasive alien species, I believe that the sixth meeting of the Conference of the Parties took a giant stride forward toward achieving the objectives of the Convention and toward putting biodiversity in the centre of efforts to achieve sustainable development.

At a Ministerial Meeting held in conjunction with the Conference of the Parties, Ministers adopted The Hague Ministerial Declaration in which they resolved “to strengthen our efforts to put in place measures to halt biodiversity loss, which is taking place at an alarming rate, at the global, regional, sub-regional and national levels by the year 2010.” Ministers recognized that biological diversity underpins sustainable development in many ways and called upon the World Summit on Sustainable Development to reaffirm the role of the Convention as the principal international instrument for the coordination of efforts in this area. This call was strengthened recently by the Secretary General of the United Nations who identified biological diversity as one of five key areas where progress can and must be made at the Johannesburg Summit.

The Ministerial Declaration is reinforced by the first ever Strategic Plan for the Convention, which commits Parties

to a more effective and coherent implementation of the three objectives of the Convention so as to achieve by 2010 a significant reduction of the current rate of biodiversity loss. One of the four strategic goals of the Plan is the improvement of the financial, human, scientific, technical, and technological capacity of Parties to implement the Convention. The adoption of the Strategic Plan will enable us to overcome the challenges posed by the broad scope of the Convention. It will help us structure our work and bring the necessary focus, without neglecting the vast range of activities already under way.

The lengthy discussions on forest biodiversity marked an important milestone in the life of the Convention. The intensity and passion of the debates reflected the vital role that the Convention on Biological Diversity plays among the various international processes and institutions aiming to achieve the objectives of conservation and sustainable use of forest biological diversity. The programme of work that was ultimately adopted will provide a road map for cooperation in this area in the years to come.

The adoption of the Bonn Guidelines on Access and Benefit-sharing is another achievement of COP 6, the significance of which cannot be overemphasized. While expectations and approaches to access and benefit-sharing vary, I believe that everyone will agree that the Bonn Guidelines constitute a major advance. After several years of exploration and analysis, we finally have in place a set of internationally accepted guidelines that will contribute substantially to the achievement of the third objective of the Convention. However, we cannot afford to rest on our laurels. Much work will be needed to ensure the practical implementation of the Bonn Guidelines, notably with regard to capacity-building. In this connection, the Secretariat will do the utmost to ensure that the workshop on

Courtesy of F. Dejon (ENB/IIISD)



Mrs. Geke Faber,
COP 6 President

capacity-building called for by the Conference of the Parties is held as soon as practicable.

The meeting also considered the important issue of invasive alien species with the aim to provide a common basis for efforts at the international, regional and national level to address this major environmental problem.

Significant progress was also made in the work programmes in many thematic and cross-cutting issues in a total of 32 decisions.

The sixth meeting of the Conference of the Parties provided fresh evidence that the Convention is successful in meeting its challenges and that it is an effective instrument. These achievements are very timely as they serve to confirm the message contained in the Ministerial Declaration addressed to the Johannesburg Summit on the key role of the Convention in our quest for sustainable development and its usefulness in addressing basic objectives such as poverty eradication, health and related socio-economic objectives.

The definitive shift from policy development to implementation that was initiated in The Hague must continue and intensify. This will be one of the main challenges of the Convention in the next few years. The policy commitments and consensus reached at the sixth, and previous, meetings of the Conference of the Parties must now be translated into concrete and measurable action on the ground. The international community expects and deserves no less. I, for one, am confident that the coming years will see tangible progress in achieving the objectives of the Convention based on the consensus achieved at COP 6.

Hamdallah Zedan
Executive Secretary



Forest biological diversity: work programme expanded (Continued)

Most activities should be implemented on national level, and Parties are selecting their priorities according to their needs and circumstances. The role of the international community is to support the implementation of the work programme. In this context, the Executive Secretary was requested to initiate specific actions addressing some focus areas important as first steps towards the implementation of regional and international activities of the programme of work, such as the comparison of the ecosystem approach and sustainable forest management; assessment of the relationships between

IPP/IFF proposals for action and activities in the CBD work programme to enable better implementation of common objectives in the context of national programmes and NBSAPs; establishment of protected forest areas as a measure to conserve and sustainably use forest biological diversity; impact of insufficient forest law enforcement and related trade; and capacity-building.

Collaboration with the United Nations Forum on Forests and the Collaborative Partnership on Forests (CPF) was strongly encouraged, and CPF members were invited by COP to

implement the expanded work programme. The COP 6 decision on forest biological diversity includes also specific actions on developing criteria and indicators for the assessment of the status and trends of biological diversity, on non-timber forest resources, on forest fires, climate change, and research and monitoring activities. ■



Focus (Continued)

particularly positive interactions have been developed with several of them. BioNET-INTERNATIONAL is catalyzing the development of regional taxonomic networks, and has invited the participation of the Secretariat in this process, specifically to assist the countries concerned incorporate into the work programme of the networks the actions identified through the GTI. Last year a workshop was held for China, Mongolia, North Korea, South Korea, Japan, and plans are in place for workshops covering North Africa and Andean countries. On the global

level, a workshop in Africa entitled "Towards sustainable development: partnerships for demand-driven taxonomic capacity building" has been arranged in conjunction with BioNET-INTERNATIONAL. This will lead further down the road of implementation.

Another major need identified is that of information provision. To meet this need the Secretariat has been working closely with initiatives including the Global Biodiversity Information Facility (GBIF). This is focusing at present on the capacity building needs of

both users and providers of information, and is directed at facilitating full involvement by users and providers of information. In July there was a GBIF Scientific and Technical Advisory Group workshop in South Africa on the Outreach and Capacity Development needs of GBIF, in which the Secretariat participated. ■

Conference of the Parties **Access and benefit-sharing at COP 6**

The adoption of the Bonn Guidelines on access to genetic resources and the fair and equitable sharing of the benefits arising out of their utilization (decision VI/24A, Annex) was one of the highlights of the sixth meeting of the Conference of the Parties.

The guidelines are widely regarded as an important first step in an evolutionary process. They will bridge the gap between policy development and implementation by creating a transparent and predictable framework for both users and providers of genetic resources.

The guidelines will assist Governments in developing an overall access and benefit-sharing strategy and in the establishment of appropriate procedures and measures for the implementation of this strategy. In turn, stakeholders such as foreign companies, researchers and collectors wishing to obtain access to genetic resources may identify the steps involved in the process of obtaining access to genetic resources. In order to ensure the fair and equitable sharing of benefits arising from the use of such resources, the guidelines also provide guidance regarding elements for consideration when establishing the terms under which access to genetic resources will take place in return for an



COP 6 Plenary

equitable share of the benefits arising from their utilization with the country of origin or the providing country.

Challenges ahead include the introduction of the guidelines by Parties and relevant stakeholders in legislative and policy measures at the national or regional level or their use when entering into contractual agreements for access and benefit-sharing. Further work is still needed to assist Parties through complementary approaches such as model

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Conference of the Parties Access and benefit-sharing at COP 6 (Continued)

agreements and model legislation. The further refinement of the guidelines will be considered as deemed necessary on the basis of future developments on related issues, such as compliance measures, and related topics such as technology transfer and the protection of traditional knowledge. The Ad Hoc Open-ended Working Group on Access and Benefit-sharing has been reconvened by the Conference of the Parties to give further consideration to these outstanding issues.

The need to build capacities for the effective implementation of the Convention's access and benefit-sharing provisions at all levels from the local to the international was recognized. An Open-ended Expert Workshop

on Capacity-building for Access and Benefit-sharing will be held to develop an action plan to meet the needs and priorities of developing countries in a coordinated manner and to identify mechanisms of implementation and sources of funding.

On the issue of intellectual property rights and their relationship with access and benefit-sharing arrangements, the COP has invited Parties and Governments to encourage the disclosure of the country of origin of genetic resources and of related traditional knowledge, innovations and practices relevant to the conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity in applications for intellectual property rights, where the subject

matter of the application concerns or makes use of genetic resources and/or traditional knowledge in its development. It was also recognized however, that further work was needed to assess the implications and efficacy of such measures. WIPO and other relevant international organizations have been invited to assist with this work. ■



INSIDE THE SECRETARIAT

Strategic Plan of the Convention Informal meeting in Sigüenza, Spain

In order to facilitate discussions at the sixth Conference of the Parties on the elements and parameters of the Strategic Plan, an informal consultation was organized in Sigüenza, Spain, on 22 March 2002, at the kind invitation of the Government of Spain. The meeting was attended by 18 participants from the following countries and international organizations: Belgium, Brazil, Check Republic, China, Denmark, Iran, Jamaica, the Netherlands, Norway, South Africa, Spain, the European Commission and the Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity.

Participants exchanged views on the draft Strategic Plan adopted by the Open-Ended Inter-Sessional Meeting on the Strategic Plan, National Reports and Implementation of the Convention (which took place in Montreal in November 2001) and made suggestions for the further development of the Strategic Plan. The meeting noted that the draft Strategic Plan was not sufficiently strategic, despite its function to develop a strategy for the further implementation of the Convention. According to the participants, a strategic plan for the Convention should serve two main purposes: it should guide and

support the implementation of the Convention and, be a political communication and outreach tool, pro-actively raising the profile of the Convention. Ways and means to make the plan more 'strategic' were subsequently discussed.

The full report of the meeting is available at: www.biodiv.org/meetings/final-reports.asp, under "Informal meetings and consultations".

Workshops on Sustainable Use

From September 2001 to February 2002, the Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity convened a series of three regional workshops, with financial support provided by the Government of the Netherlands. The first workshop was held in Maputo, Mozambique, from 24 to 27 September 2001 and focused on key elements relating, in particular, to the sustainable use of dry land resources and wildlife utilization in Africa. The second workshop was held in Hanoi, Vietnam, from 9 to 12 January 2002, and focused on forest biological diversity, including timber and non-wood forest products, with reference to agricultural biological diversity. The third was held in Salinas,

Ecuador, from 18 to 21 February 2002, and focused on marine and freshwater fisheries.

The outcomes of the three workshops are a series of principles and practical implementation guidelines. They are intended to provide a framework of key factors or conditions which governments, resource managers and other interested stakeholders should consider to optimize the sustainable use of biological diversity.

The Conference of the Parties at its sixth meeting decided to organize a fourth open-ended workshop on the sustainable use of biodiversity. The purpose of this final workshop is to synthesize and consolidate the results of the previous workshops, integrating different views and regional differences, to arrive to a final set of operational guidelines for the sustainable use of biological resources. The final set of guidelines will be submitted to the Subsidiary Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice of the Convention at its ninth session.

The reports of the three workshops can be found at: www.biodiv.org/programmes/socio-eco/use.



Third meeting of the Intergovernmental Committee for the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety (ICCP 3)

*The Hague, The Netherlands
(22-26 April 2002)*

The third meeting of the ICCP was held to finalize preparations for the first meeting of the Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Protocol (COP-MOP.1). Around 580 participants from 147 countries and over 100 organizations attended the meeting, which adopted recommendations on: liability and redress; compliance; information sharing; capacity-building; handling, transport, packaging and identification; monitoring and reporting and, consideration of other issues necessary for the effective implementation of the Protocol.

ICCP 3, and earlier the sixth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention (COP 6) and its ministerial segment, emphasized the urgent need for all States to ratify or accede to the Protocol soon. A survey done during the meeting indicated that an additional 48 countries intended to become Parties before the end of 2002 thus suggesting its possible entry into force in early 2003. The meeting highlighted the need for the Biosafety Clearing-House (BCH) to be fully functional and accessible by that time and for countries to develop the necessary capacities.

The meeting further called for active participation by all Governments in the pilot phase and its further development and for more regional activities and tools to assist countries to develop national databases interoperable with the BCH.

At the same time, the meeting welcomed the decisions by COP 6 requesting the Global Environment Facility to provide funds for national capacity-building in biosafety and another establishing the pilot-phase of a voluntary trust fund for the roster of experts. It recommended a coordination mechanism for implementation of the capacity-building action plan and interim operational

guidelines for the voluntary fund. Parties and Governments were requested to nominate experts and/or update information currently in the roster; register information on their capacity-building initiatives in the BCH; and submit views on the preliminary set of indicators for the Action Plan.

The meeting also called for further gathering of information on: the issue of liability and redress; standards, practices and rules relevant to handling, packaging, transport and identification of living modified organisms (LMOs); and on operational experience on the criteria for categorization of LMOs. Governments and relevant organizations were further requested to submit views on unique identification systems, items to be included in the medium-term programme of work and on the draft format for monitoring and reporting.

The full report of the meeting (UNEP/CBD/ICCP/3/10) is available at www.biodiv.org/biosafety/mtg-iccp-03.asp

Meetings of Technical Experts on Article 18 of the Biosafety Protocol

Following a request by the second meeting of the Intergovernmental Committee for the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety (ICCP), the Secretariat convened back-to-back two meetings of technical experts on handling, transport, packaging and identification of living modified organisms (LMOs), one on paragraphs 2(b) and 2(c) of Article 18 and another on paragraph 2(a) of the same Article, from 13 to 15 March 2002 and from 18 to 20 March 2002, respectively. The former was funded by the Governments of Canada, France and Japan, and the latter by Canada, Spain, Switzerland and the United States.

The meeting on paragraphs 2(b) and 2(c), which was a continuation of a similar meeting that was held in Paris, from 13 to 15 June 2001. It discussed the type

and extent of information that should be specified in documentation accompanying LMOs that are intended for contained use and for intentional introduction, respectively, during their transboundary movement in order to meet identification requirements of the respective paragraphs. It also identified the need to consider additional information requirements with a view to providing clear identification of the LMOs and appropriate specifications for safe handling.

The meeting recommended that Parties and Governments be requested to take necessary measures to incorporate the information required by paragraphs 2(b) and 2(c) into existing documentation, pending the consideration of the need for stand alone documentation. It also recommended further gathering of information by the Secretariat and submission of views by Parties, other Governments and relevant international organizations on various issues deemed relevant for effective implementation of the requirements of the two paragraphs.

The meeting on paragraph 2(a) of Article 18, on documentation requirements for LMOs that are intended for direct use as food or feed or for processing, examined the elements contained in the two sentences of the paragraph. It focused its recommendations on the modalities of implementing the documentation requirements of the first sentence of paragraph 2(a). The meeting considered different views regarding the requirement for clear identification and identified a number of issues that need further clarification and elaboration with a view to implement the requirements of paragraph 2(a) of Article 18 adequately.

The reports of both meetings, available at: www.biodiv.org/biosafety/meetings.asp, were considered by ICCP at its third meeting held in The Hague in April.

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Inside the secretariat (Continued)

Regional Meetings on the Biosafety Clearing-House for Central and Eastern Europe and the Asia-Pacific Region

In response to the request by the Intergovernmental Committee for the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety, and with the kind financial assistance from the Governments of the United States of America and Japan, the Secretariat organized two regional meetings on the Biosafety Clearing-House (BCH) for Central and Eastern Europe in Nitra, Slovakia (5-9 February), and for the Asia-Pacific Region in Beijing, China (4-8 March). Both meetings were held back-to-back with the UNEP/GEF regional workshops on the development of national biosafety frameworks.

The meetings, like those held earlier for Africa and Latin America and the Caribbean in 2001, were organized to provide countries with the opportunity to express their capacity needs and expectations regarding their participation in the establishment and implementation of the pilot phase of the BCH and to have "hands-on" training on the operation of the pilot phase.

Five main categories of capacity needs were identified, namely: development of human resources and technical expertise, development and maintenance of infrastructure, building institutional capacities and synergies, continued development of non-Internet based systems to access the BCH and the need to mobilize sustainable financial resources and political awareness and support. Each region developed an action plan to address the identified needs.

The meetings also included an interactive training session, which provided participants with the opportunity to practice using the BCH.

Reports of the two meetings, including the action plans that were developed, i.e. UNEP/CBD/BCH/CEE.Reg/1/2 and UNEP/CBD/BCH/Asia.Reg/1/2 can be accessed at:
www.biodiv.org/biosafety/meetings.asp

First Ad Hoc Technical Expert Group Meeting on Biodiversity of Dry and Sub-humid Lands

The Ad Hoc Technical Expert Group (AHTEG) meeting on biodiversity of dry and sub-humid lands was held from 18 to 22 March 2002 at the premises of the Secretariat in Montreal. Being the first gathering of its kind, the AHTEG meeting was an outcome of the fifth meeting of the Conference of the Parties (May 2000) where the programme of work on dryland, Mediterranean, arid, semi-arid, grassland and savannah ecosystems was adopted (decision V/23).

Government-nominated experts from various geographic regions took part in the deliberation as well as representatives of competent intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations, such as the UNCCD, FAO, UNEP-WCMC, ICARDA and the World Bank.

During the five-day session, the experts discussed issues ranging from the status and trends of dry and sub-humid lands biodiversity, indicators and monitoring to processes affecting biodiversity and capacity development for developing countries. The experts also discussed global benefits derived from biodiversity and its economic valuation taking into account traditional knowledge. In addition, the issue of socio-economic impacts of biodiversity loss in dry and sub-humid lands was considered, as well as measures taken for the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity, including the role of ex-situ conservation, and measures taken for the support of sustainable livelihoods. Deliberations were also made on possible establishment of an international network of dry and sub-humid areas followed by a review of international priorities for proposals and actions at regional and global levels.

On the final day, the experts established two inter-sessional working groups for the purpose of probing further into the matters considered during the first AHTEG meeting and to facilitate and organize discussions leading to the second, scheduled for September 2002.





INSIGHT

Ecotourism: a possible tool for Sustainable Development

*Oliver Hillel
Tourism Programme Coordinator,
UNEP/DTIE*

Although the word ecotourism was first used around the late 70s and the early 80s, its main conceptual components are rooted in history. In Europe, particularly, serious criticism of the social and environmental impacts of tourism has produced various alternative action plans, from soft to responsible to rural tourism. During the year 2002 (International Year of Ecotourism), it became evident that each area of the world has added valuable lessons in implementing ecotourism, according to particular circumstances and regional characteristics.

For UN organizations, there seems to be consensus that activities related to the UN designated Year of Ecotourism are to be taken within the broader framework of sustainable development. Accordingly, ecotourism should not be seen as a marginal segment of the world's largest industry. On the contrary, it is a set of principles and lessons learned that can – and should – be applied to all forms of tourism. Basically, ecotourism is about conservation of biodiversity, participation and benefits for local and indigenous communities, and environmental education and interpretation for hosts and guests alike.

The Year of Ecotourism is meant to be a celebration of the growing interest of travelers for the environment, and of the respect and appreciation of the cultural and social systems that have allowed us to inherit natural landscapes. As development and conservation aid to developing countries becomes increasingly restricted, a market-based tool such as sustainable ecotourism can offer less-impacting livelihood alternatives to local communities in vulnerable ecosystems, alleviating poverty and providing protected area managers with needed financial resources.

To support the objectives of the Year of Ecotourism, UNEP and the World Tourism Organization promoted global consultations through a series of regional preparatory conferences, which culminated in the World Ecotourism Summit in Quebec City last May. Efforts were made to ensure full participation by all actors involved in or affected by ecotourism. Publications were also produced to build capacity of governments and practitioners to use ecotourism as a tool for ecosystem conservation and sharing benefits from the use of biodiversity.

The multi-stakeholder dialogues explored, among other topics, the potential contribution of ecotourism to sustainable development and to the conservation of biodiversity. Information exchange on sustainable planning, development and

management of ecotourism advanced the current limited knowledge of the social, economic and environmental impacts of this activity. Over 1,100 participants from 130 countries attending the Summit shared information and expertise on good practices and lessons learned gained from direct experiences in the field. Overall, activities for the year have involved over 5,000 specialists until June 2002.

The main message and recommendations addressed to different sectors of civil society on the sound development of ecotourism activities are contained in the “Quebec Declaration on Ecotourism”. The document, which can be considered an important first step in the definition of the modalities and characteristics of a new nature-based philosophy of tourism, will be presented at the World Summit on Sustainable Development, in Johannesburg.

In this context, sustainable ecotourism will serve as an example of economic activity contributing to poverty alleviation that respects and uses biological resources sustainably and involves all sectors and levels of society in the planning, implementation and sharing of its benefits, while limiting its impacts on ecological and social systems.

VIEWS

Thinking Strategically

*John Nevill, Director of Conservation
Ministry of Environment and Transport,
Seychelles*

(This article is personal and does not necessarily reflect the viewpoint of the Government of Seychelles and of the Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity)

A key topic on the Agenda facing delegates at COP 6 in the Hague was the finalisation of the Strategic Plan. As we all know Rio + 10 in Johannesburg, is a very important opportunity for the Convention to assert its role in global environmental management. Many delegates have expressed their concern that the CBD does not have the necessary profile or the right message to reach the public. This despite, what I would argue is, the CBD's progress relative to the UNFCCC and

UNCCD. Many, however, would counter that this is merely procedural and not substantive. After all, biodiversity statistics are not good – we are still plummeting head long through a process of mass extinction, forests are continuing to be lost at a monstrous rate and coral reefs have been seriously degraded in the 10 years since Rio.

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Views (Continued)

Furthermore, it is clear that the UNFCCC has captured the media and public's attention; hence political focus, and eclipsed the CBD in this regard.

So it is apparent that the CBD needs to go to Johannesburg with a clear, concise message and plan of action which can be readily communicated to and assimilated by the masses and bring appeal and focus once more to our work.

So how to do this? All of those who have sat through SBSTTA elaborations and COP negotiations know that getting an effective message out to the public will not be an easy undertaking. This of course, in part reflects the complexity of our topic.

The ozone issue was easily communicated on a single theme: certain gases, the release of which is not vital, will destroy the ozone layer, which protects you from getting skin cancer!

Climate change whilst more complex is still relatively easy: ongoing and increasing greenhouse gas release will lead (is leading) to retreating coastlines and less rain where we want and more where we don't.

Pretty understandable for "Joe Public" though apparently not for all politicians.

Biodiversity is of course more complex. The affluent societies that we so desperately need to mobilise, find it hard to relate to the tragedies of global biodiversity loss. The vastness and inertia of the world's ecosystem coupled with the cushioning effect of the current global economy prevent biodiversity impoverishment from encroaching upon their day-to-day lives.

The basis for the development of the Strategic Plan was contained in decision V/20 and this was initially addressed at the Seychelles workshop in May 2001. The document resulting from that meeting attempted to meet the requirements of V/20 but was in truth a little too lengthy and prescriptive.

Following circulation to delegations and presentations at various CBD meetings the plan was addressed at the MSP in November 2001; there the Strategic Plan went astray. The concept of 'strategic' has been lost from the document as it developed in to the dreaded all-inclusive "wish-list" and must in many respects, have reminded more seasoned colleagues of the deliberations of the Ad hoc Working Group of Experts on Biological Diversity. We were not, however, supposed to be re-negotiating the Convention in this process but rather providing it with focus and structure. The MSP clearly failed to do this

and indeed expanded the mission statement beyond the objectives stated in Article 1 of the Convention.

It is also vital that attempts to water-down the fundamentals of the CBD are stymied. Whilst conservation and sustainable use is evidently an essential precursor for, it is not interchangeable with sustainable development. The inferences of the two terms are distinct and indeed C+SU is a necessary check and balance for the more extreme interpretations of SD.

This next stage is vital: the Strategic Plan provides an opportunity for the Convention to set out in Johannesburg and hence to the World, its message and direction – failure to do so could see the Convention taking a back seat in the vehicle of Global Environmental management for the next decade.



SYNERGY

The Crucial Role of CEPA in the Convention

Communication, education and public awareness (CEPA) are crucial factors to the successful implementation of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD). This principle, reflected in Article 13 of the Convention, was specified in Decision V/17 as a follow-up of the Global Initiative on biological diversity education and public awareness.

COP 6 transformed the findings of the Consultative Working Group of experts on education and public awareness (EPA-Group), into decision VI/19 on "Education

and Public Awareness"; the EPA-Group was established by COP 5 in decision V/17 under the aegis of UNESCO and the CBD Secretariat.

As main conclusions of the EPA-Group were mentioned the ineffective and inefficient utilization of the EPA instruments and processes in the National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans (NBSAP's), as well as in the work programmes of the different thematic areas and cross-cutting issues of the Convention. This led to the EPA-Group's recommendations for a programme of work for the global initiative on CEPA (document UNEP/CBD/COP/6/13/Add.2).

The main components of this work programme are:

- *Programme element 1 "Towards a global communication, education and public awareness network"*: Stimulating and coordinating networks composed of new information technologies and traditional communication mechanisms;
- *Programme element 2: "Exchange of knowledge and expertise"*: Exchanging of knowledge and expertise among professionals, enhancing development and innovation on CEPA;



• *Programme element 3: "Capacity building for communication, education and public awareness"*: Developing capacity of the Parties to market biodiversity to other sectors, and mainstream biodiversity into the work of other sectors.

The important aspect of Communication has been added to EPA to highlight the need to support the process of involving particular target groups, and sectors outside the biodiversity networks to speed up the implementation of the Convention, projects and programmes. Also a budget was allocated

to the three programme elements, reflected in Decision VI/29, Table 3: Special Voluntary Trust Fund (BE) for additional voluntary contributions in support of approved activities for the biennium 2003-2004, item *Implementation and Outreach*.

PUBLICATIONS AND OTHER NEWS

New publications

The Secretariat published a series of new brochures (Biological Diversity and Tourism, Introducing the Clearing-house Mechanism for the Convention on Biological Diversity, Promoting action on the Convention on Biological Diversity, The Global Taxonomy Initiative-The Response to a Problem), the CBD Technical Series no.7, a Guide to CBD documents, as well as a CBD News Supplement on financing for biological diversity. *All are available on the website at www.biodiv.org/outreach/awareness/publications.asp.*

CBD Documents Database

A database on CBD documents has been developed with the aim of assisting governments, policy makers, researchers and stakeholders to search more efficiently through the material that has been prepared within the Convention process. The database contains all documents produced and archived by the Secretariat since 1994. To ensure access to the database, the Secretariat has made it available on its homepage (www.biodiv.org) and provided a search facility to assist users in retrieving needed information.



The International Day for Biological Diversity (22 May) has been proclaimed by the United Nations (UN) with the aim to increase awareness on biodiversity issues. Each year a different theme is chosen; this year it was "forest biodiversity".

The Day was first created by the Second Committee of the UN General Assembly in late 1993, when it was known that the Convention of Biological Diversity (CBD) would enter into force on 29 December 1993. From 1993 to 2000 the Day was 29 December. This proved not to be the best choice for all the obvious reasons so in 2000 the idea of changing the date emerged, and the 22 May (date of the adoption of the text of the Convention in 1992) was proposed. The UN General Assembly adopted this new date on 20 December 2000.

SECRETARY-GENERAL URGES INCORPORATION OF BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY IN ELABORATION OF TRADE, ECONOMIC POLICIES

Following is the message of Secretary-General Kofi Annan marking the International Day for Biological Diversity, 22 May:

Biological diversity is one of the pillars of human life. It stabilizes the Earth's climate, renews soil fertility and provides goods and services that contribute to our material well-

being. Yet unsustainable patterns of production and consumption and other harmful practices, exacerbated by poverty and other social and economic factors, continue to destroy, at an unprecedented rate, habitats and the species that depend on them.

This year marks the tenth anniversary of the Convention on Biological Diversity, the main legal instrument adopted by the international community to face this challenge. The Convention has been an effective vehicle for developing new concepts and policies. It has led to the adoption of programmes to preserve key ecosystems. It has broadened participation to involve all key actors, particularly indigenous and local communities. And it has made significant inroads towards the fair and equitable sharing of the benefits generated by the utilization of genetic resources.

While these accomplishments provide good reasons for optimism, much remains to be done. The real value of biological diversity must be recognized by decision makers, and incorporated along with other environmental considerations into the elaboration of trade and economic policies. Developing countries need more assistance in strengthening their capacity to act in this area. Forests and fisheries need to be managed in sustainable ways.

On this International Day for Biological Diversity, I call on governments that have not yet done so to ratify the Convention and its Biosafety Protocol. And as we prepare for the World Summit on Sustainable Development, to be held in Johannesburg later this year, I urge the entire international community to focus urgent and creative attention on the devastating impact of human activities on the rich diversity of life with which human beings share the planet.



NEWCOMERS TO THE SECRETARIAT

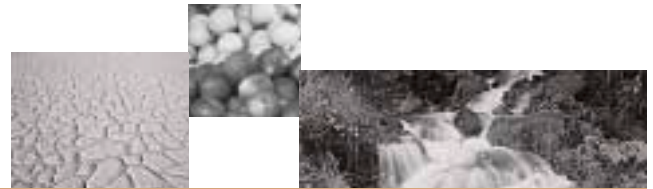
Inhee Chung (Republic of Korea) joined the Secretariat as Junior Professional Officer on impact assessment and biodiversity indicators with the STTM division. Inhee is an environmental management specialist with particular expertise in Environmental Management Systems (ISO 14001) and environmental due diligence assessments, having worked with numerous industrial sectors as a professional consultant for Environmental Resources Management (ERM), prior to her relocation to Montreal. She has also worked on energy and climate change issues with the Kyoto Protocol branch

at UNIDO, Vienna. Following a bachelor's degree in Environmental Science and Engineering from Seoul, Korea, Inhee studied environmental economics and management at the University of York, England and obtained her master's degree in Environmental Technology (Energy Policy focus) from Imperial College, University of London. Inhee can be reached at inhee.chung@biodiv.org

Anastasia Beliaeva joined the Secretariat in February as Information Assistant in the Executive Direction and Management Division. Anastasia has several years of

working experience in the public service sector as a teacher, educator, counselor, interpreter and translator. She has also worked in the field of high-tech industry as a technical writer and editor. Anastasia can be reached at: anastasia.beliaeva@biodiv.org

Johany Martínez Quinto is now the Secretariat's Personnel Assistant. She worked before in the International Civil Aviation Organization as a Recruitment Clerk in the Personnel Branch of the Bureau of Administration and Services. Johany can be reached at: johany.martinez@biodiv.org



CALENDAR OF EVENTS

This list contains only events that will take place between two issues. For an up-to-date list visit our website www.biodiv.org.

Date	Title and Venue	Status
September 2002		
9 - 13 September 2002 Montreal, Canada	Ad Hoc Technical Expert Group on Biological Diversity and Climate Change	Confirmed
23 - 27 September 2002 Montreal, Canada	Second meeting of the Ad Hoc Technical Expert Group on Dry and Sub-Humid Lands	Confirmed
23 - 24 September 2002 Montreal, Canada	Meeting of the COP Bureau	Confirmed
October 2002		
1 - 3 October 2002 Venue (to be determined)	Liaison group meeting on rapid assessment methods for inland waters	Tentative
15 - 17 October 2002 Venue (to be determined)	Liaison Group Meeting on protected areas	Tentative
22 - 24 October 2002 Bolivia	Technical Expert Group on Clearing House Mechanism/Traditional knowledge	Tentative



Date	Title and Venue	Status
November 2002		
18 - 20 November 2002 Venue (to be determined)	Liaison Group Meeting on rapid assessment methods for marine coastal biodiversity	Tentative
26 - 28 November 2002 Venue (to be determined)	Open-ended expert workshop on capacity-building on access and benefit-sharing	Tentative
December 2002		
2 - 4 December 2002 Rome, Italy	Workshop on Liability and Redress in the context of the Cartagena Protocol	Tentative
9 - 13 December 2002 Venue (to be determined)	Ad Hoc Technical Expert Group on mountain biodiversity	Tentative

Year 2003

January 2003		
21 - 23 January 2003 Venue (to be determined)	Ad Hoc Technical Expert Group on genetic use restriction technologies	Tentative
February 2003		
13 - 14 February 2003 Montreal, Canada	Meeting of the Bureau of the ICCP	Tentative
18 - 20 February 2003 Venue (to be determined)	Latin America and Caribbean regional meeting on the Clearing-House Mechanism	Tentative
March 2003		
10 - 14 March 2003 Montreal, Canada	Eighth Meeting of the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice (SBSTTA-8)	Tentative
17 - 18 March 2003 Montreal, Canada	Ad Hoc Inter-Sessional Meeting on the Multi-Year Programme of Work of the Conference of the Parties up to 2010	Tentative
20 - 21 March 2003 Montreal, Canada	Incentive measures inter-agency coordination committee	Tentative





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Editorial Board

Hamdallah Zedan, Arthur Nogueira, Cristina Stricker, Marcos Silva, Alexander Heydendael, Zoumana Bamba, Ione Anderson, Erie Tamale and Paola Deda.

Subscriptions

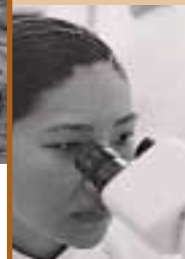
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Write to Us

CBD News invites readers' letters for publication. Comments on issues that matter to the Convention on Biological Diversity are also welcome. Readers may also wish to give us their views on *CBD News* itself and the role it should play. Letters should not be longer than 300 words and can be sent by post or e-mail.

CBD News is published by:

Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity

393, rue Saint-Jacques, Suite 300
Montreal, Quebec
H2Y 1N9 Canada

Phone: (+1) 514 288-2220

Fax: (+1) 514 288-6588

Email: secretariat@biodiv.org

URL: www.biodiv.org