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EXTRACT

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Preparations for the COP-MOP meetings on biological diversity and biosafety (Curitiba, Brazil)

European Parliament resolution on preparations for the COP-MOP meetings on biological diversity and biosafety in Curitiba, Brazil

The European Parliament,

- having regard to the 8th Conference of the Parties (COP8) to the UN Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) to be held from 20 to 31 March 2006 in Curitiba, Brazil,
 - having regard to the 3rd Meeting of Parties (MOP3) to the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety (BSP) being held from 13 to 17 March 2006 in Curitiba, Brazil,
 - having regard to the conclusions of the Göteborg European Council of 15 and 16 June 2001,
 - having regard to Rule 103(2) of its Rules of Procedure,
- A. whereas the CBD is the largest global agreement on the protection of biodiversity, addressing the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity and the fair and equitable sharing of the benefits from the use of genetic resources, and whereas it has been signed by 188 parties, including the 25 EU Member States and the European Community,
- B. whereas the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety sets common minimum standards for trans-boundary movements of living modified organisms (LMOs) and has been ratified by 131 countries,
- C. whereas biological diversity, including genetic, species and ecosystem diversity, constitutes the fabric of life and is the very foundation of human health, quality of life and prosperity, and has an inherent value in itself,
- D. whereas there is a direct link between the conservation of biological diversity and the provision of ecosystem services, such as food production, water purification, nutrient circulation and climate regulation; whereas human consumption of natural resources, the destruction of habitats, climate change, the overexploitation of wild species and the unsustainable and illegal trade in wild fauna and flora are increasing in intensity and already put ecosystem services under severe stress,
- E. whereas Parties to the CBD, by Decision CBD VI/26, and, independently, Parties at the Johannesburg World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD) in 2002 agreed to reduce the rate of biodiversity loss significantly by 2010,
- F. whereas the European Community has committed itself to halting the loss of biodiversity by 2010,
- G. whereas UN General Assembly Resolution A/RES/59/25 of 17 November 2004 calls for urgent action to ‘consider on a case-by-case basis and on a scientific basis, including the application of the precautionary approach, the interim prohibition of destructive fishing

practices, including bottom trawling that has adverse impacts on vulnerable marine ecosystems, including seamounts, hydrothermal vents and cold water corals located beyond national jurisdiction, until such time as appropriate conservation and management measures have been adopted in accordance with international law’,

- H. whereas the recent UN Food and Agriculture Organization's Forest Resources Assessment (FRA 2005) underscores the dramatic loss of the world's last ancient forests, estimating forest loss at more than 13 million hectares per year globally,
 - I. whereas at COP8 parties are expected to take stock of the commitments made in the work programme on forest biological diversity, CBD Decisions VI/22 and VII/28, regarding the sustainable use and consumption of and trade in biological resources, as well as forest law enforcement and governance and action against illegal logging,
 - J. whereas CBD Decision V/5, section III, taken by COP5 in 2000, lays down a moratorium on the field-testing and marketing of V-GURT technology (Varietal Genetic Use Restriction Technologies) designed to prevent, by means of sterility-inducing gene constructs, farm-saved seeds from germinating,
 - K. whereas the use of genetic engineering to produce sterile seeds would force farmers to purchase new seed each season and could therefore threaten food security, in particular in developing countries, and whereas such genes could contaminate non-GM crops as a result of cross-fertilisation and accidental mixing,
1. Is deeply concerned at the continued loss of biodiversity and at the European Union's ever increasing ecological footprint, which extends the impact on biodiversity well beyond the borders of the European Union;
 2. Calls on the European Commission and the Member States to show leadership and conviction by agreeing to and facilitating concrete measures for the protection of biodiversity, both domestically and internationally;
 3. Considers that the requirements of the global moratorium on the field-testing and marketing of V-GURT technology with regard to, inter alia, the ecological and socioeconomic impact and any adverse impact on biological diversity, food security and human health, have not been met;
 4. Urges the European Commission and the Member States to:
 - set specific, measurable, achievable, realistic and time-bound global targets for the review of the 2010 biodiversity target;
 - build on and accelerate implementation of the recent CBD decisions on forest biological diversity and protected areas;
 - allocate additional resources and develop new international financing mechanisms to establish a global network of protected areas by 2010 on land, and by 2012 at sea, with special emphasis on large intact ecosystems, which are vital to the protection of the world's biodiversity;

- develop strong measures to ensure sustainable use and consumption of and trade in biodiversity resources, improve forest law enforcement and governance, and combat illegal logging and the related trade, taking into account the recommendations contained in Parliament's resolution of 7 July 2005 on speeding up implementation of the EU action plan on Forest Law Enforcement, Governance and Trade (FLEGT)¹;
 - make use of the FLEGT initiative and other similar regional processes to enhance the implementation of the CBD objectives and contribute to achieving the UN Millennium Development Goals (MDGs);
 - protect marine biodiversity from destructive practices affecting vulnerable marine ecosystems, insist on the consideration on a scientific basis, including the application of the precautionary approach, of the interim prohibition of destructive fishing practices, including bottom trawling, that has adverse impacts on vulnerable marine ecosystems until such time as appropriate conservation and management measures have been adopted in accordance with international law, and stress the need to strengthen, as appropriate, the conservation powers of existing Regional Fisheries Management Organisations (RFMOs) and establish new RFMOs where needed;
 - develop a legally binding instrument to ensure fair and equitable access and benefit sharing (ABS) in respect of genetic resources within an agreed time-frame;
 - ensure the full and effective participation of local communities and indigenous peoples in implementing the CBD work programme;
 - reject any proposals to undermine the moratorium on the field-testing and marketing of so-called terminator technologies set by CBD Decision V/5 through a 'case-by-case' assessment or approval of Genetic Use Restriction Technologies;
 - defend robustly an EU policy to require that no open-air growing of crops involving Genetic Use Restriction Technologies can be permitted until thorough research on ecological and socio-economic impacts and on any adverse effects for biodiversity, food security and human health has been carried out in a transparent manner;
 - ensure that biodiversity indicators are developed, since effective implementation is hampered by a lack of coherent information on the effectiveness of measures already taken, and by the difficulty of presenting information on the state of biodiversity; and
 - insist that agreement is reached on a robust regime of requirements for the documentation accompanying shipments of LMOs, so that the legality of imported LMOs can be determined in the country of destination and the importing party can establish adequate traceability and monitor unintended releases into the environment and the use and consumption of LMOs in processed food and feed;
5. Urges, in addition, the European Commission and the Member States to speed up progress towards meeting the Community's target of halting the loss of biodiversity,

¹ Texts Adopted, P6_TA(2005)0300.

including by integrating the CBD objectives into EU development and aid policy, notably into the forthcoming EU Country and Regional Strategy Papers, and drastically improving the implementation of the EU's Habitats¹ and Birds² Directives and the related Natura 2000 network;

6. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council and Commission and to the Parties to the CBD and the BSP.

¹ Council Directive 92/43/EEC of 21 May 1992 on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora (OJ L 206, 22.7.1992, p. 7).

² Council Directive 79/409/EEC of 2 April 1979 on the conservation of wild birds (OJ L 103, 25.4.1979, p. 1).