



**CONVENTION ON  
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CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES TO THE  
CONVENTION ON BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY  
Second meeting  
Jakarta, 6-17 November 1995  
Item 9 of the provisional agenda

**FORM AND INTERVALS OF NATIONAL REPORTS BY PARTIES**

Note by the Secretariat

**1. INTRODUCTION**

1. Article 26 of the Convention on Biological Diversity provides that "Each Contracting Party shall, at intervals to be determined by the Conference of the Parties, present to the Conference of the Parties, reports on measures which it has taken for the implementation of the provisions of this Convention and their effectiveness in meeting the objectives of this convention".

2. According to the provisions of Article 23.4 (a) of the Convention which states that the Conference of the Parties shall "establish the form and the intervals for transmitting the information to be submitted in accordance with Article 26 and consider such information as well as reports submitted by any subsidiary body", the Conference of the Parties, at its first meeting held in Nassau, the Bahamas, decided, in adopting its decision I/9 on the Medium term programme of work, to consider the form and intervals of national reports for reporting issue of reports by Parties at its second meeting.

3. In adopting its decision I/7 *Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice* (SBSTTA), the first meeting of the Conference of the Parties requested the first meeting of the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice, held at the headquarters of UNESCO in Paris from 4 to 8 September 1995, to consider as a matter of priority "What kind of scientific and technical information should be contained in national reports on measures taken for the implementation of the provisions of the Convention and their effectiveness in meeting the objectives of the Convention".

4. The present note has been prepared by the Secretariat of the Convention to assist the second meeting of the Conference of the Parties in the consideration of its agenda item 9 on the forms and intervals of national reports by Parties. In considering this item, the meeting may wish also to refer to the advice provided by the first meeting of the SBSTTA, contained in document UNEP/CBD/COP/2/5, and to the note prepared by the Secretariat on this issue and submitted to the first meeting of the SBSTTA (document UNEP/CBD/SBSTTA/1/6).

5. The note first describes the purpose of national reports provided by Parties pursuant to the provisions of Article 26 of the Convention. It highlights the interlinkages between the purposes, form and intervals of national reports, as well as the options, to be considered by the meeting, on these issues. Based on the provisions of the Convention, it suggests a possible form of national report containing an overall assessment on the implementation of the Convention. The note also suggests some elements to be addressed by the Conference of the Parties on the modalities of the review of national reports.

## 2. PURPOSES OF NATIONAL REPORTS

6. The submission by Parties of national reports is a common feature of international environmental law. This is the case, for example, for the following international and regional conventions in the field of biological diversity and related issues:

- (a) The Framework Convention on Climate Change (Article 12);
- (b) The International Convention to Combat Desertification in Those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, Particularly in Africa (Article 26);
- (c) The Vienna Convention for the Protection of the Ozone Layer (Article 5);
- (d) The Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer (Article 7);
- (e) The Basel Convention on the Control of Transboundary Movements of Hazardous Wastes and their Disposal (Article 13.2 .c);
- (f) The Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (Article 8 .7);
- (g) The Convention for the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage (Article 29);
- (h) The Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals (Article 6);
- (i) The Convention on Wetlands of International Importance Especially as Waterfowls Habitat (Article 3.2);
- (j) The African Convention on the Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources (Article 16.2.b);
- (k) The ASEAN Agreement on the Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources (Article 18.3 .b);
- (l) The Convention on the Conservation of European Wildlife and Natural Habitat (Article 9.2);
- (m) The Convention concerning the Protection of the Alps (Article 5.4).

7. The form, procedure and intervals for national reports under the existing international and regional legal instruments in the field of environment vary in the light of their respective objectives. Annex I to this note contains a comparative table on practices of related conventions in reviewing implementation, prepared by the Interim Secretariat of the International Convention to Combat Desertification in Those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, Particularly in Africa (document A/AC.241/39).

8. The reports submitted by Parties should take into account the purpose of reporting as well as the objectives of the Convention. They should aim, as far as possible, at providing, *inter alia*, relevant information:

- (a) to assess effectively progress achieved towards meeting the Convention's objectives and to recommend measures to further those objectives;
- (b) for sharing national experiences between Parties;
- (c) to assess the implementation at the national level of the Convention and the effectiveness of measures taken;
- (d) to assist in the formulation of projects of cooperation and identification of needs of Parties, in particular the least developed;
- (e) to assess the global trends in the status of biological diversity and its components.

### 3. POSSIBLE OPTIONS ON THE FORM OF NATIONAL REPORTS

9. Adoption of a standard format for national reports will ensure the compatibility and consistency of the information to be provided by Parties in their national reports, so as to achieve the purposes for which they have been provided.

10. A clear understanding by the Conference of the Parties of the expected goals to be achieved through the submission of national reports by Parties, as suggested in paragraph 8 above, will determine to a certain extent the form of national reports.

11. In considering the possible form of reporting, the meeting may wish to bear in mind, *inter alia*, the following elements:

- (a) the three-fold objectives of the Convention;
- (b) the comprehensive scope of the activities covered by the Convention;
- (c) the different stages of the implementation by Parties of their commitments;
- (d) the different national conditions of Parties, including socio-economic conditions, and technical and human capacities.

12. In the light of the above, the meeting may wish also to consider the three following options regarding the form of national reports:

- (a) focused and subject-oriented reports related to the items and priorities identified in the medium-term programme of work of the Conference of the Parties; or
- (b) reports containing an overall assessment on measures taken by Parties on the implementation of the provisions of the Convention and their effectiveness in meeting the Convention's objectives;
- (c) combination of option (a) and (b).

Option a: Subject-oriented national report

13. If a focused and subject-oriented report is recommended, the Conference of the Parties may wish to advise regarding the list for such subjects and the time-frame of submission of reports. The meeting may recommend to the Parties to focus their first subject-oriented reports on the implementation of measures taken to implement Article 6 of the Convention, related to national and sectoral strategies, plans or programme for the conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity. Document UNEP/CBD/COP/2/12, concerning approaches and experience related to the implementation of Articles 6 and 8 of the Convention, provides relevant information which may guide the meeting in recommending the form of such subject-oriented reports.

Option b: overall assessment

14. If the second option is selected, the meeting may wish to consider the following possible format of reports containing overall assessment on measures taken by Parties on the implementations of the Convention:

## I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This part of the report will present, in a succinct manner, the major findings and conclusions of the report, taking into account the three-fold objectives of the Convention. Elements of the reports on which action may be taken or attention of the Conference of the Parties may be drawn can also be highlighted. A summary of the needs required and details of the international assistance offered by Parties may also be included.

## II. STATUS OF THE BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY

This section of the report will present the overall status of biological diversity and its components. Based on the definition of biological diversity provided in Article 2 of the Convention, this section may be divided into the three following sub-sections:

- A. Status of the terrestrial biological diversity.
- B. Status of marine and coastal biological diversity.
- C. Status of other aquatic biological diversity.

Each subsection should include the interactions among living organisms and with the non-living environment, and consideration of the three categories of biological diversity organization as referred to in annex I of the Convention, i.e. ecosystems and habitats, species and communities, and genomes and genes. Identification of components of biological diversity under threats and the causes of such threats should be emphasized. Identification of components of biological diversity important for its conservation and sustainable use should also be included.

## III. GENERAL MEASURES FOR THE CONSERVATION AND SUSTAINABLE USE OF BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY

This section will be based on the implementation of Article 6. It will outline (i) the national strategies, plans and programmes for the conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity; (ii) the measures adopted for the integration of the conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity into relevant sectoral or cross-sectoral plans, programmes and policies; and (iii) follow-up mechanism and

assessment of stages of strategies and action plans completed. The following three sub-sections could be considered:

- A. National Strategies, plans and programmes.
- B. Integration of the conservation and sustainable use into relevant sectoral or cross-sectoral plans, programmes and policies.
- C. Follow-up and monitoring mechanism and activities.

#### IV. SPECIFIC MEASURES FOR THE CONSERVATION AND SUSTAINABLE USE OF BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY

Under this section, implementation of the following articles may be considered:

Article 7 (Identification and Monitoring); Article 8 (*In-situ* Conservation); Article 9 (*Ex-situ* Conservation); Articles 10 (Sustainable Use of Components of Biological Diversity) and 14 (Impact Assessment and Minimizing Adverse Impacts); Article 11 (Incentive Measures); Article 12 (Research and Training); Article 13 (Public Education and Awareness); and Article 19 (Handling of Biotechnology and Distribution of its Benefits).

Relevant information may be provided under the following sub-sections:

- A. Identification of components of biological diversity important for its conservation and sustainable use.
- B. Measures to avoid or minimize adverse effects on biological diversity, with particular emphasis on the identified components under threat.
- C. Incentive measures to promote the objectives of the Convention.
- D. Measures to promote the safe handling of biotechnologies.
- E. Measures to promote and encourage research.
- F. Measures to protect traditional practices compatible with conservation and sustainable use requirements.
- G. Measures to increase public awareness.
- H. Measures to promote and encourage the local population including the non-governmental organizations.

#### V. SPECIFIC MEASURES FOR THE FAIR AND EQUITABLE SHARING OF BENEFITS ARISING OUT OF THE UTILIZATION OF GENETIC RESOURCES

Under this section, information will be provided on action taken or measures benefited from activities aimed at promoting and encouraging the fair and equitable sharing of benefits arising out the utilization of genetic resources or measures benefited. The information can be presented under the following sub-sections:

- A. Measures to facilitate access to genetic resources.
- B. Measures to promote access to the results and benefits of biotechnologies.

#### VI. TECHNICAL AND SCIENTIFIC COOPERATION

Under this section, information will be provided by Parties on measures taken or actions benefited, at the bilateral and multilateral levels, from technical and scientific cooperation, including exchange of information, promoted in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Convention. The

suggested sub-section B related to multilateral cooperation will also include information on cooperation offered or received from the clearing-house mechanism to promote and facilitate technical and scientific cooperation, to be established by the Conference of the Parties in accordance with Article 18.3 of the Convention. Accordingly the following two sub-sections could be included:

- A. Bilateral cooperation.
- B. Multilateral cooperation.

#### VII. ACCESS TO AND TRANSFER OF TECHNOLOGY

Information on measures taken or action benefited to ensure access to and transfer of technology under the Convention at bilateral and multilateral levels would be provided under this section.

#### VIII. FINANCIAL RESOURCES

Information on measures taken or action benefited to give effects to the provisions of the Convention related to financial resources can be included under this section. The following sub-sections can be envisaged:

- A. Financial resources mobilized at the national level.
- B. External financial assistance received or provided through:
  - 1. Bilateral cooperation.
  - 2. Multilateral cooperation.
  - 3. Cooperation under the financial mechanism of the Convention.
  - 4. Non-governmental organizations.

#### IX. REGIONAL AND SUB-REGIONAL COOPERATION

Information on action taken or promoted or envisaged at the regional or sub-regional levels to give effects to the provisions of the Convention can be included under this section.

#### X. RELATIONSHIP WITH OTHER RELATED BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY CONVENTIONS AND PROCESSES

This section of the reports may contain information related to the relationship with other related biological diversity conventions and processes, including the Commission on Sustainable Development, and information related to the implementation of Chapter 15 of Agenda 21 and other related chapters.

#### XI. ASSESSMENT OF THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE MEASURES TAKEN IN MEETING THE OBJECTIVES OF THE CONVENTION

This section will include, in accordance with Article 26 of the Convention, an assessment by Parties of the effectiveness of the measures taken in meeting the objectives of the Convention regarding:

- A. The conservation of biological diversity.
- B. The sustainable use of its components.
- C. The fair and equitable sharing of the benefits arising out of the utilization of genetic resources.

Option c: combination of option (a) and (b)

15. The meeting may also wish to consider the advantages and disadvantages of a possible combination of option (a) and (b). Under this third option, the meeting may wish to recommend that Parties should present, during the early operation of the Convention, national reports focused on the implementation of selected Articles of the Convention or their provisions. Such subject-oriented reports will lead, at a later stage, to submission by Parties of reports containing an overall assessment of the measures taken on the implementation of the Convention. Another possible combination of option (a) and (b) may consist in recommending submission of reports containing overall assessment once every five years and the submission of subject-oriented reports to the regular meetings of the Conference of the Parties.

16. Whatever option the Conference of the Parties chooses to adopt, it should be emphasized that the form of reporting could be flexible so as to be adjusted in the light of the specific economic and social conditions of the Parties and to accommodate their differing circumstances and capacities. The constraints facing developing countries Parties and Parties with economy in transition may warrant the development of a simplified form of reporting which could be used by all Parties, regardless of socio-economic levels of development. The form of reporting could also take into account the nature of commitments agreed upon by developing and developed countries under the Convention.

17. In considering the form and content of national reports, the Conference of the Parties may also advise on how the information provided by Parties under other biological diversity related conventions and the Commission on Sustainable Development may be streamlined so as to avoid duplication of information provided by Parties.

#### 4. INTERVALS OF REPORTING

18. The intervals of reporting will depend to a large extent on the frequency of the meetings of the COP, the expected recommendations of the Conference of the Parties on the form of reporting and the option selected. A comprehensive report will require a much longer time for the collection of data than more focused reports. Consideration on the intervals of reporting includes its effect on the quality of the information to be contained in national reports and its impacts on the volume of materials that the Conference of the Parties can consider in a given meeting. Such consideration may also include the long-term nature of the implementation of the Convention as well as the time required for assessing the effectiveness of the measures taken in meeting the objectives of the Convention. The human, technical and financial implications related to the intervals of reporting need also to be taken into account. The intervals of reporting will also play a key role in assuring the efficient review of national reports by the Conference of the Parties.

19. The Conference of the Parties, while deciding on the intervals of reporting, may wish also to bear in mind that the preparation by Parties of their first report will require, as a general rule, more time than its subsequent updating. The lack of adequate human, financial and technical capacities of some developing countries Parties and some Parties with economy in transition may require a long time for the preparation and submission of their reports.

20. The most appropriate intervals for reporting will depend on which option the Conference of the Parties chooses to adopt. A report containing an overall assessment of the measures taken under the Convention will require extensive information covering a wide variety of disciplines. Such information could not be provided in a short time frame. The intervals for such reports may be considered in relation with the duration of the medium-term programme of the Conference of the Parties.

## 5. MODALITIES OF THE REVIEW OF NATIONAL REPORTS

21. Article 23.4 states that the COP shall keep under review the implementation of the Convention *inter alia* by considering the information submitted by Parties in their national reports. In considering agenda item 9, the Conference of the Parties may wish also to address the modalities for its review of national reports. The following element may be relevant:

### Mechanism for the review

22. Given the scope and the nature of the information expected to be contained in national reports, as well as the growing number of Parties to the Convention, it would most probably be difficult for the Conference of the Parties to consider the totality of these reports in a given meeting. Therefore, the Secretariat may be entrusted with the responsibility of preparing, for consideration by the Conference of the Parties, a succinct report containing a compilation and synthesis of the information contained in national reports submitted by Parties. Such a report may also include a description of trends in the implementation of the Convention aimed at facilitating the measures to be adopted by the Conference of the Parties to further the implementation of the objectives of the Convention. The report to be prepared by the Secretariat may also include the summary of relevant information provided by Parties under other international conventions and processes related to the Convention on Biological Diversity, including the Commission on Sustainable Development.

23. In the light of the complexity of the tasks to be undertaken, as well as the comprehensive scope of such analytical report arising from the wide areas of the activities to be covered, the Conference of the Parties may wish to consider the desirability of the convening of an ad-hoc restricted panel of experts, chosen on the basis of their expertise and competence, with due respect to the principle of equitable geographic representation, to assist the Secretariat in the preparation of such analytical report.

24. In addition, the COP may consider the advice on the possible role of the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice in assisting the Conference of the Parties in the consideration of national reports submitted by Parties, as well as the possible contribution of the Clearing-house mechanism for scientific and technical cooperation as suggested in document UNEP/CBD/COP/2/6.

### Language of national reports

25. Rule 52 of the rules of procedure for meetings of the Conference of the Parties provides that "the official and working languages of the Conference of the Parties shall be those of the United Nations Organization". Rule 54 of the same document states that "Official documents of the meeting shall be drawn up in one of the official languages and translated into the other official languages". Accordingly, it is expected that the Parties will submit their national reports in one of the six official languages of the Conference of the Parties. The compilation and synthesis by the Secretariat of national reports submitted in the six official languages will have financial implications. It will also be a time-consuming process. The translation in all official languages of national reports and their reproduction will have substantial financial implications on the budget of the Convention, in particular taking into account the fact that the Conference of the Parties will not impose any limitations on the length of the national reports submitted by Parties.

26. Accordingly, the Conference of the Parties may wish to advise Parties to submit their national reports in one of its six official languages, accompanied by a French or English version (the two working languages of the Conference of the Parties). This procedure is followed by a number of other



environmental conventions. It follows that the costs will be reduced and that the analysis of the material included in national reports will be facilitated. Such a recommendation will also facilitate the dissemination of relevant information contained in national reports through the Clearing-house mechanism of the Convention. To this end, the Conference of the Parties may also wish to advise the Parties to submit their national reports in hard copies and on diskettes or electronic media if available.

26bis. In the light of the financial implication, the Conference of the Parties may wish to recommend that national reports submitted by Parties will not be distributed as official documents of the Conference of the Parties but will be made available to Parties, upon request and in the languages of submission.

Product of the review

27. A wide distribution of the relevant information contained in national reports and the results of their consideration by the Conference of the Parties may be appropriate for sharing and building on the experience gained at the national level in the implementation of the Convention. In this connection, the publication of such material by the Secretariat may be envisaged.

6. **CONCLUSION**

28. The comprehensive scope of the Convention requires a multi-sectoral and multi-disciplinary approach to the preparation of national reports and the gathering of relevant information, including scientific and technical information. The effective preparation of national reports implies an open, participatory process involving all relevant actors, including governmental organizations, private industry, non-governmental organizations and indigenous communities.

29. The success of the reporting system to be agreed upon by the Conference of the Parties will to a large extent depend on the national capacity of Parties to fulfill their reporting obligations. The preparation of national report is a complex, costly, and time-consuming process. Therefore, the development of capacity building at an early stage of the preparation of national reports needs to be considered. In this regard, the Conference of the Parties may wish to advise on how the financial and technical assistance, required by developing countries Parties and in particular the least developed amongst them and Parties with economy in transition, can be met. In addressing this issue, the Conference of the Parties may wish to explore the possibilities available under the financial mechanism of the Convention. The Conference of the Parties may wish also to consider the technical assistance that the Secretariat can provide upon request to developing countries Parties and Parties with economy in transition in the preparation of their national reports. The financial implications of the expected recommendations to be adopted by the second meeting of the Conference of the Parties on the budget of the Convention for 1996-1997 need also to be addressed.

ANNEX

**PRACTICES OF RELATED CONVENTIONS  
IN REVIEWING IMPLEMENTATION**

Practices		Climate Change	Basel	CITES	Ramsar
OBJECTIVES OF REVIEW		Exchange of information to facilitate implementation	Assessment of convention's effectiveness in achieving goals	Assessment of compliance, with recommendations to countries	Exchange of information to determine priority areas for action
REVIEW MATERIALS					
1.	Nature of communications from individual Parties	Two basic reports with different content/timing for developed and developing country Parties	Basic reports plus special reports when conditions change or when COP requests them	Two basic reports plus special reports as conditions change	National reports to triennial sessions of COP
2.	Utilization of joint communications from Parties	Provided for in convention but none received to date	No specific provisions in convention	No specific provisions but some submissions	No specific provisions but regional reports routinely submitted
3.	Nature of secretariat compilation of communications	General overview of country reports	Summary of country reports	Report on national reports	Summary of national communications with comments
4.	Utilization of expert analysis of communications	Ten page reports by expert teams nominated by governments and international agencies, which also assist with secretariat synthesis	Experts assist with secretariat compilation when independent knowledge of technical matters required	If Secretariat requests information, party can initiate expert inquiry; panels of experts also review specific matters	No, technical staff of secretariat provides needed expert knowledge
5.	Utilization of reports of subsidiary bodies	Subsidiary bodies on implementation and science/ technology consider communications and report to COP	Ad hoc committee of COP reviews implementation and reports to COP	Standing, Plants and Animals Committees review communications and report to COP	COP requests special reports on implementation from Standing Committee and Science and Technology Review Panel
6.	Utilization of reports of inter-governmental organizations (IGOs)	No, but not precluded	Provisions for COP receiving reports from competent IGOs	No formal system (except for marine species) but Secretariat gets information from IGOs	Provisions for COP requesting reports and statistics from competent IGOs
7.	Utilization of reports of non-governmental organizations (NGOs)	No, but not precluded	Provisions for COP receiving reports from any competent NGO	Variety of NGO materials utilized by Secretariat/ summarized for COP	Provisions for COP requesting and receiving reports from competent NGOs

Practices		Climate Change	Basel	CITES	Ramsar
<b>GUIDELINES FOR PARTIES' COMMUNICATIONS</b>					
1.	Format and content	Flexible formats with precise guidelines on information to be included	Eight categories of information specified	Detailed formats and other guidance in COP resolutions	Detailed formats and guidance from Standing Committee and secretariat
2.	Reporting of relevant institutional information	Not as such	Annual report giving information on competent authorities and focal points	Information on country scientific and management authorities	List of relevant national authorities
3.	Length limitations	No limit	No limit	No limit	No limit
4.	Requirement of summary	Ten page summary required	No summary required	Summary of annual trade controls report required	No summary required
5.	Utilization of quantitative material	Comparable methodologies for key data	Form for providing data	Nature of statistics specified	Comparable statistics on listed wetlands
<b>TIMING OF REVIEWS</b>					
1.	Frequency of communications	Generally, 1st in 1994, 2d in 1997 (developed countries); 1st in 1997 (developing countries)	Annually, or when significant new developments occur	Every one or two years depending on information	Every three years and when significant changes in listed wetlands occur
2.	Rotation of communications	To be examined at later stage	No	No	No
<b>MODALITIES OF REVIEW</b>					
1.	Language of communications from Parties	In official UN language and if possible, English	In official UN language and, if possible, English	In one of 3 official convention languages	In one of 3 working languages of convention
	Official translation of communications from Parties	Summaries translated in official languages	No	No	No
3.	Distribution of communications from Parties and of other review materials	Wide distribution of communications and other review materials	Wide distribution of communications and other review materials	Communications on request; other materials distributed widely	Wide distribution of communications and other review materials
4.	Assistance for communications from developing country Parties	Yes, as priority of financing mechanism in GEF	Yes, from secretariat if requested	Yes, Secretariat puts trade statistics in required format if requested	No

environmental conventions. It follows that the costs will be reduced and that the analysis of the material included in national reports will be facilitated. Such a recommendation will also facilitate the dissemination of relevant information contained in national reports through the Clearing-house mechanism of the Convention. To this end, the Conference of the Parties may also wish to advise the Parties to submit their national reports in hard copies and on diskettes or electronic media if available.

26bis. In the light of the financial implication, the Conference of the Parties may wish to recommend that national reports submitted by Parties will not be distributed as official documents of the Conference of the Parties but will be made available to Parties, upon request and in the languages of submission.

*Product of the review*

27. A wide distribution of the relevant information contained in national reports and the results of their consideration by the Conference of the Parties may be appropriate for sharing and building on the experience gained at the national level in the implementation of the Convention. In this connection, the publication of such material by the Secretariat may be envisaged.

## 6. CONCLUSION

28. The comprehensive scope of the Convention requires a multi-sectoral and multi-disciplinary approach to the preparation of national reports and the gathering of relevant information, including scientific and technical information. The effective preparation of national reports implies an open, participatory process involving all relevant actors, including governmental organizations, private industry, non-governmental organizations and indigenous communities.

29. The success of the reporting system to be agreed upon by the Conference of the Parties will to a large extent depend on the national capacity of Parties to fulfill their reporting obligations. The preparation of national report is a complex, costly, and time-consuming process. Therefore, the development of capacity building at an early stage of the preparation of national reports needs to be considered. In this regard, the Conference of the Parties may wish to advise on how the financial and technical assistance, required by developing countries Parties and in particular the least developed amongst them and Parties with economy in transition, can be met. In addressing this issue, the Conference of the Parties may wish to explore the possibilities available under the financial mechanism of the Convention. The Conference of the Parties may wish also to consider the technical assistance that the Secretariat can provide upon request to developing countries Parties and Parties with economy in transition in the preparation of their national reports. The financial implications of the expected recommendations to be adopted by the second meeting of the Conference of the Parties on the budget of the Convention for 1996-1997 need also to be addressed.