



**CONVENTION ON
BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY**

Distr.
GENERAL

UNEP/CBD/COP/4/Inf. 17
21 April 1998

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES TO THE
CONVENTION ON BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY
Fourth meeting
Bratislava, Slovakia
4 to 15 May 1998
Item 7.2 and 12.2 of the provisional agenda

REPORT OF AN "AD HOC" INTER AGENCY CONSULTATION
ON
PROMOTING CO-OPERATION ON THE CONSERVATION AND SUSTAINABLE USE OF
WILD PLANTS OF IMPORTANCE FOR FOOD AND AGRICULTURE

PARIS, FRANCE, 11-13 February 1998

A contribution of DIVERSITAS
to Agenda Items 7.2 and 12.2

NOTE: This information document (No. 17) will be of relevance and provide additional information to COP-4 agenda items 7.2 (agricultural biodiversity) and 12.2 (in-situ conservation).

Ad hoc inter-agency consultation on promoting co-operation on the conservation and sustainable use of wild plants of importance for food and agriculture

convened by DIVERSITAS, in association with UNESCO, FAO, IPGRI and the CBD Secretariat

11-13 February 1998

UNESCO HQ, Paris

Objective

1. The objective of this consultation was to bring together the different organisations concerned with the conservation and sustainable use of wild plants of importance for food and agriculture, including forestry, medicine and other groups of interest to human activities, within the broad framework of the Convention on Biological Diversity and the FAO Global Plan of Action for the Conservation and Sustainable Utilisation of Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture. The consultation aimed at:

- elaborating a draft framework for collaboration amongst organisations with converging interests to take the required action;
- providing a report on this consultation for the Executive Secretary of the Convention on Biological Diversity who may decide on the appropriate means to ask the COP and/or SBSTTA to consider this topic in their agenda;
- laying out steps for elaborating the technical content of collaborative activities in more detail, the needed co-ordination mechanisms and commitments, and potential funding sources as appropriate;
- seeking ways to raise the awareness of politicians, the scientific community and the general public on the magnitude of the problems involved and the urgency to meet them.

2. To this end, the DIVERSITAS Secretariat, in association with UNESCO, FAO, IPGRI and the Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity convened an *ad hoc* consultation of representatives of interested organisations and agencies at UNESCO HQ from 11 to 13 February 1998.

Introduction

3. The consultation was opened by Dr Pierre Lasserre on behalf of UNESCO as the host of the meeting and partner of DIVERSITAS. In welcoming participants, he stressed that UNESCO itself was carrying out a number of activities of direct relevance to the subject of the consultation. These included the MAB World Network of Biosphere Reserves, made up of more than

350 sites in 87 countries and which offered an institutionalised co-operative network upon which to build concrete projects. One such project was the proposed International Biodiversity Observation Year (IBOY) under DIVERSITAS. The UNESCO-WWF-RBG Kew Programme on *People and Plants* was an activity which UNESCO was carrying out in

collaboration focusing specifically on gathering and applying ethnobotanical knowledge to benefit the rural poor. Dr Lasserre also reminded participants that UNESCO was fully committed to the implementation of the CBD and was detaching a specialist to work with the Secretariat in Montreal. In addition, a MAB Day would be organised with the Slovak authorities just prior to COP IV in Bratislava on 2 May 1998. He finally drew attention to the fact that UNESCO was hosting the Secretariat of DIVERSITAS thus ensuring good co-ordination with the MAB Programme.

4. Sir Ghilleen Prance, Director of the RBG Kew and Chairman of the DIVERSITAS Scientific Steering Committee, recalled that the DIVERSITAS Programme was devoted to the science of biodiversity. The importance of this programme to underpin the implementation of the CBD had been highlighted in a recent article in *Nature*¹. The topic of the consultation was an integral part of the DIVERSITAS Core Programme element on Conservation, Restoration and Sustainable Use of Biodiversity which would be developed by Prof. Vernon Heywood. He indicated that there would soon be a DIVERSITAS meeting in Mexico to examine the scientific issues implied by the articles of the CBD and that the proposal for the International Biodiversity Observation Year (IBOY) would be announced at the forthcoming American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS) meeting in 13 February 1998. As Director of RBG Kew, he had a special interest in wild plants of importance for human activities and considered that this topic merited more attention. He therefore thanked Vernon Heywood for taking the initiative to convene the *ad hoc* consultation for inter-agency co-operation in this field.

5. Dr. Murthi Anishetty, Senior Officer, Plant Genetic Resources of FAO, drew attention to the Global Plan of Action (GPA) for the Conservation and Sustainable Utilisation of Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture which had been formally adopted by 150 countries during FAO's Fourth International Technical Conference on Plant Genetic Resources held in Leipzig, Germany, in June 1996. FAO needed to forge partnerships with others -- in addition to IPGRI -- in order to implement the 20 Priority Activities of the GPA and hence welcomed this consultation. He recalled that the GPA did not cover forestry and that technical consultations were now being carried out to develop a similar action plan for forests.

6. Salvatore Aricò introduced himself as a programme specialist in marine ecology who was being detached from UNESCO to the CBD Secretariat. He welcomed the participants to the consultation on behalf of Dr Calestous Juma, Executive Secretary CBD. While he regretted to inform the consultation that the CBD Secretariat officer in charge of agricultural biological diversity was not able to attend due to other commitments, he reiterated the strong interest of the Convention Secretariat in the event. He recalled decision III/11 of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on a multi-year programme of activities on agricultural biological diversity, which referred to a list of thematic areas, including wildlife and wild sources of food. Hence the interest of the Secretariat in convening this consultation, which would hopefully provide an important

contribution to the activities within the context of the Convention.

Dr. Aricò pointed out that the consultation also represented an example of concrete co-operation between the Convention Secretariat and the other convenors, and thanked UNESCO for hosting the consultation.

7. Dr Toby Hodgkin, Principal Scientist with IPGRI, and also representing the CGIAR, indicated that now the CBD and the GPA provided a framework for country-driven commitments on wild crop relatives and forest species which had hitherto been lacking. He therefore welcomed this opportunity to develop inter-agency co-operation with a practical set of outcomes. He hoped that a similar

1 *Nature* Vol. 391, 15 January 1998

GPA would be elaborated for forest species in the near future.

The importance of wild species in food and agriculture and other human activities - An assessment of the scientific and technical issues

8. Professor Vernon Heywood presented a background paper on this topic. He first defined the term "wild" when applying to species/plants that grow in natural or semi-natural ecosystems and can exist independently of direct human action. The term is contrasted with species/plants that have arisen through human action such as selection or breeding and depend on management for their continued existence. An outline of the importance of wild plants is given in Box 1 and a classification of the main usages of wild plants, based on the Taxonomic Databases Working Group (TDWG) Standard is presented in Box 2. He stressed that wild plants played a critical role in the survival and livelihood of thousands of millions of people -- usually the rural poor -- and that there lacked an overall plan to direct and render more effective the individual and multiple efforts geared towards their conservation and sustainable use. It was therefore timely to convene this *ad hoc* consultation. In presenting his paper, he drew attention to the need for concerted action covering wild plants including medicinal plants and forest species. The role of such plants was far more than just economic, as they had a very strong social dimensions, serving often to maintain the cultural identity of many groups. Women were key players in the collection, selection, breeding and use of wild plants and hence needed special attention.

Box 1: The importance of wild plants

(See Heywood 1998)

Contributions to farm and rural households

- Diversity in food supply
- Food in periods of scarcity and famine
- Fuel wood
- Medicinal, veterinarian and traditional uses
- Income generation

Potential for development

- Pharmaceutical industry
- Ornamental plants
- Agro- and processing industries
- Agricultural production

b Box 2: Classification of the main usage categories of wild plants (after Cook 1995)

- **Food plants** (including beverages for humans) - seeds, fruits, leaves, stems, petioles, roots, tubers, etc.
- **Food additives** (incl. processing agents and additive ingredients used in food preparations)
- **Animal food** (including forage and fodder for vertebrates)
- **Bee plants** (including pollen or nectar sources for honey production)
- **Invertebrate foods** (including plants eaten by invertebrates useful to humans e.g. silkworms)
- **Materials** (including woods, fibres, tannins, latex, resins, essential oils, waxes, oils)
- **Fuels** (including fuelwood, charcoal, fuel alcohol)
- **Social Uses** (including masticatories, smoking, hallucinogens, psychoactive drugs, contraceptives, abortifacients, plants used for ritual or religious purposes).
- **Vertebrate poisons** (including both accidental or useful poisonous plants e.g. hunting, fishing)
- **Non-vertebrate poisons** (including accidental and useful poisons e.g. mollusci-, herbi-, insecti-, bacteria-, and fungicides)
- **Medicines** (including human and veterinary uses)
- **Environmental uses** (including ornamentals, barrier hedges, wind-breaks, soil improvers, erosion control, indicators of heavy metals, pollution or underground water)
- **Cosmetic and perfumery plants**
- **Genetic resources** (including wild relatives of crops)

Summary presentations of programmes of organisations

9. The representatives of the following organisations made brief descriptions of their activities and interest in the topic of the consultation: FAO, UNEP, UNESCO, IPGRI, IUFRO, IUCN, WCMC, ICUC, ITDG, *Bureau des Ressources Génétiques* (France). Prof. A. Sarr (Univ. Paris VI) also made a statement.

Description of the Problem (*Problématique*)

10. The participants considered that the various dimensions of the problem could be summarised as follows:

- the general erosion of plant diversity and the simplification and reduction of ecosystems caused by world-wide habitat destruction and fragmentation, desertification and climate change are putting into jeopardy the survival of thousands of millions of people dependant on wild plants for food and agriculture;
- the world's political leaders tend to be ignorant of this problem, its urgency and magnitude;
- there is a need to publicise this problem with a catchy, easily understood title²;
- countries are mandated to address this problem, both under the Convention on Biological Diversity and also under the Global Plan of Action of FAO;

2 One possibility could be "Wild Plants for Human Use" - WIPHU.

- concerned international agencies, organisations and programmes could greatly help countries to address this problem by collaborating together to build a framework strategy and synergetic partnerships for action;
- however, the problem is vast and complex, site-specific and under-documented, making it necessary to focus on specific aspects to better quantify the larger picture and to build upon successful projects to date;
- the specific aspects which could be addressed through inter-agency contributions are:
 - development of methodologies and techniques
 - tapping into existing networks and setting up new ones as needed
 - ensuring information linkages amongst organisations and programmes
 - providing mechanisms for linking up national initiatives
 - capacity building
 - awareness raising
 - demonstrating what can be done;
- action could usefully build upon the work that has already been undertaken on wild timber species by the forestry organisations which could be synthesised and made available to guide work on other wild plants;
- specific attention should be given to the critical role of women in plant collection, use
- specific attention should also be paid to recognising the rights and protecting the knowledge and practices of indigenous peoples;
- one of the ways that collaborative inter-agency action would have greatest impact at the national and international levels was by designing and implementing with the countries concerned a small number of 'demonstration studies' each with a 2-4 year lifetime.

Framework for action

11. Participants recognised that, at the international level, the majority of countries are mandated to consider the question of wild plants of importance for food and agriculture, and other groups of interest to human activities under the Convention on Biological Diversity³ and the FAO Global Plan of Action for the Conservation and Sustainable Utilisation of Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture. Other international commitments, strategies and recommendations of relevance include *inter alia*:

- International Undertaking on Plant Genetic Resources (FAO)
- World Food Summit (FAO)
- UN Convention to Combat Desertification in those countries experiencing Drought and/or Desertification, particularly in Africa⁴
- Sevilla Strategy on Biosphere Reserves (UNESCO-MAB)⁵

3 See in particular Decision 3.11 of COP III.

4 20 Under the Convention of Desertification, wild plants are important due to their contribution to food security

5 Objective 1.2.5 of the Sevilla Strategy for Biosphere Reserves recommends that the national authorities for biosphere reserves: "Use biosphere reserves for *in situ* conservation of genetic resources, including wild relatives of cultivated and domesticated species, and consider using biosphere reserves as rehabilitation/reintroduction sites, and link them

- Recommendations of the World Forestry Congress (IUFRO)
- Recommendations of the World Conservation Congress (IUCN)
- Community Biodiversity Conservation Programme of European Union

12. In addition, a number of specific activities, regional networks and databases are relevant, such as:

- System Wide Genetic Resource Programme of CGIAR
- Botanic Gardens Conservation Strategy published by the IUCN-BGCS/WWF
- MEDUSA Network for the Identification, Conservation and Use of Wild Plants of the Mediterranean Region (supported by CIHEAM, the European Union DGI and FAO)
- Genetic Resources of ECP/IPGRI (European Co-operative Programme for Crop Genetic Resources Networks)
- *Especies Vegetales Promisorias (Promising Plant Species)* of the countries of the Andrés Bello Convention (SECAB) (Bolivia, Colombia, Chile, Ecuador, Spain, Panama, Peru and Venezuela).
- Plant Resources of South-East Asia (PROSEA)
- GEF-sponsored projects on the conservation of wild plant diversity in Turkey and in Manantlán Biosphere Reserve, Mexico.

13. Participants were particularly mindful that any collaborative activities should take account of the declarations recognising the rights and protecting the knowledge and practices of indigenous peoples. (See the discussions of the COP on Article 8(j) of the CBD), as well as to the need to respect the ownership, access to and sharing of benefits deriving from traditional knowledge⁶.

14. In sum, the participants recognised that there are a considerable number of existing initiatives which should be taken into account, that no one agency could take on this task on its own, and that efforts should be made to build partnerships and synergisms for effective action.

Socio-economic and political issues

15. Participants considered that any coherent strategy on conservation and sustainable use of wild plant should take into account the following issues, recognising the constraints to action and the opportunities to be exploited:

- land tenure
- access to and control of productive systems, including intellectual property rights
- indigenous peoples' rights (see paragraph 13)
- characteristics of human populations concerned (numbers, age structure, literacy rate, social status of different groups, for example widows)
- gender specificity (women are usually the key actors in knowledge and use systems but are often not empowered with decision making nor have access to credit)
- spiritual values associated with certain wild plants
- benefit sharing (finance, knowledge, research systems, information)
- the relative importance of the formal and informal sectors
- trade (policies of World Trade Organisation) and national and

as appropriate with *ex situ* conservation and use programmes."

⁶ See the report of the Workshop on Traditional Knowledge and Biological Diversity organised under the auspices of the CBD which took place in Madrid, Spain, from 24-28 November 1997.

international controls through GATT/TRIPS or Conventions such as CITES and Bern

- marketing system (the number of 'middle-men' going from the local to the international levels)
- global warming.

16. Participants noted that hitherto, government institutions and extension workers had largely ignored the role played by wild plants in food and agriculture. Participants stressed the need to compile the data from the numerous studies that exist to demonstrate quantitatively and irrefutably that there is a positive correlation between the satisfaction of the nutritional needs of poor and marginal rural societies and their dependence on wild plants for food. In times of food scarcity and famine, wild plants are critical to the survival of the poor people, especially in rural areas. Such a powerful statement would serve to alert donors to invest more in the conservation and sustainable use of wild plants in the future.

Areas for collaborative action

In situ conservation and maintenance⁷

17. The term *in situ* conservation covers a number of different activities: conservation of ecosystems, conservation of target species within ecosystems, conservation of land races on-farm, and conservation of predomesticates in home gardens and the like.

A primary consideration is *in situ* conservation *through* sustainable use. The conservation of wild species of importance for food, medicine and livelihood security by often poor communities throughout the world is mainly ensured by their sustainable use. This use depends, *inter alia*, upon: the conservation and sustainable use of the agroecosystems within which the species are found, recognising the dynamic nature of such systems; the full and equitable participation by both women and men in the communities; and the sustainable harvesting of products and knowledge, bearing in mind the need to recognise the community ownership of such materials and information. Many thousands of species are grown in a predomesticated state in home gardens, in agroforestry systems and other forms of local cultivation. Action is needed to conserve these *in situ* as well as innumerable landraces that have been developed locally. The STAP of the GEF recognises these issues as critical to the conservation of agricultural biodiversity through its sustainable use. In an Expert Group Workshop on sustainable use that reported to the STAP in January 1998, they concluded *inter alia* that any conservation activities therefore need necessarily to include the means to support sustainable use. Such support measures require know how about ecosystem management, capital, skills regarding the interaction of socio-economic and ecological systems, and the development of incentives and institutions to facilitate and encourage participation. Capacity building and staff training at all levels and in all organisations involved in project identification and development are required.⁸

18. The second consideration is *in situ* conservation *for* continued use. Here, a major problem is the lack of local capacity to study this. There is a need to assess trends in use and to take action in consequence at the local level. For example, if certain plants are being overused, measures should be taken to limit or control harvesting, or to ensure protection in a reserve. In turn this leads to the need for protected area managers to recognise the importance of protecting threatened useful plants and/or creating economic or other incentives favouring conservation. Tens of

7 Reference to FAO/GPA Priority Activity N° 4 which does refer to interagency action for implementation; CBD Article 8

8 Reference to STAP Expert Group Workshop on Sustainable Use of Biodiversity, Malaysia, 24-28 November 1997 (Reported to 11th STAP meeting, 21-23 January 1998, Agenda Item 6)

thousands of plant species are used in traditional medicine systems; while many of these are grown in home gardens, others are wild-harvested, often in ways that are not sustainable. The International Council for Medicinal and Aromatic Plants (ICMAP) of IUBS is seeking ways to sponsor initiatives for the sustainable use of these species and the conservation of their genetic resources both *in situ* and *ex situ*. The work under the People and Plants Programme (WWF, UNESCO, RBG Kew) and of the French *Conservatoire botaniques nationaux*, such as that at Porquerolles, and on species recovery programmes is of interest here.

19. Guidelines based on real experience are required for making assessments of trends in effectiveness of *in situ* conservation measures, which means that baseline data are required. Biological and human effects on target species should be assessed⁹. Different methods are required for wild crop relatives. The history of experience in the management of given useful species should be compiled as a means to better understand the dynamics of such conservation practices over time.

20. Considerable scientific knowledge gaps exist in our understanding of *in situ* conservation of wild species such as the distribution of genetic variation within populations and methods of sampling it effectively, dynamics of gene flow over time, the role of marginal populations, demography, etc. which are themes that it is hoped to develop as part of the DIVERSITAS programme theme on Conservation and sustainable use of the genetic diversity of wild species.

21. In sum, *in situ* conservation of wild plants requires a holistic approach integrating different methods (e.g. IUFRO for tree species, IPGRI for wild crop relatives etc.) within a given site.

Expanding *ex situ* conservation¹⁰

22. Participants stressed the need to better link the work of the protected areas systems with *ex situ* conservation initiatives, and notably the work of Botanic Gardens Conservation International. The desirability of associating simple *ex situ* facilities and nurseries with protected areas so as to allow integrated conservation to be undertaken was stressed.

23. The following issues were identified:

- the needs of local communities for *ex situ* measures are high but local capacities and possibilities of accessing *ex situ* collections are usually low;
- special problems posed by recalcitrant seed (often trees, root crops) (More information available from IPGRI, IUFRO, RBG Kew)
- need to maximise diversity in small populations. For this, there is a need for co-operation between IPGRI and the IUCN World Commission of Protected Areas, for example. Scientific research is also required on this topic;
- the need to back up *in situ* measures for useful plants under threat -- for example key medicinal plants -- by *ex situ* measures. This is a task in which the network of botanic gardens belonging to BGCI, those of the Center for Plant Conservation, and those in national and regional networks have a major role to play;
- the need for an integrated approach to the conservation of all types of useful plants.

Information needs and information available at national and local levels¹¹

9 Biological effects include genetic and ecological effect such as fragmentation of populations, loss of pollinators or breeding systems, interactions between wild species and cultivars or GMOs. Human effects cover consequences in terms of food security, income, need to switch to other plants, etc.

10 Reference to FAO/GPA Priority Activity N° 8

11 Reference to Priority Activity N° 17 and paragraph 73 b of the FAO/GPA and Articles 7, 8, 9 and 17 of the CBD

24. In order to better quantify the role of wild plants in food and agriculture, more information needs to be gathered, not just in the form of field inventories as to which plants are used and where, but data on their population dynamics, impacts of wild-harvesting on population survival, conservation status, quantities harvested, their contribution to nutrition, health and other human needs, as well as local knowledge, social, economic, and agronomic data, and local plans and policies. At the national and regional levels, there is a need to gather information on useful plant species within ecotones, high diversity agro-ecosystems, and Vavilov centres. Such inventories and information gathering should be directed at practical ends and provide guidance on actions that need to be taken to ensure the conservation and sustainable use of target species as well as pointing to the need for establishing new biosphere reserves, or other appropriate management systems. It may involve not only taxonomists and parataxonomists but local trained agriculturalists and farmers. At the local level, there is a need to inventory useful plants species in protected areas (emphasising MAB biosphere reserves), sacred groves, multipurpose management forests, homestead farms, areas of special interest such as seashores for algae/seaweed collection).

25. Methodologies for making such inventories and information gathering exist but most developing countries lack the resources to carry it out. Once the information has been gathered, it needs to be compiled in one place/database and made available in readily accessible forms. Analyses then should be made to determine, *inter alia*, which useful wild plants are stored in *ex situ* collections (genebanks, clonal collections, field gene banks, botanic garden collections, herbaria), which of them occur in protected areas, for which of them management plans have been prepared. In this connection, Botanic Gardens Conservation International (BGCI) should encourage its members to engage in a pro-active policy on the *ex situ* conservation of useful wild plants as a back-up measure to supplement *in situ* conservation.

26. Consideration might be given to revising the guidelines for biodiversity Country Studies to take account of useful wild plants. The SBSTTA should provide advice on how to make such inventories and monitor changes over time. Advantage should be taken of the experience with regional initiatives such as the Council of Europe Working Group on Biosubsistence that has sponsored a 'Catalogue of the Wild Relatives of Cultivated Plants Native to Europe' (Heywood & Zohary 1995) and a series of workshops on their conservation (Valdés & al. 1997).

27. Inventories of useful wild plants should also cover wild relatives of crops and domesticates, collection of information on elements to characterise the habitat of the species concerned, their status (declining, sustainably used etc.), the income derived from their use, the seasons concerned, quantity used, whether land rights (*droits coutumiers*) are recognised, and what conservation action would be required.

28. At the global level, participants acknowledged that much work has been done by WCMC with the recently completed '1997 IUCN Red List of Threatened Plants'. The Red List shows that 33,798 plant species are threatened, of which limited samples of 5,500 exist in *ex situ* collections, and another 2,000 of these threatened plants are considered 'useful'. The WCMC database provides global status and national status, using the original IUCN Categories of Threat but future editions of the Red List will adopt the revised IUCN Categories. Good information exists on protected areas around the world, their legal status; latitude and longitude; digitised boundaries; type of management regime (but not always on the *effectiveness* of the management which leads to assume that only some 10% of protected areas are actually well protected). Inventories of which plant species occur in which protected areas are dramatically missing.

29. At the national level, there is little information on status of useful species or subspecies and how this status is changing, making it difficult to determine what is happening to most useful species over time.

30. Given this background, participants identified the following issues:

- the desirability of compiling a global encyclopaedia along the lines of the multi-volume Plant Resources of South-East Asia (PROSEA) handbook should be considered¹³
- questions of data ownership and protection need to be addressed
- taxonomic needs so as to be able to compare data across countries and the role of local common names should be explored; the use of Standard Names for conservation Purposes should be explored further; adoption of the International Legume Database and Information System (ILDIS) model should be considered and multi-media approaches such as that of ETI Multimedia Interactive Software, VideoFloras; the possibility of making local collections through the use of 'parataxonomists'.

Under-utilised plants¹⁴

31. The under-utilised species, including traditional species in homestead farms can contribute to food security, nutrition, economic welfare of human beings and agricultural diversification by sustainable and economic production of food and industrial raw materials. However, the number of such important species are not known. Conservation of this untapped biodiversity through its local, regional and international use in economic and sustainable ways is essential. This can be done in a realistic manner by improving the productivity of traditional farming and natural ecosystems where most under-utilised species exist. However, this needs to be done carefully so that diversity of these species is maintained within the systems for better use. The promotion of under-utilised species can be done through networking and by arranging workshops/meetings. The capacity building is needed with particular emphasis on improvement and commercialisation of these species.

32. The Centre for Under-utilised Crops (ICUC) indicated it was willing to co-ordinate the implementation of programmes through collaboration with other programmes/agencies, such as UNESCO-UNU-TWAS 'South-South' Co-operation (e.g. on training, transfer of knowledge), UNIFEM, UNDP, IPGRI, IUFRO (on forest products and mixed systems, on pioneer species not used for timber).

Implementation measures

33. The specific aspects which could be addressed through inter-agency contributions identified by participants are:

- development of methodologies and techniques
- tapping into existing networks and setting up new ones as needed
- ensuring information linkages amongst organisations and programmes
- providing mechanisms for linking up national initiatives
- capacity building
- awareness raising
- demonstrating what can be done.

34. In the domain of *capacity building*, participants identified the following points:

- the need to modify how extension services work in order to expand the focus on crops to cover also useful wild plants;
- the need for more collaborative work between Development NGOs such as

13 PROSEA = Plant Resources of South East Asia. An international programme whose purpose is to make available the wealth of dispersed knowledge on plant resources for education, extension, research and industry through a computerised databank and a multi-volume handbook. It involves institutions in Indonesia, Malaysia, the Netherlands, Papua New Guinea, the Philippines, Thailand and Vietnam.

14 Reference to FAO/GPA Priority Activity N° 12 (Note participants considered that the preamble underestimates the numbers of plants concerned).

ITDG and formal sector institutions such as IPGRI and FAO, in developing methodologies for assessments that lead to practical measures for the implementation of measures for the improved conservation of wild foods through their sustainable use.

- the possibility of tapping into existing programmes or projects to serve as loci for training the trainers in the conservation and sustainable use of useful wild plants
- the use of the Farmer Field School model of FAO (on integrated pest management)
- build upon the many NGO projects at the local level to promote action on the conservation and sustainable use of useful wild plants;
- need to train high level policy makers on the importance of ecosystem management.

35. In the domain of *raising awareness*, participants proposed the following action as an immediate step:

- revision and publication of the brochure 'Conserving Wild Relatives of Crops' (IPGRI/WWF/IUCN),
- preparation of a separate volume on the conservation and sustainable use of useful wild plants. IPGRI could explore with IIED and the People and Plants Programme on the means to produce this publication. Care should be taken to analyse the target audience.

36. In the longer term action on awareness raising, consideration should be given to:

- preparation of posters/CD-ROM/videos on the conservation and sustainable use of useful wild plants. It was proposed that participants with experience with such material (such as UNESCO) should form a group to explore the technical and financial means for such material).
- preparation of a fact sheet on wild plants (for COP meetings for example). DIVERSITAS could lead this action.
- adding on to or creating web sites, paying attention to the message contents, the audience, etc. (UNESCO, FAO and IPGRI)
- organisation of lunchtime presentations at COP IV and/or the 1999 SBSTTA meeting. UNESCO and FAO to discuss with the CBD Secretariat.
- workshops in different regions with decision makers, social partners, extension workers.

Next steps

37. The report of this consultation, when finalised, will then submitted by DIVERSITAS to the Executive Secretary of the CBD. It is noted that although the outcomes and recommendations in this Report are not binding on any of the participating agencies or organisations, Participants agreed to endeavour, however, to bring the Report and its recommendations to the attention of their governing bodies so as to incorporate them, as appropriate, into the work plans of each agency or organisation.

38. It was proposed and agreed that discussions should continue in this type of open-ended ad hoc forum and that other agencies such as the World Bank, UNDP, as well as further Development NGOs be included.

39. Participants agreed to work in an opportunistic fashion to identify whenever possible projects and activities for collaborative action between the agencies, working closely with the countries concerned.

40. In consideration of the desirability of continuing the discussions initiated at this meeting, the Consultation requested FAO to consider hosting the next meeting to take the process forward.

Closure

41. Vernon Heywood, as the main initiator of this consultation, thanked UNESCO as the host organisation, Dr Hodgkin (IPGRI) for his valuable role in facilitating much of the meeting and all the participants for their

contributions and Dr. Jane Robertson (UNESCO) for preparing the Minutes.
The Consultation was then closed.

For further information please contact:

DIVERSITAS Secretariat
c/o UNESCO-MAB
1 rue Miollis
75015 Paris, France
tel: 33-1-45684054 or 93 / fax: 33-1-45685832 / e-mail: c.adam@unesco.org
or diversitas@unesco.org

Annex 1: Acronyms

BGCI	Botanic Gardens Conservation International, UK
CBD	Convention on Biological Diversity
CGIAR	Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research
CIFOR	Centre for International Forestry Research - CGIAR
CITES	Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora
COP	Conference of the Parties (CBD)
ECG	Ecosystem Conservation Group
ECP	European Co-operative Programme for Crop Genetic Resource Networks
ETI	Expert Centre for Taxonomic Identification ,University of Amsterdam
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations
GATT/TRIPS	General Agreement on Trade and Tariffs/Trade Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights
GCTE	Global Change and Terrestrial Ecosystems
GEF	Global Environmental Facility
GPA	Global Plan of Action
IABG	International Association of Botanical Gardens
IBOY	International Biodiversity Observation Year
ICMAP	International Council for Medicinal and Aromatic Plants of IUBS
ICSU	International Council of Scientific Unions
ICUC	International Centre for Underutilised Crops
IGBP	International Geosphere-Biosphere Programme
IIED	International Institute for Environment and Development
IPGRI	International Plant Genetic Resources Institute
ITDG	Intermediate Technology Development Group
IUBS	International Union of Biological Sciences
IUCN	IUCN - The World Conservation Union
IUFRO	International Union of Forestry Research Organisations
IUMS	International Union of Microbiological Societies
MAB	Man and the Biosphere Programme of UNESCO
MEDUSA	Network for the Identification, Conservation and Exploitation of Wild Plants in the Mediterranean Region
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
RBG Kew	Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew, UK
SBSTTA	Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice (to the Conference of Parties of the Convention on Biological Diversity)
SCOPE	Scientific Committee on Problems of the Environment
STAP	Science and Technology Advisory Panel
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation
UNIFEM	United Nations Development Fund for Women
WCMC	World Conservation Monitoring Centre
WFCC	World Federation of Culture Collections
WWF	World Wide Fund for Nature