



CONVENTION ON BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY

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Item 22 of the provisional agenda*

SUSTAINABLE USE, INCLUDING TOURISM

Note by the Executive Secretary

I. INTRODUCTION

1. As provided for in its programme of work (decision IV/16, annex II), the Conference of the Parties will consider at its fifth meeting "sustainable use, including tourism" as one of the three themes for in-depth discussion. In preparation for this, the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice (SBSTTA), at its fourth meeting, considered the development of approaches and practices for the sustainable use of biological resources in the context of tourism and adopted recommendation IV/7, which is contained in annex I to the report of the fourth meeting of SBSTTA (UNEP/CBD/COP/5/2). At its fifth meeting, SBSTTA considered sustainable use as a cross-cutting issue and adopted recommendation V/12, which is contained in annex to the report of that meeting (UNEP/CBD/COP/5/3).

2. The Conference of Parties is invited to:

(a) Consider SBSTTA recommendation IV/7, on development of approaches and practices for the sustainable use of biological resources, including tourism, as well as the assessment of the interlinkages between tourism and biological diversity annexed thereto (see also section II, paragraph 6, below); and

(b) Consider SBSTTA recommendation V/12, on sustainable use of the components of biological diversity: identification of sectoral activities that could adopt biodiversity-friendly practices and technologies (see also section III, paragraph 11, below).

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II. SUSTAINABLE USE AND TOURISM

3. In paragraph 14 of its decision IV/15, the Conference of the Parties requested Parties to submit information to the Executive Secretary on various matters related to tourism and biological diversity including:

- (a) Current threats to biological diversity from tourism activities;
- (b) Basic approaches strategies and instruments that demonstrate where tourism and conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity are mutually supportive;
- (c) The involvement of the private sector, local and indigenous communities in establishing sustainable tourism practices;
- (d) Collaborative efforts at the regional and the subregional levels, including case-studies of particular relevance;
- (e) Infrastructure planning and regional and land-use planning for tourism that have incorporated consideration of the Convention on Biological Diversity; or
- (f) Consideration of policies or activities which are supportive of its aims.

4. On the basis of the inputs in response to this request, as well as earlier submissions of Parties and information derived from other sources, the Executive Secretary prepared a note entitled "Development of approaches and practices for the sustainable use biological resources, including tourism" (UNEP/CBD/SBSTTA/4/11) to assist SBSTTA in its consideration of the issue at its fourth meeting.

5. At that meeting, SBSTTA developed an assessment of the interlinkages between biological diversity and tourism, which covers the role of tourism in the sustainable use of biological resources and the potential impacts of tourism on biological diversity. In recommendation IV/7, SBSTTA, *inter alia*, recommended that the Conference of the Parties adopt the assessment, which is annexed to the recommendation, and that Parties, Governments, the tourism industry and relevant international organizations consider it as a basis for the policies, programmes and activities in the field of sustainable tourism, by. Paragraph (d) of the recommendation emphasizes nine points arising from the assessment.

6. At its seventh session, in April 1999, the Commission on Sustainable Development adopted an international work programme on sustainable tourism development, to be reviewed in 2002. One element of this programme is that Governments are urged to "consider the ratification or adoption, and promote the implementation and enforcement, as appropriate, of standards or guidelines relevant to the travel and tourism industry". ^{1/} The United Nations system is invited to contribute to this work programme. More specifically, the Conference of Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity is invited to further consider, in the context of the process of the exchange of experiences, existing knowledge and best practice on sustainable tourism development and biological diversity with a view to contributing to international guidelines for activities related to sustainable tourism development in vulnerable terrestrial, marine and coastal ecosystems and

^{1/} See paragraph 4 (k) of decision 7/3 of the Commission on Sustainable Development.

habitats of major importance for biological diversity and protected areas, including fragile mountain ecosystems.

7. At its fourth meeting, SBSTTA, in paragraph (b) of recommendation IV/7, recommended that the Convention accept the invitation of the Commission on Sustainable Development to participate in the Commission's work programme on sustainable tourism development, with a view to contributing to the above-mentioned international guidelines. In this respect, SBSTTA suggested that the Conference of the Parties should transmit the assessment of the interlinkages between biological diversity and tourism to the Commission. In light of the fact that SBSTTA had considered its work on tourism as an example of the work on sustainable use under the Convention, it also suggested that further findings of SBSTTA with regard to sustainable use also be transmitted to the Commission on Sustainable Development at its tenth session. SBSTTA further recommended that Parties, Governments and organizations be encouraged to continue to submit case-studies in this regard.

8. It may also be noted that, in the context of the process under the Commission on Sustainable Development, there are opportunities to build on existing work on tourism in the field of environmental protection, such as: the work that has already been undertaken by the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) to develop proposed Principles for Sustainable Tourism; collaboration between UNEP and International Coral Reefs Initiative; the Tour Operator Initiative for Sustainable Tourism Development (supported by UNEP, the World Tourism Organisation, and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)), and the guidance on the development and management of tourism in sensitive areas that UNEP has published in association with various organisations. A summary of these initiatives is provided in documents UNEP/CBD/COP/4/Inf.21 and UNEP/CBD/COP/5/INF/13.

III. SUSTAINABLE USE AS A CROSS-CUTTING ISSUE

9. At its fifth meeting, the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice considered sustainable use as a cross-cutting issue. To assist SBSTTA in this task, the Executive Secretary prepared a note (UNEP/CBD/SBSTTA/5/13), which described the concept of sustainable use in the context of the objectives, definitions and other provisions of the Convention, and categorized the various measures for sustainable use under the Convention. It also reviewed the development of this concept by the Conference of Parties and discussed the question of identifying sectoral biodiversity-friendly practices and technologies. The note will be available at the fifth meeting of the Conference of Parties for information purposes.

10. Following its consideration of the issue, SBSTTA adopted recommendation V/12, entitled "Sustainable use of the components of biological diversity: identification of sectoral activities that could adopt biodiversity-friendly practices and technologies", in which it recommends that the Conference of the Parties reminds Parties to integrate the sustainable use of biological diversity into relevant national sectoral or cross-sectoral plans, programmes, policies and strategies.

11. In paragraph 2 of the same recommendation, it is further recommended that the Conference of the Parties request the Executive Secretary to compile and disseminate case-studies on best practice and lessons learned from the use of biological diversity under the thematic areas of the Convention, and to assemble practical principles, operational guidelines and associated instruments which would assist Parties and Governments to develop ways to

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achieve the sustainable use of biological diversity, within the framework of the ecosystem approach. SBSTTA suggests the use of a process similar to that used for the development of the ecosystem approach, drawing upon the experience of other organizations. The recommendation notes the linkages with thematic programmes of work on indicators 2/ and incentive measures. 3/ It is suggested that Parties, Governments and organizations be invited to undertake appropriate actions to assist other Parties to increase their capacity to implement the sustainable-use objective at regional, national and local levels.

2/ See section III of the note by the Executive Secretary on progress on cross-cutting issues prepared for the fifth meeting of the Conference of the Parties (UNEP/CBD/COP/5/12) and SBSTTA recommendation V/11, on development of indicators of biological diversity.

3/ See the note by the Executive Secretary on further analysis of the design and implementation of incentive measures prepared for the fifth meeting of the Conference of the Parties (UNEP/CBD/COP/5/15).