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IMPLEMENTATION OF THE GLOBAL INITIATIVE ON COMMUNICATION, EDUCATION AND PUBLIC AWARENESS (CEPA)

Report on CEPA activities during the inter-sessional period

Note by the Executive Secretary

I. INTRODUCTION

1. At its sixth meeting, and recalling the provisions of Article 13 of the Convention on Biological Diversity, the Conference of the Parties adopted the Global Initiative on Communication, Education and Public Awareness (CEPA) and the programme of work contained in the Annex to its decision VI/19. Pursuant to that decision, the Secretariat initiated activities to implement the CEPA programme of work in collaboration with key partners. The present note has been prepared by the Executive Secretary to assist the Conference of the Parties at its seventh meeting to review the status of implementation of the Global Initiative on CEPA, to consider a set of proposed recommendations to strengthen the CEPA initiative and to enhance its contribution to the overall implementation process for the Convention.

2. Section II of the present note provides a detailed review of the status of implementation of the relevant paragraphs of decision VI/19 on the Global Initiative on CEPA. In particular, the section provides a synthesis of the activities that have been undertaken and the outputs generated in direct response to the provisions of paragraphs 4 and 12 of decision VI/19. Section III provides a detailed review of the status of implementation and outputs that have been generated in each of the three programme elements of the CEPA programme of work (Annex to decision VI/19). Section IV analyses the lessons learned, focusing on the overall implementation process, while Section V contains suggested recommendations for the consideration of the Conference of the Parties at its seventh meeting.

* UNEP/CBD/COP/7/1 and Corr.1.

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II. STATUS OF IMPLEMENTATION OF DECISION VI/19 – CEPA

Monitoring and evaluation of the Global Initiative on CEPA

3. In paragraph 4 of decision VI/19, the Conference of Parties requested the Executive Secretary in consultation with the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), the Commission for Education and Communication of IUCN, and other members of the Consultative Working Group of Experts established by decision V/17, as well as any relevant institutions, to monitor and evaluate the implementation of the Global Initiative, specifically on the start-up phase of the programme of work contained in the Annex to decision VI/19. In response to that decision, the Secretariat established a working website for the group of experts on CEPA to facilitate a two-way consultative process between the Secretariat and the group and, more specifically, to enable the experts to review draft CEPA documentation, including the draft corporate communication strategy for the Secretariat and the draft CEPA implementation strategy, as appropriate. An electronic forum was also established on the CEPA website to foster communication and provide feedback to the Secretariat, share experiences and expertise, as well as to engage in discussions of relevance to the implementation of CEPA.

4. In addition, as part of the consultative process, the consultative working group of experts was convened at UNESCO headquarters in Paris, France, from 27 to 29 October 2003 to (a) provide feedback on the CEPA programme; and (b) to suggest concrete modalities for the further development of the Global Initiative, in particular recommend actions to be taken, by whom, their costs and source of the financial resources for their implementation, partnership, deadlines, monitoring and evaluation of results achieved. The Government of France and UNESCO contributed financial support for the hosting of the meeting. A detailed report highlighting the outcome and recommendations of the meeting is submitted for the consideration of the Conference of the Parties as document UNEP/CBD/COP/7/17/INF.10.

5. The consultation will continue to be an ongoing and evolving process and the outputs to be generated along the way will be particularly instrumental in enhancing the efforts of the Secretariat in regularly monitoring and evaluating the implementation of the Global Initiative.

Review of CEPA dimensions of the programmes of work of the Convention on Biological Diversity

6. In response to paragraph 4 (b) of decision VI/19, the Secretariat conducted a review of the CEPA dimensions of existing thematic areas and cross-cutting issues of the ongoing programmes of work. A similar review was also initiated on the CEPA dimensions of the National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans (NBSAPs) and the second national reports submitted to the Secretariat. The review was intended to facilitate the work of the Secretariat in the implementation of the CEPA programme of work in support of the Convention and the Strategic Plan. Due to the lack of a structured format for reporting on CEPA dimensions in the programmes of work of the Convention, the review of the NBSAPs and second national reports yielded insufficient consistent information to properly identify common threads and themes. Key issues identified in the review pointed to the need to develop and implement standardized messages and CEPA materials with emphasis on relevance to human experience, incentives for action by the individual and community, all expressed in easy-to-comprehend non-technical language.

7. As a start, the Secretariat is working with communications experts to develop consistent and inspiring messages, which will help guide and enhance the implementation of the relevant CEPA dimensions in the programmes of work of the Convention. The first application of this approach is to the worldwide promotion of the theme and activities for International Day for Biological Diversity for 2004.

Development, implementation and promotion of CEPA demonstration projects

8. In response to paragraph 4 (c) of decision VI/19 the Secretariat initiated the first phase of a school outreach effort through the development of a collaborative partnership with McGill University in Montreal, Canada. The primary focus of this partnership is on the implementation of joint activities to promote the exchange of biodiversity information including the provision of online educational tools on biodiversity.

9. This effort entails the development of a well-targeted website, web-based educational resources, and the implementation of discussion forums between designated pilot schools in Montreal, Canada, an aboriginal school in Australia, a school in Trinidad and Tobago and another in Palau, these latter being the two island States that were the first and the fiftieth to ratify the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety, respectively. Two more schools were identified from the Netherlands and from Malaysia, as the respective hosts of the sixth and seventh meetings of the Conference of the Parties. McGill University provided technical support in the design and implementation of this effort, which is currently being delivered through the CEPA Portal.

10. In addition, the Secretariat also initiated another collaborative partnership with the Roots & Shoots Program of the Jane Goodall Foundation focusing on building synergies that would contribute to the development of appropriate networking, information exchange and capacity-building in CEPA-related activities. In particular, the partnership is aimed at joint development of a training model for education and community awareness programmes to be shared with the National Focal Points for the Convention, encouraging Internet-based discussion groups among schools, teachers and other training experts, making optimal use of the CEPA website to facilitate these activities.

Case studies and best practices in biodiversity communication, education and public awareness

11. The Secretariat has also carried out a series of activities aimed at collecting, from the Parties and from national and international organizations, relevant case studies and best practices in biodiversity communication, education and public awareness. In addition, a review of the available second national reports, NBSAPs, interim reports and relevant project papers was particularly valuable as a source of information on relevant case studies and best practices. Additional case studies were also obtained from relevant websites of a number of international organizations active in biodiversity conservation and sustainable development initiatives around the world.

12. The case studies and best practices assembled by the Secretariat identified a wide range of effective activities undertaken by the Parties and other partners. Available documentation on the Internet is extensive, with many excellent websites featuring best practices and case studies of biodiversity and sustainable development CEPA activities, especially at all levels of education and community-based initiatives that reflect a high degree of success in public awareness activities. A common thread is the successful initiation of partnerships with non-governmental and community-based organizations, suggesting that in some cases it would be preferable to create alliances with practitioners to build on existing initiatives, rather than attempting to emulate them. The Secretariat is currently cataloguing CEPA-related case studies and best practices to be entered on an online compendium, which will be presented on the Convention's website. At a later date, parties will be invited to contribute their own projects to the database and make them available through the clearing-house mechanism.

Development and implementation of a corporate communication strategy

13. In response to paragraph 4(d) of decision VI/19, the Secretariat developed a draft corporate communication strategy for the Secretariat. The Secretariat established a partnership with a private sector promotional agency specifically to, *inter alia*, revamp the corporate strategy and provide better focus for its implementation. The long-term objectives of the partnership were defined to include the following:

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(a) **Foundation:** Build the Secretariat's communications infrastructure to support global media, education and public awareness activities;

(b) **Profile:** Raise the visibility of the Convention as the key instrument for preservation and promotion of biodiversity;

(c) **Relevancy:** Enhance the Secretariat's focal role as global facilitator of the implementation of the Convention;

(d) **Awareness:** Educate key publics on the importance of biodiversity, the ecosystem approach to conservation and the need for fair and equitable sharing of benefits from the use of genetic resources;

(e) **Funding:** Increase availability of financial resources to the Secretariat for implementation of its CEPA functions.

14. As a first step, the Secretariat, in collaboration with the private sector partner, initiated a pilot phase of implementing key elements of the corporate communication strategy with a priority focus on increasing visibility and awareness, whilst developing industry commitment to support initiatives that address biodiversity and the Convention and its Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety. The priority activities undertaken in this pilot phase included:

(a) Definition of target groups, priorities and activities required to effectively carry out CEPA activities as directed by the Parties;

(b) Creation of key messages on biodiversity, the Convention, the Cartagena Protocol and the 2010 biodiversity target to be conveyed to different target audiences;

(c) Building of lasting relationships with the media to promote biodiversity, the Convention, the Protocol and the 2010 target;

(d) Building a strong case for the value of biodiversity and the Convention to increase the stakeholders' commitment;

(e) Development of communication models that can be adapted and used by the National Focal Points to build their CEPA capacities and carry out CEPA activities for their local (national) stakeholders, civil society and the general public.

15. In response to paragraph 12 of decision VI/19, the Secretariat carried out the following activities.

Development of partnerships with academic and research institutions for exchange of biodiversity publications

16. The Secretariat established contacts with a large number of universities and non-governmental organizations worldwide to initiate a process of regular exchange of publications on biodiversity. As at the end of August 2003, the total number of institutions and organizations contacted stood at 93 academic and research institutions in 64 countries; 82 non-governmental organizations, intergovernmental organizations, United Nations and other international agencies; and 11 indigenous organizations. As a start, the Secretariat disseminated the latest copy of the "Handbook of the Convention on Biological Diversity" and other promotional materials produced by the Secretariat. The exchange process will no doubt be an evolving one, incorporating additional institutions and organizations, and will be further enhanced as the CEPA electronic portal becomes fully operational and widely publicized.

Formal liaison with schools

17. The school outreach effort, described in more detail in paragraphs 29-30 and 38-40 below, evolved out of the activities undertaken jointly with a number of schools in Montreal on the occasion of the International Day for Biological Diversity for 2003. To promote public education and awareness of biodiversity among future generations, the Secretariat initiated school visits to selected Montreal area schools on the occasion of the International Day for Biological Diversity. Staff from the Secretariat showed a short video, followed by presentations tailored to the interests of students ranging in age from 7 to 17 about the importance of biodiversity, explaining the effects that biodiversity loss has on everyday life, and what individuals can do to help preserve this variety of life on earth. International Day for Biological Diversity posters were presented to all the classrooms and a list of educational websites related to biodiversity issues were given to teachers for distribution to students. The presentations by staff of the Secretariat stimulated lively discussions and the experience generated many ideas for expanded school outreach in 2004.

18. The expanded school outreach effort is therefore intended to create tools and products that will appeal to different ages with varying degrees of complexity, and to be informative and thus help promote awareness and skills in the implementation of the objectives of the Convention and its Strategic Plan.

Make available all publications produced by the Secretariat in the six official languages of the United Nations

19. The Secretariat has not produced any promotional materials or publications specifically focusing on biodiversity communication, education and public awareness for the purpose of wider dissemination to the Parties and other partners. Lack of financial resources to cover the publication costs has precluded the commencement of this activity. However, it is envisaged that the formulation of a funding proposal for consideration by the Global Environment Facility (GEF) and other potential sources of financial support for the CEPA initiative will make appropriate provisions, including budgetary allocations, to address the publication and dissemination of CEPA promotional materials. It is worth noting that Spain has offered to publish the Handbook of the Convention on Biological Diversity in Spanish, for wider distribution.

III. STATUS OF IMPLEMENTATION OF THE ACTIVITIES OUTLINED IN THE ANNEX TO DECISION VI/19

20. The activities outlined under the three programme elements were designed to address issues of institutional arrangements as well as programmatic priority areas in the Global Initiative on CEPA. The present note provides a summary of the tasks and activities accomplished in the context of these two broad categories, but does not make any separation of the possible impacts of the implementation process as they relate to *communication* on the one hand, and *education and public awareness* on the other.

Programme element 1

Develop an electronic portal and alternative information dissemination mechanism

21. In response to paragraph 4 and 12 of decision VI/19, the Secretariat devoted resources to further developing the information tools, features and resources on the website of the Convention on Biological Diversity (www.biodiv.org) in order to enable it to provide support for implementation of the CEPA programme of work and, more specifically, the following tools and resources:

(a) The creation of distinct portal entry points on www.biodiv.org, which provide for the information needs of groups identified in the Secretariat's draft corporate communications strategy;

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(b) The creation of a series of online brochures presenting educational and explanatory information on biodiversity, biosafety, and other aspects of the work of the Convention, as representative models of communication tools to be created by other Parties to the Global Initiative;

(c) The deployment of an electronic portal, which aggregates information on CEPA, facilitates cooperation between partners in the Global Initiative and provides support for the capacity-building initiatives of partners;

(d) As part of the development of a communication strategy for the Secretariat, the creation of information-rich press and media;

(e) The deployment of electronic communication mechanisms in support of other CEPA programme initiatives, notably the CEPA demonstration projects including the school outreach effort such as the Schools Twinning project, The School Outreach Programme and others.

22. In support of Programme element I, as contained in the programme of work for CEPA, contained in the Annex to decision VI/19, the CEPA portal, which is being developed as an integral part of the Convention website enhancement exercise, will make visible:

- (a) A roster of experts/registry on biodiversity communication and education
- (b) Moderated electronic forums on biodiversity education-related issues
- (c) Hyperlinks to other relevant portals and websites
- (d) Databases and links to databases on case studies, best practices, standards and publications
- (e) Hyperlinks to educational institutions and centres of excellence.

23. Alternative information and communication mechanisms, including a fax server, hardcopy of publications, template presentations, etc., will also be developed to ensure full participation and equitable access to information.

24. Users of the CEPA portal will be encouraged to access the interactive communication mechanisms, including the feedback form, electronic forums and e-mail to the Secretariat, to submit materials, suggest improvements and recommend links and new partnerships. The Secretariat assumes that the success and effective use of the CEPA portal will be dependent on participation and interactivity with its user community.

25. The CEPA portal will also develop mentorship mechanisms, where experts will be able to mentor novices on specific initiatives, programmes and activities. Participants will be encouraged to submit information on biodiversity education needs, and the Secretariat will attempt to match their needs with available expertise.

26. Information on template biodiversity initiatives developed by the Secretariat, including templates and support material to implement similar programmes at the national, regional and international levels, is available for review and participation of the various CEPA stakeholders. Participants involved in these initiatives are encouraged to assist novices and acculturate them on how to implement similar initiatives for their communities

27. The first education pilot projects undertaken by the Secretariat and, in particular, the schools twinning project as well as the material developed for the school awareness programme with Roots &

Shoots will be posted on special pages, along with a description of the project and links to Roots & Shoots worldwide network. The school twinning project discussion forums will be hosted on the CEPA portal and monitored by the Secretariat and by the key partner in the project, McGill University.

28. These two pilot projects are expected to produce models that may be adopted or adapted by the Parties in order to educate students and promote awareness and understanding of biodiversity at both global and local levels. While the first target audiences are students (kindergarten through completion of secondary school), the models may also serve for community awareness especially as the content is refined and its scope broadened.

29. The Secretariat initiated discussion with McGill University's School of Computer Science, Faculty of Education and School of the Environment to establish partnerships aimed at developing web-based educational materials for students of different ages and their teachers, and assist the Secretariat in preparing the education pages to be hosted on the CEPA website. It is envisaged that these web pages would become the prototypes for education/public awareness pages of the National Focal Points of the Convention, in collaboration with their national education institutions and other related government authorities. Together, the Convention site and the national sites would then be integral parts of a global communication, education and public awareness network of biodiversity-related exchanges between communities, showcasing local initiatives and creating a database of educational material on biodiversity. The Secretariat would be at the centre of the network, recognized as the source of expertise and creating a standard of best practice.

30. A key element of this initiative is the implementation of discussion forums between designated "twinning" schools representing different regions of the world. The initial focus in the implementation was on the following three sets of paired schools:

- The Netherlands and Malaysia (host countries for the sixth and seventh meetings of the Conference of the Parties, respectively);
- Trinidad and Tobago and Palau, the two island States that were, respectively, the first and the fiftieth to ratify the Cartagena Protocol;
- Australia and Canada, focusing on schools where indigenous (traditional) knowledge is fostered.

31. This project, therefore, has two components: the first component entails the creation of a website devoted to elementary to high-school biodiversity education. There are many outstanding models available on the Internet that can guide the development of this component (e.g. the United Nations developed a rather sophisticated page for children: the UNCyberSchoolBus (www.un.org/Pubs/CyberSchoolBus/index.html)).

32. The second component of the project entails the design of a communications project between or among schools. This project makes use of the kids' page and Internet-based communication tools (Internet mail lists, reader news, chat, etc.).

Identify potential partners and stakeholders

33. The Secretariat sent out requests to the National Focal Points of the Convention and to relevant organizations and institutions to seek their advice and also nominate potential individual experts and institutions in the fields of biodiversity communication, education and public awareness, who would be requested to comprise a *roster of experts, organizations and networks* on CEPA. A number of nominations have come in from several of the National Focal Points and the Secretariat continues to receive additional names of potential individual experts and national institutions and organizations. It is anticipated that, when the process of establishing a comprehensive registry of key expertise and

stakeholders has been completed, the roster or registry will be particularly instrumental in the exchange of specialized knowledge and expertise among professionals. It will also support the development of appropriate education, training and public awareness materials, applications and tools, the sharing of experiences through case studies and best practices and the provision of expert advice on a broad range of issues concerning communication, education and public awareness of biodiversity and the Convention.

Programme element 2

34. A review of the CEPA dimensions in the second national reports and the NBSAPS was carried out by the Secretariat in direct response to Programme element 2 of the CEPA programme of work, as contained in the Annex to decision VI/19. The objective of the review was to document and analyse information contained in the reports, with a view to articulating national-level needs for communication, education and public awareness. The review was based on 133 first national reports, 96 second national reports and 94 NBSAPS that had been received by the Secretariat as at 30 July 2003.

35. The analysis of the documented information may be of limited use, given the insufficient number of reports reviewed and the inadequate nature of the information contained therein. The formats for preparation of the first and second national reports did not specifically request information related to national CEPA needs *per se* and the documented information is therefore of a general nature, mostly derived from responses related to the general measures undertaken by the Parties to implement the provisions of the Convention. In addition, it is also conceivable that this information may well be out of date in view of the time lapse between the submission of the first national reports and the review of the CEPA needs in these and subsequent reports. In this regard, it is recommended that a more comprehensive approach be adopted to assess national-level CEPA needs as a key element in the formulation of an operational strategy to strengthen the implementation of the Global Initiative on CEPA. The draft matrix contained in the report of the meeting of the consultative working group, held in Paris in October 2003 (UNEP/CBD/COP/7/17/INF.10), makes reference to the need to conduct needs assessments as a basis for the implementation of the identified priority activities.

36. With respect to the identification of links and the provision of searchable means to access biodiversity knowledge through the clearing-house mechanism, the Secretariat is currently developing a CEPA web-based portal as part of the process for establishing a global network on CEPA with operational links to the clearing-house mechanism. The details of the evolving web-based portal are described in paragraphs 21 to 24 above.

37. Paragraphs 11 and 12 above highlight the series of activities already undertaken by the Secretariat, or currently underway, concerning the collection and exchange of communication, education and public awareness projects, case studies and best practices. It is envisaged that, once the analysis is completed, the outcome will be repackaged in various formats (including CD-ROM, publications, etc.) and disseminated to the Parties, other partners and stakeholders through the CEPA portal, relevant workshops and other avenues, as appropriate.

38. As part of the overall support to the programmes of work of the Convention, the Government of the Netherlands has provided financial support to the Secretariat specifically to build the capacity of two developing countries to establish and maintain their own national clearing-house mechanism websites. This activity is now implemented by the Secretariat as an integral component of the process to develop a global network on communication, education and public awareness, details of which are provide in paragraphs 21 to 24 above. The Secretariat has identified candidate countries, with the final selection to be made from Grenada, Mali and Palau. The basic structure for the collaborative support in the development of the national clearing-house mechanisms has been drafted and will soon be discussed in greater detail with the identified candidate countries. It is envisaged that the national clearing-house mechanisms to be developed under this programme of support will be operational in early 2004.

Programme element 3

Partnership for school awareness programme

39. As noted in paragraph 10 above, in the weeks following the International Day for Biological Diversity in May and also in early June 2003, the Secretariat initiated discussions and consultations with the Roots & Shoots Program, with a view to establishing partnership to develop more extensive awareness programme for schools. Roots & Shoots, the Jane Goodall Institute's environmental and humanitarian programme for young people, has experience in outreach on environment topics to schools in Montreal, Canada, as well as in more than 50 countries around the world. The discussions with Roots & Shoots noted that, while the programme has tended to target primary school children, the partnership with the Secretariat would go beyond this target group and contribute educational and related promotional material to secondary-school-level students. As a direct follow-up the Secretariat, in collaboration with Roots & Shoots, prepared presentation materials for this particular level of students and is also producing a generic biodiversity presentation for the younger students, including some simplified material on specific thematic topics (fresh water, forests). Enhanced versions of these presentations will be published on the education pages of the Convention website. In addition, CD-ROM versions will also be produced and more traditional publishing methods employed in order to make the range of promotional materials available to the widest audience. The Convention on Biological Diversity/ Roots & Shoots joint programme for the 2003-2004 academic period began in mid-October 2003 with plans to deliver the first school presentations in the Montreal area in November 2003.

40. While the Secretariat and Roots & Shoots are jointly responsible for the development of professional presentations on biodiversity for the schools, the longer-term need for pedagogical guidelines has been recognized as a concern. The commitment of funds for the development of guidelines and a manual to support countries in the formulation and implementation of national education and public awareness strategies and action plans, and related online courses should be addressed in the formulation of an operational strategy for CEPA, as outlined in the report of the meeting of the consultative group of experts (UNEP/CBD/COP/7/17/INF.10).

41. To this end, with financial support from the Government of the Netherlands, the Secretariat will be seeking to initiate a process to produce a manual that will guide the Parties in the development and implementation of the national CEPA strategies and action plan. This production process will draw heavily on inputs and expert advice from some of the key partners, as well as individuals registered with the roster of experts.

Partnership with the World Heritage Centre of UNESCO

42. The Secretariat has held a series of consultations with the World Heritage Centre of UNESCO, focusing on development of a partnership agreement related to institutional strengthening. Among other things, the agreement is intended to enable the development of joint activities in direct response to decision VI/19 on Communication, Education and Public Awareness and its Annex on the programme of work for CEPA. Specifically, the areas of cooperation covered under the partnership agreement include:

(a) Collaborate in the development of an electronic portal and an alternative information dissemination mechanism for the establishment of a global network on communication, education and public awareness, where possible building on existing initiatives. In particular, contribute to:

- (i) The efforts of the Secretariat to make visible the expertise in biodiversity communication and education including communication, education and public awareness training databases;

- (ii) The establishment of links to the portal with other networks and websites on communication and education;
- (iii) The efforts of the Secretariat in the creation of a registry of education and communications experts;

(b) Collaborate with the Secretariat in the identification of national needs for communication, education and public awareness, exchange of knowledge and results of case studies, projects and criteria for best practices in communication, education and public awareness.

(c) Contribute to the efforts of the Secretariat, in collaboration with other organizations, in the development of capacity-building tools and kits for mainstreaming biodiversity into school curricula, creation and delivery of appropriate training programmes including distance learning programmes, on-line training courses, manuals, twinning programmes and courses for trainers and educators.

43. The partnership agreement between the Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity and the World Heritage Centre is in line with the provisions of Article 13 of the Convention on Biological Diversity, that provides for the promotion of the importance and inclusion of measures required for biodiversity conservation in educational programmes, as well as establishment of cooperative efforts with international organizations in developing educational and public awareness programmes, with respect to conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity.

Cooperation with the International Union of Biological Sciences (IUBS)

44. In fulfilment of some of the key objectives of Programme element 3, the Secretariat initiated consultations with the International Union of Biological Sciences (IUBS) to explore opportunities for joint efforts to develop the professional capacity of biodiversity educators and communicators. As a direct follow-up to those consultations, the Secretariat will prepare a comprehensive discussion paper articulating the role of research, training and education in the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity and the safe application of biotechnology. The paper will be presented at the twenty-eighth IUBS General Assembly and International Conference on Biological Sciences, to be held in Cairo in Egypt from 18 to 23 January 2004. The paper will also be the subject of more detailed review and discussion in a facilitated workshop side-event, to be held during the IUBS Conference.

45. The focus of the discussion paper will be on articulating the strategic role of academic and research communities in supporting biodiversity education and training, including through the establishment of appropriate networks to deliver the required training and education initiatives. The workshop side-event discussions will use the content of the discussion paper to articulate practical suggestions to guide the development and implementation of joint efforts in biodiversity education and training and focused on the following major outputs:

(a) Identification of priority areas of focus for the development of joint efforts in biodiversity education and training;

(b) Review of the proposed content, formats and delivery of education and training initiatives/programmes in the identified priority areas of focus;

(c) Review of the proposed partnerships and related institutional arrangements to support the development and generation of the identified initiatives/programmes;

(d) Review and articulation of a realistic short-to-medium timeframe, perhaps with a phased approach for the identified initiatives/programmes; and

(e) Identification of priority action items to initiate immediate follow-up activities and also to maintain the momentum of discussions and related outcomes.

Partnerships with journalists

46. The Secretariat established a comprehensive database of media organizations and specialized journalists, publications, information offices of intergovernmental organizations, non-governmental organizations and other organizations, and Internet-based news services specializing in communicating biodiversity-related issues. The database currently contains about 700 records. This is also part of Programme element 3 (action 8) calling for the establishment of partnerships with journalists and broadcasters engaged in communicating biodiversity-related issues through the mass media.

47. As direct follow-up and to make this database active, the Secretariat developed a special Convention on Biological Diversity *Press Room* on the existing Convention website, specifically to develop it as the focal point of reference and as a resource centre for journalists and others in the media who are interested in biodiversity topics and thus help disseminate biodiversity messages on a range of topics to the general public worldwide.

IV. LESSONS LEARNED

Overall process of implementation of the Global Initiative on CEPA.

48. In general, the implementation process of the Global Initiative on CEPA has been characterized by limited resources that clearly do not match the approved scope and level of implementation of the range of CEPA activities, considerable delays in carrying out the identified activities and, consequently, a slow delivery and generation of the expected outputs. Under the circumstance, the impacts of the Global Initiative on CEPA are only likely to begin to be realized after the CEPA programme has become fully operational at various levels.

49. In particular, the establishment of collaborative partnerships with key organizations and institutions specifically to provide substantive technical inputs in the implementation process has been less than effective in achieving the desired results. Although an early start was made to develop partnerships with some of the key agencies that are particularly active in CEPA-related activities, the desired response from these agencies has been, at best, very limited. Consequently, the interactive consultative forum established by the Secretariat specifically to foster communication, share experiences and expertise and engage in discussions of relevance to CEPA could provide the needed impetus to make the partnership process and interactions more effective than is presently the case. The expressions of commitment to make this happen following the meeting of the Consultative Working Group of Experts was indeed a positive outcome of the meeting and should be followed up by the Secretariat and the expert group itself.

50. In addition, the scope of the partnership process has also been restricted to purely those institutions and organizations that are specifically mentioned in the relevant paragraphs of decision VI/19 and the CEPA programme of work. There are a number of global initiatives that are particularly relevant to the work of CEPA and the development of cooperative partnerships with these initiatives is crucial to the success of CEPA, especially in terms of linking into the current thinking in sustainable development processes. Some of these initiatives include, *inter alia*, the global 2010 biodiversity target, the Millennium Development Goals, the decade for Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) initiative and some of the key outcomes of the World Summit on Sustainable Development. Clearly, CEPA has a role to play in these initiatives and the scope of its “outreach” efforts should therefore be expanded to include linkages to these initiatives if it is to remain relevant and up-to-date with the current perspectives and interlinkages between these initiatives in the context of meeting the evolving demands of sustainable development.

51. The slow progress noted above notwithstanding, the current status of implementation has resulted in some positive achievements that merit special mention. The development of valuable partnerships, particularly in some of the schools and universities within Montreal, the seat of the Convention's Secretariat, has served to establish a strong foundation for CEPA's linkages to biodiversity education and training and thus guide this process as it evolves from a pilot phase into a full-fledged activity. The enhancement of the web page, the CEPA portal, the roster of experts, the collection of case studies, the establishment of a media database, the establishment of permanent links with universities and other centres of excellence around the world, and the corporate communication strategy are also clear signs that, in spite of a slow start, the projects are moving forward.

52. Funding has been and still remains one of the major impediments to the implementation of the Global Initiative on CEPA. The budget approved for CEPA at the sixth meeting of the Conference of the Parties remains woefully inadequate to support some of the basic CEPA activities. Efforts by the Secretariat to secure additional financial support to carry out the budgeted activities have not been successful, with the result that the outputs generated to date have come out of innovative approaches adopted by the Secretariat. Effective communication is a continuously evolving process and requires long-term investment. It therefore comes with costs and the approaches pursued by the Secretariat, however innovative, tend to be short-term and consequently of limited impact. It will therefore be necessary for the Secretariat to seek new approaches that will leverage the necessary political commitment and funding support commensurate with the scope of work and the potential impacts envisaged under the Global Initiative on CEPA. The development of a comprehensive funding proposal, jointly with the other Rio conventions, for the consideration of GEF may serve to set this process in motion and thus help support the Parties and the Secretariat to deliver on the various provisions of the Global Initiative on CEPA.

53. The general perception amongst some of the Parties as well as some of the key partners who comprise the group of experts on CEPA is that there is not much to show in terms of the kinds of impacts expected of a programme with the potential and global reach of CEPA. The activities currently underway, the outputs they have generated to date and the overall direction of the evolution of the CEPA programme of work remain largely unknown outside the Secretariat, thereby further strengthening the perception about lack of delivery of the Global Initiative on CEPA. However, in view of the limited financial support to the CEPA programme of work and the lack of political commitment to secure appropriate funding to match the scope of work, the impacts of CEPA are likely to remain restricted to the pilot efforts initiated by the Secretariat, which by their very nature are of short duration and thus cannot contribute much to long-term sustainability efforts.

Substantive output generation and delivery of the Global Initiative on CEPA

54. As indicated in the paragraphs above, full-fledged implementation of the CEPA programme is progressively taking root with the initiation of some start-up programme activities and pilot projects. It is envisaged that the outputs to be generated from these activities will serve as a basis for the expansion and adoption of the CEPA programmes at the national level. However, whilst the CEPA programme of work appears to contain all the key elements required to address the two strategic priorities (a) institutional arrangements and (b) programmatic priority areas, there is an absence of a comprehensive operational strategy to guide the implementation of the three programme elements in a coherent and consistent manner. There is a need therefore to articulate better focus for the implementation of the three programme elements in terms of:

- (a) Intended audiences,
- (b) Activities,

- (c) Means and resources to undertake the identified activities,
- (d) Distribution of tasks among Parties, the Secretariat and partners,
- (e) Deadlines,
- (f) Outputs to be generated,
- (g) The intended use and impacts of the outputs,
- (h) As well as some form of monitoring and assessment of the activities and their results.

55. In addition, the CEPA programme of work provides a fairly long list of activities to be undertaken in order to achieve the stated objectives of the three programme elements. This in itself places a burden on the implementation process both at the Secretariat and at the national level and may very well limit the effectiveness and impacts of the overall programme. It would seem appropriate, therefore, to identify priority activities within the three programme elements and incorporate these into the process for articulating an operational strategy for the CEPA programme of work. It will be necessary for this process to build on the start-up activities and pilot projects that are currently underway.

56. There is a general perception amongst the CEPA partners that the CEPA programme of work does not make a clear distinction of what constitutes the key components of CEPA – *communication, education, training* and *public awareness* – the interlinkages between these components and their respective individual contributions to the achievement of the overall Global Initiative on CEPA. The lack of clarification of these components poses a challenge for the Secretariat from the standpoint of articulating a balanced operational strategy for the CEPA programme of work, as well as promoting and facilitating its implementation amongst the Parties.

57. Although the formulation and adoption of the Global Initiative on CEPA was the culmination of a series of consultations and expert inputs from a wide range of stakeholders, there is some concern that the CEPA programme of work is still very broad in scope and may not be particularly useful in terms of adapting it to meet the unique needs of some of the Parties. Given the vast differences between the needs of the individual Parties, it is unrealistic to expect to articulate a global programme that meets all the expressed needs of all the individual Parties. However, and to the extent possible, the formulation of an operational strategy for the CEPA programme of work could incorporate elements that address a bottom-up approach in the assessment of needs that would then determine the appropriate level of intervention in the adoption of the CEPA programme of work at the national level.

58. Related to the above is the lack of guidance on how the Secretariat should facilitate and promote the implementation of the Global Initiative on CEPA at the national level, especially those provisions of decision VI/19 that are addressed specifically to the Parties but not to the Executive Secretary of the Secretariat of the Convention. The formulation of the operational strategy should incorporate appropriate provisions and guidelines to enable the Secretariat to discharge the promotional and facilitation functions envisaged under the decision.

59. There are various organizations and institutions that have registered significant achievements in implementing effective CEPA-related programmes that address biodiversity conservation and sustainable use. Although the sixth meeting of the Conference of the Parties provides a specific mandate to the Secretariat to deliver specific outputs as part of the implementation of the CEPA programme of work, the Secretariat would do well to borrow from the experiences of those organizations that have well-established CEPA-type programmes. The cooperative partnerships between the Secretariat and other relevant organizations mentioned in paragraphs 49 and 50 above should focus on achieving better harmonization of efforts and making optimal use of the individual strengths and resources of the respective partners in order to generate the range of outputs that meet the collective and specific needs of the partners.

V. SUGGESTED RECOMMENDATIONS

60. The Conference of the Parties at its seventh meeting may wish to:

(a) Review the status of implementation of the Global Initiative on CEPA as outlined in the present note and, in particular, take note of the progress made, constraints encountered, and the lessons learned in the overall implementation process;

(b) Take note of the report of the meeting of the consultative working group of experts on CEPA submitted as an information document (UNEP/CBD/COP/7/17/INF.10) and, more specifically, the draft matrix in the report, which summarizes suggestions and proposals to enhance the implementation of the Global Initiative on CEPA including, *inter alia*, key elements required to develop an operational strategy to guide the implementation of the three programme elements in a coherent and consistent manner (including prioritization, clarification of intended audience, activities, means and resources to undertake the identified activities, institutional arrangements, results to be generated, as well as the reporting mechanisms on implementation and impacts of outputs).
