

**CONVENTION ON
BIOLOGICAL
DIVERSITY**Distr.
GENERALUNEP/CBD/COP/8/INF/24
30 January 2006

ENGLISH ONLY

CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES TO THE
CONVENTION ON BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY
Eighth meeting
Curitiba, Brazil, 20-31 March 2006
Item 26 of the provisional agenda*

**THEMATIC PROGRAMMES OF WORK –PROGRESS REPORT OF THE FOOD AND
AGRICULTURE ORGANIZATION OF THE UNITED NATIONS: FOREST
BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY, MARINE AND COASTAL BIODIVERSITY, BIOLOGICAL
DIVERSITY OF INLAND WATER ECOSYSTEMS AND AGRICULTURAL
BIODIVERSITY**

I. INTRODUCTION

1. This report was prepared by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) in collaboration with the Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity. It provides supplementary information to that contained in a note by the Executive Secretary on the relevant inter-sessional activities of the FAO that contribute to the work of the Convention on Biological Diversity and the implementation of its provisions and work programmes (UNEP/CBD/COP/8/26).

II. FOREST BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY

2. The CBD concept paper on a framework for a "Regional Partnership on Forest Biodiversity in Latin America and the Caribbean", prepared under the activities included in the Letter of Intent agreed between the CBD Secretariat and the Government of the Netherlands, will be presented at the meeting of the Latin American and the Caribbean Forestry Commission, one of the six Regional Forestry Commissions of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) in Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic, from 26-30 June 2006 for further discussion.

3. Decision VII/4 paragraph 3 of the Conference of the Parties (COP) requests the Executive Secretary to develop with the Secretariat of the Ramsar Convention a proposal, for consideration by the Conference of the Parties at its eighth meeting, on streamlining and improving the effectiveness of national reporting on inland water ecosystems, taking into account the work of the Task Force on Streamlining Forest-related Reporting established in the framework of the Collaborative Partnership on Forests (CPF) and other initiatives for harmonizing biodiversity-related national reports. Proposals on this matter were considered at the eleventh meeting of SBSTTA resulting in recommendation XI/9.

* UNEP/CBD/COP/8/1.

III. MARINE AND COASTAL BIODIVERSITY

4. *The State of World Fisheries and Aquaculture* (SOFIA), the flagship publication of the FAO Fisheries Department, published in English, French, Spanish, Arabic and Chinese languages (see http://www.fao.org/sof/sofia/index_en.htm), and is now available in fact-sheet format.

5. As recommended by the First Session of the FAO Committee on Fisheries' Sub-Committee on Aquaculture, and in order to assess properly and accurately the environmental costs of aquaculture and other food producing sectors, the FAO Fisheries Department has commissioned reviews of appropriate environmental accounting methodologies and case studies for indicative commodities and locations. Work has started to convene an international workshop in April of 2006 to synthesize information and advise FAO Fisheries on appropriate methodologies.

IV. AGRICULTURAL BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY

3. Cooperation continues to progress between the Convention on Biological Diversity and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the lead implementing partner for this Programme of Work. FAO and the Convention on Biological Diversity recently concluded a Memorandum of Cooperation, a practical framework for increased synergy between the organizations, in the area of biodiversity of relevance to food and agriculture, with due regard to the respective objectives, mandates and functions of each organization. It also makes provision for joint activities and activities FAO undertakes at the request of the Convention on Biological Diversity to be implemented through separate agreements annexed to the Memorandum of Cooperation, specifying the responsibilities of each organization and other cooperating organizations, and the establishment of a budget and attribution of budgetary responsibilities. It also provides for FAO and the Convention on Biological Diversity to jointly seek to mobilize resources for such activities. Such budgetary arrangements and funding opportunities are brought to the attention of the eighth meeting of the Conference of the Parties and to the FAO Commission on Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture (the "Commission") for advice.

4. In addition, the Executive Secretary was invited to provide an opening statement to the Tenth Regular Session of the FAO's intergovernmental Commission on Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture, on the occasion of its twentieth anniversary. The Executive Secretary noted the essential support that FAO is providing for many of the initiatives under the Convention on Biological Diversity, and emphasized that in considering decision-making for biodiversity, no sectors are more important than agriculture, forestry and fisheries: FAO and its Commission have a key role to play in ensuring coherent policy-making across the sectors.

5. Major points to note, relating to FAO specific activities and the Programme of Work on Agricultural Biodiversity are:

Mainstreaming:

6. Most of FAO's work integrating biodiversity into the food and agriculture agendas at intergovernmental level has been undertaken through its intergovernmental Commission. Following a Resolution of the FAO Conference in 1995, its mandate covers all components of biodiversity of relevance to food and agriculture. Its Membership is almost universal, having 166 Member Countries. It develops and monitors global instruments, such as the Global Strategy for the Management of Farm Animal Genetic Resources and the Global Strategy for Plant Genetic Resources. It oversees FAO's cooperation with the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity, and regularly receives reports from international organizations working in the field of biodiversity for food and agriculture.

7. The Commission undertook the negotiation of the International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture which entered into force on 29 June 2004. The Governing Body of the International Treaty will hold its First Meeting in Madrid, Spain, from 12 to 16 June 2006.

8. At its Tenth Session, the Commission agreed that FAO should submit a draft Multi-Year Programme of Work (MYPOW) for the Commission at its Eleventh Session, for its consideration (late

2006). The final report of the CGRFA's Tenth Regular Session (see in particular sections VIII and X of the Report - CGRFA-10/04/REP) is available at <ftp://ext-ftp.fao.org/ag/cgrfa/cgrfa10/r10repe.pdf>.)

9. Through the MYPOW, the Commission should implement its full mandate in the medium and longer term. The Commission's MYPOW is being developed to facilitate the integration of biodiversity considerations within the national and international agendas for food and agriculture, and strengthen mutual cooperation with other international forums, including in particular the Convention on Biological Diversity. In developing the MYPOW, the Commission's Secretariat has set up an interdisciplinary and interdepartmental Task Force within FAO, and will be consulting the FAO Regional Groups. It would also take into account inputs from its Inter-Governmental Technical Working Groups on Plant, and Animal, Genetic Resources. It is also preparing, with a number of international partner organizations, a series of background documents on the status, trends and needs of sectorial and cross-sectorial matters related to biodiversity for food and agriculture, including genetic resources other than plant and terrestrial animals.

10. At its Tenth Regular Session, the Commission also agreed to hold the First International Technical Conference on Animal Genetic Resources in 2007. It stressed the importance of this Conference, both to provide an excellent opportunity for Member Countries to reach agreement on how to best address priorities for the sustainable use, development and conservation of animal genetic resources, and to raise awareness and appreciation of the various roles and values of these essential resources. Switzerland has made an offer to the FAO to host the International Technical Conference, which will be held in Interlaken, in September 2007.

11. With regard to cooperation with the Convention on Biological Diversity in the Programme of Work on Agricultural Biodiversity, the Commission recommended that FAO work closely with the Executive Secretary of the Convention on Biological Diversity, and play a leading role in the in-depth review of the Convention's Programme of Work on Agricultural Biological Diversity, which will be considered at the ninth meeting of the Conference of the Parties in 2008. It noted that the Convention's review process will not commence until around 2006, and that the Commission's Eleventh Session would consider any preliminary findings.

Assessments:

12. The on-going work of the Commission is relevant in considering the status and trends of agricultural biodiversity. The Commission oversees the development of two major assessments in this field: (i) the first Report on the State of the World's Farm Animal Genetic Resources - the first-ever country-driven assessment on farm animal diversity will describe the current situation of animal genetic resources for food and agriculture, at the global level, and identify the gaps and needs for their characterization, conservation and sustainable utilization. The number of Country Reports already finalized is 170. One major objective of the Report is to analyze and describe the state of animal genetic resources, their status and trends, and on their contribution to food, including nutrition, agriculture, and rural development. This would be adopted in 2007 at the First International Technical Conference; and (ii) the second report on the State of the World's Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture (PGRFA), expected to be finalized by 2008. It is expected that about 166 Country Reports will be received, contributing to the preparation of the second report. The second report will include chapters related to targeted issues such as the contribution of plant genetic resources to food security, nutrition and sustainable agriculture.

13. FAO is also currently undertaking other activities on assessments of elements of biodiversity for food and agriculture. Examples of this work include a first report presenting a rapid assessment of the status of pollinators based on case studies, and a review of the status, trends and needs of aquatic genetic resources and biodiversity of the deep sea, capture fisheries, aquaculture, and modern genetic technologies. The background documentation on status and needs for the development of the Commission's MYPOW can also be considered as first steps that could lead to country-driven global assessments, to be developed in the context of the future work of the Commission. This could enable the realization of the various assessments foreseen in the programme of work on agricultural biodiversity.

14. The country-driven assessments undertaken by FAO are mostly the result of extensive consultations with national partners. The information used to prepare the above-mentioned reports are a result of Country Reports, that are submitted to FAO in a timely manner, so that their content can be compiled and consolidated into a single report (e.g. the State of the World's PGRFA, the State of the World's Animal Genetic Resources). In addition, the preparation of Country Reports is part of a process in building national-level capacity. For example, the Commission has requested the integration of the monitoring system for the implementation of the *Global Plan of Action for the Conservation and Sustainable Utilization of Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture* with the State of the World's Plant Genetic Resources. This allows coupling the preparation of a Country Report with an efficient system of planning, priority-setting and achieving mobilization of financial resources to support national programmes. As part of the development of the Commission's future programme of work and building on FAO past experience and expertise, the Commission may foresee the development of new global assessments for other components of agricultural biodiversity, or indeed a comprehensive country-driven report, which could be the equivalent to a first state of the world's report on biodiversity for food and agriculture. This could provide an avenue for future cooperation between the Convention on Biological Diversity and FAO in the review of the Programme of Work on Agricultural Biodiversity, and to further integrate biodiversity within the agendas of food and agriculture.

15. FAO organized a special session at the 13th International Soil Conservation Organization Conference Conserving Soil and Water for Society - Sharing Solutions held in Brisbane, Australia, 4-8 July 2004 to raise awareness and encourage collaboration in the International Soil Biodiversity Initiative: "Partnership for soil health and soil biological management for sustainable, productive and viable agroecosystems". Case-studies were presented from each region (Brazil, Indonesia, Nigeria and Australia) followed by a panel discussion. In collaboration with the Institut de Recherche pour le Développement (IRD), FAO has prepared a training field guide/manual on soil macrofauna for technical level personnel and for extensionists for use in the training of trainers in farmer field schools for sub-Saharan Africa and other projects. Publication is pending for a CD-Rom and publication for wide field validation. These and various other materials on soil biodiversity are being posted on the ecological portal www.ecoport.org to provide interlinked access with other ecological information and to encourage other partners to contribute to such a global, open access and interactive database on soil health and biodiversity for agriculture.

16. FAO has put out calls for case-studies, for example those on soil biodiversity (available at: <http://www.fao.org/ag/agl/agll/soilbiod/cases.stm>), and on pollinators and pollination, which provided an important contribution to the compilation of the rapid assessment on the status of pollinators. FAO furthermore has information collected in databases and statistics pertinent to different aspects of biodiversity for food and agriculture – one example is in fisheries: <http://www.fao.org/fi/statist/statist.asp>. FAO has also prepared a series of publications related to biodiversity and traditional knowledge and is carrying out case studies related to the use of wild grasses for food production. In addition, FAO has supported the preparation of several studies and organized training workshops to show the important linkages between poverty alleviation, gender equity and conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity. A training manual was developed: <http://www.fao.org/sd/LINKS/news/news.html>. FAO has also initiated work on assessing crop genetic diversity in agricultural markets and their impact on incentives for sustainable utilization. Finally, the breeds database in the Domestic Animal Diversity Information System is currently being updated (<http://dad.fao.org/en/Home.htm>).

17. Assessments of the use and conservation of aquatic animal diversity in rice-based ecosystems has been undertaken in Cambodia, China, Lao PDR, and Vietnam ^{1/} with support from national counterparts and the FAO/Netherlands Partnership Programme. Cross-sectoral work biodiversity for food and nutrition (decision VII/31) has been undertaken to understand the contribution aquatic animal diversity in rice-based ecosystems makes to rural livelihoods. Supported in part by phase two of the

^{1/} Halwart, M.; Bartley, D. (eds.) Aquatic biodiversity in rice-based ecosystems. Studies and reports from Cambodia, China, Lao PDR & Viet Nam. CD-ROM. Rome, FAO. 2005.

FAO/Netherlands Partnership Programme (FNPP II), two workshops were held to document nutritional composition of aquatic animal diversity, to review consumption and nutritional needs of rural communities, and to raise awareness through directed case studies.

V. BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY OF INLAND WATER ECOSYSTEMS

18. In response to decision VII/4 para 25, FAO Fisheries Department with numerous partners produced guidelines for data collection and co-management of inland fisheries, ^{2/} and contributed to the Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity a study on fish movement and migration in regards to poverty alleviation. Regarding that same decision, with the Mekong River Commission and the Government of Cambodia, FAO Fisheries Department convened a major international symposium and publication on fisheries in large rivers and their contribution to livelihoods in the new millenium, ^{3/} and completed a review of the State of the World's Inland Fishery Resources ^{4/} and has further produced documentation on mountain ecosystems.

19. FAO continues developing baseline information and policies on alien species in fisheries and aquaculture through expansion of the FAO Database on Introductions of Aquatic Species (http://www.fao.org/figis/servlet/static?dom=collection&xml=dias.xml&xp_detail=med). In association with numerous partners in South East Asia, work on the Mekong giant catfish is underway to develop a conservation strategy for the recovery of this critically endangered species; the main responsibility of FAO Fisheries Department are genetics and breeding, and total economic valuation of the catfish

(<http://www.enaca.org/modules/news/article.php?storyid=613&keywords=Mekong+giant+catfish>).

^{2/} Guidelines for data collection and sharing systems for co-managed fisheries. Parts 1&2: Technical guidelines.

FAO Fisheries Technical Papers - T494

^{3/} Welcomme R. and T. Petr, (Eds). Proceedings of the Second International Symposium on the Management of Large Rivers for Fisheries – Sustaining livelihoods and biodiversity in the new millennium. Volume I and Volume II. FAO Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific, Bangkok and the Mekong River Commission, Thailand. RAP Publication 2004.

^{4/} *FAO Fisheries Circular No 942, Rev. 1. 2003, Rome, Italy.*