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CONSULTATIVE WORKING GROUP OF
EXPERTS ON BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY
EDUCATION AND PUBLIC AWARENESS
Fourth meeting
Paris, 27-29 October 2003

VI/19. Communication, education and public awareness

The Conference of the Parties,

Global Initiative on Communication, Education and Public Awareness

Recalling the provisions of Article 13 of the Convention on Biological Diversity and its decisions IV/10 B, paragraph 6, and V/17,

Taking note of the information provided by the Executive Secretary with regard to biodiversity education and public awareness, ^{1/}

Noting with appreciation the work done by the Consultative Working Group of Experts convened according to decision V/17,

Recognizing that communication, education and public awareness are essential elements for the successful and effective implementation of the Convention,

Further recognizing the central role of communication, education and public awareness in the implementation of the Strategic Plan,

Emphasizing that communication and education are two distinct yet complementary disciplines,

Noting that key actors in the implementation of the Convention need effective instruments on communication, education and public awareness to engage major stakeholders and to convey the appropriate messages to mainstream biodiversity,

Recognizing the complementary nature of a global initiative on education and public awareness and the corporate communication of the Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity,

1. *Decides* to adopt the programme of work for a Global Initiative on Communication, Education and Public Awareness, as contained in the annex to the present decision;

^{1/} UNEP/CBD/COP/6/13, section V, and UNEP/CBD/COP/6/13/Add.2.

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2. *Invites* Parties to strongly and effectively promote biodiversity-related issues through the press, the various media, and public relations and communications networks at national levels;

3. *Requests* the Parties to the Convention and other Governments:

(a) To support the national, regional and international activities prioritized by the Global Initiative on Education and Public Awareness;

(b) To develop adequate capacity to deliver initiatives on communication, education and public awareness, taking into account special needs of developing countries, in particular, the least developed countries and small island developing States;

4. *Requests* the Executive Secretary, in consultation with the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, the United Nations Environment Programme, the IUCN Commission for Education and Communication, and other members of the Consultative Working Group of Experts established by decision V/17, as well as any relevant institutions, to:

(a) Monitor and evaluate the implementation of the Global Initiative according to the conditions established in the annex to the present decision for its start-up phase and report regularly on its implementation to the meetings of the Conference of the Parties;

(b) Review the communication, education and public-awareness dimensions of existing and new cross-cutting issues and thematic areas, and specifically those priorities and action plans established in the Strategic Plan for the Convention;

(c) Promote, in collaboration with the relevant agencies, the development and implementation of demonstration projects that can serve as models to initiate similar projects that can be adopted by Parties, and to report thereon to the Conference of the Parties at its seventh meeting;

(d) Seek the submission of relevant case-studies on biodiversity communication, education and public awareness from relevant sources;

(e) Develop and implement a corporate communication strategy for the Secretariat.

5. *Invites* the Global Environment Facility to include expertise relating to communication, education and public awareness when evaluating projects for funding approval and to strengthen its involvement in and support of the national implementation of the Global Initiative;

6. *Invites* the private sector to become an active player in the Global Initiative and encourages the private sector to mobilize resources for this Initiative;

7. *Invites* the United Nations Environment Programme:

(a) To promote biodiversity-related communication, education and public-awareness activities across multilateral environmental agreements and programmes;

(b) To promote capacity-building for communication, education and public awareness at the regional level in cooperation with IUCN and others;

(c) To develop international mechanisms that facilitate access to environmental information, environmental justice and public participation;

8. *Urges* the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization to develop a plan to integrate biodiversity into all levels of formal education;

9. *Invites* other agencies such as the United Nations Development Programme, the World Bank, and development banks:

(a) To reflect in their funding policies the Global Initiative on Communication, Education and Public Awareness according to the conditions established in the annex to the present decision;

(b) To include expertise on communication, education and public awareness when evaluating projects for funding approval;

10. *Invites* indigenous people's organizations, community-based organizations and non-governmental organizations to include communication, education and public awareness in their relevant activities and to support the global initiative on education and public awareness according to the conditions established in the annex to the present decision;

Library and publications

Welcoming the significant increase in the number and variety of publications prepared by the Secretariat, in particular the *Global Biodiversity Outlook*, the Handbook of the Convention, the Technical Series and the various brochures,

11. *Invites* Parties to facilitate the increase in the number of biodiversity-related publications in their national libraries in order to facilitate further dissemination of knowledge on biodiversity issues among the general public;

12. *Requests* the Executive Secretary to:

(a) Develop appropriate partnerships with public and private research and academic institutions for the exchange of publications related to biodiversity;

(b) Examine the possibility of establishing formal liaison with schools of environmental education to further disseminate decisions of the Conference of the Parties to future specialists;

(c) Make available all publications in the area of biodiversity communication, education and public awareness that have been produced by the Secretariat in the six official United Nations languages, subject to the availability of funding, and promote the translation of those publications in the languages of indigenous and local communities;

13. *Invites* United Nations bodies and other international and regional organizations to send copies of their biodiversity-related publications to the library of the Secretariat.

Annex

**PROGRAMME OF WORK FOR THE GLOBAL INITIATIVE ON COMMUNICATION,
EDUCATION AND PUBLIC AWARENESS (CEPA)**

It is recognized that:

(a) The concept of biodiversity poses particular communication and education challenges due to its comprehensiveness, complexity and ill-defined nature;

(b) Key actors in the implementation of the Convention on Biological Diversity need effective technical instruments to engage major stakeholders and to convey the appropriate messages to mainstream biodiversity;

(c) Despite repeated stated support for education and public awareness, education and communication instruments fail to be effectively utilized in the processes of the Convention. Education and communication instruments lack appropriate funding and are inadequately advised by relevant professional expertise;

(d) Education and communication, as social instruments, work best when part of an instrument mix designed to formulate, implement and manage the national biodiversity strategy and action plans;

(e) Biodiversity conservation, sustainable use and equitable sharing call for social change. Education and public awareness are long-term investments towards this change. At the same time, biodiversity issues need to be communicated effectively to ensure the participation of major stakeholders from different sectors. A distinction must therefore be established between communication strategies, on the one hand, and education ^{2/} and public awareness on the other. For this reason, the expression communication, education and public awareness is used to refer to both disciplines;

(f) The three programme elements contained below represent two strategic priorities: (i) institutional arrangements; and (ii) programmatic priority areas.

PROGRAMME ELEMENT 1

Towards a global communication, education and public awareness network

Operational objectives

1. To establish and manage a global communication, education and public awareness network composed of new information technologies and traditional communication mechanisms;
2. To stimulate the creation of national, subregional and regional communication, education and public awareness networks;
3. To create synergy between existing networks relevant to communication, education and public awareness.

^{2/} See relevant UNESCO documentation on terminology.

Proposed actions

1. Develop an electronic portal and an alternative information dissemination mechanism towards the establishment of a global network on communication, education and public awareness, building on, where possible, existing initiatives. ^{3/} The portal will be composed of new communication tools and resources including Internet-based technologies, CD-ROMs, DVDs, etc. The alternative information dissemination mechanism will use traditional media such as brochures and pamphlets and other communication modes such as theatre, music and dance. Using Internet-based and traditional information resources, this global network will:
 - (a) Make visible the expertise in biodiversity communication and education including communication, education and public awareness training databases;
 - (b) Stimulate moderated electronic discussions on issues of interest to communication, education and public awareness professionals;
 - (c) Link the portal to other networks and websites on communication and education, for example, those of the Convention on Wetlands (Ramsar, Iran, 1971), the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, etc.;
 - (d) Provide access to relevant projects and publications;
 - (e) Link with established learning institutions and centres of excellence to ensure the quality of products and materials;
 - (f) Stimulate and provide means for people to find those working on similar projects, problems or issues;
 - (g) Create access to standards of best practices;
 - (h) Ensure that the global network is service- and demand oriented;
 - (i) Promote communication and public awareness at the community level.
2. Identify potential partners and stakeholders:
 - Create a registry of education and communications experts, organizations and networks (governmental; non-governmental; indigenous; religious; sectoral – business and industry, agriculture, fisheries, forests, tourism; media).

Beneficiaries

Parties, coordinators of national biodiversity strategies and action plans, educators, communicators, non-governmental organizations and governmental implementing agencies.

Expected results

1. The communication, education and public awareness global network for networking is operational and linked to the clearing-house mechanism;

^{3/} Such as the Biodiversity Education and Public Awareness—BEPA Online and the Inter-American Biodiversity Information Network (IABIN).

2. Lists of networks and contact addresses, available on the Internet and on CD-ROMs;
3. Enhanced communication and knowledge exchange nationally and regionally;

Lead organization

Secretariat of the Convention, in cooperation with IUCN-the World Conservation Union.

Partners

Parties, UNESCO, UNEP, the IUCN Commission for Education and Communication, the International Union of Biological Sciences (IUBS), the Convention on Wetlands (Ramsar, Iran, 1971).

Time frame

Three years.

Budget

Phase 1: \$250,000 first year; \$100,000 each subsequent year;

Phase 2: Establish phase 2 budget as part of the review process by the Conference of the Parties at its seventh meeting.

PROGRAMME ELEMENT 2

Exchange of knowledge and expertise

Operational objectives

1. To enhance exchange of knowledge and expertise among professionals, enhancing development and innovation on communication, education and public awareness;
2. To meet knowledge needs of Parties and other stakeholders for Article 13.

Proposed actions

1. Document and analyse national reports from the Parties on communication, education and public awareness to develop needs for communication, education and public awareness support;
2. Identify links and provide searchable means to access biodiversity knowledge through the clearing-house mechanism;
3. Research, collect and exchange communication, education and public awareness projects and case-studies through the world Wide Web, workshops, CD-ROMs, and publications;
4. Sharing knowledge about tools and criteria for best practices;
5. Provide copyright free graphics and materials, subject to available funding, for adaptation;
6. Develop the global network in programme element 1 to facilitate actions in programme element 2.

Beneficiaries

Parties, coordinators of national biodiversity strategies and action plans, governmental implementing agencies, educators, communicators, non-governmental organizations.

Expected results

1. Biodiversity communication and education solutions for practitioners and parties and stakeholders;
2. Professional exchange of expertise made more accessible.

Lead organization

Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity, in cooperation with UNESCO and IUCN.

Partners

Parties, UNEP, IUBS.

Time frame

Three years.

Budget

\$400,000 per annum (\$1.2 million total).

PROGRAMME ELEMENT 3

Capacity-building for communication, education and public awareness

Operational objectives

1. Develop capacity of the Parties to market biodiversity to other sectors, and mainstream biodiversity into the work of other sectors;
2. Develop professional capacity of educators and communicators;
3. Enhance stakeholder participation and community development through communication, education and public awareness.

Proposed actions

1. Create and deliver training programmes including: courses help desks, coaching, manuals, check lists, exchange on application of methods to work with stakeholders;
2. Establish system for professional exchanges;
3. Promote twinning programmes;
4. Establish a distance-learning programme on communication, education and public awareness;

5. Improve synergies between communication, education and public awareness research and practice;
6. Build capacity to evaluate and define principles for the evaluation of good communication, education and public awareness practice;
7. Develop appropriate sets of tools for communicators on biodiversity;
8. Establish partnerships with journalists and broadcasters engaged in communicating biodiversity related issues through the mass media;
9. Build capacity for fund-raising.

Beneficiaries

Parties, coordinators of national biodiversity strategies and action plans, educators, communicators, non-governmental organizations, governmental implementing agencies.

Expected results

1. A range of individuals and institutions with an enhanced understanding of the needs, methods and mechanisms of stakeholder participation;
2. A range of individuals and institutions with capacity to plan and manage biodiversity communication and education;
3. Communicators pack – set of tools (among others);
4. Online training course in communication (among others);
5. Greater access at the community level to communication and public education and awareness programmes, courses and resources.

Lead organization

Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity, with the cooperation of UNEP, UNESCO, UNDP, the United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR), IUCN and WWF.

Partners

Parties.

Time frame

Three years.

Budget

\$300,000 per annum (\$900,000 total).
