

United Nations Nations Unies

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REFERENCE:

29 June 2009

Dear Mr. Djoghlaif,

I wish to refer to notification 2009-021, dated 2 March 2009, containing a request to submit relevant information concerning the objectives of the expert workshop on scientific and technical guidance on the use of biogeographic classification systems and identification of marine areas beyond national jurisdiction in need of protection, to be held in Ottawa, Canada, from 29 September to 2 October 2009.

In that regard, the Division for Ocean Affairs and the Law of the Sea, Office of Legal Affairs, of the United Nations, would like to note the relevance of the expert workshop to the work of the General Assembly Ad Hoc Open-ended Informal Working Group to study issues relating to the conservation and sustainable use of marine biological diversity beyond areas of national jurisdiction (the Working Group), as also noted in relevant CBD decisions.

It is recalled that the Working Group was established in 2004 by General Assembly resolution 59/24 with the mandate to: (a) survey the past and present activities of the United Nations and other relevant international organizations with regard to the conservation and sustainable use of marine biological diversity beyond areas of national jurisdiction; (b) examine the scientific, technical, economic, legal, environmental, socio-economic and other aspects of these issues; (c) identify key issues and questions where more detailed background studies would facilitate consideration by States of these issues; and (d) indicate, where appropriate, possible options and approaches to promote international cooperation and coordination for the conservation and sustainable use of marine biological diversity beyond areas of national jurisdiction. The Working Group held its first meeting in 2006 (the report of the meeting is contained in document A/61/56 and is available on the website of the Division at www.un.org/depts/los).

The second meeting of the Working Group was convened in 2008, pursuant to General Assembly resolution 61/222, to consider: (a) the environmental impacts of anthropogenic activities on marine biological diversity beyond areas of national jurisdiction; (b) coordination and cooperation among States as well as relevant intergovernmental organizations and bodies for the conservation and management of marine biological diversity beyond areas of national jurisdiction; (c) the role of area-based management tools; (d) genetic resources beyond areas of national jurisdiction; and (e) whether there is a governance or regulatory gap, and if so, how it should be addressed. The outcome of the meeting, which consisted of a joint statement of the Co-Chairpersons, is contained in document A/63/79 and is also available on the website of the Division.

Mr. Ahmed Djoghlaif
Executive Secretary
Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity

It is noted that the objectives of the CBD expert workshop, as reflected in paragraph 19 of CBD decisions IX/20, reflect the discussions at the Working Group.

I wish to take this opportunity to also inform you that, in resolution 63/111, the General Assembly requested the Secretary-General to convene another meeting of the Working Group in 2010 to provide recommendations to the General Assembly. The meeting is tentatively scheduled to take place at United Nations Headquarters at the end of January 2010 (precise dates to be confirmed). In line with relevant General Assembly resolutions and the decisions of the ninth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the CBD, the results of the Workshop will be made available to the meeting of the Working Group.

The Division looks forward to further collaborating with the secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity on these and other matters of mutual interest.

Yours sincerely,



Serguei Tarassenko
Director

Division for Ocean Affairs and the Law of the Sea
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