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SUBSIDIARY BODY ON SCIENTIFIC, TECHNICAL AND
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Item 6 of the provisional agenda

REPORT OF THE JOINT CBD SECRETARIAT - FAO TECHNICAL CONSULTATIONS**16 - 18 June 1997, FAO-Rome, Italy**Note by the Executive Secretary¹

The Executive Secretary wishes to avail to the Subsidiary Body for Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice (SBSTTA) the Memorandum of Cooperation (MOC) between FAO and the CBD Secretariat based on a consultation between the two parties convened 16-18 June 1997 in Rome. Appendix 1 of the Memorandum describes a number of FAO's more important ongoing, planned and potential activities in the field of biological diversity for food and agriculture of relevance to the development of an FAO-CBD joint work programme as part of the multi-year programme of work on agricultural biological diversity established by Decision III/11 of the Conference of the Parties.

This document has been prepared in fulfillment of the request for cooperation between the two parties and in response to decision III/11. It is in the process of being finalised and will be made available to the next meeting of the COP to be held in the Republic of Bratislava, Slovakia, in May 1998. Once finalised, the joint work programme will be appended to the Memorandum of Cooperation and periodically updated.

¹ For cross-reference, see UNEP/CBD/SBSTTA/3/6 *Review of Ongoing Activities on Agricultural Biological Diversity*

**Memorandum of Cooperation
between
The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO)
and
The Secretariat of Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD)**

Noting that:

1. The first meeting (1994) of the Conference of the Parties (COP) to the Convention on Biological Diversity welcomed the willingness of FAO to support and cooperate with the CBD Secretariat for the effective discharge of its functions, including through the secondment of staff, and requested the CBD Executive Secretary to enter into such arrangements as might be needed to make FAO's offer effective;
2. The FAO Conference, at its Twenty-eighth Session in October 1995, stressed the importance of an integrated approach and full cooperation with the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity and considered that the Commission on Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture, with its broadened mandate covering all components of biodiversity of relevance to food and agriculture, would provide for effective cooperation with the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity. Towards this end the FAO Council, in November 1995, requested the Commission as part of its mandate in sectoral and cross-sectoral matters related to biodiversity of relevance to food and agriculture to respond to requests from the COP in this area;
3. In pursuit of Objective 3.1 (c) of the 1996 World Food Summit Plan of Action, governments, in partnership with all actors of civil society and with the support of international institutions, agreed to promote the conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity and its components in terrestrial and marine ecosystems, with a view to enhancing food security, notably through supporting the United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity.

Recalling that the third meeting of the COP (1996):

4. Reaffirmed the need to make mutually supportive activities under the Convention on Biological Diversity and activities under other conventions, processes and institutions relevant to the achievement of the objectives of the Convention, while avoiding unnecessary duplication of activities and costs on the part of Parties and of the organs of the Convention;
5. Requested the Executive Secretary to continue to coordinate with the secretariats of relevant biological diversity-related conventions, institutions, and processes, with a view to: facilitating the exchange of information and experience; exploring the possibility of recommending procedures for harmonizing, to the extent desirable and practicable, the reporting requirements of Parties under those instruments and conventions; exploring the possibility of coordinating their respective programmes of work; and consulting on how such conventions and other international legal instruments can contribute to the implementation of the provisions of the Convention on Biological Diversity;

6. Welcomed the offer by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations to continue serving countries in implementing the Convention on Biological Diversity in the area of agricultural biological diversity, and the necessity of avoiding any duplication of work with respect to the activities being undertaken by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations in this programme of work;

7. Requested the Executive Secretary to invite the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, in close collaboration with other relevant United Nations bodies and regional and international organizations, to identify and assess relevant ongoing activities and existing instruments at the international level.

Recognizing that:

8. FAO is a leading international institution on the conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity, especially agricultural biological diversity.

Aware that:

9. The Director-General of FAO and the CBD Executive Secretary agreed at a meeting at FAO Headquarters (1996) that the two organizations would cooperate closely in the implementation of the Convention on Biological Diversity as an important contribution to food security by entering into a framework agreement. Towards this end, FAO and the CBD Secretariat convened a joint consultation to develop a joint work programme, as part of COP's multi-year work programme on biodiversity of relevance to food and agriculture;

10. FAO's Sustainable Development Department ensures that the Organization's programmes of work on sustainable development are formulated in line with Agenda 21 and are coordinated and balanced to respond and contribute to the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED) follow-up requirements and, in particular, to ensure the coordination of FAO's activities in the area of biodiversity of relevance to food and agriculture.

Have agreed as follows:

Article 1. Purpose

- (a) The purpose of this Memorandum of Cooperation is to establish a framework for cooperation between FAO and the Secretariat in the area of biodiversity of relevance to food and agriculture with a view to avoiding overlaps and duplication of effort and ensuring effective cooperation in joint activities.
- (b) This Memorandum of Cooperation covers sectoral and cross-sectoral aspects of biodiversity of relevance to food and agriculture, including forest, fisheries and micro-biological genetic resources as well as wildlife species and ecosystem conservation.

- (c) This Memorandum of Cooperation aims at achieving, within the mandates of FAO and the Secretariat, the objectives of the Convention on Biological Diversity, namely, the conservation of biological diversity, the sustainable use of its components, and the fair and equitable sharing of benefits.

Article 2. Access to and dissemination of information

- (a) The Secretariat and FAO will cooperate, as appropriate and in timely manner, in preparing documents, providing advice and producing other relevant material for the effective functioning of the Secretariat.
- (b) The Secretariat and FAO will establish methods for exchanging data on biological diversity contained in their databases and the Clearing-house Mechanism under the Convention on Biological Diversity. FAO shall coordinate the development and operation of the Clearing-House Mechanism for the agro-biodiversity sector, in accordance with FAO's mandate, taking into account the complementarity between the Clearing-house Mechanism, the World Agriculture Information Centre (WAICENT) particularly its relevant specialized information systems, and other appropriate FAO data bases.
- (c) The Secretariat and FAO will cooperate in the dissemination of information and the building of relevant capacity for the effective implementation of the Convention.

Article 3. Coordination of programmes of work

- (a) The Secretariat and FAO will, to the extent possible, coordinate their programme activities to ensure that their implementation is complementary and mutually-supportive.
- (b) The Secretariat and FAO will undertake to carry out, within their approved budgets, the joint work programme on biodiversity of relevance to food and agriculture annexed to this Memorandum of Cooperation. This joint work programme will be time-bound and updated periodically as appropriate.
- (c) The Secretariat and FAO will cooperate in the convening of joint meetings and implementing joint activities as mandated by their respective Governing Bodies and will encourage States and other institutions to support these joint activities.
- (d) FAO will serve as a lead partner with the Secretariat in the implementation of those decisions of the Conference of the Parties for which FAO is the task manager of the relevant chapters of Agenda 21 (Chapters: 10 Integrated approach to planning and management of land resources; 11 Combating deforestation; 13 Managing fragile ecosystems: sustainable mountain development; 14 Sustainable agriculture and rural development).

- (e) To ensure adequate liaison between FAO and the Secretariat, subject to approval by FAO Governing Bodies and within the limits of its approved budget, FAO will second to the Secretariat for a period of two years a Professional Officer to work on agricultural biological diversity. This Officer will be responsible for all matters related to biological diversity for food and agriculture.

Article 4. Consultation, communication and further guidance

- (a) Subject to approval by their respective governing bodies and within the limits of their approved budgets, the Secretariat and FAO will institute measures to ensure consultation on the implementation of this Memorandum of Cooperation.
- (b) The Secretariat and FAO will endeavour to provide each other with the opportunity to communicate the results of their activities to their respective governing bodies or any other appropriate organs.

Article 5. Financial aspects

- (a) Cooperative activities covered by this Memorandum are subject to the availability of funding for that purpose. The Secretariat and FAO will submit, as appropriate, to their Governing Bodies budgetary proposals for cooperative activities to be carried out under this Memorandum of Cooperation.
- (b) The Secretariat and FAO will explore possibilities to identify extra-budgetary financial resources for the conservation and sustainable use of agricultural biological diversity in accordance with Decision III/6 of the COP.
- (c) The Secretariat and FAO will develop a common approach in connection with the follow-up of Decision III/11 of the COP, in particular N. 21 and 22, regarding the priority to be given to supporting efforts for the conservation and sustainable use of agricultural biological diversity.
- (d) The Secretariat and FAO will seek, as required, further guidance from their respective governing bodies as to how to fully utilize their capacity and resources in the effective and efficient implementation of the Convention and of the mandate of FAO.
- (e) Where the Secretariat requires FAO to undertake specific activities involving payment of funds from one Organization to another, details of the work, its timetable and outputs together with the relevant budget and the schedule of payments will be set out under a separate Memorandum of Understanding, which will be prepared in accordance with the requirements of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) as the host institution for the Secretariat, after taking into account the requirements of FAO's Financial Rules and

Regulations.

Each Memorandum of Understanding will be numbered serially and signed and dated by both parties, and will be regarded as annexes to this Memorandum of Cooperation.

Article 6. Focal points

The Sustainable Development Department of FAO and the Secretariat are focal points for the purposes of this Memorandum of Cooperation and, in particular, regarding official communication and exchange of information.

Article 7. Review, amendment and termination

- (a) This Memorandum of Cooperation may be reviewed to assess its effectiveness and may amended at any time by mutual agreement of the Parties.
- (b) This Memorandum of Cooperation may be terminated by either party giving notice in writing to the other not less than six months in advance of the effective date of termination.

Done at _____, on _____

Executive Secretary
Convention on Biological Diversity

Assistant Director-General
Sustainable Development Department
Food and Agriculture Organization of the
United Nations

APPENDIX 1

FAO'S WORK ON THE CONSERVATION AND SUSTAINABLE USE OF BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY FOR FOOD AND AGRICULTURE: TOWARD A JOINT FAO-CBD WORK PROGRAMME

1. FAO AND BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY FOR FOOD AND AGRICULTURE

By Commitment Three of the 1996 FAO World Food Summit, countries stated that they would “pursue participatory and sustainable food, agriculture, fisheries and rural development policies and practices in high and low potential areas, which are essential to adequate and reliable food supplies at the household, national, regional and global levels”.

Since its foundation in 1947, FAO has been at the forefront of international efforts for the conservation and sustainable utilization of agricultural biological diversity. FAO's prime role is to work with its member countries - particularly developing countries - to increase and improve agricultural production in a sustainable manner, so as to feed present and future generations. As “raw material” for the improvement of plant varieties and animal races, biological diversity for food and agriculture must be effectively conserved, developed and deployed in sustainable and ecologically sound production systems (including aquatic and forest systems), so as to optimize production under a wide range of geographic and socio-economic conditions. Biological diversity is also important at the ecosystem level, through, for example, the introduction of beneficial species (such biological control agents and soil-improvement agents), and the use of natural biochemicals, derived from natural or wild species, as part of the management of agricultural systems. In these tasks, FAO brings to bear its specialized responsibilities and experience in crop and livestock production, fisheries and forestry, and promotes the integration of sectoral methodologies and technologies. Food security and the conservation of agricultural biological diversity are intricately linked: FAO therefore stresses the need to assess the results of sectoral activities upon the entire resource base.

Throughout the world, particularly in resource-poor and highly populated countries, governments, and civil society at large, are faced with the need to make informed and balanced decisions regarding the management of resources, and public and private investment. FAO, as a recognized centre of excellence and forum for inter-governmental debate and decision-making, acts as a broker between those requiring tools for policy making, and those developing the relevant information systems, methodologies, indicators and models. Once decisions are reached, FAO supports governments in the implementation, monitoring and refinement of strategies for the optimal use of biodiversity in food and agriculture.

This document compiles some key ongoing activities in FAO's various technical departments, which are of direct relevance to the multi-year programme of activities on agricultural biological diversity established by decision III/11 of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity, including those supported by its Regular Programme and those supported with extra-budgetary funds. Further possible activities of direct relevance to the joint CBD/FAO Joint Programme of Activities on Agricultural Biological Diversity are also identified.

2. SECTORAL ACTIVITIES

2.1 *AGRICULTURE DEPARTMENT*

2.1.1 *Management of farm animal genetic resources*

Regular Programme and extra-budgetary funding

Regular Programme resources, complemented by extra-budgetary resources, support the essential core activities that provide the Global Focus for the country-based *Global Strategy for the Management of Farm Animal Genetic Resources (AnGR)*, whereby FAO seeks to lead, coordinate and facilitate the step-by-step development of the Global Strategy, on the basis of broad stakeholder involvement, the development of the necessary modalities, and reporting on developments, including on long-term in-kind and financial support needs. Decision III/11 “appreciates the importance of the country-based Global Strategy for the Management of Farm Animal Genetic Resources under the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations and strongly supports its further development”.

The Global Strategy framework includes a set of key actions that aim, in particular, at developing and making better use of animal genetic resources adapted to the world’s major medium-input and low-input production environments, so as to sustainably intensify their agricultural systems; and at overcoming the serious threat of genetic erosion in the remaining 5,000 or so breeds of the fourteen main farm animal species: preliminary survey results show that about 30% of these resources are currently at high risk of loss. The Global Strategy framework has four basic components:

- a global, country-based structure with three elements: (i) focal points and networks, (ii) stakeholders, and (iii) the Domestic Animal Diversity Information System (DAD-IS);
- a technical activities programme with six elements: (i) characterization; (ii) in situ utilization and conservation; (iii) *ex situ* conservation; (iv) the development of guidelines and action plans; (v) the development of communications and information systems, and relevant training; and; (vi) coordination;
- expert cadres to guide development of the strategy, and maximize the cost-effectiveness of country participation;
- an inter-governmental mechanism whereby governments can directly guide international policy development: the FAO Commission on Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture.

The implementation of the Global Strategy is based on the collaboration of all stakeholders, through the Initiative for Domestic Animal Diversity (iDAD). This programme, which began in 1995, has already achieved the following:

- the *technical rationale* has been evaluated and endorsed by an Informal Panel of Experts, representing a broad range of disciplines;
- the *basic structure* at country level is being established: National Focal Point Institutions, as well as National Coordinators for Farm Animal Genetic Resources;

- *regional focuses* are being introduced;
- the *Domestic Animal Diversity Information System (DAD-IS)* provides an advanced, country-specific communications and information tool, as a “virtual structure” for the implementation of the Global Strategy;
- *mechanisms for stakeholder consultation* are being developed;
- a comprehensive *communications strategy* has been developed;
- development of an *Early Warning System* has been initiated, through global surveys of twenty-eight species of farm animals, and the development of the Global Databank for Animal Genetic Resources. The *World Watch List for Domestic Animal Diversity* has been published in English and French, and the Spanish version is forthcoming; it has proved very popular; and
- *primary country-level guidelines* for developing and implementing sound action plans for each farm animal species, and the range of primary agro-ecosystems incorporating livestock, are under development;
- *project identification missions* have taken place.

Further possible activities

In the context of the joint work programme on agricultural biological diversity, the following are activities of importance:

- to develop and promote mechanisms for more effectively linking the National Focal Points for AnGR and the CBD country focal points;
- to evaluate the sequential stages of the Domestic Animal Diversity Information System being developed by FAO, to serve as the primary Clearing House Mechanism for AnGR, and facilitate the use of DAD-IS by countries;
- to integrate each component of the comprehensive guidelines for country use for AnGR Action Planning with other biodiversity guidelines;
- to develop criteria and indicators for the conservation and sustainable use of domestic animal diversity;
- to develop and make widely available inventories which consider the conservation and sustainable use of domestic animal diversity.

A strong sectoral input regarding AnGR will be of importance in the application of agro-ecological zoning and GIS tools for assessment valuation and the conservation of biological diversity. More advanced cross-sectoral development will become possible in the 2000/01 biennium, once the Global Strategy has been consolidated and considered by governments in the FAO Commission on Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture.

Extra-budgetary funding is also being sought to develop country and regional field activities within the Global Strategy.

2.1.2 Conservation and management of plant genetic resources

Regular Programme activities

Since its establishment, FAO has been the global focus for international debate and decisions regarding this part of biological diversity for food and agriculture. In this process, under the guidance of the Commission on Plant Genetic Resources, various components of the FAO Global System on the Conservation and Sustainable Utilization of Plant Genetic Resources were put in place: these are operationally supported by the FAO Secretariat.

In 1995 and 1996, the major task was the preparation of the Fourth International Technical Conference on Plant Genetic Resources (Leipzig, Germany, June 1996), which considered the first *Report on the State of the World's Plant Genetic Resources* and the first *Global Plan of Action on Plant Genetic Resources*, two major components of the Global System. The COP supported this process, by decisions 11/15, II/16 and III/11, and encouraged Parties to develop national strategies, programmes and plans, which should focus, *inter alia*, on the key elements of the Global Plan of Action. In the 1998/99 biennium, a major focus will be on facilitating the implementation of the *Global Plan of Action* at national, regional and global levels, through support to the priority activities covering *ex situ* and *in situ* conservation, promoting the use of plant genetic resources for food and agriculture by farmers and breeders, and institution and capacity-building.

Ex situ and *in situ* conservation and networking are further activities of relevance to the joint work programme. The International Network of *Ex Situ* Collections under the Auspices of FAO will be further developed, and support will be given to enhancing governments' capacities for *in situ* conservation and the on-farm management of plant genetic resources for food and agriculture. *The Global Plan of Action* identified the promotion of crop networks as a priority area: FAO will assist in strengthening and coordinating these networks, with the aim of strengthening collections, preserving genetic diversity (including that of wild relatives), and integrating conservation and utilization. Computerized databases have been or are being developed for such networks. The *World Information and Early Warning System on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture* is being reviewed and will be strengthened: it is a major tool for the periodic updating of the *Report on the State of the World's Plant Genetic Resources*.

FAO also supports member countries in attaining self-sufficiency in the production of quality seed and planting material. Priority will be given to strengthening seed security programmes in disaster-prone areas, to developing national and regional seed policy systems, and to capacity building.

Extra-budgetary activities

Regular Programme activities also give technical support to development projects, implemented with extra-budgetary funds, for the strengthening of regional and national programmes for plant genetic

resources conservation and utilization. For example, a global project proposal for *Coconut Germplasm Utilization and Conservation to Promote Sustainable Coconut Production* has been developed, for likely support by the Common Fund for Commodities (CFC) and the Asian Development Bank, and execution by the International Coconut Genetic Resources Network (COGENT) of IPGRI. A project for the *Development of Strategies for In Situ Conservation and Utilization of Plant Genetic Resources in Desert-prone Areas of Africa* will become operational in 1997. IFAD, FAO and IPGRI are collaborating in this project. With support from Norway, FAO in collaboration with IPGRI, will be developing institutional agreements and the capacity to restore agricultural systems and seed security activities in disaster-prone areas.

Further possible activities

The *Global Plan of Action* provides an internationally agreed, prioritized and costed framework for activities in this sector, and COP decision III/11 endorsed its priorities and policy recommendations. The decision “welcomes the contribution that the Global Plan of Action for the Conservation and Sustainable Utilization of Plant Genetic Resources [...] provides to the implementation of the Convention on Biological Diversity in the field of plant genetic resources for food and agriculture and encourages Parties actively to implement the Global Plan of Action”. It is therefore proposed to direct resources within the Joint Programme of Work, in this sector, towards the key elements of the Global Plan of Action, such as broadening the genetic base of major crops; increasing the range of genetic diversity available to farmers; strengthening the capacity to develop new crops and varieties that are specifically adapted to local environments; exploring and promoting the use of under-utilized crops; and deploying genetic diversity to reduce crop vulnerability. Other key areas for which funding is required include:

- developing institutional agreements and capacity to restore agricultural systems and seed security activities;
- the development of strategies for *in situ* conservation and utilization of plant genetic resources in desert prone areas of Africa; and
- the dynamic management of domesticated biological diversity by farming communities.

2.1.3 Plant protection

Regular Programme activities

Two Codes under FAO’s aegis are of direct relevance for decision III/11:

- the International Code of Conduct for the Distribution and Use of Pesticides, which promotes the reduction of hazards from pesticides in practical use, thereby protecting the environment and preserving biodiversity; and
- the FAO Code on the Import and Release of Exotic Biological Control Agents, which regulates the use of biological agents in an environmentally safe way, in order to control introduced pests; the control of introduced species is required by the CBD.

In 1998/99, the Pesticide Code will be revised and updated better to take into consideration international developments in the chemical management field. Additional guidelines will be prepared to promote the implementation of the Biological Control Agents Code.

Extra-budgetary activities

Efforts are being made to identify funds to support the implementation of both codes.

Very considerable extra-budgetary funds are engaged in ongoing projects within FAO's Integrated Pest Management (IPM) Programme, throughout the world. Decision III/11 gives emphasis both to IPM as the preferred strategy for conserving biodiversity in managed agro-ecosystems and to the creation of local forums where farmers, extension agents, and researchers can discuss and act on local conservation of biodiversity. The attention paid to IPM by the COP results directly from experience in FAO's IPM field projects, especially in Asia and Africa: the work underway or planned within ongoing or pipeline IPM projects is of direct relevance to decision III/11, and of importance within the Joint Work Programme. Such projects will, in future, more clearly address specific aspects of the conservation and use of biological diversity for food and agriculture.

Further possible activities

If additional funds are available, specific studies on aspects of biodiversity could be undertaken, such as the impact of IPM on biodiversity in various agricultural production systems, and the strengthening of biodiversity conservation by local people, in the context of community-based IPM.

2.1.4 Agricultural support systems

Regular Programme activities

Farm Resource and Input Use Efficiency and Technology Assessment: this work covers the generation and dissemination of methodologies and guidelines for the optimum management of farm resources and inputs, with special reference to the integration of environmental accounting at small-farm level. FAO supports countries in institutionalising and strengthening farm-level natural resource and budget data-collection and comparative analysis. This includes:

- methodology for integrating small-farm environmental and conventional economic accounting;
- guidelines for teaching, extension and implementation of the methodology;
- practical methods for the assessment of economic valuation of soil degradation and agro-biodiversity, including farmers' valuations; and
- training courses in the use of farm-level environmental accounts for assessing ecological sustainability in farm and project planning in cases of farming systems operating under salinity, erosion of natural resources and soil mining.

Micro-economics of the conservation development and sustainable use of genetic resources in

agriculture: studies are being undertaken on the socio-economics of farm household decision-making and their implications for productivity and the environment:

- developing methodologies linking farm household models and farmer-level natural resource accounting, with emphasis on agro-biodiversity; and
- investment, productivity, household decision-making and the economics of biodiversity.

Extra-budgetary activities

Major relevant extra-budgetary projects include: *Environmental sustainable income and food security opportunities in the dry zone*, in Myanmar; the *Farmer-centred agricultural resource management programme (FARMASIA)*, in eight Asian countries; and *Farm-level applied research methods in eastern and southern Africa (FARMESA)*, in five African countries.

Further possible activities

Specific areas identified in Annex 2 of decision III/11, in which activities could be mounted within the Joint Work Programme, if funds were available, include:

- land resources: (iii) sustainable farming or cropping: socio-economic implications on farming systems of rangeland and grassland conservation measures in marginal areas.
- farm inputs: (iii) input costs: input costs of sustainable and intensive farming systems and their relation to biodiversity for food and agriculture.
- wild sources of food: (i) wild relatives of domesticated species: impact of wild plants on the sustainability of farming systems, and through use in farming systems.

2.1.5 Land and water development

Regular Programme activities

Biological diversity will be included in the *State of the World Land and Water Resources*, foreseen for the FAO Conference in 1999. Application of Agro-ecological zoning and GIS tools will be applied to assessment valuation and the conservation of biological diversity. Participatory land-use planning and conservation of agricultural biological diversity will be supported. Integrated soil, water, plant nutrient conservation and management and the conservation and enhancement of biological diversity at community level, will be promoted.

Further possible activities

Activities that could be undertaken with extra-budgetary support include:

- case studies on land degradation and biodiversity, and genetic erosion in dry land and humid Savannah's;
- analysis of the relationship between soil fertility and biological diversity; and

- assessment of the inter-relationship between soil type and soil biodiversity.

There are a number of possible studies that would address specific topics in Annex 2 to decision III/11:

- existing literature on soil micro-organisms in agriculture;
- the effect of desertification control on the conservation of biological diversity in drylands (pilot project and case studies in two countries for each region); and
- the effect of soil preparation and management systems in the traditional agriculture of indigenous people in the Amazon region on biological diversity.

2.1.6 Plant nutrition management

Regular Programme and extra-budgetary activities

The Regular Programme activities are supported by a variety of extra-budgetary activities.

At the farm level, activities include:

- the environmentally friendly intensification of plant nutrition in rice-based farming systems in Asia;
- improvement of the efficiency and environmental impact of nitrogen fertilizers, through effective management, in South-East Asia;
- environmentally friendly intensification of plant nutrition in cereal-based farming systems, in drylands and humid savannahs in Africa;
- plant nutrition management and diversification in cereal-based farming systems, in Sahelian West African countries; and
- environmentally friendly intensification of plant nutrition in cereal-based farming systems, in hilly areas and mountainous lands in Latin America.

At the village territory level, activities include:

- improving farmers' access to conventional plant nutrient sources, and technical advice on their application, at community level in West Africa;
- participatory assessment of untapped plant nutrient sources, and of innovations for controlling plant nutrient loss and mobilizing local plant nutrient sources, (through a pilot activity in Nepal);
- planning, with farmers' participation, the sound management of plant nutrient flows and stocks, through accurate combinations of cropping system, forestry system and waste management at village, or at small catchment level, in selected villages in India; and
- improving the local distribution of plant nutrient inputs, and the corresponding financial arrangements, and mobilizing farmers' organizations in its distribution, through a pilot programme in Niger.

Further possible activities

Policy and country level programmes that could be developed include:

- the integrated planning of, and development of incentives and regulations for, the management of urban and agricultural wastes, and the protection of coral reef and coastal waters, in Mauritius;
- the alleviation of technical constraints, the monitoring of the development of the input sector, and the creation of an enabling environment for the intensification of wheat production systems, in Pakistan; and
- analysing the cost components of mineral fertilizers and constraints for their procurement and distribution in West African Savannahs, mobilizing alternative local raw materials, and identification of strategic role of biodiversity in improving plant nutrition and soil fertility.

For all these proposed projects, project summaries are already available.

3. CROSS-SECTORAL, INTEGRATIVE ACTIVITIES

3.1 COMMISSION ON GENETIC RESOURCES FOR FOOD AND AGRICULTURE

The Commission has no technical work programmes of its own, but, by its statutes, keeps under continuous review all matters related to the policy, programmes and activities of FAO in the field of genetic resources of relevance to food and agriculture, and facilitates and oversees cooperation between FAO and other international governmental and non-governmental bodies, thereby coordinating policy development in FAO, in cooperation with relevant international organizations in the field of genetic resources for food and agriculture.

The Commission and the CBD/COP cooperate at a government-to-government level, and inform each other of relevant deliberations in each forum, through mutual reporting of relevant decisions of importance in areas under their mandates such as, in the case of FAO, the current negotiations for the revision of the International Undertaking, the adoption of the Global Plan of Action, and the development of the Global Strategy for the Management of Farm Animal Genetic Resources, and in the case of the CBD, the decision to establish the Multi-Year Programme of Activities on Agricultural Biological Diversity. Cooperation between the CBD Secretariat and FAO should aim at facilitating the tasks of the Commission and the COP.

Regular Programme activities

The main output expected in the 1998/99 Regular Programme relevant to the Joint Work Programme is the revision of the International Undertaking on Plant Genetic Resources: the CBD has expressed its willingness to consider the revised Undertaking as a possible protocol for the Convention. The Commission regards this as a likely possibility but considers it premature to take such a decision. Negotiations will take place during the Commission's Fourth Extraordinary Session; as usual, the

CBD Secretariat will be invited to observe. If not yet completed, negotiations will continue during the Eighth Regular Session (1999).

The Commission's Eighth Session will also consider reports from its subsidiary working groups, on plant and animal genetic resources, which will, during the biennium, deal with the Global Plan of Action on Plant Genetic Resources, and the Global Strategy on the Management of Farm Animal Genetic Resources, both subjects that were explicitly supported in decision III/11. As a regular session, the Secretariat of the CBD will also be invited to present a report on its policies, programmes and activities relevant to biological diversity for food and agriculture. Similar reports will be presented by other international organizations, including FAO.

Extra-budgetary activities

Extra-budgetary funds have supported the participation of developing countries in the negotiations for the revision of the Undertaking. Further funds will be needed in 1998 and 1999.

Further possible activities

Resolution 3 of the Nairobi Final Act, adopted together with the Convention in 1993, requested FAO to seek solutions matters it left outstanding, such as access to *ex situ* collections obtained prior to the entry into force of the Convention. FAO, through the negotiating process for the revision of the International Undertaking, is pursuing this matter in the case of plant genetic resources for food and agriculture; no action has yet been taken, however, in the case of other relevant genetic resources obtained prior to the entry into force of the Convention, including wild species maintained in botanical gardens and zoological parks. The availability of funds would allow FAO and the Secretariat of the Convention to hold technical meetings and prepare technical documents to further activities in this area.

The Commission has postponed activities on a number of policy matters, such as the finalization of a draft Code of Conduct on Biotechnology, as it affects plant genetic resources for food and agriculture, (the first draft of which was considered by the Commission in 1993), the revision of the FAO Code of Conduct on Plant Germplasm Collecting and Transfer, and the further development of the Network of *Ex Situ* Genebank Collections under the Auspices of FAO. Technical documentation to facilitate future work by the Commission on these issues, as well as provide updated information, could be prepared jointly by the two secretariats, if extra-budgetary funds were available.

Various cross-sectoral activities could also be programmed, including on the economic evaluation of agricultural biological diversity, their social value, and related gender matters, as well as Intellectual Property Right systems for genetic resources for food and agriculture, and related technologies and bioethical questions.

3.2 DEPARTMENT OF SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

Within FAO, cross-sectoral activities are promoted and coordinated by the Sustainable Development

Department, which coordinates cooperation with the CBD Secretariat in the development and implementation in the CBD/FAO Joint Programme of Activities on Agricultural Biological Diversity.

3.2.1 Assessment and monitoring of biological diversity for food and agriculture at the agro-ecosystem level

Regular Programme activities

The *natural resources, environmental monitoring and coordination for sustainable development and food security* programme promotes the integration of FAO's work related to the environment and natural resources; develops methodologies, tools and procedures for environmental analysis and monitoring; and coordinates FAO's participation in international agreements relative to the environment, in particular follow-up to UNCED and the three Conventions.

The following activities are relevant to the Joint Work Programme:

- development of software for establishing natural resources monitoring systems (to be completed in 2000-2001);
- establishment of harmonized methodologies for land-cover classification, and legends for the analysis of land-cover and land-use changes, as well as mapping norms.

Extra-budgetary activities

In the framework of the Regional Environment Information Management Programme for the Central African countries, 1997-2002, under a programme funded by the GEF, the World Bank and various donors, with the contribution of FAO as a technical support agency, a biodiversity information system and decision-making tool is being implemented by those responsible for environmental questions at national level, including biodiversity focal points. This system will help develop an agro-ecosystem geo-database, to which various local to regional level biodiversity databases will be connected. The information system should:

- integrate socio-economic data and gender issues with bio-physical data and information;
- harmonize classification/legend/nomenclature and geo-referenced data;
- provide indicators for decision-making;
- be generalizable to other regions; and
- have multiple uses (local and national sustainable development, desertification, and climate change).

The programme could be of direct value in the implementation of the CBD in Africa, and in developing implementation methodologies.

Further possible activities

Work is urgently needed to model the effects of the modification of wild and agricultural ecosystems

resulting in human activities and population pressure and to the climate change.

3.2.2 Gender and biological diversity for food and agriculture

Regular Programme activities

FAO promotes inter-disciplinary approaches to gender, environment and sustainable development, the response, in particular, to Chapter 24 of UNCED's Agenda 21: *Global Action for Women Towards Sustainable and Equitable Development*. Action-oriented research focuses on analyzing the links between women's social and economic status and environmental sustainability, in particular, the impact of environmental degradation, rural-urban migration, food insecurity, and population policies and practices on the livelihoods of rural women and their families. Rural women's roles in the maintenance and conservation of biological diversity for food and agriculture, food security and sustainable resource use, in such areas as integrated plant nutrition systems, irrigation and watershed management, integrated pest management, fisheries and aquaculture development, and forestry use and conservation, receive specific attention.

Strategies to improve women's role in agricultural biological diversity management are developed and disseminated, and case studies are undertaken on gender roles in the management of plant and animal genetic resources, gender dimensions in biodiversity management, and women's access to land and common property resources. Most such work is currently in the Asia Pacific Region.

Extra-budgetary activities

A Norwegian-funded regional project, *Gender, Biodiversity, and Local Knowledge Systems to Strengthen Agricultural and Rural Development*, aims to develop mechanisms for the implementation of gender-sensitive policies, programmes and participatory technology development for the in situ conservation, sustainable use and management of biodiversity for food security, building on local knowledge and skills and taking into account the environmental context, natural resource degradation, national and international legislation, and economic, food, agricultural and environmental policies. The project covers Zimbabwe, Tanzania, Mozambique, and Swaziland.

Further possible activities

The *Leipzig Global Plan of Action for the Conservation and Sustainable Utilization of Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture* recognizes that any biodiversity policy or strategy that fails to involve the resource-users in decisions regarding the implementation of programmes for conservation is unlikely to succeed, and calls for the systematic inclusion of gender factors in all conservation of biodiversity for food and agriculture. A joint IPGRI/FAO Working Group has developed a strategy for implementing the gender aspects of the Global Plan of Action. The strategy provides a framework within which the collaborating organisations can provide more effective support to international and national agricultural research and development systems, so that they can increase the attention paid to women as developers, managers and users of biological diversity for food and agriculture.

If funds are available, five comparative case studies will be carried out within the context of ongoing FAO and IPGRI projects to document and analyze the role of women in the management of neglected crops and the *in situ* conservation of genetic resources. The case studies will identify needs and gaps and provide a base on which longer-term activities may build. The results of the studies will be provided to policy-makers, programme implementers, and the community groups which provided the information for each of the case studies.

3.3 ***ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL DEPARTMENT***

3.3.1 ***Economic aspects of the conservation and sustainable utilization of biological diversity for food and agriculture***

Regular Programme activities

Analytical tools for the economic valuation of agricultural biological diversity and conservation and utilization strategies are being developed. These include:

- *The valuation of genetic resource*: linkages between valuation and strategies for the conservation and sustainable development of genetic resources for food and agriculture (including questions of intellectual property, and Farmers' Rights) were addressed at an international symposium in May 1996. The proceedings will be published in late 1997.
- *Economically optimal public investment in biodiversity for food and agriculture*: a dynamic bio-economic model is being developed for mid-1997, to estimate the net present value of genetic resources for food and agriculture (measured as economic gains to agriculture less the cost of investment in these resources) on the basis of assumptions about the impact of conservation programmes (in particular of changes in the number of plant genetic resource accessions) on plant breeding and agricultural production. Individual case-studies are then programmed.
- *Trade and the environment*: FAO regularly studies the interaction between environmental policies and commodity trade, including aspects of relevance to agro-biodiversity. A paper, *Impact of biotechnology development on trade of agricultural commodities*, presented to the Committee on Commodity Problems in February 1997, provided a tentative assessment of the qualitative impact of biotechnological developments on competitive changes in the world market, between commodities, and between commodity-exporting countries, and developed a framework for a quantitative analysis of these factors, so that future work may, *inter alia*, address the impact of environmental and biotechnology regulations on trade in a quantitative way.
- *Biodiversity indicators*: work is also underway to establish a system of statistical

environmental indicators for monitoring the development of the state of the natural resource base, both globally and at country level. This could eventually be expanded, to include indicators of the state of genetic resources of interest to agriculture, and their change over time.

Further possible activities

The following are activities that could be undertaken within the Joint Work Programme, if resources are made available:

- refining the model for public investment in agricultural biological diversity conservation, with multidisciplinary exchanges on the subject, and the carrying out of specific case studies;
- preparation of a paper on institutional options to provide incentives for the *in situ* conservation of agricultural biological diversity;
- a study on the possible impact of trade and trade liberalization on agricultural biological diversity;
- research related to the effects of TRIPS on trade; and
- further development of economic and statistical agricultural indicators for biological diversity for food and agriculture.

3.3.2 Nutrition and biological diversity for food and agriculture

Regular Programme activities

The *Agro-biodiversity in home gardens* programme has already helped to address farm households' nutritional vulnerability to food production shocks, including those that can be attributed to sub-optimal management of biodiversity for food and agriculture. The home gardening programme emphasizes the improvement of diets through more intensive and diversified home gardens in developing countries. It encourages farmers, in particular women, to make appropriate use of both local plants and improved seed resources, and contributes to the *in situ* conservation of biological diversity for food and agriculture, and nutritionally valuable food plants. At the same time, by promoting diversity in food production and consumption, and by maintaining indigenous knowledge of cultivation practices, dependence by the farmer on any one crop is reduced, thereby reducing vulnerability to a shock in the production of that crop.

3.4 WAICENT

Regular Programme activities

Three major programme areas of the World Agriculture Information Centre (WAICENT) are of direct relevance for decision III/11, through provision of a corporate platform for acquisition, updating, management and dissemination of information relevant to the implementation of the CBD; providing the access to FAO's databases and Virtual Library and documentation; and direct technical cooperation, assists focal points in member countries to establish and enhance the capacities to access to collect, analyse, interpret and disseminate information pertinent to decision III/11.

Extra-budgetary activities

WAICENT is actively involved in fund-raising activities which will provide the needed support for promoting and facilitating the capacities to access to collect, analyse, interpret and disseminate information pertinent to decision III/11.

Support to the management of information relating to all aspects of decision III/11 are being directed towards developing national capabilities, facilitating the transfer of information technology and establishing national information networks and partnerships. These activities are specifically aimed at enabling countries to cooperate in policy and technology development very much in line with the aims of the Clearing-House Mechanism of the CBD.

Further possible activities

If additional funds are available, specific country-based projects could be undertaken to assist in the implementation of the CBD so as to assist in enabling countries to organize and disseminate the wealth of information resources on key cross-sectorial linkages among agriculture, fisheries and forestry biological resources.

3.5 LEGAL OFFICE

Regular Programme activities

The Legal Office directly supports activities related to agricultural biological diversity, such as the current negotiations for the revision of the International Undertaking on Plant Genetic Resources. The Legal Office also provides support in areas such as the development of the International Network of *Ex Situ* Collections under the Auspices of FAO, the implementation of the Convention on Biodiversity and its implications for the International Undertaking on Plant Genetic Resources, the legal aspects of the development of FAO's programme on animal genetic resources, and the development and follow-up of codes of conduct and agreements, such as the Code of Conduct on Plant Germplasm Collecting and Transfer, the Code of Conduct on Responsible Fisheries, and the FAO Agreement to Promote Compliance with International Conservation and Management Measures by Fishing Vessels on the High Seas. The Legal Office also supports a variety of other negotiations relevant to fisheries resource conservation and management at the regional and global levels.

The Legal Office, through the Regular and Field Programmes, provides technical assistance, at regional and national level, in the formulation of policies, strategies and legislation in the field of biological diversity for food and agriculture and related matters.

Extra-budgetary activities

During 1996 and 1997, the Legal Office assisted Belize in drafting legislation regulating the Certification Scheme for Citrus; similar assistance was provided to Jamaica. These two projects were undertaken in parallel with a regional project, *Harmonizing Seed Legislation in the CARICOM Region*. Georgia and

Kyrgyzstan were assisted in the preparation of national seed legislation and quality control schemes.

4. **FISHERIES DEPARTMENT**

Regular Programme activities

The implementation of the *FAO Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries*, which is a primary activity of the Department, will also address priorities of the Convention on Biological Diversity, and take into account decisions of the Conference of the Parties, including the Jakarta Mandate and decision III/11. The most important relevant elements of the Code are described below:

- *Sustainable aquaculture*: Sustainable development of the aquaculture sector involves the appropriate use of farm inputs, such as feed and therapeutic agents, and the regulation of farm effluents, so as not to affect the aquatic environment adversely. It also covers fish health management, the development of genetically improved species, and the protection of natural ecosystems and natural aquatic diversity. Related activities on sustainable methods of intensifying aquaculture production will be developed, through expert consultations and other mechanisms. The development of recommendations and guidelines for the responsible use of introduced species is underway, and will continue. Integration of aquaculture into overall farming systems is a key activity for rural areas.
- *Fisheries management*: Fisheries management, in the light of the Code of Conduct, needs to address the reduction in over-capacity of many fishing fleets, the incorporation of sustainable fishing practices and the elimination of harmful ones, the reduction of fisheries by-catch, the utilization of protected areas, and analysis of the effect of fishing operations on the aquatic environment.
- *International trade*: Trade-related issues to be addressed include analysis of the role of eco-labelling as a means of promoting the sustainable harvest and use of aquatic resources, and of the relationship of CITES and TRIPS to fishery development. Specific activities include, *inter alia*, a study of world shark fisheries.
- *Policy development*: FAO, in conjunction with the International Centre for Living Aquatic Resources (ICLARM), will convene a meeting in 1998 on the development of policy for the sustainable use and conservation of aquatic genetic resources. Issues of ownership and access, intellectual property rights, *etc.*, will be elaborated. A workshop on policy development for sustainable shrimp farming will be convened in 1997, and produce guidelines, recommendations and the published proceedings, which will be followed up.
- *Information systems*: FAO maintains and develops, as an ongoing activity, a variety of databases on fishery production and value, food balance sheets, aquaculture systems, *etc.* Work is underway to improve Member country reporting and the dissemination of information. In addition to Fishery Statistical Publications, outputs include integrated

information systems in the Mediterranean and Latin American regions, and smaller databases on specific topics such as species introductions, fish pathogens and parasites, and fish feeds.

Extra-budgetary activities

- *FAO Species Identification Programme has been funded extensively by extra-budgetary sources, particularly Norway, but traditional donors are reducing their contribution.* With the expansion of this programme into freshwater areas, new sources of finance will need to be identified.
- *Aquaculture information systems: an integrated aquaculture information system covering fishery data, institutions, legal and regulatory information, and other information relevant to aquaculture development has been established, in part with external funds, primarily from Italy.*
- *Application of modern biotechnology to aquaculture and fisheries: DNA probes to identify genes of use to aquaculture, and to allow precise fish identification, are becoming important tools in aquaculture genetic improvement programmes. The government of Norway, in association with the International Atomic Energy Agency, is proposing a large project on the use of DNA markers and traditional selective breeding programmes in several countries in Asia, the Pacific, and Africa.*

Further possible activities

- *Precautionary approach to aquaculture development: the precautionary approach is a key to sustainable aquaculture development, but guidelines and definitions have so far been established only for capture fisheries, and species introductions, with Swedish support. Similar guidelines and definitions are needed for the aquaculture sector, especially marine aquaculture, as stated in the Jakarta Mandate.*
- *Sustainable Aquaculture: the FAO Committee on Fisheries (COFI) is considering the establishment of a sub-committee on aquaculture. Consultations will be required to define scope and terms of reference for this sub-committee; external funds are being sought. The development of a model code of practice for sustainable shrimp farming is envisioned for Asia.*
- *Application of modern biotechnology to aquaculture and fisheries: modern biotechnology allows the creation of genetically engineered organisms in aquaculture, as well as the establishment of DNA probes for monitoring genetically engineered animals, and for ultra-sensitive disease diagnosis. There is wide interest in genetically engineered animals, and the possible role of biotechnology in ensuring optimum fish-health management, but the capacity and regulatory framework required to utilize these technologies responsibly is often lacking, particularly in developing countries. Expert and technical consultations to define the critical issues and elaborate relevant guidelines and*

recommendations, and the development of technical manuals promoting technology transfer, will be required. The elaboration of Biosafety protocols or guidelines will also be critical.

- *Aquatic resources documentation*: the use of genetically improved and genetically modified organisms is increasing. The documentation and a registry of such species, and their utilization in aquaculture and fisheries will become important: how such databases should be structured, and how member States can best supply data, will need to be elaborated through workshops or consultations.
- *Integrated farming systems and marine polyculture*: a key method to increase the efficiency of resource use, to reduce harmful farm effluents, and to reduce risk to farmers, is to diversify the farming system. While there has been diversification in many inland areas and inland aquaculture, marine farming systems are still primarily single-species production units. Guidance and information are needed on possible species for marine polyculture, and may be provided through expert and technical consultations.

5. FORESTRY DEPARTMENT

5.1 *FOREST GENETIC RESOURCES, TREE IMPROVEMENT*

Focus and Description:

The programme works through, and with, national institutes, with the aim of institutional strengthening. It assists in the assessment of the effects of deforestation, forest degradation and intensified forest management (including the establishment of forest plantations) on biological diversity and genetic resources, and in the development of methods for counter-acting possible negative effects. The programme helps countries safeguard and ensure the availability and use of optimal planting materials, including through the exchange of reproductive materials, and technologies for their conservation and improvement at local and national levels. Support to the exchange of technologies, and dissemination of information, are important components of the programmes, as is the promotion of technical cooperation among developing countries and networking between countries and institutes.

Highlights of Recent Achievements

Seed collection, exchange, and evaluation of genetic variation:

- inter-country networks have been established, covering a number of socio-economically important species, including dry-zone, multi-purpose species, mainly of the genera *Acacia* and *Prosopis*;
- the International Neem Network, coordinated by FAO, was established with the long term objective to improve the genetic quality and adaptability of Neem and to improve its

- utilization, throughout the world;
- at its Ninth Session, the FAO Panel of Experts on Forest Gene Resources recommended that FAO take steps to catalyze further action and to coordinate already ongoing work in the conservation and sustainable use of mahogany species, initially focusing attention and interest on species of neotropical genera of the *Meliaceae*.

Conservation of genetic resources

FAO has been active in guiding and advancing methodologies for the conservation of forest genetic resources, including *ex situ* conservation as seed, pollen, tissue and in live collections. Since the early 1980s, special emphasis has been placed on in situ conservation. FAO, in collaboration with national and international collaborators, is currently developing a practical guide to the in situ conservation of forest genetic resources. The guide will complement earlier documents including *Plant genetic resources - their genetic conservation in situ for human use (FAO 1989)*.

Three international workshops, on North American, temperate, and European boreal zone forest genetic resources were held in 1995. These provided information on forest genetic resources activities and priorities in these regions, and a possible models for similar discussions in other ecological regions.

Information dissemination

With the aim of furthering international dialogue on new findings and national experiences and programmes, FAO publishes an annual news bulletin, *Forest Genetic Resources*. The bulletin, and other relevant information, has recently been made available on the internet, supported by the development of an FAO Internet page on forest genetic resources.

Since 1993, FAO has been developing a Global Information System on Forest Genetic Resources (REFORGEN), in close collaboration with national institutes in member countries and international organizations concerned with information provided by member countries. REFORGEN will help support policy and technical decisions in genetic conservation at national, regional and international levels, and will be regularly updated.

Coordination

In the field of forest genetic resources, global coordination is assured mainly through the activities of the FAO Panel of Experts on Forest Gene Resources, IUFRO subject- and working group networks, and FAO's participation in the boards and advisory committees of major seed centres and genetic resources centres, worldwide.

Within Europe, FAO and IPGRI collaborate within the framework of the EUFORGEN forest genetic resources network, and are on its Management Committee. Coordination is facilitated by the FAO news bulletin, "Forest Genetic Resources", and through the FAO Internet page on forest genetic resources.

The Tenth Session of the FAO Panel of Experts on Forest Gene Resources will be held at FAO, Rome, from 9 to 11 September 1997. The CBD Secretariat will be invited to provide resource persons.

On the recommendation of the Thirteenth Session of its Committee on Forestry, FAO plans to organize a number of sub-regional, or eco-regional forest genetic resources workshops in 1997-1999, to serve as building blocks for the elaboration of a country-driven, coherent framework for globally coordinated action in forest genetic resources. The CBD's collaboration in, and support for these workshops would be appreciated.

5.2 WATERSHED MANAGEMENT AND SUSTAINABLE MOUNTAIN DEVELOPMENT

Heightening awareness, and promoting conservation and development activities in mountain ecosystems:

In incorporating into its regular programme the implementation of Agenda 21's Chapter 13, *Sustainable Mountain Development*, FAO has paid particular attention to establishing information and coordination mechanisms. This includes:

- establishing an information and awareness-raising dialogue on conservation and development in mountain ecosystems, through regional inter-governmental and NGO consultations in the Asia-Pacific, Latin America, Africa and European regions;
- creating and sustaining the Inter-Agency Network on Chapter 13, which has held four meetings and undertaken inter-sessional work; and
- fostering very broad-based, participatory involvement in the Mountain Agenda, especially through facilitating and encouraging new partnerships, and collaboration between NGOs, governments and international organizations. This contributed to the creation of an international Mountain Forum, which has helped to establish an uninterrupted dialogue on mountain issues.

Highlights and recent achievements

A *Conservation Guide on Economic Issues in Upstream/Downstream Relationships* and a *Conservation Guide on Master Planning for Priority Watersheds* have been produced, and a variety of mountain-related information has been disseminated, including in electronic form.

Important meetings include:

- the Twenty-first Session of the European Forestry Commission Working Party on the

Management of Mountain Watersheds;

- International Meeting on Sustainable Mountain Development; and
- Regional and sub-regional thematic meetings related to the implementation of Chapter 13.

Support has been provided at national, sub-regional and regional levels, to address water resource conservation and management, and food security in mountain regions. Watershed management and sustainable mountain development networks in all regions have been supported, with particular emphasis on Latin America and Africa. Several countries have received direct support for the development and implementation of comprehensive national mountain development programmes, and donor support for implementation of the Mountain Agenda has been mobilized.