



## Convention on Biological Diversity

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### STEERING COMMITTEE FOR SOUTH- SOUTH COOPERATION ON BIODIVERSITY

First meeting  
Montreal, 29 October 2009

### ANNOTATIONS TO THE PROVISIONAL AGENDA

#### I. INTRODUCTION

1. The first meeting of the Steering Committee for South-South Cooperation (SSC) on Biodiversity was called for at the expert meeting convened by the Chairman of the Group of 77, Antigua and Barbuda, with the financial support of the Global Environment Facility (GEF) and in partnership with the Executive Secretary of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), in Montreal, on 6-7 November 2008 (see para. 9 below).<sup>1</sup> At this meeting, a Steering Committee was proposed comprising the former and current Chairs of the Group of 77 (South Africa, Antigua and Barbuda, Sudan and Yemen, the incoming chair for 2010) as well as the chair of the 2006 brainstorming session (Malawi) and the Chair of the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice (Grenada), to assist in the preparation and implementation of the multi-year plan of action on South-South cooperation, defined through decision IX/25 of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention. An inter-agency task force was also proposed to support the Committee, including the Special Unit for South-South Cooperation of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), GEF and other relevant United Nations entities.

2. The main objectives of the meeting are to: (i) review and adopt the draft multi-year plan of action prepared by the Secretariat; (ii) outline a roadmap for its presentation at the South-South Forum to be organized on 18 October 2010, on the margins of the tenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention, and submission to the Conference of the Parties at its tenth meeting (under the agenda item on cooperation with other conventions and other organizations, and as part of the Executive Secretary's report requested in paragraph 6 of decision IX/25); and (iii) to prepare the organization of a further consultative expert meeting to be held in Kampala, from 31 May to 2 June 2010, at the invitation of Hon. Jesca Eriyo, Minister of State for Environment of Uganda.

3. Within this initiative, SSC is seen as a complement to North-South cooperation, as triangular arrangements can enhance the implementation of the Convention, and biodiversity is a key economic, financial, cultural and strategic asset for developing countries. The adoption of a proposed multi-year plan

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<sup>1</sup>

The report of the meeting is available as document UNEP/CBD/EM-SSC/1/3.

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of action on SSC in the Convention will coincide with its new strategic plan and the post 2010 biodiversity target, and will complement other relevant United Nations South-South cooperation processes and related conventions. SSC is crucial to finding relevant, effective and efficient solutions to common development challenges in developing countries that have accumulated development- and biodiversity-related knowledge and achievements in various domains of great use to support other countries' development efforts.

4. The multi-year plan of action focuses on links between biodiversity, development and Millennium Development Goals, particularly goals 1 and 7. The general objective is to strengthen South-South cooperation and triangular arrangements as a complement to, and supportive of, North-South cooperation in achieving the Millennium Development Goals and the 2010 biodiversity target as defined by the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity, as well as the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety. More specifically, and as mentioned in the report of the 2006 South-South brainstorming meeting (UNEP/CBD/COP/9/INF/11), the multi-year programme of work aims to:

(a) Enhance the implementation of the three objectives of the Convention and the relevant decisions of the Conference of the Parties and the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety through South-South cooperation, as a complement to North-South and other forms of cooperation;

(b) Provide a platform for exchange of experience and dissemination of lessons learned and best practices between and among developing countries on SSC on biodiversity;

(c) Provide a framework for Parties, development agencies, commissions and banks and regional bodies to develop and implement projects and activities on South-South cooperation on biodiversity under a common approach, to facilitate coordination, fundraising and implementation;

(d) Organize and support a web-based portal (as part of the clearing-house mechanism under the Convention on Biological Diversity) with information on South-South cooperation on biodiversity for development, including references, web links, a database of case studies, and sources of further research.

## II. BACKGROUND

5. Many articles of the Convention on Biological Diversity (e.g., Articles 5 on cooperation, 6 on general measures for conservation and sustainable use, Article 7 on identification and monitoring, Article 8 on *in situ* conservation, Article 9 on *ex situ* conservation, Article 12 on research and training, Article 16 on access to and transfer of technology, and particularly Article 18 on scientific and technical cooperation) provide for South-South cooperation. Various provisions of the Biosafety Protocol also require Parties to cooperate on different issues including: the development and/or strengthening of human resources and institutional capacities in biosafety for the purposes of the effective implementation of the Protocol (Article 22), the promotion of public awareness, education and participation concerning the safe transfer, handling and use of living modified organisms (Article 23), and research and information exchange on socio-economic impacts of living modified organisms (Article 26).

6. At its ninth meeting, in May 2008, the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity emphasized, in its decision IX/25, that South-South cooperation is important for development in the context of the Millennium Development Goals, the World Summit on Sustainable Development, and the 2005 World Summit Outcome as a complement to, and supported by, North-South cooperation. The Conference of the Parties noted the report on the brainstorming meeting of experts on South-South cooperation convened by the Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity, in November 2006, in Montreal, which developed a framework for South-South cooperation on biodiversity (UNEP/CBD/COP/9/INF/11). It also:

(a) Noted the initiative of developing countries to prepare, in collaboration with the Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity and other partners, a multi-year plan of action on biodiversity for development, based on the above-mentioned framework;

(b) Invited Parties and other Governments, regional and international organizations to support the organization of a South-South cooperation forum on biodiversity for development at the margins of its tenth meeting, in October 2010, in Nagoya, Japan; and

(c) Invited the Executive Secretary of the Convention on Biological Diversity to report on the preparation of the multi-year plan of action on biodiversity for development at the tenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties.

7. In June 2008, at the twelfth session of the Intergovernmental Follow-up and Coordination Committee on Economic Cooperation among Developing Countries (IFC-XII) in Yamoussoukro, Côte d'Ivoire, the member States of the Group of 77 launched the Development Platform for the South in the context of the new realities and emerging challenges facing developing countries. The Platform<sup>2</sup> is considered an essential and necessary tool for policy-making and action to promote international cooperation in the South and to support the participation and integration of developing countries into the global economy and the globalization process.

8. Under item 4.II, paragraphs 42-46, the Development Platform recognizes that biodiversity is under threat and that South-South cooperation on biodiversity can be significant and fruitful. The Platform thus proposes that developing countries should be enabled to place high priority on biodiversity and biosafety in their national agendas (especially regarding the negotiations for an international instrument on access and benefit-sharing, as well as the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety). In this spirit, the Platform encourages the Group of 77 to pursue a programme of action for South-South cooperation on biodiversity. In section B of item 4.II, on proposed measures for South-South cooperation, the Development Platform recommends the elaboration of a "multi-year work programme on South-South cooperation to promote the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity for protection of life on Earth as well as the access and fair equitable sharing of benefit arising from the use of genetic resources". The relevant extracts of the text are reproduced in annex II below.

9. With financial support from the Global Environment Facility and in partnership with the Chairman of the Group of 77 in New York, the Executive Secretary of the Convention on Biological Diversity convened an expert meeting in Montreal on 6-7 November 2008, to: (i) review the above-mentioned draft framework for South-South cooperation on biodiversity for full integration into the G-77 Development Platform for the South; and (ii) Identify activities for inclusion in the multi-year plan of action on biodiversity for development. The meeting was attended by eighteen experts, fifteen of whom had been nominated by their respective Parties, and was co-chaired by the then Chair of the G-77, Ambassador John Ashe of Antigua and Barbuda and Professor James Seyani of Malawi, Vice-President of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention. Also in attendance were the current President of the United Nations General Assembly High-level Committee for South-South Cooperation, Ambassador Nassir Abdulaziz Al-Nasser of Qatar, the Secretary-General of the Amazon Cooperation Treaty Organization, Mr. Francisco Jose Ruiz Marmolejo, and the current Chair of the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice (SBSTTA), Mr. Spencer Linus Thomas.

## **ITEM 1. OPENING OF THE MEETING**

10. The Executive Secretary of the Convention on Biological Diversity will welcome participants, and the Chairman of the Group of 77 and Prof. James Seyani, representing the Bureau of the Conference

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<sup>2</sup> Document G-77/AM(XX)/2008/6 of the twentieth annual meeting of senior officials of the Group of 77. The complete text is also available at <http://www.cbd.int/doc/meetings/ssc/emssc-01/other/emssc-01-platform-en.doc>.

of the Parties to the Convention, will open the meeting at 9.30 a.m. on Thursday, 29 October 2009. The Chair of SBSTTA, Mr. Spencer Thomas, and the Executive Secretary of the Group of 77, Mr. Mourad Ahmia, will also be invited to make opening remarks.

## **ITEM 2. ORGANIZATIONAL MATTERS**

### ***2.1. Election of officers***

11. After an introduction of participants, in which short updates may be requested on progress on each organization's South-South cooperation strategy, the Group will be invited to elect the Co-Chairs based on proposals from the floor.

### ***2.2. Adoption of the agenda***

12. The provisional agenda prepared by the Executive Secretary (UNEP/CBD/SSC-SC/1/1) will be before the Group for consideration and adoption.

### ***2.3. Organization of work***

13. Under this item, the Group will consider the proposed organization of work for the meeting as contained in annex I of the present note.

14. The language of the meeting will be English.

## **ITEM 3. PREPARATION OF A MULTI-YEAR PLAN OF ACTION ON SOUTH-SOUTH COOPERATION**

15. Participants will have before them the draft plan of action, as information document (UNEP/CBD/SSC-SC/1/1/INF/1).

16. A representative of the Convention Secretariat will present the draft of the multi-year plan of action, and request participants to provide input and comments. Participants will be invited to comment on activities to be included in the plan, as well as on its financial mechanism and coherence with existing programmes of work under the Convention on Biological Diversity, other multilateral environmental agreements, and the strategies proposed by other United Nations agencies and organizations on SSC, international cooperation and policy tools on technology transfer.

17. Participants may wish to define next steps in the roadmap to the tenth meeting of the Conference of Parties, such as the circulation of the resulting draft, by the end of December 2009, to participants of this steering committee, and subsequently, by end of February 2010, to G-77 Parties, and to the High-level Committee on South-South Cooperation. The interim report on the preparation of the multi-year plan of action may also be submitted as an information note to the third meeting of Working Group on Review of Implementation of the Convention, to be held in Nairobi in May 2010. Other milestones to be examined by the participants include:

(a) The expert meeting on the multi year plan of action to be held in Kampala from 31 May to 2 June 2010 (see below).

(b) Distribution of the draft plan at the meeting of Ministers of Foreign Affairs of the G-77 in New York in September 2010;

(c) The First South-South Forum on Biodiversity, to be organized by the G-77 and the Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity in Nagoya, Japan, in conjunction with the tenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties;

(d) A draft decision to be introduced by Yemen, as the Chair of the Group of 77, at the tenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity.

#### **ITEM 4. PREPARATION OF THE KAMPALA EXPERT MEETING**

18. On 11 May 2009, the Minister of State for Environment of Uganda, Hon. Jesca Eryio, offered to host an expert meeting in support of South-South cooperation under the Convention on Biological Diversity. The Steering Committee is called to provide input, under this agenda item, on:

(a) The definition of an agenda, methodology and programme for the Kampala meeting, defining responsibilities for follow-up;

(b) Guidelines for the selection of experts to be invited;

(c) Ways to allow for broad consultation on the proposed multi-year Plan of Action of Parties, other Governments, other conventions and United Nations bodies, as well as interested organizations.

#### **ITEM 5. DATE AND VENUE OF THE SECOND MEETING OF THE STEERING COMMITTEE**

19. Participants may wish to propose a second meeting of the Steering Committee prior to the First South-South Forum on Biodiversity in Nagoya, Japan, in conjunction with the tenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention.

#### **ITEM 6. ADOPTION OF THE REPORT AND CLOSURE OF THE MEETING**

20. The Chair(s) will provide an overview of her/his conclusions, and her/his observations whether meeting objectives have been achieved.

21. Participants will be encouraged to provide feedback and evaluate the meeting.

22. Participants will be invited to consider and adopt the report of the meeting, on the basis of the draft report of the meeting to be prepared and presented by the Chair, and in view of its presentation at the expert meeting in Kampala, and at the high-level South-South Forum in Nagoya, Japan, on 18 October 2010, in conjunction with the tenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity.

23. The meeting is expected to end at 12.30 p.m. on Thursday, 29 October, 2009. It will be followed by lunch offered by the Secretariat and an optional visit to Montreal's Botanical Gardens.

*Annex I***PROGRAMME OF WORK**

<i>Date and time</i>	<i>Agenda item</i>
29 October 2009	
9 to 9.30 a.m.	Registration of delegates.
9.30 to 10.15 a.m.	<i>Items 1 and 2.</i> Opening of the meeting and organizational matters <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Opening words: The Executive Secretary of the CBD, Prof. James Seyani, Mr. Spencer Thomas, and Mr. Mourad Ahmia</li> <li>• Short updates on progress on each organization's South-South cooperation strategy</li> </ul>
10.15 to 11.15 a.m.	<i>Item 3.</i> Preparation of a multi-year plan of action on South-South cooperation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Based on information document UNEP/CBD/SSC-SC-1/1/INF/1</li> </ul>
11.30 a.m. to 12.30 p.m.	<i>Item 4.</i> Preparation of the Kampala expert meeting  <i>Item 5.</i> Date and venue of the second meeting of the Steering Committee
12.30 p.m.	<i>Item 6.</i> Adoption of the report and closure of the meeting.

*Annex II*

**DEVELOPMENT PLATFORM FOR THE SOUTH – G-77 (RELEVANT EXTRACTS)**

**“4.II BIODIVERSITY**

**A. The present situation**

42. Biodiversity is under threat, with species disappearing at a rate not seen since the demise of dinosaurs 65 million years ago, and with the most important ever mass extinction of species being imminent. This has serious consequences for humanity which depends on biodiversity for ecosystem services for a wide range of economic and social functions.

43. Another issue of concern is the fair and equitable sharing of benefits from using genetic resources. This is because of the widespread prevalence of “bio-piracy” in which the biological resources of developing countries are misappropriated through physical removal of resources, or the patents claimed over these resources (mainly applied for by developed countries’ institutions or persons).

44. Biosafety is also a key area of concern for developing countries, due to the importance of protecting biodiversity from the risks of genetic engineering, and the possible effects on food safety and health.

45. The issues of biodiversity and climate change are linked, because climate change is emerging as the greatest threat to biodiversity, while biodiversity can be utilized to combat climate change (both in adaptation and mitigation).

46. There can also be many useful activities for South-South cooperation on biodiversity for development.

**B. Proposed measures**

- i. Developing countries should be enabled to place high priority on biodiversity and biosafety in their national agendas. They should be assisted to strengthen their capacity to prepare legislation and action plans for the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity as well as for biosafety measures.
- ii. Developing countries should strengthen further the role and activities of the Convention on Biological Diversity. Developing countries under the G77 should prepare well for the various forthcoming negotiations under the CBD, especially the negotiations for an international instrument on access and benefit sharing, and on the biosafety protocol.
- iii. South-South cooperation on biodiversity can be significant and fruitful and the Group should pursue its initiative launched in 2006 to submit to the COP in 2008 a programme of action for South-South Cooperation in Biodiversity.”

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