



CBD

Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity

22 May 2007
International Day for Biological Diversity



Biodiversity and Climate Change

Ref: SCBD/STTM/JM/lj/59120

9 July 2007

Subject: Compilation of Information on the Impacts on Biodiversity of the Production and Use of Biofuel

Dear Sir/Madam,

In recommendation XII/7, the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice (SBSTTA) requested the Executive Secretary *inter alia* to invite Parties and other Governments to provide relevant information on the impacts on biodiversity along the full life cycle of the production and use of biofuels and how these are being addressed. SBSTTA further requested the Executive Secretary to synthesize and submit this information for consideration at the ninth meeting of the Conference of the Parties. The unedited advance text of recommendation XII/7 is annexed for your reference.

In response to this request, the Executive Secretary wishes to invite Parties and other Governments to provide relevant information on the impacts on biodiversity along the full life cycle of the production and use of biofuel and how these are being addressed.

Please kindly submit information that you deem relevant to the Secretariat (secretariat@cbd.int or fax +1-514-288-6588) at your earliest convenience but no later than **15 September 2007** to enable the Secretariat to submit a synthesis to the ninth meeting of the Conference of the Parties in May 2008.

I look forward to our continued collaboration in the enhanced implementation of the work of the Convention.

Please accept, Sir, Madam, the assurances of my highest consideration.

Ahmed Djoghlaif
Executive Secretary

To All CBD Focal Points and SBSTTA Focal Points



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XII/7. Biodiversity and biofuel production

1. The Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice *noted* that:

(a) In taking up the request in decision VIII/10, the Bureau of the twelfth meeting of the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice, following consultations within their respective regions, has included the subject of “biodiversity and liquid biofuel production” as an item for discussion on the agenda of its meeting;

(b) The Executive Secretary undertook preparatory work for this discussion, including the electronic forum moderated by the Secretariat between January and March 2007.

2. The Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice *requests* the Executive Secretary:

(a) To *invite* Parties and other Governments to provide relevant information on the impacts on biodiversity along the full life cycle of the production and use of biofuels and how these are being addressed;

(b) In collaboration with relevant organizations, including the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, the United Nations Environment Programme, the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and other members of the Collaborative Partnership on Forests, as well as the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, the International Energy Agency, the Global Bioenergy Partnership, the private sector partners, the indigenous and local communities and non governmental organisations, to *compile* additional relevant information on the impacts on biodiversity along the full life cycle of the production and use of biofuel and related sustainable-use issues;

(c) To *identify* options for consideration of this emerging issue in the programmes of work of the Convention, including the programme of work on agricultural biodiversity and the expanded programme of work on forest biodiversity;

(d) To *synthesize* and *submit* the information resulting from the above activities for consideration at the ninth meeting of the Conference of the Parties;

(e) [To *bring to the attention* of the fifth meeting of the Open-ended Working Group on Article 8(j) the outcomes of the discussions of the twelfth meeting of the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice and any other relevant information that can be made available through the clearing-house mechanism of the Convention;]

(f) To bring the outcomes of the discussions of the twelfth meeting of the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice to the attention of the Joint Liaison Group of the Rio Conventions.

3. While acknowledging the concerns of some Parties that the following is preliminary and needs further comprehensive analysis, the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice *further requests* that the Conference of the Parties *notes* that some of the issues raised during the discussions in the Subsidiary Body included:

(a) There is a wide range of systems and conditions under which biofuels are produced, including different feedstocks used, varying production schemes and management practices, land ownership and land use systems;

(b) Biofuel production and use and the associated production and use of biomass can have beneficial effects on biodiversity and human well-being, including where the production and use processes are associated with:

- (i) A reduction of the consumption of fossil fuels;
 - (ii) A decrease in land use for agricultural purposes associated with the increase in energy outputs per area;
 - (iii) A change in agricultural production leading to reduced management inputs, an increase in crop diversity, the restoration of degraded lands, a reduction in the application of pesticides and fertilizers, a reduction in water used for irrigation and increased water use efficiency of crops;
 - (iv) Decreasing land abandonment and decreasing conversion of agricultural land to other uses;
 - (v) An increase of the income-base for farmers and forest owners and improvements of employment opportunities in rural areas;
 - (vi) The reduction of greenhouse-gas emissions derived from the use of liquid biofuels;
- (c) Biofuel production and use can have adverse effects on biodiversity and human well-being, including where the production process and use are associated with:
- (i) The loss, fragmentation and degradation of valuable habitats such as natural and semi-natural forests, grasslands, wetlands and peatlands and other carbon sinks, their biodiversity components and the loss of essential ecosystem services and leading to increases in greenhouse gas emissions due to these changes;
 - (ii) Competition for land managed for the production of alternative crops, including land managed by indigenous and local communities and small-holder farmers, and competition for the commodity prices potentially leading to food insecurity;
 - (iii) Increased water consumption, increased application of fertilizers and pesticides, increased water pollution and eutrophication, soil degradation and erosion;
 - (iv) The uncontrolled cultivation, introduction and spread of genetically modified organisms;
 - (v) The uncontrolled introduction and spread of invasive alien species;
 - (vi) Emissions from burning biomass and potential adverse effects on human health;
- (d) There are gaps in our knowledge and information associated with the impact of biofuel production and use on biodiversity and the production and use of biofuel from second-generation feedstocks, including the application of the precautionary approach;
- (e) Gaps in knowledge and information can be addressed, *inter alia*, by:
- (i) Compiling and sharing relevant information on the actual and potential impacts on biodiversity of the production and use of biofuels and sustainable use issues;
 - (ii) Promoting research on the actual and potential impacts on biodiversity of the production and use of biofuels;
 - (iii) Promoting international cooperation and the transfer of appropriate technologies;

- (iv) Encouraging greater scientific input into future consideration of the impacts of biofuels on biodiversity[, for example, through an international scientific conference drawing on collaboration with the Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity, relevant organizations, private sector, civil society representatives and representatives of indigenous and local communities].
