

**Memorandum of Co-operation
between
the United Nations Educational, Scientific and
Cultural Organization
and
the Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity**

The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, hereinafter referred to as 'UNESCO' and the Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity hereinafter referred to as 'Secretariat of the CBD',

Noting that:

1. the first meeting (1994) of the Conference of the Parties (COP) to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) welcomed the willingness of UNESCO to support and co-operate with the CBD Secretariat for the effective discharge of its functions, including through the secondment of staff, and requested the CBD Secretariat to enter into such arrangements as might be needed to make UNESCO's offer effective,
2. the UNESCO General Conference, at its 28th session in November 1995, stressed the importance of the co-operation with COP to CBD and considered that UNESCO should provide support to the Convention's implementation by advising Member States on the scientific, social, cultural, ethical and educational aspects of the Convention and by providing technical support to the Secretariat,
3. the Joint Statement by the Chairpersons of the five intergovernmental endeavours of UNESCO on environment (Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission (IOC), Man and the Biosphere Programme (MAB), International Hydrological Programme (IHP), International Geological Correlation Programme (IGCP), Management of Social Transformations Programme (MOST)), presented to the General Conference at its 29th session in 1997, agreed that 'UNESCO's scientific undertakings play a key role in the intellectual and scientific support for the implementation of the Convention on Biological Diversity' and therefore have a substantial role to play in providing COP, the SBSTTA and other organs of the Convention, with input on scientific issues concerning biodiversity,

4. UNESCO's intergovernmental Committee for the Convention concerning the Protection of World Cultural and Natural Heritage has recognized the collective interest that would be advanced by closer co-ordination of that Convention's work with other international conservation instruments, as specified in the Committee's Operational Guidelines, paragraph 139 (February 1996),

Recalling that:

5. Article 24 of CBD, paragraph 1 (d), empowers the Secretariat 'to co-ordinate with other relevant international bodies and, in particular, to enter into such administrative and contractual arrangements as may be required for the effective discharge of its functions',

6. Decision III/21 of COP stressed the need 'to make mutually supportive activities under CBD 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 of Parties and of the organs of the Convention',

7. Decision III/21 of COP requested the Executive Secretary 'to continue to co-ordinate 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 practical, the reporting requirements of the Parties under those instruments and conventions; exploring the possibility of co-ordinating 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 of Biological Diversity',

8. Decision III/21 also encouraged the further development of co-operative arrangements at the scientific and technical level with appropriate biological diversity-related institutions,

Recognizing that:

9. UNESCO's mandate is the promotion of science, education and culture,

10. In its fields of competence, UNESCO has developed a number of scientific biodiversity programmes, activities and networks relevant to the implementation of the Convention, and dealing in particular with research, monitoring, *in situ* conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity,

HAVE AGREED AS FOLLOWS:

I. Purpose

a. The purpose of this Memorandum of Co-operation is to establish a framework for co-operation between UNESCO and the Secretariat of CBD in the field of biodiversity, and in particular those aspects of relevance to science, education and culture, with a view to avoiding overlaps and duplication of efforts and ensuring effective co-operation in joint activities.

b. This Memorandum of Co-operation covers all aspects of terrestrial, freshwater, coastal and marine biodiversity of relevance to UNESCO, including IOC's activities and the implementation of the World Heritage Convention. Within the general framework provided by this Memorandum, specific co-operation agreements may be concluded between the Secretariat and the latter two entities subject to decisions of their respective specific intergovernmental bodies.

c. This Memorandum of Co-operation aims at achieving, within the mandate of UNESCO and the Secretariat, the objectives of the Convention, namely the conservation of biological diversity, the sustainable use of its components and the fair and equitable sharing of benefits.

II. Institutional aspects of co-operation

Aspects of institutional co-operation include:

a. mutual participation of the representatives of the Secretariat and UNESCO to their respective meetings of relevance;

b. joint notification of national level focal points, in respective Member States and Contracting Parties, of the co-operative activity between the Secretariat and UNESCO, seeking in general to promote the consultation and co-operation among focal points, and in particular in those Member States and Contracting Parties where the focal points are different.

III. Access to and dissemination of information

- a. The Secretariat and UNESCO will co-operate in the production, exchange and dissemination of scientifically-sound information and information materials beneficial to the implementation of the Convention on Biological Diversity, for which both Parties have official mandates and institutional commitments.
- b. The Secretariat and UNESCO will establish an appropriate mechanism, technical methods and necessary procedures, for the effective exchange of data and knowledge on biological diversity. Such data and knowledge include those obtained through their international, regional and national programmes and networks, such as the World Network of Biosphere Reserves, the UNESCO Network of Microbial Resources Centres (MIRCENs), Molecular and Cell Biology Network (MCBN), Biotechnology Action Council (BAC), the World Heritage Information Network (WHIN), the IOC's database and the Clearing-House Mechanism under the Convention on Biological Diversity.
- c. The Secretariat and UNESCO will co-operate for the development of the Clearing-House Mechanism on scientific, cultural and educational aspects of biodiversity. Their co-operation will address topics such as policy issues related to data exchange and management.
- d. The Secretariat and UNESCO will jointly encourage the use of their respective rosters of experts on terrestrial, freshwater, coastal and marine biodiversity.
- e. The Secretariat and UNESCO will co-operate in building up the required scientific and technical capacity in countries for the effective development of the Convention.

IV. Co-ordination of activities

- a. The Secretariat and UNESCO will, to the extent possible, co-ordinate their programme activities to ensure that their implementation is complementary and mutually supportive.
- b. Joint activities will include, *inter alia*:
 - inventorying, assessment and monitoring of biodiversity;
 - in situ conservation and integrated ecosystem management, in particular in areas adjacent to protected areas, such as buffer and transition zones of biosphere reserves;

- capacity building (training courses and workshops, University Chairs and other activities);
- programmes for the preservation and maintenance of knowledge, innovations and practices of indigenous and local communities;
- explore the interactions between culture and biological diversity;
- education and public awareness programmes on biodiversity.

c. The Secretariat and UNESCO will investigate areas of the Convention's work programme for which UNESCO could be delegated a lead role in generating innovative theories and practices, in co-operation with the scientific community and appropriate institutions and programmes, such as DIVERSITAS.

d. To ensure adequate liaison between UNESCO and the Secretariat, UNESCO will second to the Secretariat, initially for a period of two years, a Professional Officer who will also assist the Secretariat in a specific area of the science of biological diversity. As requested by the Conference of the Parties and following a mutual agreement, UNESCO's first Professional Officer to be seconded will be a specialist in marine and coastal biological diversity.

V. Consultation, communication and guidance

- a. The Secretariat and UNESCO will arrange regular consultations as required for the implementation of this Memorandum of Co-operation.
- b. They will also report on the measures taken under this Memorandum to their respective governing bodies and seek further guidance on new areas of co-operation.

VI. Focal points

The Executive Secretary of CBD and the Director of the Division of Ecological Sciences of UNESCO are focal points for the purposes of this Memorandum of Co-operation and, in particular, regarding official communication and exchange of information.

All matters related to activities of the World Heritage Convention and of IOC, including official communications and exchange of information, should be referred to the World Heritage Centre and the IOC Secretariat respectively.

VII. Review, amendment and termination

- a. This Memorandum of Co-operation may be reviewed to assess its effectiveness and may be amended at any time by mutual agreement of the parties.
- b. This Memorandum of Co-operation 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 *Bratislava* on *May 11, 1998*, in two original copies.

For UNESCO:



Director,
Division of Ecological Sciences

For the Convention on
Biological Diversity:



Executive Secretary,
Convention on Biological
Diversity