



## Convention on Biological Diversity

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### REPORT ON THE MEETING OF THE INFORMAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE TO THE CLEARING-HOUSE MECHANISM OF THE CONVENTION ON BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY, 26 NOVEMBER 2019

#### *Summary*

The Informal Advisory Committee to the Clearing-House Mechanism met on the margins of the twenty-third meeting of the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice, in Montreal, Canada, on 26 November 2019. It reviewed its programme of work in the following areas: (a) award for national clearing-house mechanisms (CHM Award); (b) the web strategy; (c) support to national clearinghouse mechanisms; (d) technical and scientific cooperation; and (e) knowledge management.

The account of the proceedings of the meeting appears below.

#### INTRODUCTION

1. The Informal Advisory Committee to the Clearing-House Mechanism met at the Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity in Montreal, Canada, on 26 November 2019.

#### ITEM 1. OPENING OF THE MEETING

2. The meeting was opened at 8 a.m. on Tuesday, 26 November 2019, by Mr. Erie Tamale, Senior Programme Officer in the Implementation Support Division of the Secretariat. He welcomed everyone on behalf of Ms. Jyoti Mathur-Filipp, Director of the Implementation Support Division.

3. He welcomed the participants who were present and those participating remotely. He noted that, owing to the limited time available, the meeting would serve as an opportunity for the Secretariat to update members of the Committee on developments in the areas under review since the last meeting, in June.

#### Attendance

4. The meeting was attended by the following members and observers:

No.	Party	Member
1	Belgium	Mr. Han de Koeijer - Chair
2	Canada	Mr. Charles Shulman <sup>1</sup>
3	China	Ms. Zou Yeuyu
4	Jamaica	Ms. Suzanne Davis <sup>2</sup>
5	Morocco	Mr. Mostafa Madbouhi <sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Was unable to connect remotely.

<sup>2</sup> Was unable to connect remotely.

<sup>3</sup> Attended remotely.

No.	Party	Member
6	Ukraine	Ms. Yuliya Bondarenko <sup>4</sup>
	<b>Partner organization</b>	<b>Member</b>
7	ASEAN Centre for Biodiversity	Ms. Sheila Vergara
8	UNEP-WCMC	Mr. Jerry Harrison
		<b>Observers</b>
9	Global Biodiversity Information Forum	Mr. Tim Hirsch
10	France	Mr. Denis Duclos
11	France	Mr. Pierre Spielewoy

## ITEM 2. ORGANIZATIONAL MATTERS

### Adoption of the agenda and organization of work

5. The meeting was chaired by Mr. Han de Koeijer (Belgium). The Informal Advisory Committee took up consideration of the agenda of the meeting.

6. The Committee adopted the following agenda on the basis of the provisional agenda prepared by the Executive Secretary (CBD/CHM/2019/2/1):

1. Opening of the meeting.
2. Organizational matters:
  - 2.1. Adoption of the agenda;
3. Update on standing items:
  - 3.1. Award for national clearing-house mechanisms;
  - 3.2. Web strategy for the Convention and its Protocols;<sup>5</sup>
  - 3.3. Support to national clearing-house mechanisms, including progress with the Bioland tool;
  - 3.4. Technical and scientific cooperation (decision 14/24);
  - 3.5. Knowledge management under the Convention and its Protocols (decision 14/25);
4. Other matters.
5. Conclusions and recommendations.
6. Closure of the meeting.

## ITEM 3. UPDATE ON STANDING ITEMS

### 3.1 Award for national clearing-house mechanisms

7. It was reported that the criteria for the awards had been updated by the members of the Informal Advisory Committee at its June 2019 meeting. Members observed that the criteria needed to take into account the situation involving Parties that were in the process of migrating to Bioland or developing new national clearing-house mechanism (CHM) websites on the Bioland platform. It was noted that the current criteria took into account such items as the CHM website layout, ongoing maintenance and upgrades. There was a concern that, since all Bioland users would have the same template, this could cause

<sup>4</sup> Attended remotely.

<sup>5</sup> An update on the communication strategy.

discrepancies in the scores between users of the Bioland tool and those Parties who had developed their national CHMs on different platforms.

8. The Secretariat proposed that the notification be worded neutrally to provide time for the Jury members to reflect on this. The members then discussed the awards process. It was reported that the first awards had been given out during a side event at the thirteenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties. At the second awards ceremony, the awards were given out in plenary. The Committee felt that it would be best to give out the awards at plenary at some point during the first few days of the meeting of the Conference of the Parties and then have a subsequent side event to provide more time for knowledge exchange and best practice sharing.

9. Members were also asked by the Secretariat if they would consider providing some sort of trophy or other award for the winners to receive at the ceremony as there was no budget provided for the CHM Awards.

### **3.2 Web strategy for the Convention and its Protocols**

10. The Secretariat made a presentation on the new website, which would be launched shortly after the twenty-third meeting of the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice. Staff from the Communications Unit presented the new website layout and provided information on the development process. The Committee members provided brief feedback, including comments on the colour schemes of the main pages, and requested that links to national CHM websites be accessible somewhere on the website. It was suggested that the country profile pages would be the best way to do this. Members also requested to review the test web site on their own computers.

11. The Secretariat proposed to provide a non-public link to the production site for members to view and provide more feedback. In response to the Chair's question, the Secretariat reported that the web strategy would not be updated for consideration by the Subsidiary Body on Implementation at its third meeting. Instead, the Secretariat was focused on completing existing tasks and requests before updating the document yet again.

### **3.3 Support to national clearing-house mechanisms, including progress with the Bioland tool**

12. Committee members received an update from the Secretariat on the ongoing enhancement and use of the Bioland tool. Reference was made to the need for training support to Parties that had requested migration to Bioland. France announced that a booklet providing basic information on Bioland was being prepared as part of the GBIF project. The Secretariat advised that enhancements on interoperability were ongoing. The Secretariat also advised that a notification to announce the official launch of the Bioland tool would be issued in the coming days.

### **3.4 Technical and scientific cooperation (decision 14/24)**

13. The Secretariat reported on the further updates made to the document discussed at the meeting of the Informal Advisory Committee in June before it was issued for consideration by the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice at its twenty-third meeting. The updates were made following an internal peer review of the document by relevant Secretariat staff. The Secretariat also provided brief updates on the Bio-Bridge Initiative (BBI) platform. In commenting on that item, one member reported a lack of interoperability between the BBI platform and other databases, noting that a record that he had submitted through the BBI platform had not been published on other platforms. Members stressed the need to ensure interoperability between various CHM databases.

### **3.5 Knowledge management under the Convention and its Protocols (decision 14/25)**

14. The Secretariat gave an update on further developments made to the draft knowledge management strategy document since the meeting of the Informal Advisory Committee held in June and reported that a side event on knowledge management had been held the previous week, during the eleventh meeting of the Ad Hoc Open-ended Working Group on Article 8(j) and Related Provisions. The Committee members

expressed concern over the fact that a revised version of the document had been sent to them only a day before the meeting. Members were invited to provide further feedback on the draft by 31 December 2019.

15. The Secretariat agreed to incorporate this feedback into the draft by 15 January 2020. Members also discussed the relationship between the knowledge management strategy and the post-2020 global biodiversity framework. It was noted that no specific mention of knowledge management had been made during the informal briefing by the Co-Chairs of the Working Group on the Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework held on 24 November 2019.

16. The Secretariat reported that no formal consultations on knowledge management were scheduled as part of the post-2020 process due to lack of resources. The Secretariat was asked to explore potential opportunities for having at least one informal consultation prior to the third meeting of the Substantive Body on Implementation. Members noted that, due to the overlap between the clearing-house mechanism, knowledge management, technical and scientific cooperation and capacity-building, efforts should be made to use consistent language in documents relating to those four areas in order to avoid creating any confusion.

#### **ITEM 4. OTHER MATTERS**

17. The chair requested an update from the Secretariat on the status of recruitment of a programme officer for the clearing-house mechanism.

18. The Secretariat advised that the terms of reference for the position had been reviewed and revised following the outcomes of the fourteenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties. It was anticipated that the position would be advertised in the coming weeks.

#### **ITEM 5. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

19. The Committee concluded its review of the standing items and reviewed the next actions prior to its next anticipated meeting on the margins of the third meeting of the Subsidiary Body on Implementation, in May 2020.

#### **ITEM 6. CLOSURE OF THE MEETING**

20. The chair closed the meeting at 9.45 a.m. on 26 November 2019.

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