



Convention on Biological Diversity

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CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES TO THE CONVENTION ON BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY

Ninth meeting
Bonn, 19–30 May 2008
Agenda item 4.6

DECISION ADOPTED BY THE CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES TO THE CONVENTION ON BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY AT ITS NINTH MEETING

IX/17. Biodiversity of dry and sub-humid lands

The Conference of the Parties

1. *Invites* relevant organizations and donor agencies to provide technical and financial support to developing countries, in particular least developed countries and small island developing States among them, and countries with economies in transition, to identify and conduct land-use options for dry and sub-humid lands that promote the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity and generate income for indigenous and local communities, including through involving private sector and public partnerships and through the establishment of a special fund to support such activities;
2. *Encourages* Parties to develop regional and subregional research centres and networks for the exchange of research, information, traditional and cultural knowledge and technology concerning dry and sub-humid lands;
3. *Encourages* Parties to consider land-use options that promote the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity and generate income for indigenous and local communities, and to develop demonstration sites, while using the ecosystem approach and considering the links between the programmes of work on the biodiversity of dry and sub-humid lands and agricultural biodiversity;
4. *Noting* that sustainable wildlife management is an effective low impact mechanism to deliver sustainable incomes to indigenous and local communities, *encourages* Parties to enhance sustainable wildlife management through land-use planning to minimize human-wildlife conflicts and achieve the sustainable use of wildlife;
5. *Notes* that sustainable wildlife management may have a comparative advantage over other land-use options due to the natural adaptations of native species to local environmental conditions such as low rainfall and the presence of diseases;
6. *Further notes* that lands used for sustainable wildlife management may be more resilient to the predicted impacts of climate change than other land-use options due to the factors noted above;

7. *Recognizes* the important role of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) and *welcomes* its Ten-Year Strategic Plan and Framework to enhance the implementation of that Convention;

8. *Requests* the Executive Secretary, in cooperation with the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification and other relevant organizations and collaborators to:

(a) Compile and publish a list of case-studies on scientific and technical knowledge including traditional knowledge regarding the management, and sustainable use of the biological diversity of dry and sub-humid lands;

(b) Carry out a feasibility study for the development of a tool-kit to support the efforts of local and indigenous communities with regard to: sustainable pastoralism, adapted agricultural practices, control of soil erosion, valuation of natural resources, water and land-use management, carbon capture and identifying threats that have the greatest impacts on the biodiversity of dry and sub-humid lands;

(c) Prepare a compilation of experiences in the field of climate-change mitigation and adaptation, soil management and pastoralism in dry and sub-humid lands;

(d) Explore harmonized reporting between relevant conventions and strengthen collaboration on the assessment of status, trends and threats in dry and sub-humid lands;

9. *Further requests* the Executive Secretary to explore, with the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), and the UNCCD, the means to strengthen collaboration in pastoralism and agricultural use of dry and sub-humid lands in line with paragraph 11 (c) of decision VIII/2, and to produce a report on the actions that have already been undertaken and actions that need to be carried out, taking into account the specific features of dry and sub-humid lands and the needs of the people living in these lands, for further consideration by the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice prior to the tenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties;

10. *Further requests* the Executive Secretary, in collaboration with the Secretariat of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification, to develop proposals for the integration of climate change considerations within the programme of work on the biodiversity of dry and sub-humid lands, for consideration by the SBSTTA prior to the tenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties, building on the elements of the guidance contained in decision IX/16 on climate change and biodiversity already addressed in the existing programme of work, an assessment of the state of implementation, as well as the identification of gaps in implementation including a review of barriers and suggestions to overcome them and considering the importance of sustainable forest management and sustainable land management in dry and sub-humid lands and the need to enhance the understanding of the role of dryland forests with relation to climate change;

11. *Recognizing* the importance of biodiversity in dry and sub-humid lands for improved livelihood and food security and climate change adaptation and mitigation, *welcomes* the work of the Secretariat in support of the implementation of the current climate-change components of the programme of work and the joint work programme between the Convention on Biological Diversity and the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification and *requests* the Executive Secretary to collaborate with the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification to further strengthen this work;

12. *Notes with appreciation* the reports of the seventh and eighth meeting of the Joint Liaison Group and the note by the Executive Secretary, options for enhanced cooperation among the three Rio conventions (UNEP/CBD/WGRI/1/7/Add.1) and *requests* the Executive Secretary to enhance cooperation and synergies concerning biodiversity, land degradation/desertification and climate change

as called for in decision IX/16 and to continue discussions within the Joint Liaison Group on the issues as identified in decision IX/16;

13. *Adopts* the delineation option resulting from the study by the World Conservation Monitoring Centre of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP-WCMC) contained in the annex to the present decision, subject to the addition of dry and sub-humid tropical forests, which takes due account of the UNCCD criteria, and uses criteria based on the definition under the Convention on Biological Diversity as a way to define eco-regions, that encompass biological and ecological criteria as a basis to define dry and sub-humid lands and *requests* the Executive Secretary, in collaboration with UNEP-WCMC to update the map contained in the annex to better reflect dry and sub-humid tropical forests;

14. *Acknowledges* the ongoing work by the European Space Agency to quantify the change in the rate of biodiversity loss as related to the extent of dry and sub-humid lands, including the prototype map to test the approach, and looks forward to seeing the results that are expected to become available in the second half of 2008, bearing in mind the additional resources required to fill gaps in information and data;

15. *Expresses its deep concern* regarding the major obstacles, needs and constraints that may prevent achievement of the 2010 biodiversity target in dry and sub-humid lands as drawn from the Regional Workshop for Africa on Synergy among the Rio conventions and other Biodiversity-related conventions and from the Regional Synergy Workshop for Latin America and the Caribbean on Biodiversity of Agro-ecosystems within Dry and Sub-humid Lands;

16. *Recognizing* the high rate of poverty within dry and sub-humid lands and considering that activities to improve livelihoods in dry and sub-humid lands therefore combine several Millennium Development Goals, especially goal 1 (“Eradication of extreme poverty and hunger”) and 7 (“Ensuring environmental sustainability”), *requests* the Executive Secretary to further develop the activities contained in paragraphs 29 and 30 of his progress Report and Consideration of Proposals for Future Action (UNEP/CBD/COP/9/19), particularly activities related to economic valuation and payments for ecosystem services for consideration by the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and technological Advice prior to the tenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties, stressing that combating biodiversity loss in those areas requires holistic approach taking into account *inter alia* the livelihoods of local people and adaptation to climate change;

17. *Requests* the Executive Secretary, in collaboration with relevant organizations, such as the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction, to compile information on the impacts of drought on biodiversity and prepare proposals on management options for biodiversity and drought, including early-warning systems, for consideration by the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and technological Advice prior to the tenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties.

Annex

DELINEATION OPTION RESULTING FROM THE STUDY BY THE UNEP WORLD CONSERVATION MONITORING CENTRE

1. A study conducted by the World Conservation Monitoring Centre of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP-WCMC) used a geographic information system (GIS) spatial analysis at a global scale to provisionally delineate the areas that the programme of work on dry and sub-humid lands under the Convention on Biological Diversity, as defined by the Ad Hoc Technical Expert Group, should include: arid and semi-arid lands, grasslands and savannahs, and Mediterranean landscapes. This definition encompasses 47.39 per cent of the global terrestrial area.

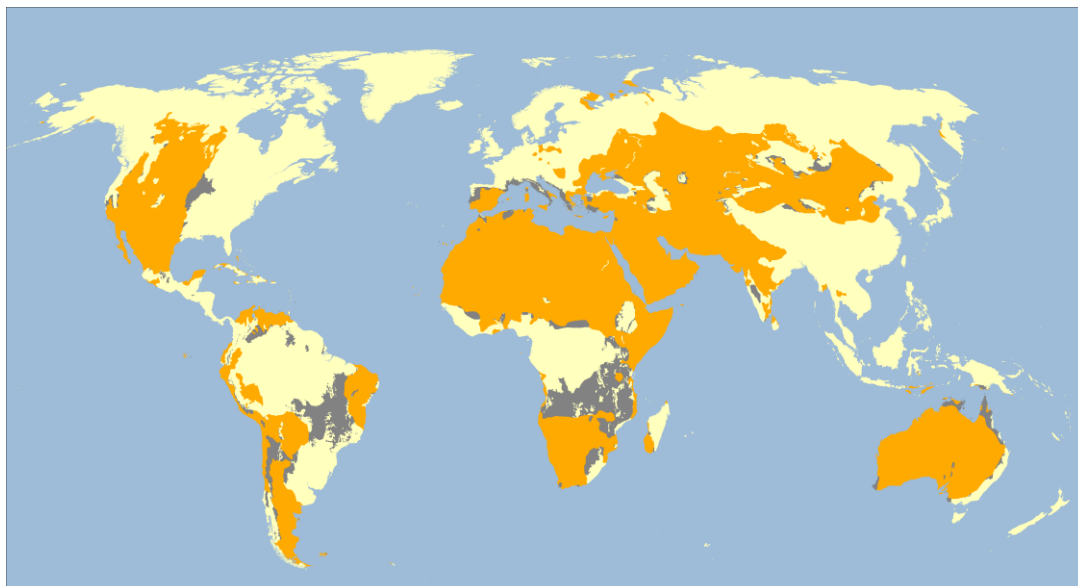
2. The analysis encompasses maps of the WWF terrestrial eco-regions and of aridity zones. In particular, using criteria based on the definition under the Convention on Biological Diversity, the eco-region descriptions were evaluated to classify areas extending beyond bioclimatic definitions.

3. The definitions of the eco-regions that were adopted for the purpose of this map include:

(a) Mediterranean ecosystems are loosely defined because no single climatic or bioclimatic definition has yet been established. They generally include areas with cool, wet winters and warm or hot dry summers. They encompass a wide range of habitat types (forest, woodland, grassland) and are typified by a low, woody, fire-adapted sclerophyllous shrubland;

(b) Savannah ecosystems are dominated at the ground layer by grasses and grass-like plants. They form a continuum from treeless plains through open woodlands to closed canopy woodlands with a grassy understorey;

(c) Grassland ecosystems are loosely defined as areas dominated by grasses (*Graminaceae*) or grass-like plants with few woody plants. Periodic drought, highly seasonal rainfall, fire and grazing by large herbivores are typical characteristics of natural grassland and savannah ecosystems.



Delineation of areas in relation to the CBD PoW on Dry and Subhumid Lands

- included by definition, $P/PET < 0.65$
- presumed included: dryland features, but $P/PET \geq 0.65$



Source: ESRI, 1993; UNEP/GRID, 1991
 CRU/UEA; WWF-US, 2004
 Scale: 1:100 million
 Projection: Robinson
 © UNEP-WCMC, 2007
