



CONVENTION ON BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY

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CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES TO THE CONVENTION ON BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY SERVING AS THE MEETING OF THE PARTIES TO THE CARTAGENA PROTOCOL ON BIOSAFETY

Second meeting

Montreal, 30 May-3 June 2005

Item 7 of the provisional agenda *

MATTERS RELATED TO THE FINANCIAL MECHANISM AND RESOURCES

Note by the Executive Secretary

I. INTRODUCTION

1. At its first meeting, the Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Protocol made a recommendation to the seventh meeting of the Conference of the Parties on the guidance to the financial mechanism with respect to financing capacity-building efforts for the implementation of the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety. The Conference of the Parties considered and incorporated the recommendation, as amended, in its decision VII/20 on further guidance to the financial mechanism (see UNEP/CBD/COP/7/21, paras. 381-389).

2. The guidance with respect to biosafety (decision VII/20, paras. 21-26) outlines, *inter alia*, the eligibility criteria and the programme priorities. It also identifies the role of the Global Environment Facility (GEF) in facilitating the implementation of the Action Plan for Building Capacities for the Effective Implementation of the Protocol. The guidance expanded the eligibility criteria so that Parties to the Convention that are not yet Parties to the Cartagena Protocol could receive GEF funding for certain capacity-building activities related to biosafety if they provide a clear political commitment towards becoming Parties to the Protocol (decision VII/20, para. 21 (b)).

II. RESPONSE OF THE FINANCIAL MECHANISM TO THE GUIDANCE OF THE CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES WITH RESPECT TO BIOSAFETY

3. At its twenty-third meeting, which was held from 19 to 21 May 2004, the GEF Council welcomed the additional guidance of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity, which included the guidance with respect to biosafety. It requested the GEF Secretariat to maintain its

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consultations with the Implementing Agencies and Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity on how best to ensure effective responsiveness to that guidance and other relevant decisions and to keep the Council regularly informed of the progress being made. At its meeting in November 2004, the Council welcomed the matrix prepared by the GEF Secretariat highlighting the GEF response to the guidance adopted by the Conference of the Parties at its seventh meeting (Council document GEF/C.24/7, annex). It recommended that, in implementing the guidance, GEF should take into account the role that regional organizations could play in coordinating their members.

4. In order to facilitate the implementation of the guidance on the expanded eligibility criteria for Parties to the Convention that are not yet Parties to the Protocol (see para. 2 above), the Council at its meeting in May 2004 requested the GEF Secretariat to develop procedures to ensure that such funding would lead to ratification of the Protocol.^{1/} Pursuant to that request, the Chief Executive Officer/Chairman of the Global Environment Facility and the Executive Secretary of the Convention on Biological Diversity developed the following procedure:^{2/}

(a) In order for a developing country or a country with an economy in transition that is a Party to the Convention but not to the Cartagena Protocol to be eligible for financing from the financial mechanism for activities described in paragraph 21 (b) of decision VII/20, the Party must confirm in writing its political commitment to become a Party to the Protocol upon completion of the activities to be funded;

(b) Such written confirmation should be in the form of a letter from the Minister responsible for biosafety issues within the Government addressed to the Executive Secretary of the Convention on Biological Diversity. A copy of the letter should also be sent to the Chief Executive Officer/Chairman of GEF;

(c) A copy of the letter submitted to the Executive Secretary should be attached to the project proposal submitted to an Implementing Agency of GEF for funding;

(d) The project proposal should be endorsed by both the national focal point for the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety and the national operational focal point of the Global Environment Facility. If a country has not yet designated a national focal point for the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety, the project proposal should be endorsed by the national focal point for the Convention on Biological Diversity;

(e) Countries that have received funding from the Global Environment Facility for activities referred to in paragraph 21 (b) of decision VII/20 will, on an annual basis, report to the Executive Secretary of the Convention on actions being taken towards becoming Parties to the Protocol.

^{1/} See the Joint Summary of the Chairs for the GEF Council meeting, 19-21 May 2004, para. 60.

^{2/} A letter jointly signed by the Chief Executive Officer/Chairman of GEF and the Executive Secretary of the Convention was circulated in September 2004 to all national focal points for the Convention, the Protocol and the Global Environment Facility clarifying the procedures to be followed.

(f) The Executive Secretary will annually compile the national reports that he receives and will distribute the compiled reports to the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity and to the GEF Council for information.

5. In response to the guidance by the Conference of the Parties, GEF has put aside the financial resources to support capacity-building efforts for the implementation of the Cartagena Protocol. ^{3/} Currently, funding is available to eligible countries for projects on implementation of their draft national biosafety frameworks. The lessons learned during the demonstration phase and the national biosafety framework development project will be incorporated in the development of the implementation projects.

6. Furthermore, in the work programme that was presented for approval by the Council at its meeting from 17 to 19 November 2004, the GEF Secretariat circulated the following two project proposals from the United Nations Environment Programme: ^{4/}

(a) Building capacity for effective participation in the Biosafety Clearing-House (BCH) (Add-on project to cover all the remaining 89 eligible countries); ^{5/}

(b) Development of national biosafety frameworks project (Add-on project for the final 10 eligible countries).

7. At its November 2004 meeting, the GEF Council requested the GEF Office for Monitoring and Evaluation to prepare an evaluation of the activities financed under the Initial Strategy for Assisting Countries to Prepare for the Entry into Force of the Cartagena Protocol, which was approved by the Council in May 2000. The evaluation includes assessments of the major results of the GEF-supported biosafety activities, GEF responsiveness to guidance under the Protocol, the technical guidelines and toolkits developed by the GEF projects, the project approaches to deliver capacity-building, national biosafety frameworks and their implementation, institutional effectiveness, stakeholder participation and overall project performance in selected countries. The evaluation also includes a review the experience gained in working in the 50 countries participating in the Biosafety Clearing-House capacity-building project, for which funding had already been approved. The evaluation is expected to be completed in time for submission to the GEF Council meeting in November 2005.

III. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

8. The Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Protocol may wish to take note of the status report on the implementation of the guidance provided to the financial mechanism with respect to biosafety, as presented in the present note, and consider the need for additional recommendation to the Conference of the Parties to the Convention regarding further guidance.

^{3/} In its Strategic Business Plan FY04-FY06, the GEF has also identified capacity-building for the implementation of the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety as one of the strategic priorities in the biodiversity focal area which will be funded in accordance with the guidance from the Conference of the Parties.

^{4/} See details at: http://www.thegef.org/Documents/Council_Documents/GEF_C24/c24_wp.html

^{5/} In November 2003, the GEF Council approved in principle the Biosafety Clearing-House capacity-building project as an add-on project to the UNEP-GEF project for Development of National Biosafety Frameworks to cover countries that have ratified or acceded to the Protocol by the first meeting of the Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety. Approval for the project was given in March 2004 to assist 50 countries. See: <http://www.unep.ch/biosafety/BCH.htm>