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REGIONAL WORKSHOP FOR LATIN AMERICA
ON THE CLEARING-HOUSE MECHANISM
Villa de Leyva, Colombia, 6-10 May 2013

REPORT OF THE WORKSHOP

I. INTRODUCTION

1. In paragraph 2 (a) of decision X/15 on the clearing-house mechanism (CHM), the Conference of the Parties (COP) encourages Parties to continue to take the necessary steps to establish, strengthen, and ensure the sustainability of national clearing-house mechanisms in order for them to provide effective information services to facilitate the implementation of national biodiversity strategies and action plans (NBSAPs), as specified in goal 2 of said decision.
2. At its eleventh meeting, the Conference of the Parties (COP-11) requested Parties and other governments which had not yet done so to develop and to revise/update their national biodiversity strategies and action plans (NBSAPs) in line with the framework of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020.
3. To support these processes, the Executive Secretary organized the following workshops, thanks to generous financial assistance from the Government of Japan and the collaboration of the Government of Colombia, particularly the Ministry of the Environment and Sustainable Development of Colombia, and the Alexander von Humboldt Institute for Research on Biological Resources (IAvH):
 - a) The Regional Workshop for Latin America on Updating National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans (NBSAPs);
 - b) The Regional Workshop for Latin America on the Clearing-House Mechanism (CHM).
4. In accordance with notification SCBD/ITS/NS/GT/81333 (2013-016), issued on 15 February 2013, the two workshops took place concurrently in Villa de Leyva, Colombia, from 6 to 10 May 2013. This made it possible to organize joint sessions to discuss topics of common interest.

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5. Henceforth in this document, the word “workshop” is used to refer to the Regional Workshop for Latin America on the Clearing-House Mechanism (CHM). This workshop was held in Spanish and was attended by 20 official delegates representing 19 Spanish-speaking countries in Latin America: Argentina, Bolivia, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Dominican Republic, Uruguay, and Venezuela.

6. The section below (Section II) describes the workshop according to its provisional agenda (UNEP/CBD/CHM/RW/2013/LA/1). Additional information on the workshop is provided in the following annexes:

- a) Annex 1: List of Participants;
- b) Annex 2: Overview of Workshop Organization;
- c) Annex 3: List of National Clearing-House Mechanisms in Latin America;
- d) Annex 4: Items Presented at the Joint Session on National Strategies and Action Plans and the Clearing-House Mechanism;
- e) Annex 5: Example of a Possible Menu for a National Clearing-House Mechanism;
- f) Annex 6: Follow-Up Recommendations; and
- g) Annex 7: Workshop Assessment Questionnaire Results.

7. For more information, the workshop documentation is available on line at www.cbd.int/doc/?meeting=CHM-RW-2013-LA. This documentation includes the participating countries’ presentations and reports, which contain the updated versions of the strategic visions and roadmaps for national clearing-house mechanisms.

II. DESCRIPTION OF THE WORKSHOP

ITEM 1. OPENING OF THE WORKSHOP

8. Registration took place before the workshop was opened. The opening session was held the morning of Monday, 6 May 2013, together with that of the Regional Workshop for Latin America on Updating National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans (NBSAPs).

9. Ms. Martha Isabel Pereira, representing the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Colombia, welcomed workshop participants and thanked the Government of Japan and the Alexander von Humboldt Institute (IAvH) for their support. Ms. Pereira noted the importance of these workshops as fora for the sharing of regional experiences and challenges, especially regarding the matters of implementation and financial resources, which, she pointed out, were the issues most discussed at COP 11. She said that other ministries had been invited to the NBSAP workshop in order to ensure their integration on a State level, reiterating the importance of mainstreaming biodiversity in all sectors. She concluded by underscoring Colombia’s commitment to research, which enables the country to implement biodiversity policy in all sustainable-development scenarios.

10. Mr. Javier Camargo, representing the Ministry of the Environment and Sustainable Development of Colombia (MADS), also welcomed participants and noted that the MADS, together with the IAvH and UNDP, had initiated the creation of the country's strategy. As a first step, the National Policy for Integral Management of Biodiversity and Its Ecosystem Services (PNGIBSE) was launched in 2012. Mr. Camargo said that Colombia's NBSAP points to other, related, policies, scientific information, and other products developed. He concluded by encouraging participants to evaluate the strategies in their respective countries.

11. Ms. Sra. Juana Marino of the Alexander von Humboldt Institute (IAvH) said that Latin American countries have the opportunity to set an example worldwide. She called on participants to be innovative and to analyze, on both a State and regional level, what is needed to ensure greater effectiveness and to determine where they want to go and which values and principles to apply. Ms. Marino pointed out that the IAvH has a crucial responsibility as regards information management, stressing that basic information must be generated in order for it to be shared on a political level with decision-makers, economic sectors, and all other relevant sectors.

12. Ms. Nadine Saad, on behalf of the Executive Secretary of the Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity (SCDB), welcomed participants and thanked the Ministry of the Environment and Sustainable Development of Colombia and the Alexander von Humboldt Institute for hosting the workshop on the updating and review of NBSAPs and the workshop on the CHM. She also thanked the Government of Japan for providing financial support and making these workshops possible. She noted that this was a key moment for both Convention processes and for broader processes affecting biodiversity, emphasizing the unique opportunity this provided for the inclusion of biodiversity issues in poverty-reduction and development planning. Before finishing, Ms. Saad remarked that the workshop provided an opportunity for strategy experts to work with CHM experts to ensure that national mechanisms really do facilitate the work related to planning, implementation, monitoring, and national reports. Ms. Saad ended by wishing the participants a very productive workshop.

13. After the opening ceremony, the participants introduced themselves, stating their respective names, countries, and roles in either the development/assessment of NBSAPs or the establishment/development of CHMs in their respective countries.

ITEM 2. GLOBAL AND REGIONAL OVERVIEW

14. The purpose of this joint session was to have the participants in both workshops understand the global and regional context beyond the national one.

15. To introduce the various topics, Ms. Nadine Saad of the SCBD informed participants of the objectives of the workshop and gave a brief introductory presentation on NBSAPs and CHMs. Ms. Saad explained that Article 6 of the Convention defines an NBSAP as a primary mechanism for the application of the Convention, given that it is a process through which countries plan and address threats to biodiversity. She also mentioned Aichi Target 17, which asks countries to develop NBSAPs and adopt them as policy instruments.

16. Ms. Saad said that COP 11, in addition to urging countries which have not yet done so to revise their strategies, invites countries to undertake a voluntary peer review and to include all social actors in the NBSAP review and implementation process. She also pointed out that COP 11 reiterates the call for the facilitation of experience-sharing through the CHM and for technical and scientific cooperation. Before ending her presentation, she discussed the steps necessary to biodiversity planning, explaining the three main parts of the fifth national report.

17. Mr. Olivier de Munck, SCDB CHM Programme Officer, introduced the clearing-house mechanism (CHM) and provided a panorama of national clearing-house mechanisms. He explained that the CHM is a platform for two-way exchange of information the mission of which is to support various articles of the Convention, including Article 13 (Public Education and Awareness), Article 16 (Access to and Transfer of Technology), Article 17 (Exchange of Information), and Article 18 (Technical and Scientific Cooperation).

18. As mentioned, Mr. de Munck provided a panorama of current national clearing-house mechanisms, noting that out of 33 countries in Latin America and the Caribbean, 17 have clearing-house mechanisms, and out of those 17 countries, 12 are in Latin America. Mr. de Munck also discussed the mission, goals, and objectives for the 2011-2020 period, referring to Decision X/15. He concluded his presentation by stressing that a revised NBSAP should include the strategic vision of the national CHM in order to define the CHM's supporting role as: a provider of national biodiversity information; a provider of information on the NBSAP and its updating process; a direct contributor to certain national goals; and a facilitator of cooperation and collaboration.

19. Ms. Nadine Saad presented a global overview of the NBSAPs revised post-Nagoya. She shared with participants the list of 20 countries which had presented their NBSAPs after COP 10. However, she mentioned that not all these strategies had been developed based on the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020. Ms. Saad discussed some of the results of the United Nations University Institute of Advanced Studies (UNU-IAS) study on NBSAPs, as well as the results of the review carried out by the SCBD in 2007.

20. Ms. Saad discussed some of the results of the Secretariat's informal analysis of the strategies received after COP 10. The results are listed below.

- a) Eleven out of 19 strategies have been adopted as national policy;
- b) Some of the priorities, in addition to the three objectives of the Convention, are: i) biodiversity integration; ii) "green"/sustainable development; iii) research/CHM; iv) climate change; v) sustainable funding;
- c) Only half of the strategies mention clearing-house mechanisms;
- d) Nine out of 17 strategies have goals and/or strategies to increase funds, and only one has an action plan funded by identified sources;
- e) There is greater focus on sectoral integration than on development-policy integration; most strategies establish qualitative goals related to integration;
- f) More than half the strategies do not mention strategic environmental assessment; only environmental impact assessment (EIA) is mentioned;
- g) Only four countries use spatial planning; and
- h) Fourteen out of 18 strategies do not mention gender equity, and only two have strategic actions related to this issue.

21. The talk ended with a presentation on the support modules prepared by the Secretariat of the CDB to assist Parties in the development and revision of NBSAPs, the guidelines for NBSAPs, and suggested content based on Decision IX/8, consisting of the following: i) justification; ii) strategy; iii) an action plan; iv) plans for training, communication, and mobilization of resources; and v) institutional mechanisms.

22. Ms. Jamie Ervin of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) also gave an introductory talk in which she first presented a list of the key priorities of the UNDP's Biodiversity and Ecosystems programme: i) the economic assessment of biodiversity; ii) sectoral integration; iii) protected areas; iv) restoration; v) adaptation to climate change; and vi) sustainable financing. Ms. Ervin said that, based on the first-generation strategies she had analyzed, she concluded that there are five "fatal errors" which can be improved in the revised NBSAPs.

23. The "fatal errors" discussed by Ms. Ervin were as follows: i) the strategies are not relevant to society because they are not linked to the national agenda; ii) biodiversity is not integrated in the various sectors; iii) the strategies are not connected to one another: although key issues such as restoration and protected areas are addressed, the programmes are not interrelated; iv) data are not spatially explicit; and v) governments are not implementing NBSAPs either because of a lack of political will or because NBSAPs are not implementable. Ms. Ervin ended her presentation by noting that, for the UNDP, NBSAPs provide a mechanism for positively influencing the path of development.

ITEM 3. ORGANIZATION AND OBJECTIVES OF THE WORKSHOP

24. The participants accepted the proposal that Mr. Hesiquio Benítez Díaz, the representative of Mexico, should chair the workshop, and they adopted the provisional workshop agenda (Annex 2). After a discussion on matters related to the organization of work, Mr. de Munck of the Secretariat gave an overview of the workshop's objectives and expected results. The overall objective was to strengthen the capacity to establish and sustain effective national clearing-house mechanisms in support of national biodiversity strategies and action plans (NBSAPs). For each active participating country, the main results expected at the end of the workshop were as follows:

a) A strategic vision for the future of the country's national clearing-house mechanism which could be integrated into the revised national biodiversity strategies and action plans; and

b) A realistic roadmap for the establishment or further development of the country's national clearing-house mechanisms.

25. Another expected result was the identification of cooperation opportunities which can support the development of national clearing-house mechanisms in the region.

ITEM 4. WORK PROGRAMME OF THE CLEARING-HOUSE MECHANISM

26. Under this item, Mr. de Munck of the Secretariat presented the relevant elements of the proposed work programme for the clearing-house mechanism in support of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 (UNEP/CBD/COP/11/31).

27. Mr. de Munck paid special attention to CHM Goal 2 (see Annex to Decision X/15), which states that national clearing-house mechanisms should provide effective information services to facilitate the implementation of national biodiversity strategies and action plans. He detailed the activities which should be carried out in order to meet the five objectives related to the aforementioned Goal 2.

28. A general discussion on the work programme of the clearing-house mechanism followed. It was concluded that countries would have to determine which priority activities would ensure the best impact possible with available national capacity.

ITEM 5. NATIONAL EXPERIENCES

29. Each participating country gave a presentation to share its experience in respect of the development and status of its own national clearing-house mechanism and/or related initiatives. The suggested format for these presentations covered these three areas: i) an overview of the current situation; ii) the strategic vision for the future; and iii) the type of cooperation or support that would be beneficial. The following people gave presentations:

- a) Ms. Silvana Peker discussed the experience of Argentina;
- b) Mr. Johny Guzmán Vallejos discussed the experience of Bolivia;
- c) Mr. Oscar Orrego discussed the experience of Colombia;
- d) Mr. Mario Coto Hidalgo discussed the experience of Costa Rica;
- e) Mr. Francisco Cejas Rodríguez discussed the experience of Cuba;
- f) Ms. Cristina Alexandra Quiroga Lozano discussed the experience of Ecuador;
- g) Ms. Carolina Canales discussed the experience of El Salvador;
- h) Mr. Estuardo Solórzano discussed the experience of Guatemala;
- i) Mr. León Rojas discussed the experience of Honduras;
- j) Mr. Hesiquio Benítez Díaz discussed the experience of Mexico;
- k) Ms. Marta Lucía Sánchez discussed the experience of Nicaragua;
- l) Mr. Ricardo Barranco discussed the experience of Panama;
- m) Ms. Rocío M. Barreto Valinotti discussed the experience of Paraguay;
- n) Ms. Roxana Solís discussed the experience of Peru;
- o) Mr. Brigido Hierro discussed the experience of the Dominican Republic;
- p) Ms. Ana Lydia Aber Eisenberg discussed the experience of Uruguay; and
- q) Ms. Carliz Díaz discussed the experience of Venezuela.

30. After each presentation, participants were given the opportunity to ask questions. The presentations are available on line, and Annex 3 contains a summary of each country's situation.

ITEM 6. WORKING SESSIONS

31. The working sessions were the most substantive part of the workshop. Each session focused on a topic of particular relevance to the development of effective national clearing-house mechanisms. In general, each working session began with an introductory presentation by Mr. de Munck of the Secretariat and continued with a brainstorming discussion on the work item.

6.1. Identification of Working Groups

32. Although the original objective of this session was to group countries according to common needs and interests, the participants expressed their preference for continuing to work in a single group for the following reasons:

- a) The presentations on national experiences demonstrated that the countries' situations had many points in common;
- b) Brainstorming would be more effective if it were carried out jointly;
- c) Time would be saved because there would be no need for information exchange among groups; and
- d) It was logistically feasible to continue as a single group because there were fewer than 20 countries.

33. It was thus agreed that the single working group format would be retained and that each country would produce its own working document with the strategic vision and roadmap adapted to its own specific national situation.

6.2. National Coordination

34. The purpose of this session was to discuss how to coordinate activities related to the development of a national clearing-house mechanism with a view to ensuring effectiveness and sustainability. The session started with an introductory presentation by the Secretariat. This was followed by a general discussion during which participants were invited to provide comments and suggestions as to how to improve national coordination. Suggested measures included:

- a) The appointment of a national focal point for the clearing-house mechanism and sound cooperation between said national focal point and the national focal point of the CBD;
- b) The establishment of a national coordination structure (council, committee, executive) for biodiversity;
- c) The establishment of directories of responsible bodies with clear mandates; and
- d) The establishment of alliances and cooperation agreements.

6.3. Technical Aspects

35. This session was dedicated to technical aspects common to the implementation of clearing-house mechanisms. The purpose of the session was to ensure that the participants had a broad overview of relevant existing technology in order to plan the establishment or further development of their national clearing-house mechanisms. The session consisted of a presentation by the Secretariat which discussed the following matters:

- a) The web server (hosting, domain name, 24/7 service);
- b) Web content management systems (e.g., Joomla!, Drupal, WordPress);
- c) Databases and dynamic pages;
- d) Web standards and interoperability interfaces for the exchange of information; and
- e) The human resources needed.

36. The participants were given the opportunity to ask questions and make comments during and after the presentation.

6.4. Strategic Management of Web Content

37. The purpose of the session was to ensure that the participants understood the impact of content management on the effectiveness of a website, and that they were aware of general guidelines on how to strategically plan and manage web content. The session began with a presentation by the Secretariat, which was organized as follows:

- a) A presentation of the objectives and activities associated with the work programme;
- b) An analysis of the reasons for which a website falls into disuse and of the importance of user-centred design;
- c) A list of sound bibliographic references on the subject (content strategy, user experience, web usability, usability testing); and
- d) A proposal for a possible menu (information architecture) for the website of the national clearing-house mechanism.

38. The participants were given the opportunity to ask questions and make comments during and after the presentation.

6.5. Information Services of the Clearing-House Mechanism

39. This session started with a brief introductory presentation by the Secretariat to describe the information services typical of the clearing-house mechanism. Mr. Hesiquio Benítez of Mexico contributed to this session by giving a presentation on the information services offered by the National Commission for Knowledge and Use of Biodiversity (CONABIO).

40. The participants were given the opportunity to ask questions and make comments during and after the presentation.

6.6. National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans and the Clearing-House Mechanism

41. The purpose of this joint session was to strengthen the two-way relationship between national biodiversity strategies and action plans and the clearing-house mechanism, as described below:

a) A national clearing-house mechanism should provide effective information services to facilitate the implementation of national biodiversity strategy and action plans (CHM Goal 2);

b) To maximize the chances of achieving the above goal, national biodiversity strategy and action plans should include a strategic vision for the clearing-house mechanism with sustainability and effectiveness in mind.

42. Before the joint session, the participants in each workshop met separately to brainstorm on the role of the clearing-house mechanism within the framework of national biodiversity strategies and action plans. The results of this exercise were shared at the joint session by Ms. Andrea Cruz, representing the NBSAP group, and by Mr. Hesiquio Benítez Díaz, representing the CHM group. These results can be found in Annex 4.

43. Continuing the discussion on information management, Mr. Olivier de Munck gave an introductory presentation on the various sessions of the CHM workshop. Mr. De Munck provided a series of activities which can be carried out to ensure effective coordination, he clarified some necessary technical aspects, and he presented a possible CHM menu (see Annex 5) including the services which should be offered, explaining how they contribute to the Strategic Plan.

44. The final presentation concerning this item was on the NBSAP Forum and was given by Ms. Jamie Ervin. She explained that the Forum is a partnership between the CBD, UNDP, and the UNEP World Conservation Monitoring Centre (UNEP-WCMC) which aims to be a ready source of information on NBSAPs and a place in which to share successful learning experiences and best practices related to the NBSAP revision/updating process, as well as on implementation. Ms. Ervin explained the format of the Forum and what can be done with it, such as, for example, find contacts, search for and share best practices, and find information on different NBSAP-related subjects, tools, and documents. Peer reviews can be conducted and on-line courses can be taken as well.

45. Ms. Ervin concluded her presentation by emphasizing that, in order to ensure the success of the Forum, the people involved in the revision/updating/implementation process must participate so that information may be exchanged. To achieve this, on the last day of the workshop, during a session presided over by Ms. Helen Negret, the participants undertook to submit one successful case per country in order to begin providing data for the Forum.

6.7. Cooperation Opportunities

46. The objective of this session was to identify potential cooperation opportunities which could contribute to the development of national clearing-house mechanisms in Latin America. During the discussion, an important point was raised: countries would first need a thorough diagnosis of their respective situations and capacities in order to properly plan the type of support which would be the most effective, especially in a context of limited resources. Some countries could need assistance in establishing an accurate diagnosis of their circumstances.

47. Overall, opportunities for cooperation and support were identified for the following activities:
- a) Assessment of the situation and of the potential for development of the national clearing-house mechanism using SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats) methodology;
 - b) Improvement of national processes in respect of biodiversity, taking into account planning needs, national strategy, action plan follow-up, data collection, monitoring of progress, analysis of results, and preparation of the fifth national report;
 - c) Sharing of experiences to improve national coordination through, for example, interinstitutional agreement models;
 - d) Strengthening of the technology infrastructure of the national clearing-house mechanism website, especially for countries which share the same tools; for example, Annex 3 shows that seven Latin American countries use the same content-management system (Joomla!);
 - e) The interconnection of national and central clearing-house mechanisms to automate the exchange of information;
 - f) The development and maintenance of national directories of institutions, projects, experts, and other relevant parties in the sphere of biodiversity; and
 - g) Promotion of the importance and use of the clearing-house mechanism on a national level.

6.8. Pending Matters

48. This session was used by participants to continue preparing their respective roadmaps. Although work was carried out individually, participants did interact to brainstorm and provide mutual support.

6.9. Results of the Working Groups

49. At this session, the participants presented the results of their work on the development of their respective national clearing-house mechanisms in a manner adapted to specific country situations. After the presentations, the following was suggested:

- a) The Secretariat should propose a standard form with which to collect important information on the development of the national clearing-house mechanism in each country, including the strategic vision, roadmap, key players, and cooperation opportunities to support the development of the national clearing-house mechanism; and
- b) Each country should review its work after the workshop so that its results may be published on line with the workshop documentation.

ITEM 7. REPORT OF THE WORKSHOP

50. After the working sessions, the participants discussed the structure and content of this report. They agreed that the report should include a summary of the sessions, details on the work of the participating countries, follow-up recommendations, and annexes with additional information.

51. Afterward, participants discussed how to follow up on the workshop and on the development process for their national clearing-house mechanisms. Some recommendations were made; they are listed in Annex 6 and can be summarized as follows:

a) The Secretariat should facilitate information-sharing among countries, promote the development of national clearing-house mechanisms, and contribute to the development of national CHMs through guidelines and technical support;

b) Each country should strengthen coordination on a national level, take the clearing-house mechanism into account in the NBSAP revision process, and follow up on the activities mentioned in its roadmap; and

c) Research should be conducted on the possibility of technical support for the development of national clearing-house mechanisms through funds or donors, and cooperation proposals should be prepared if such opportunities exist.

ITEM 8. SYNTHESIS AND CONCLUSION

52. The event was concluded with a plenary session for the participants in both workshops. Mr. Juan Carlos Bello, representing the IAvH, spoke before the workshop was closed, noting the importance of including NBSAPs in all the development issues of a country, a significant challenge which must be met in order to address the political, social, and environmental changes faced by the region and its countries. He mentioned that, at the workshops, experiences were shared and participants established guidance on how to ensure the progress of the NBSAP and CHM processes.

53. Mr. Javier Camargo, representing the Ministry of the Environment, said that the cooperation between participants which arose from the sharing of experiences was extremely useful and enriching, and he invited participants to keep open the channels of communication between countries to enable mutual support for their processes.

54. Ms. Nadine Saad and Mr. Olivier de Munck thanked the IAvH, the Ministry of the Environment, the UNDP, and the IUCN for their support, and they thanked all workshop participants for their contribution. They noted the importance of bringing together NBSAP and CHM experts and continuing these joint efforts in order to establish revised NBSAPs and truly effective CHMs.

55. The participants expressed their appreciation for the organization of the workshop. They noted that the discussions were very useful and relevant to the initiation/continuation of their respective processes.

ITEM 9. CLOSURE OF THE WORKSHOP

56. Before the workshop was closed, participants were asked to fill out an assessment questionnaire and give their opinions. The results of this assessment can be found in Annex 8. They will be used to improve the planning and organization of future workshops.

57. Both workshops ended on Friday, 10 May 2013, at approximately 4:00 p.m., following a brief closing ceremony.

Annex 1

LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

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Annex 2

OVERVIEW OF WORKSHOP ORGANIZATION




	Biodiversity [Country]	Strategies and Implementation	Services and References	Thursday	Friday
9:00 10:40	[Arrival] Opening of Workshop	[Summary] National Experiences	[Summary] Technical Aspects	[Summary] NBSAP and CHM	[Summary] Results of Working Groups
11:00 12:30	Global and Regional Overview	National Experiences	Strategic Management of Web Content	NBSAP and CHM	Report of Workshop
13:30 15:15	Organization and Objectives of Workshop Work Programme of CHM	Identification of Working Groups	Information Services of CHM	Cooperation Opportunities	Synthesis and Conclusion Closure of Workshop
15:35 17:00	National Experiences	National Coordination	Information Services of CHM	Pending Matters	[Farewell]





 Joint session with Regional Workshop for Latin America on Updating National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans (NBSAPs)






Annex 3






NATIONAL CLEARING-HOUSE MECHANISMS IN LATIN AMERICA



(Updated on 8 July 2013)

	Country and Site (Technology and Language)	Official CHM	Current Situation	Potential for Development
	Argentina	No	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No CHM, but various sites on biodiversity: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> National Biodiversity Observatory (OBIO), still under development http://obio.ambiente.gob.ar National Biological Data System (SNDB), for scientific data: http://datos.sndb.mincyt.gob.ar Biodiversity Information System, on protected areas: http://www.sib.gov.ar 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Willingness to develop official national CHM and strengthen scientific-political interface Use of existing commission to facilitate national coordination: National Advisory Commission for the Conservation and Sustainable Use of Biological Diversity (CONADIBIO)
	Brazil http://www.mma.gov.br (Joomla!, PT)	Yes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ministry of the Environment website High quality, good structure, information on biodiversity and NBSAPs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Unknown because Brazil did not attend CHM Workshop
	Bolivia	No	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No CHM, but BioCAN programme in place to develop the Plurinational System of Information on the Biodiversity of the Bolivian Amazon (SIPBAB) and link it to the Amazon Regional Environmental Information Platform (PIRAA) for the Andean Community (Bolivia, Colombia, Ecuador, Peru) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Institutionalization of CHM Development of SIPBAB, but uncertainty as to future funding for BioCAN

	Country and Site (Technology and Language)	Official CHM	Current Situation	Potential for Development
	Colombia http://www.humboldt.org.co/chmcolombia (Java Server Pages, SP)	Yes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Actual CHM has been active for several years • Contains information on biodiversity, experts, projects, etc. • However, currently lacking information on NBSAP 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Willingness to strengthen CHM and provide information on NBSAP • A requirement is NBSAP revision and official decision to take charge of corresponding activities
	Costa Rica http://www.sinac.go.cr (Microsoft .NET, SP)	Yes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Website of National System of Conservation Areas (SINAC) to manage protected areas • Various other websites on biodiversity (SENIGA, CRBIO, INBio) • Note: INBio is an NGO, and not the national CHM 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National Commission for Biodiversity Management (CONGEBIO) is official body responsible for preparation of NBSAP • Willingness to strengthen institutionalization of CHM and develop a true CHM site
	Chile http://www.mma.gob.cl/biodiversidad/1313/w3-channel.html	Yes	Although there is a CHM website, it has not been updated since 2010 and it did not comply with the mission to follow up on the National Biodiversity Strategy. Currently, there are various national websites on biodiversity. The Ministry of the Environment has the National Inventory of Species, the node for biological collections, the maps server, and soon, the inventory of wetlands, protected areas, and ecosystems; however, a coordinated focus is needed.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need to strengthen interinstitutional collaboration to plan a true CHM • Operational Committee for Biodiversity (COB) continues to follow up on NBSAP implementation and can facilitate this process • Old website can be reactivated and adapted so that it complies with mission of CHM
	Cuba http://www.ecosis.cu/chm/chmcuba.htm (Basic HTML, SP)	Yes	Website has been active for many years (operating with only one person), but using old technology. Cuba restricted in terms of Internet connectivity (very slow) and availability of online services (e.g., Google).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plans to improve structure of website to make it more user-friendly • Future Internet cable with Venezuela may resolve connectivity problem • Support from other Latin American countries could be helpful

	Country and Site (Technology and Language)	Official CHM	Current Situation	Potential for Development
	Dominican Republic http://www.ambiente.gob.do/chm (Joomla!, SP)	Yes	Website with basic information on biodiversity. Web content should be improved. Technical problems need to be resolved to enable updates. Apparent lack of information technology capability.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Priority is to resolve major technical problems • Plans to increase national coordination and develop content-management strategy • Honduran and Panamanian CHM experts could be useful because they are familiar with Joomla!
	Ecuador http://chmecuador.ambiente.gob.ec (PHP, SP)	Yes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good CHM site; Ministry of the Environment website • Covers biodiversity, NBSAP, projects, experts, etc. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plans to improve menu and content, to link to additional databases, and to migrate to new server
	El Salvador http://www.marn.gob.sv (Joomla!, SP) (Google Translate for EN and FR)	Yes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ministry of the Environment website • Covers NBSAP and information on Ministry 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plans to improve national coordination so that national CHM has more content providers • Willingness to develop better CHM, but diagnosis of information systems infrastructure is needed for technical decisions to be taken
	Guatemala http://www.chmguatemala.gob.gt (Plone, SP)	Yes	A CHM site has been in existence for several years, but it has some technical limitations due to the use of the Plone platform and a lack of information technology capacity. However, the website is updated and efforts are made to promote biodiversity and the NBSAP with existing capacity.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Site migration to a modern content-management system (such as Joomla!) advisable; information technology support decisive • Plans for diagnosis with recommendations to improve situation • Honduran and Panamanian CHM experts could be useful in process
	Honduras	No	No official CHM site, but Secretariat of Natural and Environmental Resources (SERNA) has good site maintained by Joomla! expert: http://www.serna.gob.hn	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Willingness on part of participant to support appointment of CHM focal point with mandate to establish national CHM website • Willingness to establish partners and create national committee to control process

	Country and Site (Technology and Language)	Official CHM	Current Situation	Potential for Development
	Mexico http://www.biodiversidad.gob.mx (Joomla!, SP, EN)	Yes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Website on Mexican biodiversity progressive from scientific, educational, and governmental perspective • CONABIO is a well-established institution with 21 years of experience and capacities (300 people) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continuation of current operations • Content may be revised and improved to include indicators of compliance with CBD and Strategic Plan 2011-2020 on national and State scale
	Nicaragua	No	There is no official CHM website, but there is a very active national biodiversity CHM network (RENIBIO) focused on awareness-raising. There is also a national system of information on protected areas (SINIA).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Willingness to institutionalize CHM with appointment of focal point and establishment of national coordination structure • Technical assistance may be necessary
	Panama http://www.chmpanama.gob.pa (Joomla!, SP + Google Translate for other languages)	Yes	The official CHM was launched in July 2013, after the CHM workshop. Previously, the National Environmental Authority (ANAM) already had a comprehensive website maintained by a Joomla! expert: http://www.anam.gob.pa .	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Willingness to revise and improve content to properly align it with CHM mandate
	Paraguay	No	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Website developed in 2007 with relevant content (directories, species, protected areas, studies), but no longer operational 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Willingness to reactivate and improve CHM • Website will belong to Secretariat of State for the Environment (SEAM) - www.seam.gov.py • Entry into office of new president-elect in August 2013 must take place before any strategic decision taken
	Peru	No	There was an active CHM in 1998. A new site is being developed. There are various national networks and systems (SINIA, 3IN, Consorcio-GTI, Agrobiodiversidad). There is a National Commission on Biological Diversity (CONADIB).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continued preparation of new website • Five sub-national nodes expected

	Country and Site (Technology and Language)	Official CHM	Current Situation	Potential for Development
	Uruguay http://www.dinama.gub.uy (Joomla!, SP)	Yes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ministry of Housing, Land-Use Planning, and the Environment (MVOTMA) website • Section on biodiversity and protected areas, with information on NBSAP, legislation, and other subjects; could be more accessible, however 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Willingness to establish more visible national CHM
	Venezuela http://www.diversidadbiologica.info.ve (Joomla!, SP)	Yes	Modern website for awareness-raising in respect of biodiversity (species, conservation areas, players) and NBSAP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Willingness to review and improve content to properly align it with CHM mandate

Annex 4

ITEMS PRESENTED AT THE JOINT SESSION ON NATIONAL STRATEGIES AND ACTION PLANS AND THE CLEARING-HOUSE MECHANISM

ITEMS PRESENTED BY THE CHM GROUP

Mission According to the Annex to Decision X/15

Mission

To contribute significantly to the implementation of the Convention on Biological Diversity and its Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020, through effective information services and other appropriate means in order to promote and facilitate scientific and technical cooperation, knowledge sharing, and information exchange, and to establish a fully operational network of Parties and partners.

Goal 2

National clearing-house mechanisms provide effective information services to facilitate the implementation of the national biodiversity strategies and action plans.

Objectives of a National CHM

- To be the main reference for information on biodiversity in its country by raising awareness of the importance of biodiversity (knowledge, conservation, sustainable use, ABS) to human development and well-being, and to help raise the issue of biodiversity in the various sectors of society
- To coordinate biodiversity information from various national and international sources (e.g., academics, government, NGOs, communities)
- To be the main reference for information on national implementation of the CBD, especially as regards the implementation of the national biodiversity strategy
- Local, national, regional, and international cooperation

Key Users

- Public institutions (government)
- The general public
- Indigenous and local communities
- Academics
- Businesspeople
- Media
- International organizations (conventions, cooperation agencies, intergovernmental organizations, etc.)

In other words, the key users are the parties that implement the national biodiversity strategy.

Basic Content

- Knowledge and biodiversity status in its country:
 - Genes (variability of species of interest, ABS provisions)
 - Species:
 - Distribution (historic, current, population trend)
 - Conservation status (national, IUCN, CITES)
 - Traditional use and sustainable use
 - Specimen information and observations (databases)
 - Ecosystems (ecoregions, wetlands, Ramsar sites, protected areas, ecosystem inventories and classifications, types of vegetation, environmental services, traditional knowledge, etc.)

- National actions:
 - Knowledge:
 - Projects, institutions, traditional knowledge
 - Conservation:
 - Species recovery and conservation programmes (endangered, CITES, priority, important native, etc.)
 - Ecosystems (protected areas, priority areas, biological corridors, restoration, etc.)
 - Sustainable use:
 - Underexploited species
 - Native species of national importance
 - Opportunities for the use of biodiversity which supports local development and maintains ecosystem services (good practices)
 - Sustainability certification (good practices)
 - Biosafety
 - ABS
 - International cooperation

- CBD documents and national reports:
 - Focal points, contacts
 - National reports
 - Country study
 - NBSAP:
 - Develop a template listing both the person responsible and the corresponding indicators for each objective or strategic approach in order to show the progress made
 - Take advantage of the opportunity with the fifth national report and CHM content structure
 - Thematic strategies (GSPC, invasive species, islands, etc.)

- Legislation, public policy and standards, incentives, procedures, and the like applicable to biodiversity (summaries)

- Indicators for measuring CHM effectiveness

Services

- Technical reports:
 - Lists (red lists, ecosystems and species inventories)
 - Legislation, usage manuals, baselines
 - Population trends
 - Catalogues of traditional uses
 - Analysis of threats:
 - Loss of habitat
 - Invasive species
 - Pollution
 - Overexploitation
 - Climate change and desertification
- Publications, virtual library, image bank (a, b, c)
- Maps (Geoportal) and databases of: specimens, species, ecosystems, land-use change
- Guidance on bureaucratic procedures
- Directories of relevant players:
 - Individuals (researchers, focal points, experts)
 - Organizations (authorities, cooperators, academia, international, NGOs)
- Pages and documents in plain language, multimedia applications concerning:
 - Biodiversity (importance, richness, endemism, threats, uses, assessment, NBSAP, sustainable use, social and corporate responsibility)
 - News on topics of interest
 - Glossary
 - Newsletters and press releases
 - Summaries (infographics on topics of interest)
 - Products in local languages
 - Citizen science portals
- Broadcasting of opportunities:
 - Notices
 - Events, news
 - Business opportunities, sustainable procurement
 - Biotrade initiatives
 - Incentives (compensation and mitigation portfolio, concessions)
 - Employment

ITEMS PRESENTED BY NBSAP GROUP**NBSAP: Updating, Follow-Up, Assessment, and Reporting**

- Use it to expand enquiries and participation:
 - Fora for updating (Ecuador, Guatemala)
- Use CHM as tool for follow-up on (actions) goals and indicators
- Methods for collecting information, institutional agreement:
 - Institutional information networks – links between institutions
 - Information for national reports

Operation

- Standardize national CHMs (standard basic structure)
- Define profile of people in charge of CHM:
 - Guidelines and protocols for technicians in charge of feeding and maintaining CHM
- Methods of information presentation
- Make information accessible language-wise (including indigenous languages)

Cooperation and Repetition of Experiences

- Tool for linking support and bilateral and multilateral cooperation
- Link between national CHMs, including the CHMs of the three conventions and FAO to facilitate synergy, IPBES (information users and providers)
- Connect and make use of regional experiences – repeat experiences (e.g., CAN)
- Network of focal points of other conventions and organizations
- Coordination mechanism

Capacity-Building

- Window on technical needs and priorities
- Tie support and cooperation to academics and other generators of knowledge on research and priorities
- Development and institutional strengthening of capacity-building
- Coordinate with related fora (e.g., indigenous forum) on a national level
- Free access

Annex 5

EXAMPLE OF A POSSIBLE MENU FOR A NATIONAL CLEARING-HOUSE MECHANISM

Biodiversity [Country]	Strategies and Implementation	Services and References	Participate and Contribute	About
<p>Overview - Introduction - Richness</p> <p>Ecosystems - ...</p> <p>Species - ...</p> <p>Threats - ...</p> <p>Protected Areas - ...</p>	<p>NBSAP - National - Subnational</p> <p>Actions - Initiatives - Projects - Reports - Progress</p> <p>Players - Government - Others</p> <p>Cooperation - National - Regional - International</p>	<p>For - Everyone - Educators - Journalists - Public Servants - Scientists</p> <p>Information - Protected Areas - Species - Indicators - More ></p> <p>References - Events - Directories - Publications - Laws - Databases - Maps - Videos - Links</p>	<p>Your Actions - Advice - Your Opinion - Sign Up</p> <p>For Members - Forum - Share Data - ...</p>	<p>Us - Who We Are - Our Mission</p> <p>CBD - Strategic Plan - Aichi Targets</p> <p>CHM - Information-Sharing - Network</p>

Annex 6

FOLLOW-UP RECOMMENDATIONS

(Updated on 8 July 2013)

Follow-up by Secretariat of the CBD

Actions Completed

- Share workshop presentations and other documents
- Send form to collect data on national CHMs
- Create mailing list for participants
- Create shared space in which to exchange documents and other files
- Send draft report for comments

Actions Pending

- Complete report, taking into account comments received
- Translate final report into English
- Prepare notification asking Parties to appoint, if they have not done so already, national CHM focal points and to keep their respective national CHM websites updated
- Prepare guidelines for the development of national CHMs (including tools and templates)
- Communicate progress made in the development of central CHM services which support follow-up on national strategies (NBSAPs)
- Organize assessment of existing sites
- Research options for the use of mobile platforms for the CHM

Follow-Up by Parties

- Send form containing national data requested to the Secretariat of the CBD
- Strengthen coordination on a national level, particularly between CHM and CBD focal points
- Incorporate the CHM component into the NBSAP revision process so that the revised NBSAP includes a strategic vision of the role of the national CHM in NBSAP implementation
- Follow up on the activities mentioned in roadmaps
- Share progress made with and development plans for the national CHM

Follow-Up by Other Partners

- Look into the possibility of technical support for the development of national CHMs from funds or donors
- Prepare cooperation proposals to support the development of national CHMs

Annex 7

WORKSHOP ASSESSMENT QUESTIONNAIRE RESULTS

This annex contains the results of the workshop assessment questionnaire, and is based on the 13 forms completed by participants.

Note: Where the horizontal sum of the quantitative assessments is lower than 13, this means that at least one reply was missing.

1. What expectations did you have before attending this workshop?				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To learn about the lessons and experiences of the countries in the region. - To learn about the progress made by the countries in the region. - To meet the focal points and learn about their national and regional experiences, and to have a space for interaction in order to make progress in terms of the adaptation, interoperability, and functional development of national CHMs. - To learn more about national experiences with CHMs. - To find out about the experiences other Latin American countries have had with the CHM, and to learn about the causes of difficulties encountered in the establishment of a CHM system in countries. - To determine what tools to use to reactivate the CHM. - To acquire CHM experience. - To share with partner countries (experiences). - General information. - To learn about the significance of the CHM and also have an idea of how it works, what information could be shared, and information for the user. - To acquire proper knowledge for CHM implementation. - To understand how the CHM will facilitate monitoring and implementation of the NBSAP. - To learn about the difficulties Latin American countries have had with the development of their CHMs and to learn about possible solutions. - To develop a roadmap for the national CHM. - To identify cooperation opportunities. - I thought it would be difficult for me since my country does not have an active CHM. - I also expected to be able to fully understand the concepts, strategies, objectives, procedures, and other matters. - To learn more about clearing-house mechanisms and to establish agendas for their development by means of consensus objectives. - Before the workshop, I didn't understand the significance of the CHM or what to make of it. Now, after the workshop, I am clear on how it works and how I can apply it in my country. - Misapprehensions regarding the CHM. - I had high expectations of learning about an essential tool for biodiversity awareness-raising and management. 				

2. Please rate the degree to which the workshop met your expectations. The workshop was:				
1 Poor	2 Adequate	3 Good	4 Very Good	5 Excellent
		1	6	5

- The workshop allowed me to learn about countries' experiences and difficulties, but it did not give me technological tools with which to put my learning into practice.
- I learned about a procedure which will allow us to boost our strength as a team.
- It was a comprehensive workshop, in which I learned how to work with the CHM and how to create our own national CHM.
- It met my expectations fully.
- I found it excellent because I can now bring to my country the procedures (roadmap) necessary to putting the system into operation. The professionals who led the workshop were excellent.
- I learned about other countries' experiences and am drawing from those positive experiences a basis for implementation in my country.

3. Please rate the usefulness of the sessions.

		Poor	Adequate	Good	Very Good	Excellent
3.	Organization and Objectives of the Workshop			1	7	3
4.	Work Programme of the CHM			3	8	2
5.	National Experiences			2	7	4
6.	Working Sessions			1	7	4
	National Coordination			1	8	4
	Technical Aspects		1	3	6	3
	Strategic Management of Web content		1	1	9	2
	Information Services of the CHM			2	9	2
	NBSAP and CHM			2	7	3
	Cooperation Opportunities			3	8	2
	Results of Groups			1	6	5
7.	Report of the Workshop			1	8	3
8.	Synthesis and Conclusion			1	6	5

- I would suggest more diverse work methods in order to promote greater participation and interaction among country representatives.
- It would be very useful if the time were more regulated so that all participants could have a more even degree of participation and so that one working session would not take time away from subsequent sessions (the NBSAP and CHM session was cut short).
- A very good workshop and good experience with all countries; we learned about each country's experience and the problems and solutions of each country belonging to the CHM.
- Everything was useful. The question is whether I can apply my learning in my country; whether I will have technical and/or financial assistance. The sessions were useful.

4. What did you find lacking in terms of content or substance?

- I felt that the content was very comprehensive.
- I feel that the work would have been easier with templates to better standardize information, which would have facilitated the sharing of national experiences.
- See more successful examples and find out about the lessons learned.

- Nothing.
- Some more financial cooperation for countries which do not have equipment or programmes with which to develop a CHM website.
- Everything was positive because it was based on national experiences. Now the challenge is to monitor and follow up on the results.
- Perhaps it would have been helpful to do some technical exercises.
- Technical aspects.

5. What did you like about the workshop?

- We did not have time to use the hotel swimming pool.
- The motivation and desire to make progress in terms of existing objectives, combined with the initiative to interact and share progress made as regards CHMs.
- The location chosen for the workshop was lovely.
- The interaction between different countries.
- Participants' positive attitude and their willingness to participate.
- The opportunity to share experiences.
- The support provided to facilitate understanding of the CHM; that is, the willingness on the part of organizers and representatives from the Alexander von Humboldt Institute to provide us with information on all the procedures for CHM implementation.
- Learning about other countries' experiences and seeing how other countries overcome difficulties in developing their CHMs.
- The moderator's equanimity.
- Having the organizational capacity for and availability of machines, equipment, services, etc.
- The organization, the establishment of objectives, and work vision.
- Learning about the status and progress of countries with regard to their CHMs and the lessons learned.
- The sharing of experiences.
- The sharing of experiences with other countries having a similar reality.
- The opportunity to develop a roadmap and objectives which facilitate CHM implementation.

6. What did you dislike about the workshop?

- There were not many options in terms of more vegetarian food or salads.
- There were sound problems, making it difficult to hear the other participants (heavy, colonial-style construction and amplified sound with a great deal of reverberation).
- The sessions were very long and had many meal breaks, but we were not given breaks to take a walk or stretch our legs.
- I am concerned about the role of the CBD CHM.
- Everything was very productive.
- Finishing a bit late.

7. Please rate how well the workshop has helped you understand the role of the CHM, particularly in the context of the NBSAP.

1 Poorly	2 Adequately	3 Well	4 Very Well	5 Excellently
			6	6

- Its importance is understood from the perspective of synergy with NBSAP implementation; greater analysis to establish an effective follow-up module.
- Before, the CHM was not part of my country's NBS. Now, it will certainly be part of it.

8. Please state at least one aspect of the workshop which has increased your ability to develop your national CHM.

- Acquiring a broad vision of what is happening in the region.
- Assisted learning about options for web-content management, its advantages and scope.
- Learning about circumstances in other countries.
- Understanding that we need to work with the diverse content which arises to improve management for biodiversity conservation.
- Explanations in Spanish (language).
- Experience (shared).
- Dialogue with people knowledgeable about the CHM.
- It has made it possible to better organize national CHM development activities and determine which can be carried out with existing resources.
- I have learned more about strategic management of web content.
- Understanding the importance of having a Paraguayan CHM.
- This workshop helps me with my management activities at the Secretariat of the Environment.
- Clear understanding of objectives.
- Establishing the worth of working hand-in-hand with NBSAPs.
- Knowing that, although we don't have an official CHM, we do have information, websites, services, networks, and the like which will make it easier to consolidate the system as the national CHM.
- Understanding the subject in and of itself and understanding what is expected of the CHM.
- Developing objectives with a roadmap of concrete activities.

9. Please rate the facilitation of the workshop sessions.

1 Poor	2 Adequate	3 Good	4 Very Good	5 Excellent
			6	6

- Excellent!

10. Please rate the organization of the workshop (logistics, administration, etc.).

1 Poor	2 Adequate	3 Good	4 Very Good	5 Excellent
		2	4	6

- Very good organization.

11. Please share any other comments or suggestions for improvement.

- Consider including an activity which will break the ice among participants on the first or second day of the workshop.
- A good way to regulate workshop costs would be to survey the participants to find out whether any would be willing to share a room.

- I would like it if the moderation, in addition to being flexible, helped us to concretize the ideas developed in accordance with the various sessions.
- Logistical information should reflect or be adapted to reality.
- We agree with supporting you however we can in terms of the technical aspects of how to create a website (rbarranco@anam.gob.pa).
- It would be advisable to hold another workshop at a suitable point. That is, this workshop should be held periodically, based on the progress we make. This would be one way of consolidating knowledge.
- Please continue the training workshops. Please cover more technical issues concerning biological diversity.
- From now on, ensure that the link between the Secretariat and national CHMs remains active.

12. Do you have any comments on or suggestions for this questionnaire?

- It would be very helpful to learn about the comments made by the NBSAP workshop participants for the purposes of feedback.
- It is adequate.
- None.
- Everything excellent. Thank you for this opportunity.
- It is fine.
- Thank you for contributing to our training and for uniting Latin America in providing responses and cooperation within the framework of the CBD!
- This was an excellent initiative to draw on the experiences of other countries in order to strengthen weaknesses. Thank you very much!
- Everything is fine.
- No.
