



Convention on Biological Diversity

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REGIONAL WORKSHOP FOR AFRICAN COUNTRIES
ON THE CLEARING-HOUSE MECHANISM
Buea, Cameroon, 5-9 May 2014

ANNOTATIONS TO THE PROVISIONAL AGENDA

BACKGROUND

1. In paragraph 2 (a) of decision X/15 on the clearing-house mechanism (CHM), the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity encouraged 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 the national biodiversity strategies and action plans (NBSAPs) as specified in goal 2 in the annex to that decision (CHM goal 2).
2. In paragraph 11 of decision XI/2, the Conference of the Parties welcomed the work programme for the clearing-house mechanism in support of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 (UNEP/CBD/COP/11/31), which contains recommended activities to achieve this goal. In paragraph 11 (b) of the same decision, the Conference of the Parties agreed to strengthen communication with, and build the capacity of, national focal points for the clearing-house mechanism.
3. Pursuant to these decisions, the Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity, with the generous support of the Governments of Japan and Cameroon, is organizing a regional workshop for African countries on the clearing-house mechanism to be held from 5 to 9 May 2014 in Buea, Cameroon, as announced in notification 2014-032 (Ref. no. SCBD/TSI/RS/ODM/83268) issued on 6 March 2014.¹ This workshop is intended for African countries that have not yet benefitted from a capacity-building initiative on the CHM, either from the Secretariat or from any of its partners.
4. The overall objective of the workshop is to build capacity and provide guidance on how to establish and sustain effective national clearing-house mechanisms, in line with decision X/15 and in support of the national biodiversity strategies and action plans (NBSAPs).
5. Governments were invited to nominate one representative to participate in this workshop. The nominee should meet the following criteria:
 - (a) Direct involvement in the development of the national CHM in his/her country, as is expected from the CHM national focal point;

¹ See document <http://www.cbd.int/doc/notifications/2014/ntf-2014-032-chm-ws-en.pdf> at www.cbd.int/notifications.

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In order to minimize the environmental impacts of the Secretariat's processes, and to contribute to the Secretary-General's initiative for a carbon-neutral UN, this document is printed in limited numbers. Participants are kindly requested to bring their own copy to the meeting.

- (b) Familiarity with the national biodiversity strategy and action plan (NBSAP);
- (c) Ability to present the current situation of the national CHM as well as any existing plan to develop it; and
- (d) Occupy a position enabling him/her to apply the knowledge and capacity gained during the workshop for further developing the national CHM.

6. The working language of the workshop will be English. Annex I below contains the list of documents which are available on the CBD website at www.cbd.int/doc/?meeting=CHM-WS-2014-01. The proposed organization of work is provided in annex II. This workshop will be held in parallel with a coordination meeting of the Belgian partnership on the clearing-house mechanism. The working language of this parallel meeting will be French but joint sessions will be held in English for topics of interest to both meetings.

7. The documentation includes an information note for participants containing details of logistical arrangements including information on travel, visa requirements, accommodation and other matters for the workshop. Registration of participants will be done on arrival of each participant at the venue of the workshop.

ITEM 1. OPENING OF THE WORKSHOP

8. The opening session will be held in conjunction with the coordination meeting of the Belgian partnership on the clearing-house mechanism. The joint opening ceremony will be held at 9 a.m. on Monday, 5 May 2014. Representatives of the Governments of Cameroon and Belgium, and of the Secretariat of Convention on Biological Diversity, are expected to make opening statements.

ITEM 2. OBJECTIVES AND PROGRAMME OF THE WORKSHOP

9. This session will be held jointly by the two meetings. The Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity will give an overview of the objectives, the programme and the expected outcomes of each workshop. Participants will be invited to briefly express their expectations.

10. The overall objective of the workshop is to strengthen the capacity to establish and sustain effective national clearing-house mechanisms in support of the national biodiversity strategies and action plans (NBSAPs). For each active participating country, the main expected results at the end of the workshop are:

- (a) A strategic vision for the future of its national clearing-house mechanism that could be integrated into the revised national biodiversity strategy and action plan;

- (b) A sound roadmap for the establishment or further development of its national clearing-house mechanism.

11. The workshop will also be an opportunity to share national experiences on the clearing-house mechanism and promote regional networking with a view to learning how to improve national implementation.

ITEM 3. WORK PROGRAMME OF THE CLEARING-HOUSE MECHANISM

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

13. Special attention will be devoted to CHM goal 2, which indicates that national clearing-house mechanisms should provide effective information services to facilitate the implementation of the national biodiversity strategies and action plans. A general discussion will follow to answer questions and provide further clarifications if needed.

ITEM 4. EXPERIENCES OF NATIONAL CLEARING-HOUSE MECHANISMS

14. Under this item, countries will share their experiences in the development of national clearing-house mechanisms. This will be an opportunity for all participating countries to learn from each other.

15. The following structure is being suggested for the national presentations:

- (a) An overview of the current situation;
- (b) The strategic vision for the future;
- (c) The type of cooperation or support that would be beneficial.

16. Each presentation has an expected duration of 10 to 15 minutes and will be followed by a brief discussion to answer any questions. Due to the high number of participating countries, this item will be split into several sessions, including a joint session with the coordination meeting of the Belgian partnership on the clearing-house mechanism during the first day.

ITEM 5. GUIDANCE FOR NATIONAL CLEARING-HOUSE MECHANISMS

17. The purpose of this item is to provide the participants with guidance for further developing their national clearing-house mechanisms. This item will start with a presentation by the Secretariat, followed by a discussion to exchange views and collect feedback.

18. The focus will be on the following topics of particular relevance to the development of effective national clearing-house mechanisms:

(a) National coordination: To understand the benefits of coordinating activities related to the development of a national clearing-house mechanism with a view to ensuring effectiveness and sustainability;

(b) Strategic management of web content: To understand the impact of content management on the effectiveness of a website, and to provide general guidelines on how to strategically plan and manage web content;

(c) Information services: To describe the typical information services that a national clearing-house mechanism can provide to support the NBSAP implementation process;

(d) Technical aspects: To give a general overview of existing technology relevant to the establishment or further development of national clearing-house mechanisms.

ITEM 6. TRAINING SESSION ON INFORMATION SERVICES OF THE CLEARING-HOUSE MECHANISM

19. The purpose of this session is to train the participant on the use of recent information services that are being developed by the Secretariat and other partners. Participants will be given a tour of the available features, and will then have the opportunity to practice with the assistance of the Secretariat.

20. This session will also be used to collect feedback in order to plan future improvements of the information services, particularly in terms of effectiveness and user experience.

ITEM 7. STRATEGIC VISION AND ROADMAP FOR NATIONAL CLEARING-HOUSE MECHANISMS

21. Under this item, each participant will draft a strategic vision and roadmap for developing their national clearing-house mechanism.

22. The purpose of the strategic vision is 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 the national biodiversity strategies and action plans (CHM goal 2);

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

23. It is expected that each country will eventually review and further elaborate this draft strategic vision in order to integrate it into its revised national biodiversity strategy and action plan.

24. The roadmap logically complements the strategic vision by identifying the list of steps or tasks that need to be carried out by a country in order to further develop its national clearing-house mechanism.

25. For further background, participants are invited to read the information document entitled “Extracts from the national strategy and action plan for the clearing-house mechanism of Burundi” (UNEP/CBD/CHM/WS/2014/1/INF/1), which provides some relevant information on how a developing country has strategically planned the development of its national clearing-house mechanism. They may also wish to consult the national information provided by the participants of recent regional workshops on the clearing-house mechanism available online at www.cbd.int/doc/?meeting=CHM-RW-2013-CAR and www.cbd.int/doc/?meeting=CHM-RW-2013-LA.

ITEM 8. PENDING MATTERS

26. This session will be reserved to discuss any pending matters arising from previous work and discussions.

ITEM 9. SYNTHESIS AND REPORT OF THE WORKSHOP

27. The purpose of this item is to recap what was achieved during the workshop and to identify which items will require some follow-up. The participants will briefly present the results of their work, which is expected to include their strategic vision and roadmap for developing their national clearing-house mechanisms. The structure and content of the final report will be discussed. A draft report will be circulated to all participants after the workshop for their review and comments.

28. Prior to the closure of the meeting, participants will be invited to complete a feedback form. Any feedback provided will be used to improve the planning and organization of subsequent workshops.

ITEM 10. CLOSURE OF THE WORKSHOP

29. This joint session is expected to include concluding presentations from each meeting. Both meetings are expected to close at 5 p.m. on Friday, 9 May 2014, with closing remarks by government representatives and the Secretariat.

Annex I

LIST OF DOCUMENTS

<i>Document symbol</i>	<i>Title</i>
UNEP/CBD/CHM/WS/2014/1/1	Provisional agenda
UNEP/CBD/CHM/WS/2014/1/1/Add.1	Annotations to the provisional agenda
UNEP/CBD/CHM/WS/2014/1/2	Report of the workshop
UNEP/CBD/COP/11/31	Proposed work programme for the clearing-house mechanism in support of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020
UNEP/CBD/CHM/WS/2014/1/INF/1	Excerpts from the national strategy and action plan for the clearing-house mechanism of Burundi
	Information note for participants

*Annex II***PROPOSED ORGANIZATION OF WORK****Regional Workshop for African Countries on the Clearing-house Mechanism (CHM)**

Buea, Cameroon, 5-9 May 2014

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
9 a.m. - 10.30 a.m.	1. Opening 2. Objectives and programme	5. Guidance for national CHMs	<i>Field trip</i>	5. Guidance for national CHMs	8. Pending matters
11 a.m. - 12.30 p.m.	3. Work programme of the CHM	4. Experiences of national CHMs	<i>Field trip</i>	6. Training session on information services of the CHM	9. Synthesis and report of the workshop
2 p.m. - 3.30 p.m.	4. Experiences of national CHMs	4. Experiences of national CHMs	<i>Field trip</i>	7. Strategic vision and roadmap for national CHMs	10. Closure
4 p.m. - 5.30 p.m.	4. Experiences of national CHMs	4. Experiences of national CHMs	<i>Field trip</i>	7. Strategic vision and roadmap for national CHMs	

Note: Agenda items in **bold** are being held jointly with the coordination meeting of the Belgian partnership on the clearing-house mechanism.
