



**Minutes of the meeting of the Informal Advisory Committee
of the Clearing-House Mechanism (Revised version - April 2006)**

Montreal, Canada

27 November 2005

CHM IAC Members

Asghar Fazel (Iran, Chair)

Jackie van Goethem (Belgium, Acting Chair, afternoon session)

Gladys Cotter (Inter-American Biodiversity Information Network)

Bonnie Carroll (Inter-American Biodiversity Information Network)

Soumalyia Bance (Burkina Faso)

Horst Freiberg (Germany)

Fernando Gast (Colombia)

Ole Hendrikson (Canada, representing Jason Thomson)

Jan Plesnik (Czech Republic)

Tom Hammond (IUCN Canada)

Beatriz Torres (Global Biodiversity Information Facility, representing Wouter Los)

Observers

Somali Chan (Cambodia)

Moustafa M. Fonda (Egypt)

Philip Ivey (Global Invasive Species Programme)

Vladimir Bocharnikov (Russian Academy of Sciences)

Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity:

Marcos Silva, Programme Officer

Olivier de Munck, Programme Officer

Welcome by Mr Asghar Fazel

Mr. Asghar Fazel welcomed Informal Advisory Committee (IAC) members and observers to the meeting.

In his introductory remarks, Mr. Fazel spoke on issues related to the implementation of the Convention, the 2010 target, communication, education and public awareness and technology transfer (Programme element 2 of Decision VII/29), particularly within the



context of technical and scientific collaboration and the Clearing-House Mechanism. He emphasized the role of the IAC in relation to decision VII/23 (Scientific and technical cooperation and the Clearing-House Mechanism (Article 18, paragraph 3)) and VII/29 (Transfer of technology and technology cooperation (Articles 16 to 19)), especially the updating of the Clearing-House Mechanism strategic plan. Activities related to VII/29 and the role of the IAC were also highlighted and discussed. He concluded his introductory remarks by thanking participants for their contribution to the Clearing-House Mechanism and wished everyone a fruitful and successful meeting.

On behalf of Mr. Hamdallah Zedan, Executive Secretary, Mr. Marcos Silva thanked participants for their support of the Clearing-House Mechanism. He gave a brief presentation on achievements to date and introduced the draft updated strategic plan of the Clearing-House Mechanism. He concluded by thanking Mr. Asghar Fazel for Chairing the meeting.

Item 2: Organizational Matters

This agenda item was introduced by Mr. M. Silva.

Item 2.1: Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted (see Annex I)

Item 2.2: Organization of work

The meeting agreed with the organization of work described in the provisional agenda.

Item 2.3 Welcome new members

Mr. Fazel welcomed the observers to the meeting.

Item 3: Discussion on recommendations related to the review of the Clearing-House Mechanism (UNEP/CBD/WGRI/1/4) and its draft Strategic Plan (UNEP/CBD/WGRI/INF/11), to be made by the Ad Hoc Open-Ended Working Group on Review of Implementation of the Convention

1. The Chair requested Mr. Silva to introduce the updated strategic plan and summarize its main revisions and updates.
2. Mr. Silva in discussing the updated strategic plan, stated that it had been reviewed at the meeting of the Ad Hoc Open-ended Working Group on the Review of Implementation of the Convention, which was held in Montreal, from 5 to 9 September 2005. He explained that, following advice received from the Informal



- Advisory Committee, the plan would be submitted to the eight meeting of the Conference of the Parties, pursuant to paragraph 7(a) of Decision VII/23¹.
3. In the ensuing discussion, comments were made by representatives from Belgium, Burkina Faso, Canada, Colombia, Czech Republic, Egypt, Germany, Iran, the Global Biodiversity Information Facility, the Global Invasive Species Programme and IUCN.
 4. There was strong agreement by participants that the updated strategic plan should place more emphasis on the need for financial support by Parties, funding agencies and others actors. There was also agreement that national Clearing-House Mechanisms should examine reaching out to the private sector for partnerships and support.
 5. Participants further requested that the mission statement in the updated strategic plan be modified to more clearly reflect the mandate of the Clearing-House Mechanism, namely to: To contribute significantly to the implementation of the Convention on Biological Diversity and its programme areas and cross-cutting issues, especially the 2010 target, through the promotion and facilitation of technical and scientific cooperation among Parties, other Governments and stakeholders.
 6. GBIF raised concerns about the wording of objective and activities of 2.2. In the draft updated Strategic Plan dated 20 October 2005, it stated: "The clearing-house mechanism facilitates the access to and repatriation of information on biodiversity". GBIF considered that the stated objective 2.2 dealt with matters related to information while the activities presented were dealing with matters related to biodiversity data. Therefore there was a need for a better correspondence between the proposed objective and the suggested activities.
 7. On the proposed activities of objective 2.2., GBIF highlighted that work was already being done by different initiatives and emphasized the need to avoid duplication of efforts. The list of activities under objective 2.2.1 corresponds to activities that are tightly connected with the implementation of the GTI Work Programme. At the last SBSTTA 11 meeting, during the discussions on the GTI Work Programme, several Parties (e.g. Austria, Australia, Mexico, China, EC) expressed concerns about the risk of duplication of efforts between the CHM and existing initiatives. GBIF mentioned that those concerns had not been taken into account in the Updated Strategic Plan. Furthermore the current wording of objective 2.2 and its related activities, may appear to be in competition or even potential conflict to the GTI Programme of Work and related activities (i.e., the GTI portal). Therefore, GBIF suggested to put all the activities of objective 2.2 as "in collaboration with relevant partners".

¹ 7. *Also requests* the Executive Secretary to: (a) Update the strategic plan of the clearing-house mechanism to 2009, in collaboration with the informal advisory committee, for consideration by the eighth meeting of the Conference of the Parties;



8. There were also requests to expand goal 2.2 by adding activity 2.2.4 which states: Collaborate with relevant partners, academic and research institutions, non-governmental organizations and the private sector to facilitate access to relevant data and information, such as genetic, observational, environmental, geospatial and scientific literature.
9. Participants also made other suggestions such as to include reference to a metadata registry in activity 2.3.2 and to add other categories of information to activity 2.3.1.
10. With regard to activities under goal 2.2, it was advised to change references to museums to natural history collections, and to add references to observational data. There was also a request to make reference to collaboration with other international initiatives.
11. GBIF was delighted to see that the concept of mentoring originally proposed in the GBIF Strategic Plan and Work Programme was considered useful, and that it was an important addition to the CHM Strategic Plan.

Item 4: Discussion on implementation of items related to decision VII/29

12. In the afternoon session, Mr. Asghar Fazel, who had to participate in the bureau meeting of the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice (SBSTTA), requested Mr. Jackie van Goethem to Chair the meeting.
13. Mr. van Goethem invited members of the Expert Group on Technology Transfer and Scientific and Technical Cooperation to join the meeting to discuss draft documents: *Proposals for the enhancement of the Clearing-House Mechanism as a key mechanism in technology transfer and cooperation* and *Synthesis report of information on national, regional and international information systems*.
14. After the ensuing discussion, it was decided that participants would send comments via email to the Secretariat.

Item 5: Other matters

The Secretariat requested IAC members to make more use of the IAC Collaborative Portal, especially with regard to electronic discussions related to decision VII/23 and VII/29 and communication, education and public awareness.

Item 6: Closure of meeting

The meeting was closed at 17:00 by the acting Chair, on behalf of the Executive Secretary, who thanked all participants for a constructive and most productive meeting.



ANNEX I

PROVISIONAL AGENDA

1. Opening of the meeting
2. Organizational matters:
 - 2.1 Adoption of the agenda
 - 2.2 Organization of the work
3. Discussion on recommendations related to the review of the Clearing-House Mechanism (UNEP/CBD/WGRI/1/4) and its draft Strategic Plan (UNEP/CBD/WG-RI/INF/11), to be made by the Ad Hoc Open-Ended Working Group on Review of Implementation of the Convention
4. Discussion on implementation of activities in support of decision VII/29, transfer of technology and technology cooperation
5. Discussion on activities and initiatives by the Clearing-House Mechanism in support of the 2010 target
6. Other matters
7. Closure of the meeting