

**Convention on
Biological Diversity**

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MEETING OF THE INFORMAL ADVISORY
COMMITTEE TO THE CLEARING-HOUSE
MECHANISM OF THE CONVENTION ON
BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY

Montreal, Canada, 30-31 October 2015

**REPORT OF THE INFORMAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE TO THE CLEARING-HOUSE
MECHANISM OF THE CONVENTION ON BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY ON ITS MEETING OF
30-31 OCTOBER 2015**

I. RECOMMENDATIONS

A. Recommendations from the joint session of the CHM-IAC and ABSCH-IAC

Online reporting tool

1. Review the feedback received from the CHM-IAC and other Parties, and set implementation priorities by mid-November with a view to making the online reporting tool available for official submissions by the end of 2015.
2. Investigate ways to present the information submitted through the tool in an effective and attractive way to any website visitor.
3. Clarify the modalities for online submissions to the central CHM, in particular with respect to the role of the CHM NFP, and in line with existing modalities for the BCH and ABSCH.
4. Provide alternate procedures for submission by Parties having limited access to the Internet.

Common formats and metadata

5. Proceed with the implementation of the common formats on capacity-building resources and initiatives prepared by the Informal Advisory Committee on Capacity-building for the Implementation of the Nagoya Protocol, taking into account the following recent comments:

- (a) Include the possibility of selecting ex situ collections as “main target group(s)/beneficiaries”;
- (b) Provide a way to relate the capacity-building resource or initiative to one or more Aichi Biodiversity Targets;
- (c) Add a word limit to the field describing “summary, abstract, or table of contents” in the common format for submitting capacity-building resources;

(d) Remove “ABS” from the title of the common format on capacity-building initiatives to avoid confusion with the ABS Capacity Development Initiative;

(e) Modify the options included under question 7 of the common format on capacity-building initiatives to read “agencies/organizations” in order to be more consistent with the question “agency(ies) or organization(s) implementing and/or executing the initiative”, and provide a way to enter free text about “collaborating partners”.

6. Further consider which filters would be more useful for searching information submitted through these common formats and how the information could be displayed.

7. Develop common formats in order to capture additional relevant information on capacity-building opportunities.

8. Consider means to avoid duplication in the submission of information.

Web strategy

9. Collect further feedback on the preliminary draft web strategy by the end of 2015 through a joint online forum to be set up by the Secretariat.

10. Consider the following when further developing the web strategy:

- (a) Provide further information on matters related to interoperability and its API;
- (b) Take into account the specificities of the Nagoya Protocol and the ABS Clearing-House in terms of users and user needs;
- (c) Provide estimates of the time and/or cost needed to implement each potential deliverable;
- (d) Include the relevant elements of the communication strategy, including social media aspects;
- (e) Outline the policy clarifying which web browsers are supported by taking into account:
 - (i) The extent of the problem based on user feedback and web analytics;
 - (ii) The estimated development costs of supporting legacy browser versions;
- (f) Identify the core controlled vocabularies needed to allow a global search engine to retrieve all common or relevant information from the CBD and its Protocols;
- (g) Take into account the guidance already provided for the development of the ABS Clearing-House and its current functionalities.

B. Additional recommendations from the CHM-IAC

Award for national clearing-house mechanisms

11. Send a notification to Parties kindly reminding them to respond to notification 2015-068 on the CHM Award by the end of the year if they have not yet done so.

12. Prepare a neutral assessment of the national CHM of each Party having responded to the notification on the CHM Award, based on the criteria specified in this notification.

13. Approach potential organizations with expertise in web awards to see whether they would be interested in supporting this process on a voluntary basis.
14. Establish, by the end of 2015, the CHM Award Jury, including the CHM-IAC members who have kindly volunteered to be part of it (France, Morocco, Mexico and Czech Republic) as well as some partner organizations.
15. Approach the Republic of Korea and ask them to chair the CHM Award Jury during their current Presidency of the Conference of the Parties.
16. Consider holding the CHM Award event at the thirteenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties, in plenary, in order to optimize visibility with no allocated budget.

Support to national clearing-house mechanisms

17. Reaffirm the importance of having a CHM network with a national CHM in each Party, as envisaged in paragraph 22 of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 and requested in goal 2 of decision X/15.
18. Prepare best practices for national CHMs, taking advantage of successful experiences shared by Parties through the CHM Award process.
19. Continue the development of the tool to facilitate the establishment of a new national CHM, thanks to the generous support of the Japan Biodiversity Fund.
20. Further collaborate with the Belgian CHM in order to provide hosting, technical support and capacity-building for Parties interested in using this tool.
21. Provide training sessions on this tool during the forthcoming regional capacity-building workshops on the CHM.
22. Prepare capacity-building materials, including videos, on how to establish or further develop a national CHM.

Interoperability

23. Continue the ongoing work on interoperability between the central and national CHMs by:
 - (a) Addressing pending technical issues;
 - (b) Developing a plug-in that can be used on any national CHM to display information from the central CHM;
 - (c) Allowing updates on the central CHM;
 - (d) Providing corresponding technical documentation;
 - (e) Providing demonstration examples for national CHMs.
24. Continue the ongoing work on interoperability between the CBD Secretariat and InforMEA by:
 - (a) Addressing pending technical issues;
 - (b) Ensuring that data exposed by the CBD Secretariat is accurate.

Collaboration with partners

25. Continue the ongoing collaboration with the MEA-IKM initiative with a view to ensuring that:
- (a) Information harvested from the CBD and its Protocols is adequately presented on the InforMEA website;
 - (b) Training modules related to the CBD and its Protocols, which are made available on the InforMEA E-learning Platform, are up-to-date and accurate;
 - (c) Terminology related to the CBD and its Protocols is adequately integrated in the Law and Environment Ontology (LEO).
26. Collaborate with the European Union to allow synergies between the CBD online reporting tool and the Target Cross-linking Tool (TCT).
27. Continue to collaborate with the NBSAP Forum on matters related to the CHM, including the web strategy.

Decision tracking tool

28. Plan the design of the public component of the decision tracking tool in consultation with the CHM-IAC with a view to having a system that effectively streamlines the tracking of CBD obligations.
29. Invite the CHM-IAC to test the first version of the decision tracking tool when this tool is available.

II. ACCOUNT OF PROCEEDINGS

A. General information

1. The meeting of the Informal Advisory Committee to the Clearing-House Mechanism (CHM-IAC) of the Convention on Biological Diversity was held in Montreal, Canada, on 30 and 31 October 2015, prior to the nineteenth meeting of the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice. The venue was, on the first day, the Secretariat of the Commission for Environmental Cooperation, and, on the second day, the headquarters of the Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity. The documentation for the meeting is available online at www.cbd.int/doc/?meeting=chmiac-2015-01 and the list of participants is contained in annex II.
2. On the first day of the meeting, there was a joint session with the Informal Advisory Committee to the Access and Benefit-sharing Clearing-House (ABSCH-IAC), which was holding its first meeting from 28 to 20 October 2015, in order to give both committees the opportunity to discuss together issues of common interest. The documentation for the ABSCH-IAC meeting is available online at www.cbd.int/doc/?meeting=absch-iac-01.

B. Background

3. In its decision X/15, the Conference of the Parties adopted the mission, goals and objectives of the clearing-house mechanism for the period 2011-2020. In paragraph 11 of its decision XI/2 B, it welcomed the work programme for the clearing-house mechanism in support of implementation of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 (UNEP/CBD/COP/11/31) and agreed to keep this work programme under review.

4. The previous meeting of the Informal Advisory Committee to the Clearing-House Mechanism (CHM-IAC) was held in Pyeongchang, Republic of Korea, on 5 October 2014 to review the progress made on the clearing-house mechanism. The report of that meeting (UNEP/CBD/CHM/IAC/2014/2/2) includes recommendations to the Executive Secretary.

C. Expected outcome

5. The purpose of the meeting was to review progress made on the clearing-house mechanism in the light of decision XII/2 B and to make recommendations to the Executive Secretary for further implementation. The meeting was also an opportunity for the members of the CHM-IAC to share views with the members of the ABSCH-IAC on issues of common interest.

ITEM 1. OPENING OF THE MEETING

6. The meeting started at 9.15 a.m. on 31 October 2015. The Executive Secretary opened the meeting and welcomed all participants, including the two co-chairs of the joint meeting, Mr. Han de Koeijer (Belgium), and Mr. Christopher Lyal (Denmark).

7. In his opening statement, the Executive Secretary highlighted key topics of the agenda. He said that online reporting should be viewed in the context of gradually moving towards more continuous reporting, and that there were links with the format of the sixth national report to be discussed by the Subsidiary Body on Implementation at its first meeting. He mentioned the ongoing preparation of the web strategy, indicating that it should take into account the specificities of the Protocols. He indicated that interoperability had an important role to play in facilitating information exchange. He also referred to the ongoing functional review process and the establishment of various functional clusters, including on information technology, knowledge management and capacity-building.

8. The opening was followed by a few comments from the co-chairs, and a tour de table which gave participants the opportunity to introduce themselves.

ITEM 2. ORGANIZATIONAL MATTERS

2.1. Adoption of the agenda

9. The Committee adopted the provisional agenda (UNEP/CBD/CHM/IAC/2015/1/1) prepared by the Executive Secretary with the understanding that sub-item 5.4 on additional joint issues could be followed by another sub-item dedicated to additional issues related to the central clearing-house mechanism.

2.2. Organization of work

10. The Committee adopted the proposed organization of work, as described in annex I of the annotations to the provisional agenda (UNEP/CBD/CHM/IAC/2015/1/1/Add.1), but with a minor scheduling adjustment due to the fact that the joint session would end at the afternoon coffee break of the first day.

ITEM 3. BACKGROUND AND OBJECTIVES

11. This item consisted of a presentation made by Mr. Olivier de Munck (CBD Secretariat) to provide all participants with the necessary background about the clearing-house mechanism, and to highlight the three objectives of this meeting:

- (a) To review progress made on the clearing-house mechanism in the light of decision XII/2 B;
- (b) To make recommendations to the Executive Secretary for further implementation of the corresponding activities;
- (c) To share views with the members of the ABSCH-IAC on issues of common interest.

ITEM 4. PRESENTATIONS

12. The joint session started with presentations by the Secretariat on progress with the CBD clearing-house mechanism and the Access and Benefit-sharing Clearing-House. These presentations were followed by a short question-and-answer session.

4.1. The clearing-house mechanism

13. There were two presentations by the CBD Secretariat. The first presentation, made by Mr. Olivier de Munck, summarized the information contained in the progress report on the clearing-house mechanism (UNEP/CBD/CHM/IAC/2015/1/2).

14. That presentation was followed by a presentation by Mr. Frédéric Vogel, who described the new web infrastructure consisting of a back-end server, a front-end client, and an application programming interface (API) enabling information exchange between them. He also gave an overview of the modern web technologies recently selected by the CBD Secretariat.

4.2. The Access and Benefit-sharing Clearing-House

15. Mr. Matthew Dias (CBD Secretariat) made a presentation on the Access and Benefit-sharing Clearing-House. His presentation started with a reference to Article 14.1 of the Nagoya Protocol and continued with an overview of the existing Access and Benefit-sharing Clearing-House.

ITEM 5. ISSUES RELATED TO THE CENTRAL CLEARING-HOUSE MECHANISM AND TO THE ACCESS AND BENEFIT-SHARING CLEARING-HOUSE

16. The Committees were invited to consider the following issues of common interest to the clearing-house mechanism and the Access and Benefit-sharing Clearing-House:

- (a) Online reporting tool;
- (b) Common formats and metadata;
- (c) Web strategy.

5.1. Online reporting tool

17. In paragraph 18(a) of decision XII/2 B, the Conference of the Parties requested the Executive Secretary to establish a fully functional online reporting tool enabling Parties to submit, on a voluntary basis, information on their progress towards national targets and the Aichi Biodiversity Targets, directly involving Parties in the development and testing of the tool.

18. The discussion started with an introduction by Mr. Robert Höft (CBD Secretariat), who explained the purpose of the online reporting tool. Mr. Frédéric Vogel (CBD Secretariat) followed, giving an overview of the features of the tool while highlighting the existence of two versions: the live version, available at <https://chm.cbd.int>, and the test version, available at <https://dev-chm.cbd.int>. He also summarized the feedback received from users who had tested the latest version of the tool.

19. Following the presentation made by the CBD Secretariat, the committees noted the progress made on the online reporting tool for submitting information on progress towards national targets and the Aichi Biodiversity Targets, including Aichi Biodiversity Target 16. For the recommendations to the Executive Secretary, see the “Online reporting tool” section on page 1

5.2. Common formats and metadata

20. Ms. Kata Koppel (CBD Secretariat) made a presentation giving an overview of the common formats available through the CBD clearing-house mechanism (described in UNEP/CBD/CHM/IAC/2015/1/INF/1), in particular the new common format for submitting information to the virtual library. She also presented the common formats developed for capacity-building resources and initiatives (described in UNEP/CBD/ABS/CH-IAC/2015/1/INF/1), noting the areas of the common formats that were cross-cutting for both clearing-houses.

21. Subsequently, Ms. Beatriz Gómez Castro (CBD Secretariat) presented the two common formats (described in UNEP/CBD/ABS/CH-IAC/2015/1/INF/1) to be discussed in detail in this session, namely:

- (a) Capacity-building and development initiatives (activity/project/programme);
- (b) Capacity-building and development resources.

22. Following the presentations made by the CBD Secretariat, the committees welcomed the draft common formats. For the recommendations to the Executive Secretary, see the “Common format and metadata” section on page 1.

23. The committees suggested that the approach for submitting and displaying regional initiatives could be similar to that agreed for regional/multilateral measures. In accordance with guidance provided by the Informal Advisory Committee on Capacity-building for the Implementation of the Nagoya Protocol,¹ the Committees noted that organizations or agencies involved in relevant projects could play a leading role in submitting information on capacity-building initiatives, particularly global or regional projects, while Governments could play such a role in registering national projects in the Access and Benefit-sharing Clearing-House.

24. The committees expressed the need to consider means to avoid duplication in the submission of information.

25. The committees recognized the need to further consider which filters would be more useful for searching information submitted through common formats and how such information could be displayed. They agreed that those aspects could be better considered once the common formats were reflected online.

26. The committees indicated that it would be useful to share information on capacity-building opportunities through the CBD clearing-house mechanism and the Access and Benefit-sharing Clearing-House. In addition, they noted that it would be necessary to develop a common format to capture additional relevant information on capacity-building opportunities.

5.3. Web strategy

27. In paragraph 19 of its decision XII/2 B, the Conference of the Parties had requested the Executive Secretary to develop a web strategy to ensure that all information common or relevant to the

¹ See [UNEP/CBD/ABS/CB-IAC/2015/1/3](#), para. 48.

clearing-house mechanism, the Access and Benefit-sharing Clearing-House and the Biosafety Clearing-House, as well as other platforms developed under the Convention, such as the NBSAP Forum, the website for ecologically or biologically significant marine areas and any future similar developments, could be accessed centrally to avoid duplication of efforts, and to provide the strategy to the Subsidiary Body on Implementation, for its consideration at its first meeting, in preparation for the thirteenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties.

28. Mr. Olivier de Munck (CBD Secretariat) provided some background on the process that had led to the preparation of the preliminary draft web strategy (UNEP/CBD/CHM/IAC/2015/1/INF/2). He explained that the document had been prepared through a collaborative process involving both relevant staff from the CBD Secretariat and the Web Strategy Working Group established within the CHM-IAC. He then gave an overview of the three parts of the document: the strategic vision, the current situation, and the way forward. He highlighted the main deliverables and their implementation road map described in the third part. He emphasized that the web strategy should respond to the expectations of Parties and the needs of users. He also outlined the process for finalizing the official web strategy for consideration by the Subsidiary Body on Implementation at its first meeting, to be held in Montreal, Canada, from 2 to 6 May 2016.

29. Following the presentation, the committees welcomed the preliminary draft web strategy. For the recommendations to the Executive Secretary, see the “Web strategy” section on page 2.

30. In that regard, the ABSCH-IAC noted that it was already providing guidance to the Executive Secretary in order to ensure that the Access and Benefit-sharing Clearing-House and its functionalities supported the implementation of the Protocol and adapted to the needs of Parties and different user groups. The Committees also noted that the web strategy should take into account the guidance already provided for the development of the Access and Benefit-sharing Clearing-House and its current functionalities.

31. The Committees agreed to provide further guidance on the draft preliminary website strategy by 31 December 2015, through a joint online forum to be set up by the CBD Secretariat.

5.4. Additional joint issues

32. The Committees were invited to consider additional issues of common interest.

33. They considered ways to ensure coherence and the best use of the controlled vocabularies used across the CBD clearing-house mechanism, the Access and Benefit-sharing Clearing-House, and the Biosafety Clearing-House. After some discussions, they agreed to consider the issue at a later stage.

34. They also expressed concern regarding the fact that the web infrastructure currently employed by the Access and Benefit-sharing Clearing-House, which would eventually host the CBD website and other platforms, would require additional development to support legacy versions of the most widely used Internet browsers. They advised the Executive Secretary to: (a) provide an estimate of the development costs to support legacy browser versions; and (b) collect information on the extent of the problem based on feedback from users and analytics on the external use of the Access and Benefit-sharing Clearing-House, including the number of visitors and browsers used, to allow the Committees to provide guidance on the way forward.

5.5. Additional issues related to the central clearing-house mechanism

35. Consideration of the sub-item was taken up on the first day, after the end of the joint session of the CHM-IAC and ABSCH-IAC. The chair invited the Committee to raise any issue related to the central clearing-house mechanism.

36. The main issue raised under the sub-item revolved around the modalities for online submission to the central clearing-house mechanism. After some discussion, it was agreed to advise the Executive Secretary to clarify those modalities, in particular with respect to the role of the CHM national focal point and in line with existing modalities for the Biosafety Clearing-House and the Access and Benefit-sharing Clearing-House.

ITEM 6. ISSUES RELATED TO THE NETWORK OF THE CLEARING-HOUSE MECHANISM

37. The Committee was invited to consider the following issues related to the clearing-house mechanism network:

- (a) Award for national clearing-house mechanisms (CHM Award);
- (b) Support to national clearing-house mechanisms;
- (c) Interoperability;
- (d) Collaboration with partners.

6.1. Award for national clearing-house mechanisms

38. In paragraph 15 of decision XII/2 B, the Conference of the Parties had requested the Executive Secretary to propose, in collaboration with the Informal Advisory Committee to the Clearing-House Mechanism, a process to grant, at the thirteenth, fourteenth and fifteenth meetings of the Conference of the Parties, subject to the availability of resources, an award to the Parties that had made the most significant progress in the establishment or further development of their national clearing-house mechanisms.

39. Mr. Olivier de Munck (CBD Secretariat) summarized progress made in that area. He explained that the CHM-IAC had established the CHM Award Working Group in order to drive that process and define its modalities. He referred to notification 2015-068, issued June 2015, to inform Parties of these modalities and to kindly request them to answer a questionnaire on their national clearing-house mechanisms. He also indicated that, thus far, 25 Parties had responded to the notification.

40. The Committee was then invited to provide advice on how to plan the next steps in the process until the thirteenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties.

41. For the recommendations to the Executive Secretary, see the “Award for national clearing-house mechanisms” section on page 2.

6.2. Support to national clearing-house mechanisms

42. In paragraph 15 of decision XII/2 B, the Conference of the Parties had invited Parties and partners to provide support to developing country Parties that were developing their national clearing-house mechanisms. In paragraph 16 of the same decision, it had also invited Parties and donors to continue to provide financial support to establish and strengthen their national clearing-house

mechanisms, including for content preparation and for translation in order to facilitate the sharing of information and knowledge.

43. Mr. Olivier de Munck (CBD Secretariat) summarized progress made in that area. He explained that, thanks to generous funding from the Japan Biodiversity Fund, the CBD Secretariat would convene two capacity-building workshops between the time of the meeting and the thirteenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties. He added that the support from Japan also included a component to develop a tool for assisting Parties in the establishment of their national clearing-house mechanisms. He demonstrated the current version of the tool, available at <http://demo.chm-cbd.net>, and said that future capacity-building workshops on the clearing-house mechanism would include hands-on training on the tool.

44. After the presentation, the Committee was invited to provide comments and advice on support to develop national clearing-house mechanisms. The chair initiated the discussion by asking about the impact of regional capacity-building workshops. The CBD Secretariat indicated that one indicator of impact was the number of new national clearing-house mechanisms established after a workshop. In the case of Africa, four national clearing-house mechanisms had been established after the regional capacity-building workshop for Africa held in Cameroon in 2014. The chair informally added that a few additional African countries were likely to launch their national clearing-house mechanisms in the near future.

45. Mr. Hesiquio Benítez (Mexico) took the opportunity to share a national initiative with the Committee. He presented a recently developed online tool being used in Mexico to capture information on the progress made by provinces towards Aichi Biodiversity Targets. He explained that the purpose of the tool, available at http://dgcii.conabio.gob.mx/phpscripts/evaluacion_estatal.html, was to facilitate communication with the provinces by providing a systematic way to collect important information on national implementation. The Committee welcomed that initiative.

46. The Committee also welcomed the new tool for national clearing-house mechanisms. Dr. Suzanne Davis (Jamaica) recommended the preparation of training materials, such as videos, that Parties could use at any time. That would be a cost-effective way to achieve a certain level of continuity in capacity-building, independently of the timing of a capacity-building workshop.

47. Mr. Alexandre Rafalovitch (CBD Secretariat) provided some additional background information on the new tool for national clearing-house mechanisms. He explained that feedback from past workshops as well as a survey of existing national clearing-house mechanisms had revealed that technical issues remained a major barrier to the establishment of national clearing-house mechanisms. Once that barrier was removed, the focus could then be on aspects related to content management in order to make the national clearing-house mechanism as effective as possible in supporting the implementation of national biodiversity strategy and action plans.

48. For the recommendations to the Executive Secretary, see the “Support for national clearing-house mechanisms” section on page 3.

6.3. Interoperability

49. In paragraphs 18(b) and 18(c) of decision XII/2 B, the Conference of the Parties had requested the Executive Secretary to continue developing the following interoperability services of the central clearing-house mechanism:

- (a) Interoperability with national clearing-house mechanisms;

(b) Interoperability with InforMEA to allow relevant information on the Convention on Biological Diversity to be globally searchable on the InforMEA website.

50. Mr. Olivier de Munck (CBD Secretariat) summarized progress made on both requests. Regarding interoperability with national clearing-house mechanisms, he explained that the CBD Secretariat was developing an application programming interface (API). He showed the set of endpoints available from this API to retrieve national information from the CBD Secretariat. He also showed the endpoints of the InforMEA API, implemented according to the specifications available at www.informea.org/about/api.

51. Subsequently, Mr. Alexandre Rafalovitch (CBD Secretariat) made an online demonstration of interoperability with national clearing-house mechanisms using, on the one hand, the API developed by the CBD Secretariat and, on the other hand, the API available in the new tool for national clearing-house mechanisms which had been presented under sub-item 6.2. The demonstration showed how it was possible to automatically create national focal point records on the new tool and maintain synchronicity with the corresponding master records in the central clearing-house mechanism.

52. Following the presentations made by the CBD Secretariat, the Committee was invited to provide comments and advice on the further development of interoperability within the clearing-house mechanism network.

53. During the ensuing discussion, the Committee noted that the use of the CBD Secretariat's API required technical expertise that might not be readily available in many countries. Therefore, it would be useful to have simpler options, such as a plug-in that could be easily inserted in any national clearing-house mechanism website. The Committee also noted that interoperability should always respond to a particular need or resolve a particular issue, such as duplicate maintenance of the same information in separate databases. For instance, if a country has an existing national database containing national targets, the corresponding records will be present in two databases: the national database and the Secretariat's database. Manually maintaining the same records in both databases would be an issue due to the duplication of data maintenance and the resulting risk of inconsistencies. Interoperability can resolve this issue by having a single update in the master database, followed by an automating update of the same record in the slave database, thanks to the interoperability mechanism.

54. For the recommendations to the Executive Secretary, see the "Interoperability" section on page 3.

6.4. Collaboration with partners

55. Mr. Olivier de Munck (CBD Secretariat) summarized the ongoing collaboration with key partners and initiatives, including the MEA Information and Knowledge Management (MEA-IKM) initiative, the NBSAP Forum, and the Belgian cooperation supporting the development of national clearing-house mechanisms in partner developing countries.

56. Committee members involved in collaboration initiatives were invited to provide their own summaries. Mr. Jerry Harrison (UNEP-WCMC) provided some background on the online reporting system (ORS) being used by some biodiversity-related conventions. He indicated that a working group had been established within the MEA-IKM Initiative to facilitate collaboration on the matter. Due to its interest in online reporting, the CBD Secretariat was an observer in that working group.

57. The chair briefly mentioned collaboration between the European Union and the CBD Secretariat on the Target Cross-linking Tool (TCT), and the fact that a meeting with the Executive Secretary had been scheduled early the following week to discuss that collaboration.

58. For the recommendations to the Executive Secretary, see the “Collaboration with partners” section on page 4.

6.5. Additional issues related to the network

59. The Committee was invited to raise and discuss any relevant issues related to the clearing-house mechanism network.

60. The issue of best practices was raised by Dr. Suzanne Davis (Jamaica), who wondered whether some support could be obtained to prepare best practices in order to guide CHM national focal points in the development of their national clearing-house mechanisms.

61. Pursuant to the ensuing discussion, the Committee advised the Executive Secretary to prepare best practices for national clearing-house mechanisms, taking advantage of successful experiences shared by Parties through the CHM Award process.

ITEM 7. OTHER MATTERS

62. The chair informed the Committee of the following matters related to the operations of the CHM-IAC:

(a) In accordance with paragraph 12 of decision XI/2, the mandate of the Committee would be reviewed by the Conference of the Parties at its thirteenth meeting and a corresponding draft decision should be prepared in due course;

(b) A one-day CHM-IAC meeting is expected to be held on the margins of the first meeting of the Subsidiary Body for Implementation;

(c) Another one-day CHM-IAC meeting is expected to be held on the margins of the thirteenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties;

(d) In the meantime, working groups established within the CHM-IAC should continue to operate through Internet-based means of communication.

63. The Committee was then invited to raise any other matters related to the clearing-house mechanism. The chair invited the Committee to take that opportunity to discuss the online decision tracking tool to be implemented within the clearing-house mechanism, as requested in paragraph 3 of decision XII/28. He also asked the Secretariat to provide an update on the current status of the project.

64. Mr. Frédéric Vogel (CBD Secretariat) indicated that there had been internal discussions with the colleagues in charge of coordinating the project. He also indicated that a mock-up for a data entry form had been proposed.

65. The following points were made during the discussion:

(a) Parties are interested in a tool that helps them keep track of their obligations in a user-friendly way;

(b) The Committee expressed an interest in forming a working group consisting of Belgium, Canada, Cameroon, Mexico and UNEP-WCMC, to review and test the functionality of the public part of the tool to be used by Parties;

(c) Ideally, a period of two months would be needed to test the system and provide feedback in time before the first meeting of the Subsidiary Body on Implementation.

66. For the recommendations to the Executive Secretary, see the “decision tracking tool” section on page 4.

ITEM 8. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

67. Before closing the meeting, the main conclusions and recommendations arising from the discussion were recapped. The recommendations addressed to the Executive Secretary are contained in section I.

ITEM 9. CLOSURE OF THE MEETING

68. The chair made closing remarks to express his appreciation of the work done and thanked the participants for their valuable contributions. Following the customary exchange of courtesies, the meeting was closed at 5.00 p.m. on 31 October 2015.

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