



CONVENTION ON BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY

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LATIN AMERICA AND CARIBBEAN REGIONAL
MEETING ON THE CLEARING-HOUSE MECHANISM
Lima, 7 September 2001

ANNOTATIONS TO THE PROVISIONAL AGENDA

INTRODUCTION

Background

1. Article 18.3 of the Convention on Biological Diversity establishes a clearing-house mechanism (CHM) to promote and facilitate technical and scientific cooperation.
2. In decision V/14, the Conference of the Parties recommended that the Executive Secretary convene regional workshops to support capacity-building for clearing-house activities, training and awareness, with a focus on cooperation in biodiversity information for the implementation and management of the clearing-house mechanism at the national, subregional, bio-geographic and regional levels, as appropriate.
3. Accordingly, the Executive Secretary has organized the present meeting to provide countries of the region with an opportunity to express their needs and expectations with regard to the promotion and facilitation of technical and scientific cooperation.
4. The organization of the meeting also responds to the recommendation of the Informal Advisory Committee made at its meeting of 11 March 2001, which requests the Executive Secretary to focus on the use of the CHM to promote technical and scientific cooperation, particularly within the work programmes of invasive alien species, the Global Taxonomy Initiative (GTI), coastal and marine biodiversity and the ecosystem approach.
5. This meeting further supports recommendations made during the sixth meeting of the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice (SBSTTA), particularly recommendation VI/4, 4(c), 22 which called for the clearing-house mechanism to be used to facilitate scientific and technical cooperation.
6. The meeting will consider issues relevant to the operation of the clearing-house mechanism in the Latin American and Caribbean region. Specific objectives for the meeting include:

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- (a) To determine the regional information requirements and mechanisms needed to promote and facilitate scientific and technical cooperation activities under the Convention at the local and national level;
- (b) To identify likely problems and suggest solutions in the implementation and ongoing development of the clearing-house activities in the region;
- (c) To explore partnerships for improving technical and scientific collaboration and reducing duplication of efforts;
- (d) To identify synergies and differences in the implementation of the Biosafety Clearing-House and the clearing-house mechanism in the region .

Participants

7. Each Party in the Latin American and Caribbean region has been invited to nominate one expert qualified in the fields of management of clearing-house mechanism issues, information-sharing systems and database-management, and/or experience with the Biosafety Clearing-House of the Cartagena Protocol. Nominations were requested from the CHM national focal points under the Convention on 3 August 2001.

8. In order to further assist the deliberations of this workshop, Parties, Governments and relevant organizations have also been requested to submit their views and needs with regard to the operation of the clearing-house mechanism, as well as any other relevant information they may wish to convey prior to the meeting.

9. In addition to these participants, representatives of the following organizations active in CHM issues have also been invited to participate as observers:

- (a) Representatives of the: United Nations Environment Programme World Conservation Monitoring Centre (UNEP-WCMC), Inter-American Biodiversity Information Network (IABIN), and the Global Environment Facility (GEF);

- (b) Representatives of the: Global Invasive Species Program (GISP), the Global Taxonomy Initiative (GTI), the Latin American Centre for Technology Studies (ACTS), The Reference Center for Environmental Information (CRIA), and the Integrated Taxonomic Information System (ITIS);

- (c) Representatives of donor organizations, particularly of those Governments who have indicated their interest in funding capacity-building activities to enable the active participation of developing countries in pilot projects promoted by the clearing-house mechanism.

Documents

10. A list of documents for the meeting is attached as annex I below.

Anticipated outcome of the meeting

11. It is expected that the meeting will facilitate a better definition of the needs of countries of the region with regard to the further development of the clearing-house mechanism, and will recommend possible solutions to overcome the identified constraints and impediments.

12. The recommendations of the meeting will be communicated to the Conference of the Parties at its sixth meeting, to be held in The Hague, Netherlands, from 8 to 19 April 2002.

ITEM 1. OPENING OF THE MEETING

13. The meeting will be held at the Department of Foreign Affairs, Lima. The meeting will be opened by the Executive Secretary or his representative at 8 a.m. on 7 September 2001.

ITEM 2. ORGANIZATIONAL MATTERS

2.1. Election of officers

14. The meeting will be invited to elect its Chair and Rapporteur from among its members. Proposals will be made from the floor.

2.2. Adoption of agenda

15. The meeting will be invited to adopt its agenda on the basis of the provisional agenda proposed in document UNEP/CBD/CHM/LAC.Reg/1/1.

2.3. Organization of work

16. A proposed programme of work for the meeting is shown in annex II below.

17. Participants will be invited to discuss the issues relevant to the promotion of technical and scientific cooperation as reflected in COP decision V/14, recommendations of the sixth meeting of the SBSTTA and recommendations of the Informal Advisory Committee, as well as issues pertaining to regional needs assessment in relation to use and future development of the clearing-house mechanism. To facilitate these discussions, it is proposed that these issues be clustered under two headings:

- (a) Promotion and facilitation of technical and scientific cooperation;
- (b) Synergies and distinctions in Latin America and Caribbean implementation of the Biosafety Clearing-House and the clearing-house mechanism.

18. Each of these headings will encompass various relevant issues. Following an introduction to the topic, the regional meeting will be invited to discuss relevant issues, with a view to making recommendations relevant to the objectives for the meeting.

ITEM 3. PROMOTION OF TECHNICAL AND SCIENTIFIC COOPERATION UNDER THE CONVENTION ON BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY AND THE BIOSAFETY PROTOCOL

19. The Secretariat will make a short presentation on issues relevant to this item based on documents from SBSTTA6 and COP V/14 recommendations. Accordingly, it is proposed that this item of the agenda cover the following elements:

- (a) Ongoing CHM projects to promote and facilitate technical and scientific cooperation;
- (b) Progress report on the joint work of the CHM and BCH.

20. These issues will be considered in light of decision V/14, recommendation VI, C, 22 of the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice at its Sixth Meeting, 12-16 March 2001, and the minutes of the Meeting of the Clearing-house Mechanism Informal Advisory Committee 11 March 2001.

ITEM 4. SYNERGIES AND DISTINCTIONS IN THE LATIN AMERICAN AND CARIBBEAN IMPLEMENTATION OF THE BIOSAFETY CLEARING-HOUSE AND THE CLEARING-HOUSE MECHANISM

21. In considering this item, the regional meeting will be invited to consider the synergies and distinctions in regional implementation of the Biosafety Clearing-House and the clearing-house mechanism.

22. Possible group discussions that could be held under this item with a view to determining options for technical and scientific collaboration include: (i) an overview of potential synergies between the clearing-house mechanism and the Biosafety Clearing-House and ways to make use of these; and (ii) an overview of potential differences between the clearing-house mechanism and the Biosafety Clearing-House and ways to overcome these.

ITEM 5. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

23. The regional meeting will be invited to formulate its general conclusions and recommendations on the issues considered at this meeting.

ITEM 6. ADOPTION OF THE REPORT

24. The regional meeting will consider and adopt its report, on the basis of the draft report of the meeting and draft recommendations to be presented by the Rapporteur.

ITEM 7. CLOSURE OF THE MEETING

25. It is expected that the meeting will be closed at 5 p.m. on 7 September 2001.

Annex I

**LIST OF DOCUMENTS FOR THE LATIN AMERICA AND CARIBBEAN REGIONAL
MEETING ON THE CLEARING-HOUSE MECHANISM**

PLEASE NOTE:

**For reasons of economy, documents will be available at the meeting in a limited number.
Participants are requested to bring their copies of the documents to the meeting.**

Working documents

UNEP/CBD/CHM/LAC.Reg/1/1

Provisional agenda

UNEP/CBD/CHM/LAC.Reg/1/1/Add.1

Annotations to the provisional agenda

Background documents

Recommendations Adopted by the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice at its Sixth Meeting, 12-16 March 2001 (UNEP/CBD/COP/6/3), recommendation VI/4

Conference of the Parties decision V/14

Minutes of the Meeting of the Clearing-house Mechanism Informal Advisory Committee 11 March 2001

*Annex II***PROVISIONAL PROGRAMME OF WORK FOR THE LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN REGIONAL MEETING ON THE CLEARING-HOUSE MECHANISM**

8:00	1. Opening of the meeting.
8:15- 9:00	2. Organizational matters: 2.1. Election of officers; 2.2. Adoption of the agenda; 2.3. Organization of work.
9:00- 10:30	3. Promotion and facilitation of technical and scientific cooperation:
10:30- 11:00	Break
11:00- 13:00	4. Synergies and differences in the implementation of the Biosafety Clearing-House and the clearing-house mechanism in Latin America and Caribbean Region.
13:00- 14:00	Lunch
14:00- 15:30	5. Conclusions and recommendations.
15:30- 16:00	Break
16:00- 17:00	6. Adoption of the report. 7. Closure of the meeting.
