

**CONVENTION ON
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LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN
REGIONAL MEETING ON THE
CLEARING-HOUSE MECHANISM
Second meeting
Brasilia, 9-11 March 2005

ORGANIZATIONAL MATTERS*Annotations to the provisional agenda***INTRODUCTION**

1. Article 18, paragraph 3, of the Convention on Biological Diversity establishes a clearing-house mechanism to promote and facilitate technical and scientific cooperation.
2. In decision VII/23, the Conference of the Parties requested the Executive Secretary to convene, subject to the availability of financial resources, regional workshops as a catalysing mechanism to allow for the interaction of international thematic focal points with the national focal points to further enhance the scientific and technical cooperation goal of the clearing-house mechanism and to build capacities at the national level with regard to use of and access to new information technologies.
3. The Conference of the Parties, in decision VI/18, also urged the Executive Secretary to convene additional capacity-building workshops at the national, subregional and regional levels referred to in decision V/14 of the Conference of the Parties for clearing-house activities and training in support of national capacities to implement the Convention.
4. Accordingly, the Executive Secretary has organized the present meeting to provide countries of the region with an opportunity to discuss the development and implementation of initiatives by the clearing-house mechanism to promote and facilitate technical and scientific cooperation at the national and regional levels with regard to the Convention's programme areas and cross-cutting issues, particularly the 2010 target, the transfer of technology and Article 8(j): traditional knowledge, innovations and practices.
5. The organization of the meeting also responds to the recommendation of the informal advisory committee for the clearing-house mechanism, made at its meetings of 11 March 2001, 11 November 2001, 10 April 2002 and 9 March 2003, that the Executive Secretary should focus on the use of the clearing-house mechanism to promote technical and scientific cooperation within the programme areas

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and cross-cutting issues of the Convention, including invasive alien species, the Global Taxonomy Initiative (GTI), coastal and marine biodiversity and the ecosystem approach.

6. Specific objectives for the meeting include:

(a) Identification of activities by the clearing-house mechanism to assist Parties and other Governments to achieve by 2010 a significant reduction of the current rate of biodiversity loss at the global, regional and national level;

(b) Development of proposals on the possible role of the clearing-house mechanism as a central mechanism for exchange of information on technologies and for facilitating technology transfer;

(c) Identification of activities to assist in the development of communication networks and tools for use by indigenous and local communities.

(d) Development of activities in support of the programme areas and cross-cutting issues of the Convention, including invasive alien species, the Global Taxonomy Initiative (GTI), coastal and marine biodiversity and the ecosystem approach, among others;

(e) Discussion of issues related to the enhancement of national clearing-house mechanisms and opportunities for more effective technical and scientific cooperation among clearing-house mechanisms in the region.

A. Participants

7. Each Party to the Convention on Biological Diversity in the Latin America and Caribbean region, have been invited to nominate one expert qualified in the fields of management of clearing-house mechanism issues, information-sharing systems and database-management, and other activities related to technical and scientific cooperation. Nominations were requested from the national focal points for the Convention on 9 February 2005.

8. In order to further assist the deliberations, 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 clearing-house mechanism issues have also been invited to participate as observers:

(a) The Caribbean Environment Programme Network (CEPNET UNEP), the Global Environment Facility (GEF), the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), and the World Conservation Monitoring Centre (UNEP-WCMC);

(b) BirdLife International, BioNet International, Global Invasive Species Programme (GISP), Centro de Referência em Informação Ambiental (CRIA), the Global Taxonomy Initiative (GTI), Indigenous Biodiversity Information Network (IBIN), Integrated Taxonomic Information System (ITIS), NatureServe, North American Biodiversity Information Network (NABIN), Species 2000;

(c) Donor organizations, particularly from those Governments that 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;

(d) Members of the informal advisory committee for the clearing-house mechanism.

B. Documents

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

C. Expected outcome of the meeting

11. It is expected that the meeting will facilitate a better definition of the role of the clearing-house mechanism with regard to activities in support of the 2010 target, transfer of technology and Article 8(j):

traditional knowledge, innovations and practices and other programme areas and cross-cutting issues, particularly invasive alien species, the Global Taxonomy Initiative (GTI), marine and coastal biodiversity and the ecosystem approach, among others.

12. The recommendations of the meeting will be communicated to the Conference of the Parties at its eighth meeting, to be held in Brazil, in 2006.

ITEM 1. OPENING OF THE MEETING

13. The meeting will be held Brasilia. It will be opened by the Executive Secretary of the Convention on Biological Diversity or his representative at 9 a.m. on 9 March 2005.

ITEM 2. ORGANIZATIONAL MATTERS

2.1. Election of officers

14. Participants will be invited to elect a Chair and Rapporteur for the meeting. 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 (UNEP/CBD/CHM/LAC.Reg/2/1).

2.3. Organization of work

16. The 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 decisions made at the seventh meeting of the Conference of the Parties, the recommendations from meetings of the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice (SBSTTA) and recommendations of the informal advisory committee for the clearing-house mechanism. To facilitate these discussions, it is proposed that these issues be clustered under three headings:

(a) The role of the clearing-house mechanism in promoting and facilitating activities to assist Parties and other Governments to achieve the 2010 target;

(b) The role of the clearing-house mechanism as a central mechanism for exchange of information on technologies, as a core element in its role to facilitate scientific and technical information, and for facilitating technology transfer;

(c) The development of activities by the clearing-house mechanism in support of the programme areas and cross-cutting issues of the Convention.

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

ITEM 3. THE ROLE OF THE CLEARING-HOUSE MECHANISM IN PROMOTING AND FACILITATING ACTIVITIES TO ASSIST PARTIES AND OTHER GOVERNMENTS TO ACHIEVE THE 2010 TARGET

19. Under this item, representatives of national clearing-house mechanisms, international organizations and regional organizations will be invited to make presentations on current or possible activities to promote and facilitate cooperation to assist Parties and other Governments to achieve the 2010 target. Accordingly, it is proposed that this item of the agenda cover the following elements:

(a) The role of the clearing-house mechanism in making data available in support of the 2010 target;

(b) The role of the clearing-house mechanism in promoting the use of common formats, protocols and standards to facilitate the exchange of data;

(c) The role of the clearing-house mechanism in making accessible information on geo-referenced data and models based on that data.

20. Participants to the meeting will be invited to discuss and propose ways and means to develop and establish such activities at the national and regional levels.

ITEM 4. THE ROLE OF THE CLEARING-HOUSE MECHANISM AND THE TRANSFER OF TECHNOLOGY

21. Representatives of national clearing-house mechanisms, international and regional organizations will be invited to make short presentations on issues relevant to this item based decisions VII/23 and VII/29 of the Conference of the Parties. Observers will also be invited to make brief presentations on their potential role in promoting cooperation at the regional level to assist Parties and other Governments with issues related to the transfer of technology. Accordingly, it is proposed that this item of the agenda cover the following two elements:

(a) Proposals on the role of the clearing-house mechanism as a central mechanism for exchange of information on technologies and for facilitating technology transfer and cooperation; and

(b) Development of guidance for implementation by national clearing-house mechanisms for common or similar frameworks for identifying the availability of relevant technologies to enhance international cooperation and to facilitate the interoperability with relevant existing systems of national and international information exchange, including technology and patent databases.

22. Participants to the meeting will be invited to discuss and propose ways and means to develop and establish such activities at the national and regional levels.

ITEM 5. THE DEVELOPMENT OF ACTIVITIES BY THE CLEARING-HOUSE MECHANISM IN SUPPORT OF THE PROGRAMME AREAS AND CROSS-CUTTING ISSUES OF THE CONVENTION

23. Representatives of national clearing-house mechanisms, international and regional organizations will be invited to make short presentations on issues relevant to the Convention's programme areas and cross-cutting issues. Observers will also be invited to make brief presentations on their potential role in promoting cooperation at the regional level to assist Parties and other Governments with issues related to the Convention's programme of work. Accordingly, it is proposed that this item of the agenda cover the following elements:

(a) The role of the clearing-house mechanism in assisting in the development of communication networks and tools for use by indigenous and local communities;

(b) The role of the clearing-house mechanism in enhancing national capacity with regard to the Global Taxonomy Initiative and taxonomic authorities, including metadata and controlled vocabularies;

(c) The clearing-house mechanism and issues related to implementation of the ecosystem approach;

(d) The role of the clearing-house mechanism in assisting with the development of the global invasive species information network;

(e) The clearing-house mechanism its role in facilitating cooperation with regard to activities related to marine and coastal biodiversity.

24. These issues will be considered in the light of decisions VII/5 (Marine and coastal biodiversity), VII/9 (Global Taxonomy Initiative), VII/11 (Ecosystem approach), VII/13 (Alien species that threaten ecosystems, habitats or species), VII/16 (Article 8(j) and related provisions) and VII/23 (Scientific and technical cooperation and the clearing-house mechanism), of the Conference of the Parties, SBSTTA recommendations, and the minutes of the meeting of the informal advisory committee for the clearing-house mechanism held on 9 March 2003.

ITEM 6. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

25. Participants will be invited to formulate general conclusions and recommendations on the issues considered at this meeting.

ITEM 7. ADOPTION OF THE REPORT

26. Participants will consider and adopt the report of the meeting, on the basis of the draft report of the meeting and draft recommendations to be presented by the Rapporteur.

ITEM 8. CLOSURE OF THE MEETING

27. It is expected that the meeting will be closed at 5 p.m. on 11 March 2005.

Annex I

**LIST OF DOCUMENTS FOR THE JOINT 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/2/1

Provisional agenda

UNEP/CBD/CHM/LAC.Reg/2/1/Add.1

Annotations to the provisional agenda

Background documentation

Decisions VII/5, VII/9, VII/11, VII/13, VII/16 and VII/23 of the Conference of the Parties

Minutes of the meeting of the informal advisory committee for the clearing-house mechanism, 9 March 2003 ^{1/}

^{1/} <http://www.biodiv.org/doc/meetings/chm/chmiac-2001/official/chmiac-2001-03-11-minutes-en.pdf>.

Annex II

PROPOSED PROGRAMME OF WORK FOR THE SECOND LATIN AMERICA AND CARIBBEAN REGIONAL MEETING ON THE CLEARING-HOUSE MECHANISM

<i>9 March 2005</i>	
9 a.m.	<i>Item 1: Opening of the meeting.</i>
9.15 - 9.30 a.m.	<i>Item 2: Organizational matters:</i> <i>2.1. Election of officers;</i> <i>2.2. Adoption of the agenda;</i> <i>2.3. Organization of work.</i>
	<i>Item 3. The role of the clearing-house mechanism in promoting and facilitating activities to assist Parties and other Governments to achieve the 2010 target</i>
9:30 – 10:30 a.m.	Presentations under item 3
10:30 – 11 a.m.	Break
11 a.m. – 1 p.m.	Presentations under item 3
1–2 p.m.	Lunch
2-3 p.m.	Discussions under item 3
3 – 3.30 p.m.	Break
	<i>Item 4. The role of the clearing-house mechanism and the transfer of technology</i>
3.30 – 5 p.m.	Presentations under item 4
<i>10 March 2005</i>	
9 – 10.30 a.m.	Discussion under item 4
10:30 – 11 a.m.	Break
	<i>Item 5. The development of activities by the clearing-house mechanism in support of the programme areas and cross-cutting issues of the Convention</i>
11 a.m.–1 p.m.	Presentations under item 5
1–2 p.m.	Lunch
2:– 3 p.m.	Discussion under item 5
3 – 3:30 p.m.	Break
3:30 – 5 p.m.	Discussion under item 5
<i>11 March 2005</i>	
9 – 10.30 a.m.	Discussion on recommendations
10.30 – 11 a.m.	Break
11 a.m. – 1 p.m.	Discussion on recommendations
1 – 2 p.m.	Lunch

2 – 3 p.m.	Discussion on recommendations
3 – 3.30 p.m.	Break
3.30 – 4.30 p.m.	Adoption of report
4.30 – 5 p.m.	Closure of meeting
