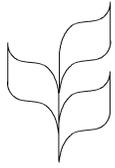




CBD



**CONVENTION ON
BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY**

Distr.
GENERAL

UNEP/CBD/COP/4/Inf.21
2 April 1998

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES TO THE
CONVENTION ON BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY
Fourth meeting
Bratislava, Slovakia
4 to 15 May 1998
Item 16.3 of the provisional agenda

BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY AND SUSTAINABLE TOURISM:

PREPARATION OF GLOBAL GUIDELINES

Submission by Germany

Proposal for a decision and *rationale* (page 5) adopted at the International Workshop „Biological Diversity and Sustainable Tourism“, Heidelberg, Germany, 26/27 March 1998, and attended by representatives of the countries and organizations listed below (page 12).

PROPOSAL FOR A DECISION

to be taken by the 4th Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity to develop global guidelines on biological diversity and sustainable tourism

Decision IV / ..

Development of global guidelines on biological diversity and sustainable tourism

The Conference of the Parties,

considering

- ◆ the increasing economic significance of tourism, which can make an essential contribution to sustainable development in many countries;
- ◆ the importance of biological diversity as a basic prerequisite for tourism, particularly nature-oriented tourism, which is also increasing;
- ◆ the need to protect natural areas in such a way that they can be preserved and remain attractive to tourists in the long term;
- ◆ the possible threats which the insufficiently managed development of tourism may pose for biological diversity and to indigenous and local communities embodying traditional lifestyle relevant for the conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity;
- ◆ the potential of tourism for the conservation of biological diversity and the sustainable use of its components;
- ◆ the need to promote, through global guidelines, a harmonious balance of the requirements of biological diversity and of tourism;
- ◆ the fact that the Convention on Biological Diversity constitutes the appropriate framework to elaborate global guidelines on biological diversity and sustainable tourism

decides:

1. to develop global guidelines on biological diversity and sustainable tourism, i.e. tourism that is economically, ecologically, socially and culturally sustainable;
2. to establish an ad-hoc body for the preparation of global guidelines on biological diversity and sustainable tourism, and to provide it with the mandate to develop such rules;
3. to invite relevant international organisations, in particular the World Tourism Organisation, to support and assist with the procedures;
4. to request the Executive Secretary of the Convention on Biological Diversity to take the necessary steps to convene the ad-hoc body to prepare global guidelines according to the Terms of Reference contained in the Appendix to this Decision.

ANNEX to Decision IV / ..

Terms of Reference for the ad-hoc body for the preparation of global guidelines on biological diversity and sustainable tourism

1. The ad-hoc body should consist of representatives of Parties including experts appointed by the Parties. The composition of the body should be geographically balanced; it should include representatives from various

tourist destinations and countries of origin for tourism. Also, efforts should be made to reach a balance between representatives of industrialised countries and developing countries. The body should further recognise the unique status of small island developing states in this context.

2. It should be ensured that the knowledge, positions and interests of relevant international organisations, the private sector, non-governmental organisations, including environmental organisations, the local communities and indigenous peoples are taken into account in the deliberations of the ad-hoc body.
3. The ad-hoc body should prepare draft global guidelines and submit the draft to to an open-ended workshop.
4. The global guidelines should be elaborated within the framework of the Convention on Biological Diversity on the basis of the submissions by governments, the Information Document UNEP/CBD/COP/4/Inf.21 and the best available knowledge and experience. They should identify basic approaches, strategies and instruments that can ensure that the interests of tourism and the requirements of conservation and the sustainable use of biological diversity are brought into harmony. Infrastructure planning, regional and land-use planning need to be incorporated. International cooperation is needed to develop, disseminate and implement the guidelines.
5. When preparing the guidelines on biological diversity and sustainable tourism the following principles should also be taken into account:
 - (1) the need for inventories of tourist activities and tourist attractions as well as the impacts on the natural environment and biological diversity resulting from them;
 - (2) the need to prepare and implement integrated plans for the development of tourism;
 - (3) the need to carry out prior impact assessments of tourism plans and projects which may have a significant impact on the natural environment and biological diversity;
 - (4) the provision of appropriate legislative and administrative measures, monitoring mechanisms, and the use of economic instruments and incentives to promote sustainable tourism recognising the common responsibility of all stakeholders;
 - (5) the need to take account of the interests of, and equitable benefit-sharing by, local communities and indigenous peoples as well as traditional lifestyles and the cultural heritage;
 - (6) the need to design environmentally friendly concepts of transport and to reduce environmental impacts resulting from tourist traffic;

- (7) the need to use environmentally friendly technologies to save resources (e.g. water, energy), to reduce waste and to prevent environmental impacts;
 - (8) the management of recreational activities in natural areas, including hunting and fishing;
 - (9) the need to integrate concepts and criteria of sustainable tourism into the training of people working in the tourism sector and to raise the awareness of the general public;
 - (10) the need to take into account the ecosystem approach and provide for special protection of ecologically and culturally sensitive areas, such as coastal regions, small islands, mountain regions and protected areas.
6. The ad-hoc body should be convened without unnecessary delay after the decision has been taken by the 4th Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity and it should start with the preparation of draft guidelines. A first draft should be available within 6 months of the convening of the body. A draft discussed and consolidated by the ad-hoc body should be submitted to an open-ended workshop. The draft global guidelines on biological diversity and sustainable tourism should be submitted by the open-ended workshop to the first appropriate Conference of the Parties for adoption.

Biological Diversity and Sustainable Tourism - Preparation of Global Guidelines

Rationale

I. Tourism and biological diversity

1. Trends in tourism

Today, tourism is of great economic importance. It is one of the fastest growing economic sectors in the world. It accounts for 10% of the world's real net output; however, many developing countries and island states are dependent on tourism to a far greater degree. Figures released by the World Tourism Organisation indicate that the number of international tourists has increased 25-fold since 1950 (1997: 617 million). If current trends continue, international tourism will double every 20 years.

Long-haul tourism is accounting for an ever increasing share; this segment is currently growing at an above-average rate. Furthermore, tourism patterns have become more diversified: new activities have joined traditional recreational patterns. As a consequence, even remote and so-far untouched natural areas are being visited by tourists more frequently.

The major trends in tourism are characterised by:

- an increased demand for air travel to ever-more remote destinations, with a trend towards more frequent trips of shorter duration emerging;
- an increasing demand for recreation and the various forms of tourism in natural areas, such as climbing, kayaking, diving, hang-gliding or snow-boarding, often in those very areas that merit particular protection;
- an increase in land use for tourism infrastructure and construction measures in attractive cultural and natural landscapes, particularly in coastal regions;
- a growing number of large-scale tourist facilities and artificial recreation worlds, such as holiday parks, marinas, golf courses and other resorts, once again often in or near attractive landscapes or sensitive ecosystems;
- a growing recognition that community-based models for tourism development offer high potentials for biodiversity conservation.

2. Tourism's dependency on biological diversity

An unspoilt natural environment is essential for successful tourism. Tourism is dependent on a clean environment. Moreover, many tourists are seeking an intact natural environment and, increasingly, spectacular natural scenery. In recent years, the importance of nature-oriented tourism has been growing even faster than other forms of tourism.

In addition to traditional tourist destinations, such as coasts, lakes and mountains, more and more unusual and particularly attractive natural areas have been developed for tourism, e.g. high mountains and glaciers, steppes and deserts, natural watercourses or coral reefs. Even remote and barely accessible areas such as tropical rain forests, the Arctic and the Antarctic are being opened up to adventure-loving tourists.

Sometimes these areas are ecologically sensitive and have been designated protected areas for precisely this reason. Consequently, tourist activities increasingly encounter conservation efforts. The one needs to be reconciled with the other to the extent possible.

3. The problems tourism poses for biological diversity

Current trends in international and domestic tourism raise a number of problems for biological diversity. The increasing number of visitors as well as the intensity of tourist activities may have negative impacts, both direct and indirect, on the natural environment, particularly in ecologically sensitive areas. Expanding tourism developments and infrastructures use up the natural environment and the countryside; lead to environmental stresses, such as air pollution, noise and the consumption of resources; and may deflect and may deflect budgets away from resource management.

Where tourism develops without planning, influences planning, or is carried out without awareness of the value of biological diversity and is at best influenced by the tourist industry in the countries of origin, it could lead to an overuse of natural resources. In protected areas it could also lead to conflict with conservation objectives.

An issue that often gives rise to concern is the insufficient degree of participation of the local population in the planning and implementation of tourist activities and in the distribution of the profits of tourism. There is also agreement that tourism can have negative cultural impacts and may lead to the world's cultural heritage being "sold out".

4. The potential of tourism for the conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity

On the other hand, it is equally obvious that tourism also holds potential for the conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity. Nature-oriented tourism in particular can contribute to the conservation of biodiversity and its sustainable use, thus contributing to regional and local development. Where nature is the foundation of tourist activities there is an incentive to conserve it. The same is true for the conservation of endangered species. Experience has shown that it was the use of the natural environment by tourists that presented the opportunity to conserve endangered species of animals and their habitats. Nature-oriented tourism can increase public awareness of the value of biodiversity.

Above and beyond this, tourism offers a source of income that, in turn, may be used for the conservation of biological diversity. Examples of this are the fees that tourists pay to have access to protected areas.

However, it is important that fees really are charged and that the natural environment is not opened up to tourists for free. It is also important that the level of the fee corresponds to the attractiveness or the sensitivity of the natural area in question and that the fees collected are allocated to conservation in the area. Experience has shown that it is absolutely essential that the local population also receives a share of the income from tourism.

5. The needs and the ways and means of tourism management

Tourism should have a positive rather than a negative impact on biological diversity. In order to achieve this, development of tourism needs to be managed. Tourism needs to be planned at the appropriate level, whereby tourism planning must be integrated into general development planning. The local population must be involved in the planning and it must be ensured that the local population benefits from tourist activities.

The management of tourism also implies that tourist activities may need to be regulated, particularly in protected and ecologically sensitive areas, even where those areas do not have the formal status of protected areas. Tourist activities need to be assessed to ensure that they comply with the requirements of the conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity. It is also necessary to establish control mechanisms to enforce the decisions concerning environmentally friendly tourist activities.

The tourism offer should be developed in such a way that it respects the requirements of biological diversity. This implies, among other things, that tour operators act in an ecologically responsible way, i.e. that they take environmental considerations into account when they develop and present their tourism offer. However, it is equally important that each individual tourist is informed and motivated to act in a way that respects the needs of biological diversity.

II. Previous international initiatives concerning sustainable tourism

1. Sustainable tourism in general

Since the mid 1990s there have been a variety of international activities aimed at the development of sustainable forms of tourism. In 1994 the Council of Europe adopted recommendations for sustainable tourism that contain measures at the national, international, local and regional levels. In 1995 the United Nations Environment Programme recorded the guidelines for environmentally friendly tourism that existed at the time.

The World Conference on Sustainable Tourism, held on Lanzarote in April 1995, adopted the Charter for Sustainable Tourism listing 18 points that are essential for sustainable tourism.

In 1995 the World Tourism Organisation, the World Travel and Tourism Council and the Earth Council adopted a joint declaration entitled "Agenda 21 for the Travel and Tourism Industry: Towards Environmentally Sustainable Development". On the basis of Agenda 21 the declaration is a draft action programme for the tourist industry and includes the following principles:

- tourism should help people to live a healthy and productive life in harmony with nature;
- tourism should contribute to the conservation, the protection and rehabilitation of ecosystems;
- the protection of the environment should be an integral component of tourism development;
- tourism should be planned at the local level and should allow for the participation of the citizens;
- tourism should recognise and support the identity, culture and interests of indigenous peoples;
- international agreements to protect the environment should be respected by the tourist industry.

The "Workshop on the Sustainable Development of Tourism in the East African Region", convened on the Seychelles from 20 to 22 October 1996, adopted recommendations on sustainable tourism in the East African region, spelling out measures both at the regional and international level.

The "Malé Declaration on Sustainable Tourism Development" adopted on 16 February 1997 on the Maldives identifies the fundamental requirements of sustainable tourism; these include the promotion of ethics in tourism, the reduction of the consumption of resources and the reduction of waste, the conservation of natural, social and cultural diversity, the integration of tourism planning, the promotion of the local economy and the participation of the local population, the groups of tourists affected and the general public, the development of responsible tourism marketing, the need to assess the impacts of tourism on the natural and cultural heritage, and the special role of the private sector.

The Manila Declaration on the Social Impact of Tourism of 22 May 1997 spells out 10 principles of sustainable tourism, including: the greater involvement of communities in the planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation processes of tourism policies, programmes and projects; the improvement of people's standard of living through tourism; the preservation of the legacy, heritage and integrity of tourist destinations worldwide; the development of appropriate marketing tools for the destination countries; the sensitisation of visitors to the culture and behavioural expectations of host communities; and the recognition of the role of human resources development in tourism.

The Special Session of the United Nations General Assembly in June 1997 was an important milestone on the way to developing sustainable forms of tourism. The Final Declaration explicitly refers to the problems of sustainable tourism and calls upon the Commission on Sustainable Development to establish a work programme on this subject by 1999.

In addition to these programme initiatives undertaken by a variety of states, international organisations and the tourist industry, individual efforts have been made in the legal field. Within the system of the Antarctic Treaty

additional agreements on environmentally friendly tourism in Antarctica have been considered; to date, however, no agreements have been concluded. On the other hand, the Protocol on Tourism negotiated within the framework of the Alpine Convention, which is to be signed in 1998, is an example of how legal regulations on sustainable tourism could be worded.

2. Tourism and biological diversity

The general efforts concerning sustainable tourism were complemented by specific initiatives addressing the issues of sustainable tourism and the conservation of biological diversity.

The International Conference of Ministers on Biological Diversity and Tourism held in Berlin from 6 to 8 March 1997 elaborated and adopted the "Berlin Declaration" which contains both general and specific recommendations for biological diversity and sustainable tourism.

The general recommendations are based on compliance with the objectives, principles and obligations of the Convention on Biological Diversity, the promotion of tourist activities that directly or indirectly support the conservation of nature and biological diversity, the need to protect the integrity of ecosystems and habitats, the need to avoid additional tourism uses in areas that are already under stress, the need for planning and environmental impact assessments, the need to develop and use environmentally friendly technologies in the field of tourism, and the respective responsibility of governments, international organisations, the private sector and environmental organisations in the field of tourism - all of whom have to make their specific contributions in order to achieve the objectives of sustainability.

The specific recommendations underline the need to control and reduce environmental stresses from infrastructure developments, the need to involve local communities in the planning and implementation of tourist activities and in the sharing of profits more than was the case in the past, the need to restrict tourist activities in ecologically and culturally sensitive areas and to avoid all forms of mass tourism in these areas, and the need to manage tourism in protected areas in such a way that the objectives of the protected areas are not jeopardised.

III. Proposal of an initiative within the framework of the Convention on Biological Diversity to develop global guidelines on sustainable tourism

The following conclusions can be drawn from what has been said so far:

- Biological diversity is a major foundation for many tourist activities.
- Tourism has an impact on biological diversity.
- Tourism can help to conserve biological diversity and to use it sustainably.

1. Guidelines

There is a need to maintain the balance between the requirements of biological diversity and those of tourism. Guidelines need to be developed to ensure that tourism is promoted and managed with biological diversity being taken into account.

Rules can be drawn up in various forms. One option would be to develop legally binding regulations. This is indeed possible in the context of the Convention on Biological Diversity since it is a framework convention and may be complemented by additional legal instruments.

Another option would be to develop rules that are not legally binding, such as guidelines. This option may have a number of advantages:

- guidelines are flexible instruments that can react to a variety of different situations;
- guidelines leave scope for all stakeholders to take responsibility for their own actions;
- guidelines are an appropriate instrument for forming consensus at a global level; they can appropriately deal with the complex problem of "tourism and biological diversity" and the various interests associated with it;

- guidelines can help develop legally binding regulations at some later point in time, within or outside the framework of the Convention on Biological Diversity.

2. At the global level

Guidelines must be developed at a global level since tourism is largely a worldwide phenomenon. They need to be sufficiently detailed to be applicable. Tour operators are active all over the world; tourists are travelling all over the world at ever increasing rates.

3. Within the framework of the Convention on Biological Diversity

The Convention on Biological Diversity is the appropriate framework for the development of worldwide guidelines on biological diversity and sustainable tourism. The objective of the Convention is three-fold: the conservation of biological diversity; the sustainable use of its components; and the equitable sharing of benefits.

There is consensus that tourism constitutes a form of use of the components of biological diversity. If tourism is sustainable, it can make a particularly important contribution to the objectives of the Convention on Biological Diversity, by ensuring that biological resources are used in a sustainable way and that this contributes to the conservation of resources and the equitable sharing of benefits.

Guidelines within the framework of the Convention should address the aspect of tourism and biological diversity in particular. They do not have to cover the entire range of issues raised by sustainable tourism. An initiative on sustainable tourism taken within the framework of the Convention on Biological Diversity does not exclude other initiatives to develop sustainable forms of tourism.

4. Organisation and procedure of the initiative

The following steps are considered necessary for carrying out the initiative within the framework of the Convention on Biological Diversity:

The Conference of the Parties to the Convention recognises the need to develop global guidelines on biological diversity and sustainable tourism. It recognises the task to elaborate guidelines within the framework of the Convention. For this purpose it is establishing a body, it is deciding on its procedure and is adopting substantive requirements for the basic elements of the initiative.

The appropriate mechanism to elaborate the global guidelines could be an ad-hoc body established by the Conference of the Parties which comprises parties interested in, and representative of, global tourism in a geographically balanced way. Efforts should be made to ensure a balance between a variety of tourist destinations and countries of origin. It should also be ensured, through appropriate consultation processes, that the concerns of the tourist industry, those of non-governmental organisations and those of the local and indigenous communities are taken into account.

Following the decision of the Conference of the Parties the ad-hoc body is to be convened. It should start immediately by preparing draft guidelines on biological diversity and sustainable tourism. The ad-hoc body should discuss and adopt the first draft and submit it to a larger, open-ended workshop for further discussion and adoption. The meeting of the open-ended workshop should be scheduled so that the draft adopted can be submitted to the Conference of the Parties.

The global guidelines elaborated within the framework of the Convention should deal in particular with the problem of biological diversity and sustainable tourism. They should be based on the substantive statements, the problems and the solution proposed in this Information Document. Furthermore, the guidelines need to be based on the best current state of knowledge and scientific research available in the field of biological diversity and sustainable tourism. In preparing for its meeting, the ad-hoc body should request submissions by governments on biological diversity and sustainable tourism.

The timing for the initiative could be such that the establishment of the ad-hoc body is decided upon by the 4th Conference of the Parties. Without unnecessary delay it should start on preparing the draft global guidelines so that a first draft may be available during the first quarter of 1999. The open-ended workshop should take place at a time which allows for a timely submission of the draft global guidelines to the first appropriate Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity.

The document was prepared by the International Workshop „Biological Diversity and Sustainable Tourism“, Heidelberg, Germany, 26/27 March 1998 which was attended by representatives of the following countries and organisations:

Countries: Austria, Belgium, China, Colombia, Germany, Indonesia, Jamaica, Nepal, Netherlands, Poland, Samoa, Seychelles, Singapore, Slovakia, South Africa, Thailand, Tunisia, United Kingdom

Organisations: Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity, Council of Europe, European Commission, Indigenous Peoples' Biodiversity Network, International Union for the Conservation of Nature, World Tourism Organization, Deutscher Reisebüro-Verband (Germany), Forum Umwelt und Entwicklung (Germany), GTZ (Germany), Institut für Entwicklung und Frieden (Germany)
