



**CONVENTION ON
BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY**

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CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES TO THE
CONVENTION ON BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY
Fourth meeting
Bratislava, 4-15 May 1998

REPORT OF THE THIRD MEETING OF THE SUBSIDIARY BODY
ON SCIENTIFIC, TECHNICAL AND TECHNOLOGICAL ADVICE

Introduction

1. Article 25 of the Convention on Biological Diversity established the Subsidiary Body on Scientific Technical and Technological Advice (SBSTTA).
2. In its recommendation I/1, made at its first meeting, held in Paris from 4 to 8 September 1995, the SBSTTA recommended that its meetings be held annually and sufficiently in advance of each regular meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity. In its decision II/1, paragraph 2, the Conference of the Parties at its second meeting, held in Jakarta from 6 to 17 November 1995, endorsed the modus operandi of the SBSTTA.
3. The second meeting of SBSTTA was held in Montreal, from 2 to 6 September 1996. In its decision III/2, the Conference of the Parties took note of the report of the second meeting of SBSTTA and decided to give further consideration at its fourth meeting to SBSTTA recommendation II/11, which contains the proposed revised elements of its modus operandi, as part of the longer-term review of the programme of work and the operations of the Conference of the Parties and subsidiary organs. The Conference of the Parties also noted, in particular, the recommendation of SBSTTA that it adopt a thematic approach to its work. In its decision III/3, the Conference of the Parties decided that the meetings of SBSTTA be held in the six official languages of the United Nations and that the modus operandi of SBSTTA be modified accordingly.
4. At its organizational meeting, held in Montreal on 31 August 1997, the Bureau of the second meeting of the SBSTTA reviewed preparations for the third meeting. The third meeting of the SBSTTA was held at the Conference Centre of the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) in Montreal, from 1 to 5 September 1997.

AGENDA ITEM 1: OPENING OF THE MEETING

5. The meeting was opened at 10.20 a.m. by Mr. Peter J. Schei, Chair of the SBSTTA for 1996, who observed that many representatives and organizations had been participating in a number of events preparatory to the current meeting of the SBSTTA and hoped that that would guarantee its substantive impact and fruitful outcome. The third meeting of the Conference of the Parties had given the Bureau of the SBSTTA the task of reducing the agenda of the current meeting in order to focus discussions. He hoped that that task had been successfully accomplished, although it was necessary not to lose sight of some items which had been dropped from the agenda at that time. Noting that more and more partners and organizations wanted to contribute to the SBSTTA's work, he expressed his gratitude for the positive cooperation that he, as Chair of the SBSTTA, had received from relevant organizations and the scientific community, which had recognized the need to move forward and had responded to his request for their involvement. He particularly mentioned the involvement of the international scientific community through DIVERSITAS, an international research institute on biological diversity sponsored by UNESCO, International Union on Biological Sciences (IUBS), International Union of Microbiological Societies (IUMS), International Geosphere Biosphere Programme (IGBP), Scientific Committee on Problems of the Environment (SCOPE) and the International Council of Scientific Unions (ICSU). He was also grateful to the secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity, and particularly its Executive Secretary, Mr. Calestous Juma, who had been doing excellent work to raise the standards and the work of the secretariat. He was very pleased that Mr. A.H. Zakri of Malaysia, whose work for SBSTTA was well known, would now take the Chair, and it was with great confidence that he passed the gavel on to him.

6. The Chair of the SBSTTA, Mr. A.H. Zakri (Malaysia), expressed gratitude for the honour of having been appointed Chair of the SBSTTA by the Conference of Parties. The crucial role of SBSTTA, whose mandate was to provide timely advice to the Conference of the Parties on scientific, technical and technological issues relating to implementation of the Convention, could not be overemphasized. The SBSTTA had a leading role in meeting the three-pronged objectives of the Convention and he noted that more than half of the agenda items at each Conference of the Parties were issues that must first be addressed by the SBSTTA. Three recurring problematic areas were: gaps in knowledge of the extent of biological diversity in the world, and the decline and lack of global biosystematic expertise; the imperative need for capacity-building at the professional, semi-professional and technician levels; and the need for easy and speedy dissemination of information to all corners of the world, preferably through electronic means. As examples of progress, he noted the work of the First Meeting of Experts on Marine and Coastal Biological Diversity, that of the Meeting of the Liason Group on Forest Biological Diversity and that of the Liaison Group on Biological Diversity Indicators, all of whose reports would assist the current meeting. He noted that a number of representatives had initially had reservations about the need for groups of that type, but experience to date had demonstrated their usefulness. He therefore urged Parties which had not done so to submit to the secretariat names to the relevant roster of experts established by the secretariat. He also noted the work to expand the clearing-house mechanism and hoped that the SBSTTA would be kept fully informed of its pilot phase. He expressed appreciation for the close collaboration and interest shown in

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the Convention by non-governmental organizations, which had just been demonstrated by the eighth Global Biodiversity Forum, focusing on the biological diversity of inland waters, and also by the collaborative efforts of Norway and Sweden in co-hosting the Workshop on Freshwater Biodiversity. He concluded by expressing regret that more donors had not been available to facilitate participation by a greater number of Parties from developing countries.

7. Mr. Reuben Olembo, Deputy Executive Director of UNEP, said that the SBSTTA had a very important role to play in providing effective scientific, technical and technological guidance for the work of the Conference of the Parties - guidance that had to be based on the best available scientific and technical information and knowledge. Many of the items to be considered at the current meeting would have an impact, not only for the Conference of the Parties, but also elsewhere, in other bodies such as the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) and the United Nations itself. The decisions taken or recommendations made at the current meeting could be the integrating factor, the cornerstone or benchmark to which other Conventions dealing with one or other element of the issues could turn as a reference. Noting that the Executive Director of UNEP would be addressing the meeting later in the week on the substantive aspects of a number of the issues on the agenda, he concluded by welcoming those present, congratulating the newly-elected Chair and thanking the outgoing Officers who, from UNEP's point of view, had done an outstanding job. UNEP trusted that the present meeting would serve as a constructive building block for the work of the Parties in 1998.

8. Mr. Calestous Juma, Executive Secretary of the secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity, after welcoming the participants, congratulated the newly elected Chair and promised him the full support of the secretariat. He also expressed his thanks to the outgoing Chair, Mr. Peter Schei, for his valuable work and support, and to the Government of Norway for allowing Mr. Schei to devote so much time to the work of the SBSTTA. Noting that the secretariat was operating effectively in Montreal, Mr. Juma said that this could be attributed in large measure to the support received from the Government of Canada, the Government of the Province of Quebec, and the Municipal Authorities of the City of Montreal, as well as from ICAO, from its partner institutions in Montreal, and from the United Nations Office at Nairobi (UNON). The secretariat's work required a consultative and interactive relationship with the Parties and a number of international institutions, and he was very grateful to Governments, agencies and institutions for their continuing support. He stressed that the secretariat wished to continue to operate within such a framework of close cooperation. The progress made in implementing the pilot phase of the clearing-house mechanism offered a basis to extend such cooperation with Parties. The SBSTTA needed to translate scientific findings into advice for Parties as the key to helping them implement the provisions of the Convention. He thanked the Governments of Finland, Indonesia and the Netherlands for hosting meetings, as well as those Governments that had provided the names of experts whose services they would be willing to make available. In conclusion, he noted that the next meeting of the Conference of the Parties would be reviewing the institutional structure of the

Convention. After the Conference of the Parties itself, the most important element of that structure was the SBSTTA, and it was crucial that the present meeting build on the solid achievements of the previous meetings.

9. The representative of the Global Biodiversity Forum (GBF) described the work of its eighth session, held in Montreal from 28 to 31 August 1997 with over 200 participants from over 50 countries. Five workshops had been held on key themes of the implementation of the Convention on Biological Diversity. The workshop on communication and education for biological diversity had recommended that the SBSTTA advise the Conference of the Parties to include public awareness and education as a priority issue for its next meeting in Bratislava, and to acknowledge communication and education as a technical issue. The policy research capacity workshop had urged Parties to include in their national reports information on available capacity to inform and analyse policy alternatives for implementing the Convention; to exchange, through the clearing-house mechanism, their experiences on policies; and to call upon the SBSTTA to incorporate policy research capacity into its deliberations on each of the sectoral agendas. The workshop on forest biological diversity had concluded that the draft programme of work proposed by the secretariat was not sufficiently action-oriented, and that the outputs for each of the five programme elements needed to be modified and strengthened. The workshop on inland water systems and biological diversity had noted the need for better information on functional uses and wider environmental services provided by inland waters; the more effective implementation of an ecosystem-based approach; and the development of environmental economics and legislation to support decision-making. The workshop on incentives, private sector partnership and the marine and coastal environment had concluded that the primary role of Governments was: to remove the disincentives which encouraged coastal and marine degradation; to strengthen the negotiation capacity of weaker stakeholder groups; and to provide positive incentives to foster the role of the private sector in conservation through creative partnerships between business entities and non-governmental organizations.

10. The representative of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) noted that the present meeting was just two weeks before the date of entry into force of the most important decisions of the Tenth CITES Conference of Parties, which had been considered a success. It had given rise to 22 new and 10 revised resolutions and more than 40 other decisions; it had completed its 170-item agenda ahead of schedule; and it had seen an unprecedented number of international organizations speak of the fruitful and growing cooperation between themselves and CITES. On the debit side, the budget which CITES had hoped for had not been achieved, and the image of CITES as a one-species organization had not been dispelled. Decision 10/4 of that conference dealt with cooperation and synergy with the Convention on Biological Diversity. While the two secretariats of the Conventions did indeed work in close cooperation, under a Memorandum of Understanding, the key factor was close cooperation at the national level, including cooperation among trade ministries, customs authorities, police forces and other enforcement agencies. Areas in which the two secretariats might cooperate further were the harmonization of national legislations and strategies, exploration of opportunities for access to Global Environment Facility (GEF) funding and coordination of research, training and public awareness activities.

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11. The representative of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the United Nations drew attention to the need to protect, in particular, forest and aquatic systems, also taking into account their sustainable use and looking at social development in broader terms. He looked forward to opportunities offered for cooperation within the current meeting and to enhanced cooperation in the future between the Convention on Biological Diversity and the Commission on Sustainable Development. He also noted that technical issues pertaining to forests and water, in the context of increasing demand for those resources, would be raised under the appropriate agenda items. He concluded by expressing thanks for the contributions to the work of the Intergovernmental Panel on Forests (IPF) and hoped that such cooperation would continue for the further implementation of the programmes of Agenda 21.

12. The representative of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) said that it had become increasingly clear that, in a world of accelerating demographic pressures and attendant stresses on natural resources, food security and the conservation and sustainable utilization of biological diversity for food and agriculture were inextricably linked. Sustainability required Governments to cover a full range of ecosystems. Understanding the interface between biological diversity and agriculture was key to countries' ability to plan agricultural development in ecologically sound ways and to implement such plans effectively at national and regional levels. FAO, as a broker, was able to act between the member countries that needed tools for policy-making and implementation and the organizations that were developing the relevant information systems, methodologies, indicators and models. It also provided a forum for intergovernmental debate and decision-making on agricultural biological diversity issues. She noted the progress FAO had made in responding to the invitation from the Third Conference of the Parties to take the lead in implementing its decision III/11. First, FAO was administering a survey to assess ongoing activities and instruments at the international level, on the basis of the thematic areas in annex 2 of decision III/11. Second, in response to the Conference of the Parties' establishment of a multi-year programme of work on agricultural biological diversity, the FAO and the secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity had signed a Memorandum of Cooperation incorporating elements of a joint work programme.

13. The representative of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), stressing its continuing close cooperation with the Convention, said that a memorandum of cooperation between UNESCO and the Convention secretariat would soon be signed, covering the partial agreement adopted by the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission (IOC) as well as many UNESCO activities of relevance to the Convention. It envisaged the establishment of a specialized post in the field of coastal and marine biological diversity; contributions from UNESCO's Man and the Biosphere Programme (MAB) and from the IOC to the clearing-house mechanism established by the Convention; participation by UNESCO's network of Chairs in the fields of ecological sciences, economy and social sciences, which were of interest to a growing number of universities of both the North and the South; and the establishment of computerized networks of databases developed in collaboration with a number of States and NGOs such as the World Conservation Union (IUCN). Many countries were encouraging the strengthening of the Worldwide Network of Biosphere Reserves in existence since 1995, of the

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"Seville Strategy", and of a Statutory Framework which established the principles and operating modalities for the operation of the Network. More than 350 Biosphere Reserves had been proposed by 85 countries in land, freshwater and marine/coastal ecosystems, that served as concrete examples of lasting development compatible with conservation and involving the active participation of local populations. The international research programme DIVERSITAS, launched by UNESCO and the International Council of Scientific Unions (ICSU) and its associated organizations (IUBS, IUMS, IGBP, SCOPE and ICSU) could contribute significantly to the work of the SBSTTA by directing the scientific expertise of many centres of research and specialized training in both the North and the South. DIVERSITAS was also in a position to participate actively in the strengthening of national capacities.

14. The representative of the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission noted that almost two thirds of the 125 IOC member States were party to the Convention on Biological Diversity. That statistic emphasized the need to avoid duplication and to join forces in order to achieve common objectives. The secretariats of IOC and of the Convention on Biological Diversity had recently finalized a Memorandum of Cooperation, which had been welcomed by the IOC Assembly at its last session. It stressed a regular exchange of information between the two secretariats and referred to the participation of IOC in the organization of capacity-building activities within the Convention on Biological Diversity; the identification of best assessment and monitoring biological diversity indicators for the ocean and coastal environments; the IOC contribution to the compilation of a Global Biodiversity Outlook; and its contribution to the promotion of the Integrated Marine and Coastal Area Management concept and related practices. It was to be hoped that 1998, the International Year of the Ocean, would see the implementation of several concrete actions for the protection and best sustainable use of marine and coastal biological diversity, and the Commission was very willing to continue assisting in the implementation of such endeavours.

15. The representative of the World Bank said that the first meeting of experts on implementation of the Jakarta Mandate on coastal and marine biological diversity, which had been held in Indonesia the previous March and in which the Bank had participated, had highlighted the importance of the issue of inland freshwater biological diversity. The Bank believed that it was an excellent example of the need to implement a holistic ecosystem management approach in order to achieve conservation of biological diversity. Freshwater ecosystems were not only important harbours of biological diversity but, equally importantly, they maintained the integrity of the water cycle and water supplies for human use. This demonstrated the need to perceive conservation beyond simple ecosystems, through the many upstream and downstream connections with the coastal zone. The Bank had prepared an initial draft of the new freshwater strategy for biological diversity, which would be presented during the current meeting. Feedback on the draft would be most welcome, as the Bank hoped to continue strengthening its support to conservation of biological diversity and the work of the Convention, as part of the overall strategy to mainstream biological diversity issues within the Bank's broader development agenda.

16. The representative of the Convention on Wetlands of International Importance Especially as Waterfowl Habitat (RAMSAR) drew the meeting's attention to the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding between the

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secretariats of that Convention and of the Convention on Biological Diversity, which was intended to promote closer cooperation between them. He recalled that decision III/21 of the Third Conference of the Parties had taken note of the Ramsar Strategic Plan and had invited the Ramsar Convention to act as a lead partner of the Convention on Biological Diversity on wetlands and inland water ecosystems. He suggested some ways in which the two Conventions could put decision III/21 into effect. In the first 25 years of the Ramsar Convention, its Contracting Parties had implemented a number of technical guidelines, some referring to the conservation of Ramsar sites or particular wetlands, others referring to the "wise use" concept, which called for wetlands to be incorporated into national land and water use planning. Ramsar's concept of national wetland policies might make a useful contribution to the National Biodiversity Strategies of the Convention on Biological Diversity. Noting that the Ramsar Strategic Plan incorporated a number of new orientations for conservation and wise use of wetlands, he suggested that implementation of the Plan would contribute to the conservation of the biological diversity of inland water ecosystems, and proposed that the SBSTTA should consider whether some of the actions in the Plan might be incorporated in the programme of work which it was to propose to the Fourth Conference of the Parties.

17. The representative of the International Center for Living Aquatic Resources Management (ICLARM) explained that his organization undertook research and training on, and disseminated information on, aquaculture and fisheries. Its research thrusts were to improve productivity, to protect the environment, to save biological diversity, to improve policies and to strengthen national programmes. The work concentrated on species which would benefit the poor, such as fish which fed relatively low in the food chain. The organization provided training in over 50 countries and maintained databases on the status of living aquatic resources worldwide. In cooperation with FAO, it was organizing a conference on aquatic genetic resources policy, which would take place just before the Fourth Conference of the Parties.

18. The representative of the Scientific and Technical Advisory Panel (STAP) of GEF said that cooperation and coordination with the SBSTTA had been effectively implemented since the formation of STAP. The previous Chairmen of the SBSTTA had participated in regular STAP meetings, as well as in a series of STAP-initiated activities, including workshops, the preparation of joint strategic papers and continuous exchanges towards developing the strategic advice that was a key part of the STAP mandate. Such close cooperation and active participation had paved the way for a lasting and most effective dialogue, helping to clarify the direction of work, and enhancing the quality of STAP's work and the effectiveness of its role in a significant way. STAP was currently finalizing preparations for a major three-day workshop on sustainable use of biological diversity, to be held in Malaysia in November 1997. Cooperation between STAP and the SBSTTA had been instrumental in forming the scope and content of the workshop over the last few months and the SBSTTA was expected to play an active role in the workshop.

Address by the Executive Director
of the United Nations Environment Programme

19. On Thursday, 4 September 1997, Ms. Elizabeth Dowdeswell, Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), addressed the meeting. She first extended congratulations to the new Chair, Mr. Zakri, expressing confidence that he would serve with the same remarkable distinction as his predecessors. Reviewing the role and importance of the SBSTTA, she suggested that the international community should take pride in the fact that the Convention on Biological diversity had now been ratified by 169 Parties and that, in practical terms, all nations of the world were participating in its activities. The role of the SBSTTA in providing considerable scientific and technical advice to the policy makers participating in the Conference of the Parties was absolutely fundamental, as its advice guaranteed that the Conference's decisions were based on the best science available. The growing involvement of scientific bodies, including those of other conventions and independent groups of experts, in the meetings of SBSTTA was a very practical step.

20. She congratulated the SBSTTA Bureau on its decision to limit the number of items on the agenda, and to adopt a thematic approach, in order to allow for work of real substance, and she encouraged the SBSTTA to provide advice on biological diversity not only to the Conference of Parties, but also to other organizations with the United Nations system.

21. Turning to issues of critical significance to the fourth meeting of the Conference of Parties, she said that biological diversity of inland waters was a matter of great concern because it relied on ecosystems and habitats containing high diversity and large numbers of endemic and threatened species that were unique or associated with ecological process. The issue of freshwater was a top priority globally, which was being addressed not only by the United Nations Commission on Sustainable Development, but also by the General Assembly, through ECOSOC decisions. She urged the SBSTTA to accord to the issue of agricultural biological diversity the importance it deserved and expressed gratitude for the very necessary close cooperation with the FAO in that regard. On the issue of forest biological diversity and the associated work on indicators of forest biological diversity, she noted that forests provided the most diverse sets of habitats for plants, animals and micro-organisms and that the maintenance of forest ecosystems was crucial to the conservation of biological diversity on which forest degradation had a dramatic impact. In that connection, she noted the active contribution of the Intergovernmental Panel on Forests (IPF) to the work of the Convention and stressed that there was great need for close cooperation between the secretariat of the Convention and the successor to the IPF, the Inter-agency Forum on Forests (IFF). She also made reference to the crucial role of the clearing-house mechanism in terms of increasing international cooperation and enhancing information exchange.

22. Emphasizing the importance of the interlinkages among environmental issues, she noted that many of those highlighted were related not only to biological diversity, but also to climate change, ozone layer depletion, desertification and land degradation. UNEP, in collaboration with the National Aeronautics and Space Agency (NASA) of the United States and the World Bank, was undertaking the first steps to bring together the many

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assessments undertaken on global issues. While the burden of responsibility and impacts of environmental problems differed from country to country, it was well known that the poor and disadvantaged remained the most vulnerable, while the rich contributed disproportionately through their higher levels of resource consumption.

23. Recalling the recent special session of the General Assembly relating to the environment, she emphasized that everyone should now examine the degree to which biological diversity had been protected in the past five years since the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development and whether tangible results had been achieved, and whether the multilateral system was working. Science and technology bodies had an important role to play in that evaluation, and their role had been underestimated in the past.

24. On the subject of finances, she questioned why considerable secretariat efforts and core budget resources should be expended to convene meetings of the Convention if only a fraction of the world community could participate in them. The total amount received for the SBSTTA meeting had been insufficient, as the assisted participation of only 35 representatives had been possible, while nearly twice as many should have been supported. If the present serious trend were to continue, the secretariat might have to postpone until next year some activities scheduled for the rest of 1997, some of which were in an advanced stage of preparation. The decline in support for participation of representatives from developing countries and countries with economies in transition was, in her view, one of the most significant threats to the implementation of the Convention. She encouraged all partners in the Convention to join to overcome the declining trend in the availability of additional resources, and she expressed gratitude to the Governments of Australia, Denmark, Norway, Sweden, Switzerland and to the European Community for their generous contributions, particularly in view of the budgetary difficulties in many industrialized countries. Additional donors had also just come forward. She recognized the intent of both the Netherlands and Canada, and appealed for further donor Parties.

25. In conclusion, she assured participants at the meeting of UNEP's continuing support for the Convention on Biological Diversity and its activities, support which was evidenced by the presence of the Deputy Executive Director, Mr. Olembo, throughout the current meeting.

AGENDA ITEM 2: ORGANIZATIONAL MATTERS

A. Attendance

26. The meeting was attended by representatives of the following Contracting Parties and countries: Albania, Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Australia, Austria, Bahamas, Belgium, Benin, Bhutan, Brazil, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cambodia, Cameroon, Canada, Chile, China, Colombia, Comoros, Costa Rica, Cuba, Czech Republic, Democratic Republic of Congo, Denmark, Djibouti, Dominica, Equatorial Guinea, Ethiopia, European Community, Fiji, Finland, France, Gambia, Germany, Greece, Guinea, Haiti, Hungary, Iceland, India, Indonesia, Ireland, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Kenya, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Luxembourg, Madagascar, Malawi, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Mexico, Monaco, Morocco, Mozambique, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, Niger, Niue,

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Norway, Papua New Guinea, Peru, Portugal, Republic of Korea, Russian Federation, Saint Lucia, Samoa, Seychelles, Slovak Republic, Slovenia, South Africa, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Tanzania, Thailand, Togo, Uganda, Ukraine, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America and Venezuela.

27. Observers from the following United Nations bodies, specialized agencies and other bodies also attended:

(a) United Nations bodies: United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), Industry and Environment Office of UNEP, Global Environment Facility (GEF), UNEP Secretariat of the Scientific and Technical Advisory Panel (STAP) of GEF, United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), United Nations Department of Social and Economic Affairs, Secretariat of the Intergovernmental Forum on Forests;

(b) Specialized agencies: Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission (IOC) of UNESCO, the World Bank;

(c) Secretariats of treaty bodies: Convention on Wetlands of International Importance Especially as Wildfowl Habitat (RAMSAR), Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES);

(d) Other intergovernmental bodies: Agence de la Francophonie (ACCT), Centre for International Forestry Research, Commission for Environmental Cooperation, Commonwealth Secretariat, Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research, International Center for Living Aquatic Resources Management (ICLARM), International Plant Genetic Resources Institute, Southern African Development Community (SADC).

28. The following other organizations were represented:

ADN, AMBIO Foundation, American Museum of Natural History, Assinsel, Association Canadienne des Pates et Papiers, Biodiversity Conservation Information System (BCIS), Biodome of Montreal, Bioforum Indonesia, BioNet-International, Biosphere of Montreal, BirdLife International, CAB International, CEM/University of Botswana, Center for International Environmental Law, Centre de Génétique Moléculaire, CIEFE/RAAF, CIDA, CODEFF, Concordia University, Cultural Survival Canada, DIVERSITAS, DIVERSITAS/American Museum of Natural History, Ecole Normale Supérieure, EDIC, Egerton University, Environment Canada, Environment Liaison Centre International, Environmental Information Management, Farming Systems R&D Institute Cantho University, FIS, Florida University, Fondation des Amis de la Nature, Foundation for International Environmental Law and Development, Friends of Siberian Forests, Fundacion Ecotropico, Fundacion Natura, Global Forest Policy Project, Greenpeace International, ICONS Project, Indian Institute of Public Administration, Indigenous Knowledge Programme, Institute for Biodiversity and Nature Conservation, Institute of Marine and Coastal Science, Instituto de Ecologia, Intermediate Technology, International Alliance of Indigenous and Tribal Peoples of the Tropical Forest, International Marine Life Alliance, International Mycological Institute/CAB International, International Union of

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Biological Sciences (IUBS), IUCN Regional Office for Southern Africa, IUCN/Commission on Ecosystem Management, the IUCN-Canada, IUCN Netherlands Committee, Japan Bioindustry Association, Laboratoire d'Ecologie, Lake Biwa Museum, London School of Economics, M.S. Swaminathan Research Foundation, McGill University, Monitor International, Montreal Gazette, Montreal International, Musée Canadien de la Nature, National Council for Scientific Research, National Water Research Institute, NSRC, NSW Government Department of Land and Water Conservation, Orbis Institute, Orbita Popular, Organization for Flora Neotropica, Ornamental Fish Industry, ORSTOM, Pavillon Vert, Radio Canada International (RCI), RAFI, RLT Environmental, Royal Botanic Gardens Kew, Rutgers University, Safari Club International, School of Environmental Sciences Jawaharlal Nehru University, Senado Federal Brazil, Shaman Pharmaceuticals, Shuswap Nation Fisheries Commission, Sino Cetacean Research Institute, Species 2000, Stanford University, Stockholm Environment Institute, The Other Economic Summit, Tulalip Tribes, World Conservation Union (IUCN), Universidad Nacional Autonomoma de Mexico, Université de Québec à Montreal, University of California, University of London, University of Maryland Biotechnology Institute, University of Quebec in Montreal ISE/UQAM, University of Sao Carlos, Wetlands International, Wetlands International Asia-Pacific, World Conservation Monitoring Centre (WCMC), World Endangered Species Protection Association, World Resources Institute, World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF), Worldwatch Institute, Zimbabwe Trust.

B. Election of officers

29. At its third meeting, held in Buenos Aires, Argentina, from 4 to 15 November 1996, the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity, in accordance with rule 26, paragraph 3 of the rules of procedure, by which the Conference of the Parties shall elect the chair of each subsidiary body, elected Mr. A.H. Zakri (Malaysia) as Chair of the SBSTTA and confirmed that his term of office would commence at the start of the third meeting of the SBSTTA.

30. The SBSTTA decided on the following composition of the Bureau:

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| Rapporteur: | Mr. Mbongu-Sodi Nagahuedi (Democratic Republic of Congo) |
| Vice-Chair: | Ms. Elaine Fisher (Jamaica) |
| | Ms. Patricia Gudiño (Costa Rica) |
| | Mr. Mick Naimegi Raga (Papua New Guinea) |
| | Mr. Gábor Nechay (Hungary) |
| | Mr. Jan Plesnik (Czech Republic) |
| | Mr. Peter Schei (Norway) |
| | Mr. Jameson Seyani (Malawi) |
| | Mr. Martin Uppenbrink (Germany) |

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C. Adoption of the agenda

31. On the basis of the provisional agenda contained in document UNEP/CBD/SBSTTA/3/1, the meeting adopted the following agenda:

1. Opening of the meeting.
2. Organizational matters:
 - 2.1 Election of officers;
 - 2.2 Adoption of the agenda;
 - 2.3 Organization of work.
3. The main ecosystem topic: assessment of the status and trends of the biological diversity of inland water ecosystems and identification of options for conservation and sustainable use.
4. Scientific, technical and technological aspects of the conservation and sustainable use of coastal and marine biological diversity: report of the First Meeting of Experts on Marine and Coastal Biological Diversity and consideration of a draft three-year work plan.
5. Scientific, technical and technological advice on forest biological diversity, taking account of research and technical priorities previously identified.
6. Review of ongoing activities on agricultural biological diversity:
 - 6.1 Review of relevant ongoing activities and existing instruments at the national and international levels relating to the thematic areas contained in Annex 2 to decision III/11 of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention and advice on priorities for further work within the programme of activities on agricultural biological diversity;
 - 6.2 Review of work done on the topics described in Annex 3 to decision III/11.
7. Implementation of Article 7 on indicators and monitoring:
 - 7.1 Provision of scientific advice and further guidance to assist in the national elaboration of Annex I of the Convention;
 - 7.2 Review of methodologies for assessment of biological diversity;
 - 7.3 Current approaches to indicator development and recommendations for a preliminary core set of indicators of biological diversity, particularly those related to threats, and options for capacity-building in developing countries in the application of guidelines and indicators for subsequent national reports.

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8. Promotion of international technical and scientific cooperation: report on the implementation of the pilot phase of the clearing-house mechanism.
9. Progress report on the work of SBSTTA and of the effectiveness of its advice (1995-1997):
 - 9.1 Overall assessment of the operations of SBSTTA and proposals for action, including ways and means to further the development of cooperative arrangements at the scientific and technical level with appropriate biodiversity-related conventions and institutions.
10. Draft provisional agenda of the fourth meeting of SBSTTA.
11. Date and venue of the fourth meeting of SBSTTA.
12. Other matters.
13. Adoption of the report.
14. Closure of the meeting.

D. Organization of work

32. In line with recommendation I/1, paragraph 8, of the first meeting of the SBSTTA, endorsed by paragraph 2 of decision II/1 of the Conference of the Parties, it was decided that two open-ended sessional working groups would be established and operate simultaneously during meetings of the SBSTTA.

33. On the basis of suggestions by the Bureau, the following allocation of tasks between the two working groups was decided:

Working Group 1

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| Agenda items: | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. The main ecosystem topic: assessment of the status and trends of the biological diversity of inland water ecosystems and identification of options for conservation and sustainable use 4. Scientific, technical and technological aspects of the conservation and sustainable use of coastal and marine biological diversity: report of the First Meeting of Experts on Marine and Coastal Biological Diversity and consideration of a draft three-year work plan 7. Implementation of Article 7 on indicators and monitoring (specifically in relation to inland water ecosystems) |
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- 7.1 Provision of scientific advice and further guidance to assist in the national elaboration of Annex I of the Convention;
- 7.2 Review of methodologies for assessment of biological diversity;

Working Group 2

- Agenda items:
- 5. Scientific, technical and technological advice on forest biological diversity, taking account of research and technical priorities previously identified
 - 6. Review of ongoing activities on agricultural biological diversity
 - 7.3 Current approaches to indicator development and recommendations for a preliminary core set of indicators of biological diversity, particularly those related to threats, and options for capacity-building in developing countries in the application of guidelines and indicators for subsequent national reports.

34. It was agreed that the following would act as officers of the sessional working groups:

Working Group 1

- Chair: Ms. Elaine Fisher (Jamaica)
Rapporteur: Mr. Jan Plesnik (Czech Republic)

Working Group 2

- Chair: Mr. Gábor Nechay (Hungary)
Rapporteur: Mr. Mick Naimegi Raga (Papua New Guinea) (2-3 September 1997)
Ms. Patricia Gudiño (Costa Rica) (4-5 September 1997)

35. It was agreed that the remaining items on the agenda would be discussed in plenary.

36. The SBSTTA decided to adopt the organization of work set out in the note by the secretariat contained in documents UNEP/CBD/SBSTTA/3/1/Add.1 and Add.2, as amended.

37. One representative, noting that the situation with regard to pre-session documentation in languages had improved as compared to the last meeting of the SBSTTA, regretted that certain documents had not been available in French

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before his arrival for the meeting in Montreal. The meeting expressed the wish that the necessary documentation for future meetings of the SBSTTA be available, in all working languages of the United Nations, before the beginning of the meetings.

AGENDA ITEM 3: THE MAIN ECOSYSTEM TOPIC: ASSESSMENT OF THE STATUS AND TRENDS OF THE BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY OF INLAND WATER ECOSYSTEMS AND IDENTIFICATION OF OPTIONS FOR CONSERVATION AND SUSTAINABLE USE

38. At its 1st session, on 2 September 1997, Working Group 1 took up its consideration of this agenda item. The Group had before it a report prepared by the Executive Secretary of the secretariat, UNEP/CBD/SBSTTA/3/2, entitled "Biological Diversity of Inland Waters." Introducing the item, the representative of the secretariat said that the document had been prepared in order to assist the SBSTTA in its consideration of the status and trends of biological diversity in inland water ecosystems in accordance with decision III/13 adopted by the third meeting of the Conference of the Parties, held in Buenos Aires in November 1996. An earlier version of document UNEP/CBD/SBSTTA/3/2 had been placed on the Internet with a request for input, to which several intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations had responded.

39. The representative of the secretariat drew attention to Section VI of the document, containing topics for possible inclusion in a future programme of work.

40. During the discussion of the item, statements were made by representatives of the following Contracting Parties and countries: Argentina, Australia, Austria, Benin, Belgium, Brazil, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Canada, Colombia, Denmark, European Community, Finland, France, Germany, Guinea, Haiti, India, Iceland, Indonesia, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Kenya, Malawi, Malaysia, Mexico, Netherlands, Norway, Peru, Republic of Korea, Russian Federation, Sweden, Switzerland, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America. Statements were also made by the representatives of FAO, of the World Bank and of the Secretariat of the Ramsar Convention. Representatives of the following non-governmental organizations also made statements: Global Biodiversity Forum (eighth session), Indigenous Peoples' Biodiversity Network (IPBN), NeoSynthesis Research Center (speaking on behalf of a number of NGOs present at the meeting) and Wetlands International.

41. The Chairman announced the formation of an informal group of friends of the Chair to resolve outstanding issues under the agenda item, and said that the group would be led by Mr. Odd Sandlund (Norway).

42. At its 7th session, on 4 September 1997, the Group considered draft recommendations submitted by the Chairman. The draft recommendations, as orally amended from the floor, were approved for transmission to the plenary.

43. At the 5th plenary session, on 5 September 1997, the meeting considered the draft recommendation on this item contained in document UNEP/CBD/SBSTTA/3/L.8 and adopted it as orally amended. The text of recommendation III/1 can be found in annex 1 to the present report.

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AGENDA ITEM 4: SCIENTIFIC, TECHNICAL AND TECHNOLOGICAL ASPECTS OF THE CONSERVATION AND SUSTAINABLE USE OF COASTAL AND MARINE BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY: REPORT OF THE FIRST MEETING OF EXPERTS ON COASTAL AND MARINE BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY AND CONSIDERATION OF A DRAFT THREE-YEAR WORK PLAN

44. At its 5th session, on 4 September 1997, Working Group 1 took up its consideration of this agenda item. The Group had before it a report prepared by the Executive Secretary of the secretariat, UNEP/CBD/SBSTTA/3/4, entitled "Conservation and Sustainable Use of Coastal and Marine Biological Diversity". Introducing the item, the representative of the secretariat said that the report had been prepared pursuant to decision II/10 of the Conference of the Parties, which instructed the Executive Secretary to provide, in accordance with Annex II of the decision, the SBSTTA with scientific, technical and technological advice and options for recommendation I/8, with the exception of paragraphs 3 and 4. It was also based on recommendation II/10 of the SBSTTA, which stated that at its third meeting, the secretariat, on the basis of the outcome of the first Meeting of Experts, should provide an interim report on recommendations for proceeding with positive action on conservation and sustainable use of marine and coastal biological diversity.

45. The report addressed activities undertaken during the period September 1996 to May 1997; had been submitted to the Parties 90 days prior to the present meeting of the SBSTTA; and provided information on collaboration with other agencies and processes as well as on arrangements made for the first Meeting of Experts. It contained the conclusions and recommendations of that Meeting, on the basis of which, as required by Annex II to decision II/10, seven programme elements were proposed for the three-year programme of work. They were: application of the precautionary approach; implementation of integrated marine and coastal area management; marine and coastal living resources; marine and coastal protected areas; mariculture; alien species; and general issues. Preliminary cost estimates of the proposed programme of work were also included. In accordance with paragraph 8 (b) of decision II/10, the Executive Secretary had established a roster of experts on marine and coastal biological diversity, which by 1 May 1997 contained over 700 names.

46. During the discussion of the item, statements were made by representatives of the following Contracting Parties and countries: Antigua and Barbuda, Australia, Bahamas, Brazil, Canada, Colombia, Dominica, European Community, France, Germany, Guinea, Haiti, Iceland, Indonesia, Japan, Kenya, Malaysia, Mexico, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Peru, Portugal, Republic of Korea, Saint Lucia, Seychelles, Sweden, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United Republic of Tanzania, United States of America and Venezuela. A representative of UNESCO also took the floor. Statements were made by the representative of the UNEP Regional Coordinating Unit for the Caribbean Environment Programme and by the representative of the small island developing States of the South Pacific. A statement was also made by the representative of a non-governmental organization, the Indigenous Peoples' Biodiversity Network, and a representative of an industry organization, the Japanese Fisheries Association.

47. At its 6th session, on 4 September 1997, the Group continued its consideration of the agenda item.

48. The Chairman announced the establishment of a small contact group, which would be chaired by the representative of Indonesia and would not be open-ended, to draft a recommendation on the item for approval by the plenary.

49. At its 7th session, on 4 September 1997, the Group considered a draft recommendation submitted by the Chairman on the agenda item. The draft recommendation, as orally amended from the floor, was approved for transmission to the plenary.

50. At the 5th plenary session, on 5 September 1997, the meeting considered the draft recommendation on this item contained in document UNEP/CBD/SBSTTA/3/L.9 and adopted it as orally amended. The text of recommendation III/2 can be found in annex 1 to the present report.

AGENDA ITEM 5: SCIENTIFIC, TECHNICAL AND TECHNOLOGICAL ADVICE ON FOREST BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY, TAKING ACCOUNT OF RESEARCH AND TECHNICAL PRIORITIES PREVIOUSLY IDENTIFIED

51. At its 1st session, on 2 September 1997, Working Group 2 took up its consideration of this agenda item. The Group had before it a note prepared by the Executive Secretary of the secretariat, UNEP/CBD/SBSTTA/3/5, entitled "Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice on Forest Biological Diversity, Taking Account of Research and Technical Priorities Previously Identified: Draft programme of work for forest biological diversity". Introducing the item, the representative of the secretariat said that the draft work programme had been prepared in accordance with decision III/12 of the Conference of the Parties and took account of the recommendations put forward by a liaison group on forest biological diversity that had met in Helsinki from 25 to 28 May 1997, at the invitation of the Government of Finland, as well as the outcome of the Ad Hoc Intergovernmental Panel on Forests (IPF). The report of the liaison group meeting was contained in document UNEP/CBD/SBSTTA/3/Inf.5. Two of the working documents considered by the liaison group were also available, namely document UNEP/CBD/SBSTTA/3/Inf.22 - "Forests and Biological Diversity" - and document UNEP/CBD/SBSTTA/3/Inf.23 - "Indicators of Forest Biodiversity".

52. On the basis of the proposals of the liaison group and of the substantive comments that the secretariat of the IPF and other relevant institutions had provided during the process of its development, the Executive Secretary proposed that the focused programme of work called for in paragraph 6 of decision III/12 be based on five elements, each of which included as an integral component traditional systems of conservation and sustainable use of forest biological diversity and the wider application of such knowledge in accordance with Article 8 (j), and other related provisions of the Convention.

53. During the discussion of the item, statements were made by representatives of the following countries: Australia, Austria, Benin (joint statement with Netherlands), Brazil, Canada, Colombia, Democratic Republic of Congo, Denmark, Fiji, Finland, France, Germany, India, Italy, Japan, Kenya, Malawi, Mali (on behalf of the African Group), Mexico, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Peru, Portugal, South Africa, Sweden, Switzerland, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America and Venezuela. The representative of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) made a statement, as did the representative of the

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secretariat of the Intergovernmental Forum on Forests. A statement was also made by the representative of the Centre for International Forestry Research, and by the representative of the Swedish Scientific Council on Biodiversity. Representatives of Biodiversity Action Network, Fundacion Ecotropica, Global Forest Policy Project and Greenpeace International also made statements.

54. At its 3rd session, on 3 September 1997, the Chair stated that he had asked the representatives of Finland and Peru, as friends of the Chair, to assist him in developing the terms of the advice that the SBSTTA was asked to provide to the Conference of the Parties. To facilitate the task, he invited all Contracting Parties, countries and observers to participate in an informal exchange of views, following which he would prepare, with the assistance of interested Parties and countries, a draft document for the consideration of the Working Group.

55. At its 6th session, on 4 September 1997, the Group considered an informal paper, prepared by the contact group, containing a draft of the advice that the SBSTTA was asked to provide to the Conference of the Parties. That advice, as orally amended from the floor, was approved for transmission to the plenary.

56. At the 6th plenary session, on 5 September 1997, the meeting considered the draft recommendation on this item contained in document UNEP/CBD/SBSTTA/3/L.7 and adopted it as orally amended. The text of recommendation III/3 can be found in annex 1 to the present report.

AGENDA ITEM 6: REVIEW OF ONGOING ACTIVITIES ON AGRICULTURAL BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY

57. Working Group 2 began its consideration of agenda item 6 at its 2nd session, on 2 September 1997. It had before it a note by the Executive Secretary which provided a first report on progress made by Parties and Governments and by international regional organizations and bodies in the implementation of decision III/11 on conservation and sustainable use of agricultural biological diversity (UNEP/CBD/SBSTTA/3/6). The note had been prepared with contributions from the FAO. Supporting documentation for this item comprised reports from international organizations on their policies, programmes and activities on agricultural biological diversity (UNEP/CBD/SBSTTA/3/Inf.6); progress reports from the FAO on its policies, programmes and activities on agricultural biological diversity and a progress report on the global system for the conservation and sustainable use of plant genetic resources for food and agriculture (UNEP/CBD/SBSTTA/3/Inf. 7); the report of the seventh session of the Commission on Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture (CGRFA) (UNEP/CBD/SBSTTA/3/Inf.8); a compilation of national contributions on agricultural biological diversity (UNEP/CBD/SBSTTA/3/Inf.9); the report of the joint secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity-FAO workshop on farming systems approaches for the conservation and sustainable use of agricultural biological diversity and agro-ecosystems held in Rome from 19 to 20 June 1997 (UNEP/CBD/SBSTTA/3/Inf.10); a compilation of technical papers on farming systems approaches for the conservation and sustainable use of agricultural biological diversity and agro-ecosystems which had been presented at the aforementioned secretariat of the Convention on Biological

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Diversity-FAO Workshop (UNEP/CBD/SBSTTA/3/Inf.20); and the report of the joint secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity-FAO technical consultations, held in Rome on 17 and 18 June 1997 (UNEP/CBD/SBSTTA/3/Inf.21).

58. Introducing the item, the representative of the secretariat recalled that, in its decision III/11, the Conference of the Parties had decided to develop a multi-year programme of activities on agricultural biological diversity and had requested the Executive Secretary to collaborate with the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations and other relevant bodies in its development. The draft memorandum of cooperation between the secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity and the FAO was now available for information and was expected to be finalized shortly.

59. During the general discussion of the item at its 2nd, 3rd and 4th sessions, statements were made by representatives of the following Contracting Parties and countries: Argentina, Australia, Austria, Brazil, Canada, Colombia, Cuba, Ethiopia, European Community, France, Germany, India, Indonesia, Japan, Kenya, Mali, Morocco (on behalf of the African Group), Netherlands, New Zealand, Peru, Republic of Korea, South Africa, Sweden, Switzerland, Togo (on behalf of the West African Sub-Group), United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and United States of America. The representative of the Southern African Development Community made a statement. The representatives of FAO and the GEF also made statements. A statement was made by the representative of the Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research (CGIAR). Statements were also made by representatives of Bioforum Indonesia and the NeoSynthesis Research Center.

60. At the 6th session of the Group, on 4 September 1997, the Chairman submitted an informal paper containing elements of a draft recommendation, based on the general discussion of the item. Following discussion of that informal paper, a revised draft recommendation was prepared to take account of the comments made, and was submitted at the same session. The revised draft recommendation was amended orally from the floor and approved for transmission to the plenary.

61. At the 6th plenary session, on 5 September 1997, the meeting considered the draft recommendation on this item contained in document UNEP/CBD/SBSTTA/3/L.6 and adopted it as orally amended. The text of recommendation III/4 can be found in annex 1 to the present report.

AGENDA ITEM 7: IMPLEMENTATION OF ARTICLE 7 OF THE CONVENTION
ON INDICATORS AND MONITORING

Agenda item 7.1: Provision of scientific advice and further guidance to assist in the national elaboration of Annex I of the Convention

(As pertaining to inland water ecosystems)

62. At its 2nd session, on 2 September 1997, Working Group 1 took up its consideration of this agenda item, as pertaining to inland water ecosystems. The Group had before it a report prepared by the Executive Secretary, UNEP/CBD/SBSTTA/3/7, entitled "Identification and Monitoring of Components of Biological Diversity of Inland Water Ecosystems". Introducing the item, the representative of the secretariat recalled that in its decision III/10, the

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Conference of the Parties had endorsed recommendation II/1 of the SBSTTA concerning indicators, monitoring and assessment of biological diversity and had thereby instructed the Executive Secretary to undertake further work in consultation with a liaison or expert group for consideration by the SBSTTA at its third meeting. That work included the provision of scientific advice and further guidance to the Conference of the Parties, through its thematic work on ecosystems, to assist in the national elaboration of Annex I of the Convention, using as guidance the elaboration of the terms as set out in paragraphs 12-29 of document UNEP/CBD/COP/3/12.

63. Accordingly, the Executive Secretary had prepared, in consultation with a liaison group, document UNEP/CBD/SBSTTA/3/7, which provided a paragraph by paragraph elaboration of the terms in Annex I of the Convention as they might apply to inland water ecosystems and contained a series of possible recommendations for consideration by the SBSTTA. The document drew particular attention to the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands Criteria for Identifying Wetlands of International Importance, which were appended to it as an annex. The SBSTTA might wish to consider recommending that the Conference of the Parties endorse those criteria or a modified version of them.

64. During the discussion of the item, statements were made by representatives of the following Contracting Parties and countries: Australia, Belgium, Brazil, Burkina Faso, Canada, Colombia, Democratic Republic of Congo, European Community, France, Germany, Haiti, India, Ireland, Japan, Kenya, New Zealand, Norway, Peru, Republic of Korea, Russian Federation, South Africa, Sweden, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.

65. The representative of the secretariat of the Ramsar Convention and the representative of IUCN also spoke on this item.

66. At its 7th session, on 4 September 1997, the Group considered a draft recommendation submitted by the Chairman on the agenda item, contained in document UNEP/SBSTTA/3/WG.1/CRP.1/Rev.1. The draft recommendation, as orally amended from the floor, was approved for transmission to the plenary.

67. At the 5th plenary session, on 5 September 1997, the meeting considered the draft recommendation on this item contained in document UNEP/CBD/SBSTTA/3/L.8 and adopted it as orally amended. The text of recommendation III/1 can be found in annex 1 to the present report.

Agenda item 7.2: Review of methodologies for assessment of biological diversity

(As pertaining to inland water ecosystems)

68. At its 3rd session, on 3 September 1997, Working Group 1 took up its consideration of this agenda item, as pertaining to inland water ecosystems. The Group had before it a report prepared by the Executive Secretary, UNEP/CBD/SBSTTA/3/8, entitled "Methodologies for the Assessment of Biological Diversity in Inland Water Ecosystems". Introducing the item, the representative of the secretariat recalled that in its decision III/10, the Conference of the Parties had endorsed recommendation II/1 of SBSTTA, concerning identification, monitoring and assessment of biological diversity, and had thereby instructed the Executive Secretary to undertake further work in consultation with a liaison or expert group for consideration by SBSTTA at its

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third meeting. This work included further review of methodologies for the assessment of biological diversity, and recommendations for their application, to be made to the fourth meeting of the Conference of the Parties.

69. Accordingly, the Executive Secretary had prepared, in consultation with a liaison group, document UNEP/CBD/SBSTTA/3/8, which outlined major differences between inland water ecosystems and terrestrial ecosystems, identified some of the most important components of inland water biological diversity and discussed principles and problems in their monitoring and assessment. It further provided a series of recommendations which SBSTTA might wish to consider making to the Conference of the Parties.

70. During the discussion of the item, statements were made by representatives of the following Contracting Parties and countries: Argentina, Austria, Australia, Brazil, Colombia, Denmark, European Community, Finland, Germany, Haiti, Indonesia, Japan, Kenya, Netherlands, New Zealand, Peru, Republic of Korea, Sweden, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland. The representative of the secretariat of the Ramsar Convention also spoke on the item.

71. At its 4th session, on 3 September 1997, the Group continued its consideration of the agenda item.

72. After the discussion, it was decided that the group of friends of the chair would meet to consider the points contained in document UNEP/CBD/SBSTTA/3/2, to examine the issues raised by the Working Group with regard to document UNEP/CBD/SBSTTA/3/7 and to look at the draft recommendations contained in document UNEP/CBD/SBSTTA/3/8. On the basis of the above three documents, the friends of the chair would produce a consolidated set of draft recommendations for consideration and approval by the Working Group.

73. At its 7th session, on 4 September 1997, the Group considered a draft recommendation submitted by the Chairman on the agenda item, contained in document UNEP/SBSTTA/3/WG.1/CRP.1/Rev.1. The draft recommendation, as orally amended from the floor, was approved for transmission to the plenary.

74. At the 5th plenary session, on 5 September 1997, the meeting considered the draft recommendation on this item contained in document UNEP/CBD/SBSTTA/3/L.8 and adopted it as orally amended. The text of recommendation III/1 can be found in annex 1 to the present report.

AGENDA ITEM 7.3: CURRENT APPROACHES TO INDICATOR DEVELOPMENT AND
RECOMMENDATIONS FOR A PRELIMINARY CORE SET OF
INDICATORS OF BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY, PARTICULARLY
THOSE RELATED TO THREATS, AND OPTIONS FOR
CAPACITY-BUILDING IN DEVELOPING COUNTRIES
IN THE APPLICATION OF GUIDELINES AND
INDICATORS FOR SUBSEQUENT NATIONAL
REPORTS

75. Working Group 2 took up its consideration of this agenda item at its 5th session, on 4 September 1997. The Group had before it a note prepared by the Executive Secretary of the secretariat, UNEP/CBD/SBSTTA/3/9, containing recommendations for a core set of indicators of biological diversity.

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Introducing the item, the representative of the secretariat said that the document before the Working Group had been prepared with the help of a liaison group established to assist the Executive Secretary, which had held a meeting, from 30 May to 2 June 1997, at the invitation of the Government of the Netherlands. It represented a synthesis of the conclusions of the meeting of the liaison group, together with recommendations for further action. Documents UNEP/CBD/SBSTTA/3/Inf.13, entitled "Recommendations for a Core Set of Indicators of Biological Diversity: Background paper prepared by the liaison group on indicators of biological diversity", and UNEP/CBD/SBSTTA/3/Inf.14, entitled "Exploring Diversity Indicators and Targets Under the Convention on Biological Diversity: A synthesis report of a meeting of the Global Biodiversity Forum" were also available.

76. During the discussion on the item, statements were made by representatives of the following Contracting Parties and countries: Argentina, Australia, Austria, Brazil, Burkina Faso, Canada, Denmark, European Community, Finland, France, Germany, Italy, Malawi, Malaysia, Mexico, Netherlands, New Zealand, Niger, Norway, Peru, Portugal, South Africa (on behalf of the African Group), Sweden, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, and United States of America. A statement was made by the representative of the Biodiversity Action Network. The representative of the Zimbabwe Trust (on behalf also of Africa Resources Trust and the Southern African Sustainable Use Specialist Group of IUCN) also made a statement.

77. At its 6th session, on 4 September 1997, the Group examined an informal paper prepared by the Chairman, containing the elements of a draft recommendation developed in the light of the discussion. A number of representatives made general comments and proposals for changes to that informal paper, which was subsequently revised and resubmitted during that same session. The revised version, with one amendment from the floor, was approved for transmission to the plenary.

78. At the 6th plenary session, on 5 September 1997, the meeting considered the draft recommendation on this item contained in document UNEP/CBD/SBSTTA/3/L.4 and adopted it as orally amended. The text of recommendation III/5 can be found in annex 1 to the present report.

AGENDA ITEM 8: PROMOTION OF INTERNATIONAL TECHNICAL AND SCIENTIFIC COOPERATION: REPORT ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PILOT PHASE OF THE CLEARING-HOUSE MECHANISM

79. At its 2nd plenary session, on 1 September 1997, the SBSTTA took up discussion of implementation of the pilot phase of the clearing-house mechanism in facilitating and promoting technical and scientific cooperation. In its deliberations, the meeting had before it a note submitted by the secretariat, reporting on progress made by secretariat, Parties and sub-regional and regional initiatives during the period from September 1996 to June 1997 (UNEP/CBD/SBSTTA/3/3), as well as the report on the International Expert Meeting on Building the Clearing-House (UNEP/CBD/SBSTTA/3/INF.12). Introducing the item, the representative of the secretariat suggested that, as the pilot phase was to last until December 1998, the SBSTTA might wish to consider the preparation of its advice for a final review in 1998.

80. During the discussion of the item, statements were made by the following Contracting Parties and countries: Argentina, Australia, Belgium, Brazil, Canada, Colombia, Democratic Republic of Congo, European Community, France, Germany, India, Italy, Kenya, Malawi, Malaysia, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Peru, Republic of Korea, Sweden and Switzerland. A statement was also made by the representative of the Biodiversity Conservation Information System (BCIS).

81. Many representatives expressed appreciation for the documentation prepared by the secretariat on the clearing-house mechanism. However, the view was expressed that the secretariat's note on the implementation of the pilot phase (UNEP/CBD/SBSTTA/3/3) contained inadequate information on the operational framework of the clearing-house mechanism, particularly on how it was operated and by whom.

82. Appreciation was expressed to the Government of Germany for having hosted, in June 1997, the International Expert Meeting on Building the Clearing-House to elaborate concrete recommendations for the functioning of the clearing-house mechanism, and for its overall contribution to developing the mechanism. That meeting had discussed the minimum information structure, information content and training tool-kit of the clearing-house mechanism.

83. In the general discussion on this item, it was noted that four regional workshops were planned to assist national focal points of the Parties in identifying the key elements in a strategy to meet Parties' needs in implementing the clearing-house mechanism. The view was held that it was important to hold these workshops as soon as possible. One representative considered it important that the agenda of each workshop should be established in consultation with the Parties and countries of the region. Another representative believed that the workshops should have a common agenda.

84. It was pointed out that only two countries, Colombia and Malaysia, had so far officially signalled their readiness to host a workshop and there was a need for others to do the same. It was noted with appreciation that a number of countries had volunteered to finance the workshops. In that connection, the Chair expressed thanks to the Government of the Republic of Korea for the contribution of US\$50,000 towards the funding of the Asian regional workshop, scheduled to be held in Malaysia in November 1997. He also acknowledged Australia's contribution of US\$20,000 towards the clearing-house mechanism and Germany's contribution of US\$20,000 for the regional workshop in Colombia. It was pointed out that there was a need for additional financial resources to finance workshops.

85. With regard to information from the clearing-house mechanism, it was stressed that it was important to identify the needs and priorities of each country, which could be established through the workshops and from country reports.

86. Regarding the clearing-house mechanism Internet homepage, the view was expressed that, under the provisions of Article 18, paragraph 3, of the Convention on Biological Diversity, which required full and equal participation by all Parties, the development of the mechanism reflected a participatory approach. The secretariat should explore ways and means to create links between relevant international information systems. Methods to integrate the various sources of information from conventions related to biological diversity

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should also be explored to support scientific assessments, taking into account interactions between global warming, desertification and species extinction. In order to meet the expectations of the Third Conference of the Parties on the functions and scope of the clearing-house mechanism in respect to technology transfer, capacity-building and information exchange, it was also necessary to explore ways in which to sustain clearing-house activities at the national level beyond the three-year pilot phase.

87. It was noted that use of the clearing-house mechanism poses great challenges in developing countries, where use of the Internet and a modern telephone service were not always available, and that it was necessary to identify communication technologies appropriate to all countries around the world. Several representatives said that there was a concern in the developing countries that they did not have the appropriate information exchange tools. Several representatives called on GEF to support activities critical to the implementation of the clearing-house mechanism, including its pilot phase, and the development of national focal points. One representative said that the clearing-house mechanism should take account of the realities of the developing countries, which needed assistance in the provision of basic telecommunications facilities, and supported the idea that it should disseminate not only information on scientific and technical matters, but also on policy and management issues.

88. Several representatives highlighted the need to develop alternatives for those countries without easy access to the Internet. One suggestion was that a list of sources of assistance to developing countries should be drawn up. One representative said that the clearing-house mechanism was more than an Internet presence: there was a need to train people in its use and in disseminating and applying its information.

89. One representative said that the clearing-house mechanism needed to be demand-driven, with a decentralized nature, based on existing information sources and serviced by the secretariat, giving priority to meeting the needs of the Parties and clearly focused on the implementation of the Convention. However, another representative questioned how that demand should be defined. Several representatives believed that the mechanism should be used not only for the exchange of information, but also for identification and transfer of technologies. One representative requested the secretariat to carry out a study on how best to promote and facilitate scientific and technical cooperation between countries through the clearing-house.

90. Another representative suggested that the role of the secretariat in the clearing-house mechanism should be clearly understood and expressed concern that it should not be seen as the sole or primary facilitator, nor should it undertake the primary decision support for the clearing-house mechanism. The role of the secretariat should be to ensure that users were able to engage the clearing-house mechanism network, while providing access to information arising from its own functions. It should not be overburdened by the responsibility of supplying information.

91. One representative considered that there were some shortcomings in the clearing-house mechanism in its current form: there was a lack of models for national information exchanges and of appropriate search tools. He also believed that the secretariat should provide an indication of the information

and topics which were priorities. One other representative considered there was a need to progress at the national level and strengthen national capacities.

92. One representative believed that priority should be given to determining the format of information to ensure that it would be understood by any user of the mechanism, which should not be limited to the Internet process. Some representatives were of the view that a common structure of information was neither necessary nor desirable at the present stage. Another pointed to the need to facilitate the availability of information, which was a prerequisite for any transfer of technology; he considered that existing databases should be used to disseminate information, and the establishment of new databases should be avoided.

93. Several representative pointed to the need for a mechanism to screen information and validate its science before it reached the clearing-house mechanism. Guidelines should be established to ensure that only accurate information was included in the clearing-house mechanism.

94. Noting that a logo had been developed for the clearing-house mechanism, one representative observed that national focal points might also like to use their own logos to show where material was from.

95. Several representatives considered that the informal advisory committee proposed by the secretariat should be established without delay. One representative, however, considered that it would be premature to establish it at the present time.

96. One representative expressed concern about the low level of developing country representation at meetings as important as those of the SBSTTA, and called on donor countries to assist the developing countries to attend.

97. The representative of an NGO, the Biodiversity Conservation Information System (BCIS) suggested that the SBSTTA should recommend to the Fourth Meeting of the Parties the creation of a consultative process to design a mechanism to facilitate cooperation and exchange between biological diversity networks.

98. The Chair concluded that, on the basis of the discussions, he would consult with the Bureau and prepare a draft recommendation, perhaps with the assistance of one of the vice-Chairmen, for submission to the meeting later in the week.

99. At the third plenary session, on 2 September 1997 it was decided to set up an open-ended drafting group on this agenda item, to be coordinated by Mr. Martin Uppenbrink (Germany).

100. At the 6th plenary session, on 5 September 1997, the meeting considered the draft recommendation on this item contained in document UNEP/CBD/SBSTTA/3/L.5 and adopted it as orally amended. The text of recommendation III/6 can be found in annex 1 to the present report.

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AGENDA ITEM 9: PROGRESS REPORT ON THE WORK OF SBSTTA AND OF THE
EFFECTIVENESS OF ITS ADVICE

9.1 Overall assessment of the operations of SBSTTA and proposals for action, including ways and means to further the development of cooperative arrangements at the scientific and technical level with appropriate biodiversity-related conventions and institutions

101. The representative of the secretariat proposed that, since the modus operandi of the SBSTTA had been considered in detail already, the meeting might elect not to consider it again as a separate matter, but to do so in the context of the overall review of the Conference of the Parties and its subsidiary organs, which was scheduled for the fourth meeting of the Conference of the Parties, in accordance with decision III/22. An informal group could be set up at the current meeting to gather inputs to that review process as it related to the SBSTTA. The representatives of Canada, France, Germany and United Kingdom agreed that that would be a useful procedure, as they did have views to express, and requested that the informal group meet outside the times when the Working Groups or the plenary were meeting.

102. The representative of the secretariat said that eight written submissions on the subject had been received, which would be compiled into a document and provided to the meeting.

103. At the third plenary session, on 2 September 1997, it was decided to establish an open-ended informal group on the agenda item, coordinated by Mr. Peter Schei (Norway).

104. At the 5th plenary session, on 5 September 1997, Mr. Peter Schei reported to the meeting on the conduct of an informal meeting of some 30 participants, held on Thursday, 4 September 1997, to discuss aspects of the modus operandi of the SBSTTA. The text of a report on the proceeding and conclusions of that meeting is attached to the present report as annex 3.

AGENDA ITEM 10: DRAFT PROVISIONAL AGENDA OF THE FOURTH MEETING OF SBSTTA

105. At its 6th plenary session, on 5 September 1997, the meeting considered the above item of its agenda. In introducing the note prepared by the Executive Secretary on the subject (UNEP/CBD/SBSTTA/3/11), the representative of the secretariat noted that the draft agenda had been analysed by the SBSTTA Bureau, which had agreed to introduce an additional item 4 (e) "Inland waters".

106. During the consideration of this item, a statement was made by the representative of Luxembourg (on behalf of the European Community). The representative of Greece sought clarification of one of the items.

107. The draft provisional agenda, as amended by the Bureau, was adopted. The agenda is attached to the present report as annex 2.

AGENDA ITEM 11: DATE AND VENUE OF THE FOURTH MEETING OF SBSTTA

108. At its 6th plenary session, on 5 September 1997, the meeting considered the above item of its agenda on the basis of a note prepared by the Executive Secretary (UNEP/CBD/SBSTTA/3/12) and a related information document UNEP/CBD/SBSTTA/3/Inf.19.

109. In the course of the discussion on this item, statements were made by the representatives of Switzerland and Luxembourg (speaking on behalf of the European Community). The representative of Germany said that, if a decision were to be taken to hold the fourth meeting of the SBSTTA in early 1999, then his Government would formally announce at the Fourth Meeting of the Conference of the Parties, to be held in May 1998, that it would be pleased to offer to host the meeting.

110. It was agreed to request the advice of the fourth meeting of the Conference of the Parties on the date and venue of the fourth meeting of SBSTTA.

AGENDA ITEM 12: OTHER MATTERS

Bureau recommendation on participation in the Convention process

111. At the 6th plenary meeting on 5 September 1997, a representative of the secretariat introduced a draft recommendation, prepared by the Bureau, on the subject of participation in the Convention process.

112. After an exchange of views involving a number of representatives, the recommendation III/7 was adopted as orally amended, and is contained in annex 1 to the present report. A number of representatives were of the view that, while there was insufficient time to discuss the issues contained in the following paragraphs under operative paragraph 6 of the original draft recommendation, they should be noted in the report and addressed at a future time:

"(a) include in the core budget of the Convention provisions for enabling the participation in the forthcoming meetings of the SBSTTA of one representative per developing countries and countries with economies in transition;

"(b) additional voluntary contributions paid by donors to the relevant trust fund would be used for funding the participation of an additional delegate from the same countries, in particular least developed countries and small island developing States; and

"(c) make provision in the core budget of the Convention for necessary means enabling the secretariat to mobilize additional financial contributions to facilitate participation in meetings convened under the auspices of the Convention."

Statement on participation by non-governmental organizations

113. The representative of the Latin American Forest Network, speaking on behalf of other non-governmental organizations present, expressed concern about the need to ensure the full participation of observers in meetings of SBSTTA.

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Recalling that the need for the widest participation by civil society in taking care of the planet had been recognized by the General Assembly of the United Nations, she noted that SBSTTA, as a scientific and technical advisory body, would benefit from the relevant roles played by non-governmental organizations, indigenous peoples' organizations and other observers. She referred to the increasing number of meetings and workshops jointly organized by Governments and non-governmental organizations relevant to the Convention on Biological Diversity and noted that such partnerships are instrumental in developing the full potential of the Convention. Representatives of Canada, Colombia and Brazil supported the inclusion of observers as active participants and pointed to the important contributions made by non-governmental organizations, whilst noting the need to abide by the rules of procedure. The representative of Argentina recalled that only the Conference of the Parties can effect changes to the rules of procedure.

Statements by the French-speaking participants

114. The representative of the Comoros, speaking on behalf of the francophone countries present at the meeting, regretted the fact that some pre-session documents were not available in both working languages of the United Nations prior to the start of the meeting. He also noted that information documents were available only in one working language and that, whilst there had been interpretation in all languages in the plenary sessions and in the working groups, only one working language had been used in contact groups. He emphasized the need to apply the principle of equity between the working languages of the United Nations and requested the secretariat to make every effort to provide documents in the appropriate languages within agreed deadlines and to post relevant documents in both working languages on the website of the Convention on Biological Diversity. His statement was supported by the representatives of Canada, Haiti and Switzerland.

AGENDA ITEM 13: ADOPTION OF THE REPORT

115. At its 5th and 6th plenary sessions, on 5 September 1997, the meeting adopted its report on the basis of documents UNEP/CBD/SBSTTA/3/L.1, UNEP/CBD/SBSTTA/3/L.2 and UNEP/CBD/SBSTTA/3/L.3. It was agreed that the secretariat and the rapporteur would be entrusted with the finalization of the report of the last part of the meeting.

AGENDA ITEM 14: CLOSURE OF THE MEETING

116. After the customary courtesies, the Chair declared the meeting closed at 5.45 p.m. on Friday 5 September 1997.

Annex 1

RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE SBSTTA AT ITS THIRD MEETING

Recommendation III/1

AGENDA ITEM 3: THE MAIN ECOSYSTEM TOPIC: ASSESSMENT OF THE STATUS AND TRENDS OF THE BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY OF INLAND WATER ECOSYSTEMS AND IDENTIFICATION OF OPTIONS FOR CONSERVATION AND SUSTAINABLE USE

AGENDA ITEM 7.1: PROVISION OF SCIENTIFIC ADVICE AND FURTHER GUIDANCE TO ASSIST IN THE NATIONAL ELABORATION OF ANNEX 1 OF THE CONVENTION (As pertaining to inland water ecosystems)

AGENDA ITEM 7.2: REVIEW OF METHODOLOGIES FOR ASSESSMENT OF BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY (As pertaining to inland water ecosystems)

A. Recommendation concerning agenda item 3

The SBSTTA

Recalling that decision III/13 of the Conference of the Parties requested the SBSTTA to provide the fourth meeting of the Conference of the Parties with scientific, technical and technological advice on the status and trends of biological diversity in inland water ecosystems and the identification of options for conservation and sustainable use,

Having examined the Notes prepared by the Executive Secretary (UNEP/CBD/SBSTTA/3/2, UNEP/CBD/SBSTTA/3/7 and UNEP/CBD/SBSTTA/3/8); and the other information provided to the third meeting of the SBSTTA,

Recognizing the importance of inland water ecosystems for global biological diversity and human welfare, and also their vulnerability to human actions,

Recognizing the importance of adopting an ecosystem-based approach that integrates the conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity and the fair and equitable sharing of benefits of inland waters,

Recognizing the link between human communities, inland waters and biological diversity of inland waters and the importance of local community participation and awareness in achieving conservation and sustainable use of inland water biological diversity, and

Recognizing the crucial part played by technical and scientific cooperation in all aspects of biological diversity, including the transfer of technology, and recognizing also the necessity of capacity-building to enable Parties to carry out identification, monitoring and assessment of biological diversity as required by Article 7 of the Convention,

/...

Recommends to the Conference of the Parties:

I. General Recommendations

(a) That the Executive Secretary continue and further develop the collaboration with organizations, institutions, and conventions working with research, management and conservation of inland water biological diversity. These include (but are not limited to) the Ramsar Convention, FAO, ICLARM, Global Water Partnership, World Water Council, UNDP, UNEP, Diversitas, Wetlands International, IUCN, World Bank, Bonn Convention, et al;

(b) That, at the earliest opportunity, the Conference of the Parties should further encourage the Executive Secretary of this Convention and the Secretary-General of the Ramsar Convention to elaborate a work plan that ensures cooperation, and avoids overlap between the two conventions, noting the Memorandum of Cooperation with the Ramsar Convention, and decision III/21 of the Conference of the Parties, whereby the Ramsar Convention would be a lead partner in inland water ecosystems;

(c) That the Conference of the Parties should continue the close cooperation with the Commission on Sustainable Development in their development of the Strategic Approach to Freshwater Management to ensure that biological diversity issues are considered in this process;

(d) That the Conference of the Parties request that the Executive Secretary develop a roster of experts on the conservation and sustainable use of the biological diversity of inland waters, and urge Governments to nominate experts to the roster, noting also that the Ramsar Bureau is establishing a similar list of experts;

(e) That the clearing-house mechanism be used to promote and facilitate the exchange of information and the transfer of technology relevant to the conservation and sustainable use of inland water biological diversity.

II. SBSTTA Work Plan

The SBSTTA further recommends to the Conference of the Parties that a work plan for the SBSTTA be developed in cooperation with relevant organizations, Governments and Parties that should build upon the ongoing efforts in inland water ecosystem conservation. The work plan should include:

Status and Trends

(a) Using existing information and drawing upon relevant organizations and experts, develop an improved picture of inland water biological diversity, its uses and its threats, around the world. The output should identify areas where the lack of information severely limits the quality of assessments. This will help to focus attention on these areas;

(b) Developing and disseminating regional guidelines for rapid assessment of inland water biological diversity for different types of inland water ecosystems;

Conservation and Sustainable Use

(a) Compiling case studies of effective watershed management and best practices, to synthesize the lessons that emerge from these studies, and to disseminate information through the clearing-house mechanism. Five areas where the SBSTTA should concentrate their efforts include:

- (i) Examples of watershed management that incorporate inland water biological diversity with special reference to examples that use the ecosystem-based approach to meet water management goals;
- (ii) Examples of water resource development projects (water supply and sanitation, irrigation, hydropower, flood control, navigation, groundwater extraction) that incorporate biological diversity considerations;
- (iii) Impact assessment and other methodologies that address inland water biological diversity issues in an adaptive management framework;
- (iv) Successful case studies of remedial action, including restoration and rehabilitation of degraded inland water ecosystems;
- (v) Examples of equitable sharing of benefits derived from use of inland water biological diversity.

(b) Developing methods and techniques for the valuation of goods and services of inland water ecosystems, incentives and policy reform, and the understanding of ecosystem function.

III. Recommendations to Parties

SBSTTA further recommends to the Conference of the Parties that Parties:

Watershed Management

- Encourage the use of integrated watershed management approach as a basis of the planning and taking decisions in relation to the use of land and water resources, including biological resources, within river catchment;

Appropriate Technologies

- Encourage the use of low-cost (appropriate) technology, non-structural and innovative approaches to meet watershed management goals, such as using wetlands to improve water quality, using forests and wetlands to recharge groundwater and maintain the hydrological cycle, to protect water supplies and using natural floodplains to prevent flood damage, and to use indigenous species for aquaculture;

Technology transfer

- Emphasize more effective conservation and efficiency in water use, together with non-engineering solutions. Environmentally appropriate technologies should be identified, such as low-cost sewage treatment and recycling of industrial water to assist in the conservation and sustainable use of inland waters;

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Research

- Encourage research on the application of ecosystem-based approaches;

Monitoring and assessment

- Identify the most cost-effective approaches and methods to describe the status, trends and threats of inland waters and indicate their condition in functional as well as species terms;
- Promote the development of criteria and indicators for the evaluation of impact on inland water ecosystems from both physical infrastructure projects and watershed activities, including, inter alia, agriculture, forestry, mining and physical alteration, taking into consideration the natural variability of water conditions;
- Initiate studies on ecological functions and services to improve understanding of effects of exploitation on non-target species;
- Undertake assessments in such inland water ecosystems which may be regarded as important in accordance with the terms of Annex I of the Convention. Furthermore Parties should undertake assessments of threatened species and conduct inventories and impact assessments of alien species within their inland water ecosystems;

Sustainable use

- Encourage valuation of inland water biological diversity;
- Produce and promote guidance on the sustainable use of inland waters to maintain biological diversity;
- Consider the use and/or establishment of gene banks for fish and other species;

Environmental Impact Assessments

- Encourage environmental impact assessments (EIAs) of water development projects, aquaculture, and watershed activities including agriculture, forestry, and mining. EIAs need to gather adequate biological data to document effects on biological diversity, provide predictions on the effects of alternative project scenarios on ecosystems and consider the valuation of the goods and services of potentially affected ecosystems, and test predictions with well-designed sampling schemes that can adequately distinguish the effects of anthropogenic activities from natural processes;

Alien species, genotypes and genetically modified organisms

- Raise awareness of the possible problems and costs associated with the deliberate or accidental introduction of alien species, genotypes and genetically modified organisms which adversely affect aquatic biological diversity, bearing in mind the activities relating to the development of

a Protocol on Biosafety under the Convention. Policies and guidelines should be developed to prevent and control such introductions, and to rehabilitate sites where possible;

Education and Public Awareness

- Strengthen education and awareness programmes, recognizing that responsible environmental stewardship requires an informed public. Participatory-based management approaches are most effective when people are well informed of both the economic and environmental consequences of management. Inland waters provide both a challenge and an opportunity to educate the public and policy makers about the need to take an ecosystem-based approach to management. Environmental education should be built into school curricula and should emphasize integration using inland waters as a model subject to teach problem-solving;

Collaboration with Broader Water Resource Community

- Promote effective collaboration among ecologists, planners, engineers, and economists (both within countries and among countries) in the planning and implementation of development projects to better integrate inland water biological diversity with water resource development when considering projects likely to have an adverse impact on inland water ecosystems;

Transboundary Cooperation

- Develop effective cooperation for sustainable management of transboundary watersheds and migratory species including watershed planning commissions;

Involvement of Local and Indigenous Communities

- Involve, as far as possible and appropriate, local and indigenous communities in the development of management plans and in projects that may affect inland water biological diversity;
- Implement Article 8 (j) as related to inland water biological diversity;

Economic and Legal Instruments

- Review the range and effectiveness of national incentives, subsidies, regulations, and other relevant financial mechanisms which have the ability to affect inland water ecosystems, whether adversely or beneficially;
- Redirect financial support measures which run counter to the objectives of the Convention regarding the biological diversity of inland waters;
- Implement targeted incentive and regulatory measures that have positive impacts on the biological diversity of inland waters;
- Develop the policy research capacity needed to inform the decision-making process in a multi-disciplinary and sectorally integrated manner.

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IV. Financing

The SBSTTA recommends to the Conference of the Parties:

(a) That guidance be provided to the Global Environment Facility regarding the importance of projects concerning inland water biological diversity, and that the GEF be encouraged to consider the importance of inland water biological diversity in projects in its other focal areas;

(b) That ways be considered of mobilizing financial resources from other sources.

B. Recommendation concerning agenda item 7.1

The SBSTTA

Emphasizing that, since many inland aquatic ecosystems are highly modified and degraded, the elaboration of terms in Annex I of the Convention should be undertaken with a view to expediting the implementation of the Convention as a whole, and in particular Articles 6 and 8. Parties should give particular importance in this regard to the implementation of Articles 8 (f) and 10 (d) of the Convention concerning remedial action in degraded ecosystems,

Recommends that the Conference of the Parties advise Parties to prepare indicative lists of inland water ecosystems, using the criteria set out in Annex I of the Convention. The Conference of the Parties should direct the secretariat to work closely with the Ramsar Bureau and further direct the SBSTTA to work jointly with the Ramsar Convention Science and Technical Review Panel to achieve desirable convergence between approaches on criteria and classification of inland water ecosystems between the two Conventions,

Recommends to the Conference of the Parties that Parties take note of the work of the IUCN in the ongoing review and application of criteria for the assessment of threatened species and populations, including the further development of such criteria for application at the regional and national levels.

C. Recommendation concerning agenda item 7.2

The SBSTTA

Recognizing the importance of the clearing-house mechanism in the dissemination of methodologies for assessment of biological diversity:

1. Recommends that the Conference of the Parties urge Parties to adopt an integrated approach in their assessment, management and where possible remedial action of inland water ecosystems, including associated terrestrial and inshore marine ecosystems. Assessments should involve all stakeholders, should be cross-sectoral and should make full use of indigenous knowledge;

2. Recommends that suitable organisms be identified as being particularly important in the assessment of inland water ecosystems. Ideally, such groups should meet the following criteria:

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the group should contain a reasonable number of species with varied ecological requirements;

the taxonomy of the group should be reasonably well understood;

the species should be easy to identify;

the group should be easy to sample or observe so that density - absolute or as indices - can be assessed, used objectively and treated statistically;

the group should serve as indicators of overall ecosystem health or indicators of development of a key threat to ecosystem health;

3. Recommends that, in view of the great economic importance of some groups (e.g. inland water fish species), and of the large gaps in taxonomic knowledge for many species, the Conference of the Parties consider this as a specific focus of the capacity-building in taxonomy recommended by the SBSTTA in its recommendation II/2 and endorsed by the Conference of the Parties in decision III/10;

4. Recommends that the Conference of the Parties advise Parties and relevant international organizations that issues of biological diversity and subsistence use of fisheries should be more fully addressed in fisheries reporting and management. In particular species composition of total catch should be reported and the contribution that indigenous species make to capture fisheries should be reported separately;

5. Recommends to the Conference of the Parties that the transboundary nature of many inland water ecosystems be fully taken into account in assessments, and notes that it may be appropriate for relevant regional and international bodies to contribute to such assessments;

6. Stresses that, in accordance with recommendation II/1 of the SBSTTA, endorsed by the Conference of the Parties in decision III/10, assessments should be simple, inexpensive, rapid and easy to use. It stresses, however, that such rapid assessment programmes will never replace thorough inventories. The Conference of the Parties should take note of and evaluate specific rapid assessment programmes for inland water ecosystems currently under development;

7. Stresses that assessments should be carried out with a view to implementing other articles of the Convention and, in particular, to addressing the threats to inland water ecosystems within an appropriate framework such as that included in paragraphs 39-41 of document UNEP/CBD/COP/3/12. Of particular importance is the undertaking of environmental impact assessments on biological diversity of major development projects involving inland water ecosystems.

D. Recommendation concerning the urgency of needed action on taxonomy

The SBSTTA

Recalling recommendation II/2 of the SBSTTA and decision III/10 of the third meeting of the Conference of the Parties, which urged Parties to develop a global taxonomy initiative,

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Noting that, at the third meeting of the SBSTTA, there were continued calls in discussions on inland water ecosystems for improved taxonomic capacity, and that there remains a general concern for increased effort in taxonomic activity world-wide,

Recommends that the Conference of the Parties direct the Executive Secretary to take decisive action to advance the Global Taxonomy Initiative as detailed in decision III/10 of the Conference of the Parties, which should be implemented as soon as possible.

Recommendation III/2

AGENDA ITEM 4: SCIENTIFIC, TECHNICAL AND TECHNOLOGICAL ASPECTS OF THE CONSERVATION AND SUSTAINABLE USE OF COASTAL AND MARINE BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY: REPORT OF THE FIRST MEETING OF EXPERTS ON MARINE AND COASTAL BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY AND CONSIDERATION OF A DRAFT THREE-YEAR WORK PLAN

The SBSTTA

Recognizing the continued importance of conservation and sustainable use of marine and coastal biological diversity to all countries,

Recognizing the special significance of small island developing States in the global conservation of marine and coastal biological diversity,

Recognizing that the precautionary approach underlies effective use of all coastal and marine living resources,

Recommends to the Conference of the Parties that, in light of the Jakarta Mandate, and in light of the elaboration of the Mandate by the group of experts meeting on coastal and marine biological diversity, held in Jakarta in March 1997:

1. It direct the Executive Secretary to:

undertake the programme of work in the attached Annex;

maintain and develop liaison with partner and other organizations concerned with coastal and marine living resources, including those involved in both conservation and sustainable use of marine living resources, taking into consideration existing memoranda of cooperation between the secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity and other entities;

utilize to the extent possible the competence of the roster of experts to monitor and moderate the outputs for the program of work;

invite countries, Parties, regional governmental organizations and IGOs to propose contributions to implement specific elements of the programme of work;

/...

2. And that it recognize that there is a cost implication in the programme of work, and budget accordingly.

Annex to Recommendation III/2

Programme element 1. Implementation of integrated marine and coastal area management

Rationale: Integrated Marine and Coastal Area Management (IMCAM) constitutes the most effective tool for implementing the Convention with respect to the conservation and sustainable use of marine and coastal biological diversity, pollution control and environmental degradation. Such a tool may require implementation at different levels, ranging from the intra-national, or local, through national and regional, or supra-national to the global level.

Operational objective 1.1: To review the existing instruments relevant to IMCAM and their implication for the implementation of the Convention.

Activities

- (a) To identify existing mechanisms and instruments relevant to IMCAM;
- (b) To identify focal points for the implementation of IMCAM at different levels (national, regional and global);
- (c) To gather, compare and analyze information provided by the focal points;
- (d) To convene meetings involving representatives of stakeholders at different levels; and
- (e) To develop and promote as appropriate the implementation of IMCAM at the national and regional levels.

Time schedule and ways and means: The activities will be carried out during the three-year period by the secretariat, with the collaboration of an informal inter-agency task force.

Budgetary implications *

Operational objective 1.2: To develop guidelines for ecosystem evaluation and assessments, paying attention to the need to identify and select indicators, including social and abiotic indicators, that distinguish between natural and human-induced effects.

Activities

- (a) To identify existing organizations and initiatives;
- (b) To promote exchange of information and experience to identify and select key indicators using appropriate mechanism; and

* To be developed by the Secretariat.

(c) To collaborate with relevant organizations in the preparation of guidelines.

Time schedule and ways and means: The activities should be carried out, under the guidance of the SBSTTA, as part of the work programme on indicators, monitoring and assessment.

Budgetary implications*

Programme element 2. Marine and coastal living resources

Rationale: Very little is currently known about the loss of genetic, species and ecosystem diversity in marine and coastal ecosystems. A significant number of marine species have suffered population decline in recorded history and this process continues. Ecosystems have been degraded and, from the loss of populations, it is reasonable to infer that there has been a consequent loss of genetic diversity. The overall goal is to achieve conservation and long-term sustainable use of marine and coastal living resources in a manner that satisfies human needs and guarantees the integrity of ecosystems.

Operational Objective: To promote ecosystem approaches to the sustainable use of marine and coastal living resources, including the identification of key variables or interactions, for the purpose of assessing and monitoring:

- (a) Components of biological diversity;
- (b) The sustainable use of such components; and
- (c) Ecosystem effects.

Activities

- (a) To develop collaborative links with relevant organizations and institutions;
- (b) To promote exchange of information and experience using appropriate mechanism;
- (c) To develop and promote ecosystem approaches compatible with sustainable use of marine and coastal living resources;
- (d) To promote the identification of components of the ecosystems which are critical to the functioning and key threats;
- (e) To promote capacity-building at national and regional level; and
- (f) To carry out a study on the effects of stock enhancement on coastal and marine biological diversity.

Time schedule and ways and means: The activities should be undertaken throughout the three-year period. The information dissemination aspects should be included in the work plan of the clearing-house mechanism. The secretariat will seek to establish an informal inter-agency task force for this work.

Budgetary implications*

Programme element 3. Marine and coastal protected areas

Rationale: Marine and coastal protected areas are useful and important tools of effective biological diversity conservation strategies. Individual protected areas can serve many conservation-related and sustainable-use functions by enhancing critical habitats, ecological features or processes, special or unique sites or features, ecologically representative or typical habitats, and control areas for research and monitoring. To be effective, however, such protected areas have to be integrated into wider strategies for preventing adverse effects to marine and coastal ecosystems from external activities and must take into consideration the sustainable use of resources and the needs of stakeholders, inter alia.

Operational objective 3.1: To facilitate research and monitoring on the value and on the effects of marine and coastal protected areas or similarly restricted management areas on sustainable use of marine living resources;

Activities

- (a) To collaborate with relevant organizations for the preparation of project proposals;
- (b) To work with relevant organizations to identify pilot projects;
- (c) To facilitate countries or international/regional organizations in conducting research on the effects of marine and coastal protected areas on population size and dynamics, subject to national legislation; and
- (d) To conduct a desk study to gather and assimilate information.

Time schedule and ways and means: The programme should be an ongoing activity, to be carried out by an ad hoc technical expert group under SBSTTA.

Budgetary implications*

Operational objective 3.2: In collaboration with relevant intergovernmental, national and non-governmental organizations, to develop guidance on criteria for, and operational aspects of, marine and coastal protected areas.

Activities

- (a) To compile research findings on relevant aspects of marine and coastal protected areas through existing relevant literature, bibliographies and information networks;

(b) To facilitate the exchange of information on relevant incentive measures, including through the clearing-house mechanism and through regional workshops;

(c) To assist the development of national and regional capacity-building;

(d) To provide information on relevant legal and institutional issues, having regard to the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) and other related international agreements;

(e) To assist the development of appropriate education and public awareness programmes at all levels;

(f) To assist information exchange between sites aimed at networking;

(g) To provide guidance on the maintenance and wider application of local and traditional knowledge; and

(h) To identify the linkages between conservation and sustainable use.

Time schedule and ways and means: These should be ongoing activities over the three-year period. The basis for undertaking these activities should be collaboration between the secretariat, under the guidance of SBSTTA, and relevant intergovernmental, national and non-governmental organizations. The creation of an informal task force may be an appropriate mechanism, conducting its work through regular communication and through periodic meetings as required. The clearing-house mechanism will play a key role.

Budgetary implications*

Programme element 4. Mariculture

Rationale: Mariculture offers possibilities for sustainable protein-rich food production and for the economic development of local populations, but poses risks for marine and coastal biological diversity.

Operational objective 4.1: To assess the consequences of mariculture on marine and coastal biological diversity and promote techniques which minimize adverse impact.

Activities

(a) To provide guidance on criteria and methods and techniques which avoid the adverse effects of mariculture on marine and coastal biological diversity;

(b) Collection and dissemination of information, data, literature and bibliography relevant to the objective and best practices of successful sustainable mariculture; and

(c) Evaluation of the current state of knowledge on the effects of mariculture on marine and coastal biological diversity.

Time schedule and ways and means: The coordination of this programme of activities within the secretariat creates the need for a professional with specific high-level expertise. This need could probably best be met through the secondment by a Party or specialized institution of an appropriate professional. To be successful and cost-effective, the work would need to draw upon specialist scientific knowledge worldwide. It would thus need to be supported by a specialist inter-agency task force or by the establishment of an ad hoc technical expert group under SBSTTA. Operational aspects thus suggest that this work be undertaken from 1999 onwards.

Budgetary implications*

Programme element 5. Alien species and genotypes

Rationale: While some eradication and control technology options exist for alien species and genotypes in marine and coastal environment, the most effective strategy for limiting their effects on biological diversity is to prevent their introduction.

Operational objective 5.1: To achieve a better understanding of the impact on biological diversity of the introduction of alien species and genotypes, with particular attention to the characteristics of the species and of the recipient ecosystems.

Activities

- (a) To analyze and disseminate information, data and case studies on the subject;
- (b) To develop collaboration with relevant organizations; and
- (c) To ensure exchange of information and experience using appropriate mechanisms.

Time schedule and ways and means: The activities should be undertaken throughout the three year period. The secretariat, under the guidance of SBSTTA, will seek the assistance of relevant organizations through an informal inter-agency task force. In particular, the options will be investigated for collaboration with the Scientific Committee on Problems of the Environment (SCOPE)/IUCN efforts to develop a global strategy and action plan.

Budgetary implications*

Operational objective 5.2: To identify gaps in existing and proposed legal instruments and guidelines related to the introduction of alien species and genotypes, including a process to deal with reckless or deliberate introductions of alien species and genotypes (especially where transboundary effects have occurred).

Activities

Parties and other bodies should be requested to provide the Executive Secretary with their views on the linkages between biological diversity-related matters, and on the possible need for additional legal

instruments, especially with regard to reckless or deliberate introductions.

Time schedule and ways and means*

Budgetary implications*

Operational objective 5.3: To establish an "incident list" on introductions of alien species through the national reporting process.

Activities

To distil references of incidents from the national reports.

Time schedule and ways and means: To be considered by the Conference of the Parties at its fourth meeting, as part of its consideration of the intervals and forms of subsequent national reports. If approved, appropriate guidance to Parties would need to be prepared and this distillation and dissemination would form part of the ongoing work of the national reports unit and of the clearing-house mechanism unit, when receiving national reports from Parties.

Budgetary implications*

Programme element 6. General

Rationale: The Executive Secretary should pursue further collaborative linkages with a wide range of agencies and organizations whose mandates and activities are relevant to the conservation and sustainable use of marine and coastal biological diversity, in order to avoid unnecessary duplication and to ensure efficiency and cost-effectiveness in carrying out the work.

Operational objective 6.1: To assemble a database of ongoing case studies through a cooperative approach with relevant bodies and organizations, with special emphasis on integrated marine and coastal area management.

Activities

- (a) To identify sources of relevant information;
- (b) To request inputs from countries and from relevant organizations and bodies; and
- (c) To carry out desk evaluations of available information and to disseminate the findings.

Time schedule and ways and means: Ongoing activities to be carried out by the secretariat over the three-year period as previously described in programme element 1 above, involving collaboration between the Jakarta Mandate unit and the clearing-house mechanism unit.

Budgetary implications*

Operational objective 6.2: To develop a database of experts, starting from the roster, to be available for the development and implementation of specific elements of national policies on marine and coastal biological diversity, giving full recognition to the importance of taxonomy and following closely the development of the Global Taxonomic Initiative. Special consideration should be given to regional perspectives and the setting up of regional centres of taxonomic expertise, as well as to the taxonomic efforts of other intergovernmental programmes, agencies and relevant institutions.

Activities

(a) To maintain and update regularly the database of information on experts on marine and coastal biological diversity nominated to the roster;

(b) To make the information database available through the clearing-house mechanism; and

(c) To promote strengthening taxonomic expertise at regional and national levels.

Time schedule and ways and means: Ongoing activity undertaken by the secretariat.

Budgetary implications*

Recommendation III/3

AGENDA ITEM 5: SCIENTIFIC, TECHNICAL AND TECHNOLOGICAL ADVICE
ON FOREST BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY, TAKING ACCOUNT
OF RESEARCH AND TECHNICAL PRIORITIES
PREVIOUSLY IDENTIFIED

Decision III/12, paragraph 6, of the Conference of the Parties requested the Executive Secretary to develop a focused work programme for forest biological diversity, focusing initially on research, cooperation and the development of technologies necessary for the conservation and sustainable use of forest biological diversity, and indicated that this programme should:

(a) Take account of the outcome of the Intergovernmental Panel on Forests and other forest-related forums;

(b) Facilitate the application and integration of the objectives of the Convention on Biological Diversity in the sustainable management of forests at the national, regional and global levels, in accordance with the ecosystem approach;

(c) Complement and not duplicate the work of relevant international forums, notably the Intergovernmental Panel on Forests;

(d) Complement existing national, regional or international criteria and indicator frameworks for sustainable forest management;

(e) Incorporate traditional systems of forest biological diversity conservation.

/...

Paragraph 9 of the same decision also requested the SBSTTA to contribute advice on this draft focused programme of work for forest biological diversity and to report back to the fourth meeting of the Conference of the Parties. The SBSTTA, in providing this advice, was requested to bear in mind for possible future action, inter alia, the remaining forest research priority items listed in its recommendation II/8.

In paragraph 10 of that decision, the Conference of the Parties further directed the SBSTTA, in the light of the proposed work programme and taking account of the research and technical priorities already identified in its recommendation II/8, to advance its scientific, technical and technological consideration of forest biological diversity by focusing initially on the synthesis and development of scientific information in the following areas:

(a) Methodologies necessary to advance the elaboration and implementation of criteria and indicators for the conservation of biological diversity as part of sustainable forest management;

(b) Scientific analysis of the ways in which human activities, in particular forest management practices, influence biological diversity and assessment of ways to minimize or mitigate negative influences.

Paragraph 5 of the decision requests the Executive Secretary to explore ways and means to cooperate with the Intergovernmental Panel on Forests or any successor process on matters relating to biological diversity and forests, including intersessional work, with a view to developing common priorities for further consideration.

The SBSTTA

Recalling decisions II/8, paragraph 1, and III/12, paragraphs 1 and 5, of the Conference of the Parties and proposal 17a of the Final Report of the Ad Hoc Intergovernmental Panel on Forests, that encouraged countries, in accordance with their national sovereignty, specific country conditions and national legislation, to develop, implement, monitor and evaluate national forest programmes, which include a wide range of approaches for sustainable forest management, taking into consideration the following: consistency with national, sub-national or local policies and strategies, and - as appropriate - international agreements; partnership and participatory mechanisms to involve interested parties; recognition and respect for customary and traditional rights of, inter alia, indigenous people and local communities; secure land tenure arrangements; holistic, intersectoral and iterative approaches; ecosystem approaches that integrate the conservation of biological diversity and the sustainable use of biological resources; and adequate provision and valuation of forest goods and services,

Having examined the Draft Programme of Work for Forest Biological Diversity prepared by the Executive Secretary (UNEP/CBD/SBSTTA/3/5),

Taking note of the report of the meeting of the Liaison Group on Forest Biological Diversity, which took place from 25 to 28 May 1997 in Helsinki (UNEP/CBD/SBSTTA/3/Inf. 5) and other relevant information documents made available for the meeting,

Bearing in mind the interventions made by all participants;

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Taking into account that the work programme should initially focus on research, cooperation and the development of technology, and that it should be time-bound in order to provide the Conference of the Parties with a more effective tool to review and monitor progress,

Noting a need for additional activities that focus on the synthesis of scientific information on decision III/12, paragraphs 10(a) and (b), and which are necessary to provide a comprehensive foundation for the SBSTTA to advance effective scientific programmes of work in these areas,

1. Recommends that the Executive Secretary consider initiating additional activities to further efforts in these areas. Guidance on the types of activities needed is provided in cells 1A, 2A, 3A and 4A of the organizational matrix in the Annex to the present recommendation;

2. Further recommends that the draft programme of work be organized in a matrix structure based on this format;

3. Recommends also that, in developing and implementing the draft programme of work, the following ways and means be considered, inter alia, workshops, regional meetings, the clearing-house mechanism, and scientific meetings;

4. Recommends, in addition, that the draft programme of work reflect a rolling three-year planning horizon, subject to periodic review by the SBSTTA;

5. Recommends that the draft programme of work contain a section documenting and highlighting the linkages between the activities of the draft programme of work and the work being conducted in other intergovernmental forums with a view, inter alia, to improving the effective and efficient allocation of resources;

6. Further recommends:

(a) That the activities identified in the draft work programme be demand-oriented and selected according to the interests expressed by the countries;

(b) That, in the selection of activities of the draft work programme, due care is taken to minimize duplication with similar ongoing activities in other forums;

(c) That the activities in the draft programme of work be consistent with the proposals for action of the Intergovernmental Panel on Forests, and in close cooperation with the Intergovernmental Forum on Forests and other related forums, taking into account the decisions of the United Nations General Assembly in June 1997;

(d) That the activities of the draft work programme, where appropriate, reflect the following issues, inter alia:

(i) capacity-building;

(ii) forest management;

/...

- (iii) land-use management;
- (iv) equitable sharing of benefits;
- (v) good national practices;
- (vi) harmonization of ecosystem and socio-economic considerations.

7. Recommends to the Conference of the Parties that it recommend that Parties and countries and international funding institutions, including GEF, give priority to the allocation of resources to aid progress towards achieving the objectives of the Convention with regard to forest biological diversity.

Annex to recommendation III/3

| | | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|---|---|--|---|---|---|--|
| | | Holistic and intersectoral ecosystem approaches that integrate the conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity as well as socio-economic considerations | Scientific analysis of the ways in which human activities, in particular forest management practices, influence biological diversity (decision III/12, paragraph 10(b)) | Assessment of ways to minimize or mitigate negative influences (decision III/12, paragraph 10(b)) | Methodologies necessary to advance the elaboration and implementation of criteria and indicators (decision III/12, paragraph 10(a)) | Remaining research and technological priorities identified in the SBSTTA Recommendation II/8 |
| A | Research <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Approach • Activities • Ways and Means • Collaborative efforts and capacity-building • Outcomes | 1A | 2A | 3A | 4A | |
| B | Cooperation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Approach • Activities • Ways and Means • Capacity-building • Outcomes | | | | | |
| C | Development of technologies <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Approach • Activities • Ways and Means • Collaborative efforts and capacity-building • Outcomes | | | | | |

* The following research and technological priorities identified in SBSTTA Recommendation II/8 will be taken into consideration as future work is developed: analysing the role of biological diversity in ecosystem functioning; analysing measures for mitigating the underlying causes of biological diversity loss; advancing scientific and technical approaches to (i) rehabilitating degraded and deforested ecosystems and (ii) enriching biological diversity in forest plantations; identifying gaps in knowledge in the areas of fragmentation and population viability, to include mitigation options such as corridors and buffer zones; assessing ecological landscape models, the integration of protected areas in the ecosystem approach to sustainable forest management and the representativeness and adequacy of protected areas networks; and developing assessment and evaluation methodologies for the multiple benefits derived from forest biological diversity.

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Annex to recommendation III/3 (cont.)

The following paragraphs refer to the numbered cells in the table above: These provide examples of activities according to which a programme of work could be organized.

1A - Foster activities to synthesize existing knowledge of holistic and intersectoral ecosystem approaches and socio-economic considerations to set the context for the development of a science programme and identify and prioritize remaining research needs.

2A - Foster activities to assemble management experiences and scientific information at the national level to provide for the sharing of approaches and tools that lead to improved forest practices with regard to forest biological diversity.

Ways and means: inter alia, electronic information network, clearing-house mechanism, case studies

3A - Foster activities to synthesize existing knowledge to set the context for the development of a science programme and identify and prioritize remaining research needs.

Ways and means: inter alia, regional workshops that bring together experts in forest management and science from the forestry sector with experts on biological diversity.

4A - Foster activities to determine and advance methodology for implementing the indicators of forest biological diversity that have already been developed or require further development, in coordination with the IPF/IFF, and drawing upon existing and ongoing work to synthesize criteria and indicators. This includes measurement protocols and statistical sampling theory to allow for the expression of national trends.

Recommendation III/4

AGENDA ITEM 6: REVIEW OF ONGOING ACTIVITIES ON AGRICULTURAL BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY

The SBSTTA

Taking note of the important information contained in document UNEP/CBD/SBSTTA/3/6 and in the supporting documents, both those that had been provided by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) following the seventh session of the Commission on Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture (CGRFA) (UNEP/CBD/SBSTTA/3/Inf.6, Inf.7 and Inf.8) and those prepared specifically for the third meeting of SBSTTA (UNEP/CBD/SBSTTA/3/Inf.9, Inf.10, Inf.20 and Inf.21),

1. Congratulates the secretariat for the significant progress made in initiating the review of the identification and assessment of ongoing activities and instruments at international and national levels, and in particular the proposed process outlined for the development of a multi-year work programme to implement decision III/11 and the focus provided on farming systems and agro-ecosystems approaches, contained in document

/...

UNEP/CBD/SBSTTA/3/Inf.10. The SBSTTA notes that the completion of this review, well ahead of its consideration at the next meeting of the SBSTTA, is a top priority;

2. Thanks the Government of the Netherlands for its support in facilitating the joint secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity - Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations technical workshop;

3. Congratulates the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations for its work to promote the implementation of decision III/11;

4. Commends the establishment of collaboration between the secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity and FAO in response to decision III/11 and related decisions and, noting the important progress made, encourages the further development of the joint collaboration between the Convention on Biological Diversity and FAO, so as to reflect the results of the analysis of activities and instruments at international level and the identification of gaps and complementarities resulting from the review;

5. Notes the progress made by the CGRFA at its seventh session in May 1997, and recalls the importance, for the implementation of the Convention of Biological Diversity, of a successful conclusion to the negotiation for the adaptation of the International Undertaking in harmony with the objectives of the Convention;

6. Acknowledges the complexity of agricultural biological diversity and the breadth and scope of decision III/11; notes the need to address ecosystems, species and genetic levels, to focus on the interface between environment and agriculture and to consider linkages with other ecosystems; and further notes the importance of agricultural biological diversity in ensuring food security and sustainable development and the need for countries to recognize the importance of agricultural biological diversity as an integral component of their overall biodiversity strategies;

7. Emphasizes the importance for the conservation and sustainable use of agricultural biological diversity of respecting the knowledge, innovations and practices deriving from traditional farming systems;

8. Agrees to expand the focus placed on soil micro-organisms in Annex 2 of decision III/11 to address all soil biota, so as to include other key organisms such as earthworms;

9. Welcomes the efforts being made by GEF to incorporate agricultural biological diversity into its operational programmes, revised operational criteria for enabling activities, and short-term response measures;

10. Notes the granting, to the secretariat of the Convention of Biological Diversity, of observer status in the Committee on Trade and Environment of the World Trade Organization, and supports the proposed collaboration between these bodies, and with FAO, in order to consider ways to develop a better appreciation of the relationship between trade and agricultural biological diversity and to initiate the identification of issues that will need to be addressed by the Conference of the Parties, while providing an opportunity for Parties and Governments to provide inputs;

/...

11. Further notes that relevant information, at national, regional and global levels, should be made available through the clearing-house mechanism and that this mechanism should be used as widely as possible to promote the transfer and development of technology and information exchange;

12. Agrees that work undertaken on the development of indicators for agricultural biological diversity be carried out in context of recommendation III/5;

13. Notes the contributions received to date in response to paragraphs 1 to 6 of decision III/11, emphasizes the importance of the identification and assessment of relevant activities and existing instruments related to agricultural biological diversity to be conducted at national level, and hopes that such information will become more widely available following further contributions and submission of the first national reports;

14. Recommends that the Conference of the Parties:

(a) Note the significant progress made so far in initiating the development of the multi-year work programme on agricultural biological diversity called for in decision III/11;

(a) Encourage the Executive Secretary, in collaboration with FAO, to continue ongoing efforts to compile and assess the findings of the review being conducted by Governments and Parties and by international and regional organizations, and to seek closer collaboration with other relevant United Nations bodies, as well as with other regional and international organizations, in particular the Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research (CGIAR) centres, and including non-governmental organizations, with a view to drawing on their experience and expertise;

(b) Reaffirm that the reporting on, and development of, the multi-year work programme is an iterative and phased process;

(c) Provide guidance to GEF and invite other funding institutions to assist countries with the implementation of decision III/11, in particular, through responding to urgent and priority national needs.

Recommendation III/5

AGENDA ITEM 7.3: CURRENT APPROACHES TO INDICATOR DEVELOPMENT AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR A PRELIMINARY CORE SET OF INDICATORS OF BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY, PARTICULARLY THOSE RELATED TO THREATS, AND OPTIONS FOR CAPACITY-BUILDING IN DEVELOPING COUNTRIES IN THE APPLICATION OF GUIDELINES AND INDICATORS FOR SUBSEQUENT NATIONAL REPORTS

The SBSTTA

Reaffirming the vital importance of indicators of all levels of biological diversity in the implementation of the Convention, particularly with respect to Article 7, and recognizing the need to provide urgent, practical advice to Parties in the implementation of identification and monitoring,

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Having examined the documents prepared by the Executive Secretary in consultation with a liaison group concerning recommendations for a core set of indicators of biological diversity (UNEP/CBD/SBSTTA/3/9 and UNEP/CBD/SBSTTA/3/Inf.13),

1. Considers that these provide a good basis for the development of further work on indicators and generally supports the proposed work programme on indicators as set out in UNEP/CBD/SBSTTA/3/9;

2. Stresses that the primary role of indicators in this context should be as a tool for management of biological diversity at local and national levels and assessing the implementation of the Convention, but recognizes also that they may have a wider role, for example in increasing public awareness;

3. Stresses that, in the future, the development of regional and global indicators will be necessary to assess specific aspects of the world's biological diversity;

4. Stresses also that all work undertaken by the secretariat and any liaison group on indicators should be integrated with any work on indicator development undertaken within thematic areas under the Convention, for example concerning forests, inland water ecosystems and agricultural biological diversity;

5. Recognizes that the development and application of indicators requires the collection and analysis of data on a continuing basis, and that this is likely to be a costly activity;

6. Recognizes also that every attempt should be made to avoid duplication of effort in the development and application of indicators;

7. Recommends to the Conference of the Parties:

(a) That any liaison group on indicators of biological diversity have as wide as possible a range of expertise, both geographical and sectoral, represented on it;

(b) That the secretariat and any such liaison group be requested to ensure that all their work on indicators take as full as possible account of other relevant indicator initiatives undertaken by different international processes and organizations, particularly those relating to sustainable development and biological diversity;

(c) That the secretariat and any such liaison group be requested to develop a key set of standard questions, using as a basis the material on pages 12 and 13 of document UNEP/CBD/SBSTTA/3/Inf.14;

(d) That the secretariat and any such liaison group be requested to compile a set of principles for designing national-level monitoring programmes and indicators. These should address matters such as:

(i) the way indicators relate to management questions;

(ii) the ability to show trends;

/...

- (iii) the ability to distinguish between natural and human-induced change;
- (iv) the ability to provide reliable results (i.e. through the establishment of standard methodologies);
- (v) the degree to which indicators are amenable to straightforward interpretation;
- (vi) the question of baselines for measurement, in light of the fact that application of a pre-industrial baseline may often prove problematic;

(e) That the Executive Secretary be requested to invite countries and relevant organizations to forward case studies to the secretariat. The secretariat and any liaison group should use these to provide a menu of possible approaches and a synthesis of best practice and lessons, to provide further advice to Parties on identification and monitoring;

(f) That consideration be given to providing means for regional coordination of indicator development;

(g) That Parties be urged to share relevant experience concerning the development and application of indicators through the clearing-house mechanism and other means; and also be urged to include in their future National Reports specific reference to indicator development activities and their capacity to implement indicators;

(h) That the need for capacity-building in indicator development and application be stressed;

(i) That the work programme on indicators as set out in Table 5 of UNEP/CBD/SBSTTA/3/9 be adopted, as amended, in the annex to the present recommendation.

Annex to recommendation III/5Preliminary outline of work under the two-track approach

| ACTIVITY | DETAILS | WAYS AND MEANS | TIME SCALE |
|--|---|---|---|
| FIRST TRACK | | | |
| Roster of experts | Establish a roster based upon submissions of names by Contracting Parties, countries and relevant organizations | Secretariat | Immediately |
| Contributions | Contact relevant institutions and processes to seek information and expertise, and to explore collaboration | Secretariat | Immediately |
| Further development of indicator framework, including standard questions and principles. | Incorporate recommendations from SBSTTA 3 and other reports | Liaison group, incorporating further expertise | Further meeting in 1997 if funds available |
| Support from financial mechanism | Liaison with GEF secretariat on methodologies and priorities for supporting national development of indicators | Secretariat | Ongoing |
| Development of menu of indicators in thematic areas | Case studies (compilation and synthesis) of indicators for coastal and marine, agro-biological diversity, forest and freshwater systems | Liaison group | For SBSTTA 4 |
| Capacity assessment | Questionnaire distributed to countries following agreement on indicator framework and analysis of first national reports | Developed by secretariat with assistance of liaison group | Questionnaire ready by COP 4 |
| Training | Development of methodology sheets, guidelines and public information. | Liaison group | Guidelines by SBSTTA 4 |
| Training | Development of training systems to meet identified needs. | Liaison group | After COP 4 |
| Agreed indicator framework | Recommendations made available to Parties for inclusion in the second national report. | Secretariat | As soon as available, and one year prior to deadline for report |
| <u>Global Biodiversity Outlook</u> | Data from initial national report and other sources for inclusion in GBO-2 | Secretariat | Publication likely by COP 5 |
| SECOND TRACK | | | |
| Research and development | Develop research proposal | | Submission to agencies by mid-1999 |
| Pilot programme | Set up pilot programmes to develop and test indicators | | Completed by May 1999 |
| Second set of indicators | Further development of indicators | | Available for preparation of third national reports |

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Recommendation III/6

AGENDA ITEM 8: PROMOTION OF INTERNATIONAL TECHNICAL AND SCIENTIFIC COOPERATION: REPORT ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PILOT PHASE OF THE CLEARING-HOUSE MECHANISM

The SBSTTA,

Recalling decision I/3 of the Conference of the Parties, that a clearing-house mechanism should be established, in accordance with Article 18, paragraph 3, of the Convention, to promote and facilitate technical and scientific cooperation,

Recalling also decision II/3 of the Conference of the Parties on the development of the clearing-house mechanism through the establishment of a pilot-phase 1996-1997, extended by decision III/4 until December 1998, and related activities to promote technical and scientific cooperation,

Recalling further decision III/4 of the Conference of the Parties that the clearing-house mechanism is expeditiously implemented in accordance with the expectations of the Parties,

Recalling decision III/4 of the Conference of the Parties that the key characteristics of the clearing-house mechanism are, inter alia, that it should be demand-driven, decentralized in nature and provide support for the decision-making process,

Notes that the clearing-house mechanism is still in its pilot-phase and will be developed in a step-by-step process, based on the experiences gained by the partners of the Convention and the expectations and needs expressed by the Parties,

Notes further that the clearing-house mechanism is a mechanism with a variety of functions and services to the Parties, inter alia exchange of information, identification and facilitation of the transfer of technologies and capacity building,

Acknowledges the concrete recommendations for the functioning of the clearing-house mechanism formulated in the information document UNEP/CBD/SBSTTA/3/Inf.12,

Acknowledges further decision III/4 of the Conference of the Parties that recognizes the role of the secretariat in the coordination of the implementation of the clearing-house mechanism,

Notes that the Conference of the Parties decisions (I/3, II/3-4, II/7-8, II/10-11, II/14, II/16-17, III/4-5, III/9-11, III/15, III/17-19) have clearly stressed and broadened the roles of the clearing-house mechanism as a key instrument to promote and facilitate the implementation of all aspects of the Convention,

Noting also:

/...

(a) The need for capacity-building for the purposes of the clearing-house mechanism in developing countries, including training on information systems technologies that will allow developing countries to take advantage of the recent developments in electronic communication;

(b) The advantages of country-driven pilot projects focused on priority areas identified by the Conference of Parties which would enable developing countries to begin to implement the main features of the pilot phase of the clearing-house mechanism;

(c) The clearing-house mechanism activities to include communication technologies appropriate to all countries and exchange modalities additional to the Internet to ensure the participation of Parties without Internet access;

(d) The need for the clearing-house mechanism to be clearly focused on the implementation of the Convention;

Recommends to the Conference of the Parties that it:

1. Request the Global Environment Facility to play a substantial role as a major catalyst in the full development and implementation of the clearing-house mechanism so that it can play its role in promoting and facilitating the implementation of the Convention, in a participatory manner and fully incorporating the modern information and communication tools available;

2. Provide guidance to the Global Environment Facility so that financial resources are provided:

- to support the pilot phase as an enabling activity, including: regional workshops, regional efforts, sub-regional and national studies and training materials;
- to strengthen national biological diversity information systems and networks and their linkage to the clearing-house mechanism;

3. Request all Governments and bilateral and multilateral funding institutions to provide funding for the development and implementation of the clearing-house mechanism as an important instrument for the implementation of the Convention, including financial support to the regional clearing-house mechanism workshops;

4. Request the Parties to develop concrete examples on best practices of the use of the clearing-house mechanism to facilitate the implementation of the Convention and disseminate the information also in printed form;

5. Request all Parties to make available best practices and access to expertise on the implementation of the Convention's objectives and recommendations by the Parties, as well as advice on the best ways and means to promote and facilitate scientific and technological cooperation among the Parties in particular with developing country Parties;

6. Invite the Parties to disseminate, through the clearing-house mechanism, information on funding sources regarding the implementation of the Convention;

/...

7. Further recommend that Parties include in their National Reports activities undertaken to implement their national clearing-house mechanisms;

8. Recommend that Parties should organize a national clearing-house mechanism Steering Committee or Working Group composed of multisectoral and interdisciplinary representatives, to achieve broad participation of different stakeholders on national level in the implementation process of the clearing-house mechanism;

9. Invite the Parties and other partners to use the clearing-house mechanism logo as a unifying element creating a clearing-house mechanism identity;

10. Recommend that, in building up the content of information in the clearing-house mechanism either at the secretariat or other level, the following major content elements, among others, be used:

Secretariat level: Convention on Biological Diversity and its implementation, national focal points, international themes, financial sources;

Other level: country profile, national strategy and action plans, national legislation, scientific and technological information;

11. Direct the secretariat to implement a list-server with all officially designated clearing-house mechanism national focal points and other partners to disseminate information on new and recent developments in regard to the clearing-house mechanism, on either the national, regional or international level;

12. Direct the secretariat to improve synergy in regard to information exchange with Convention on Biological Diversity-related conventions and ongoing international/supranational information initiatives in order to encourage and optimize cooperation and collaboration;

13. Support the Executive Secretary to implement decision III/4, paragraph 10, in convening the informal clearing-house mechanism Advisory Committee;

14. Ensure that the clearing-house mechanism must be practical, innovative, decentralized and creative and based on a network of partners, use a simple structure, and be designed to continue effectively beyond the pilot phase;

15. Recommend the regional workshops to examine, inter alia, aspects that:

- identify potential users of information;
- define information needs and priorities of Parties;
- examine ways and means to exchange information;
- assess information and communication resources available for the implementation of the Convention;

- identify actions that contribute to capacity-building at the national level;

and make the reports on the regional meetings available to the next meeting of the Conference of the Parties,

16. Recommend that the principal role of the secretariat, following establishment of the framework of the clearing-house mechanism, be that of providing a gateway and facilitate access to the clearing-house mechanism network and making available information arising from the secretariat's own functions as outlined in Article 24 of the Convention;

17. Direct that the secretariat undertake an independent review of the pilot phase of the clearing-house mechanism in 1998, to be presented to the fourth meeting of the SBSTTA for its consideration;

18. Recommend that, in launching the independent review of the clearing-house mechanism pilot phase, the following elements for evaluation, among others, be used:

- number of national focal points fully and effectively connected;
- number and relevance of thematic focal points connected;
- amount of information transferred from participating nodes;
- number and effectiveness of training events;
- effectiveness of guidelines in achieving their aims;
- whether the clearing-house mechanism is being effectively used by parties to further the aims of the Convention;
- number of nodes supplying relevant information such as national reports, legislation and policies;
- use made of discussion lists;
- financial support provided for the implementation of the clearing-house mechanism.

Recommendation III/7

PARTICIPATION OF PARTIES IN THE CONVENTION PROCESS

The SBSTTA

Recalling that the Conference of the Parties has decided to rely on additional voluntary contributions for ensuring the participation of Parties in meetings convened under the auspices of the Convention,

Considering that a decline in support for participation of representatives from developing countries and countries with economies in transition in meetings convened under the auspices of the Convention is one of the most significant threats to the implementation of the Convention,

/...

Acknowledging the efforts made by the secretariat for mobilizing additional financial resources, but also the limitations resulting from the absence of authority for such activity,

1. Expresses gratitude to donor Governments and Parties who have made contributions in favour of participation of least developed countries and small island developing States in the third meeting of the SBSTTA, in pursuance with decision III/24 of the Conference of the Parties;

2. Recognizes that these contributions were generous, particularly on the context of the budgetary difficulties encountered by many donor countries, but were insufficient to enable the full participation of developing countries and countries with economies in transition in the SBSTTA;

3. Appeals to more Parties and donors to join the group of donors in their efforts to ensure full participation in the meetings convened under the auspices of the Convention;

4. Commends those developing countries and countries with economies in transition who have found alternative means of ensuring participation in the third meeting of the SBSTTA;

5. Encourages all Parties to join forces to defeat the present declining trend in the availability of addition resources in its effects by demonstrating more generosity and exerting extreme care in the use of the additional voluntary resources provided;

6. Recommends to the Conference of the Parties at its fourth meeting to give urgent consideration to the resolution of this serious problem in relation to the SBSTTA, the SBSTTA Bureau and other meetings held under the auspices of the Convention,

7. Recommends further to the Conference of the Parties to adopt a similar approach for other meetings convened under the auspices of the Convention.

Annex 2DRAFT PROVISIONAL AGENDA OF THE FOURTH MEETING OF THE SUBSIDIARY BODY ON
SCIENTIFIC, TECHNICAL AND TECHNOLOGICAL ADVICE

1. Opening of the meeting.
2. Organizational matters:
 - (a) Election of officers;
 - (b) Adoption of the agenda;
 - (c) Organization of work.
3. Assessment of the status and trends of terrestrial biological diversity: scientific, technical and technological advice on matters relating to dryland and mountain biological diversity and options for conservation and sustainable use.
4. Review of ongoing activities under the Convention on Biological Diversity:
 - (a) Implementation of the pilot phase of the clearing-house mechanism;
 - (b) Implementation of the three-year work plan on the conservation and sustainable use of marine and coastal biological diversity;
 - (c) Implementation of Article 8 (j);
 - (d) Implementation of the work plan for the conservation and sustainable use of forest biological diversity;
 - (e) Inland waters.
5. Advice on activities, instruments, issues and priorities relating to agricultural biological diversity: consideration of the draft multi-year programme of work.
6. Impact assessment: scientific analysis of the ways in which human activities influence biological diversity and identification of ways to minimize or mitigate negative impacts.
7. Consideration of matters related to benefit-sharing:
 - (a) Benefit-sharing with regard to promoting and facilitating access to and transfer and development of technology, including the knowledge and practices of local and indigenous communities;
 - (b) Measures to promote and advance the distribution of benefits from biotechnology, in accordance with Article 19.
8. Identification of alternative models and mechanisms for linkages between in situ and ex situ conservation techniques.

/...

9. Review of existing conventions and other international agreements relevant to the various paragraphs of Article 8.
10. Review of the operations of the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice, in the light of the review by the Conference of the Parties of its operations and those of subsidiary organs.
11. Draft provisional agenda for the fifth meeting of the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice.
12. Date and venue of the fifth meeting of the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice.
13. Other matters.
14. Adoption of the report.
15. Closure of the meeting.

Annex 3

REPORT ON THE INFORMAL MEETING ON ISSUES DEALING WITH
THE OPERATION OF THE SBSTTA

Introduction

The informal meeting was conducted between 13:00 and 14:30 on Thursday, 4 September 1997; 27 representatives participated. The discussion focused on those issues dealing with the operation of the SBSTTA which the participants felt were important to the overall review of the operations of the Convention, but which were not covered by recommendation II/11 on the modus operandi of the SBSTTA. A wide range of issues were raised, and what follows presents only a summary of the major points. It must be stressed that this summary is by no means the only opportunity of Parties, participants and other relevant institutions to make submissions on the operations of the SBSTTA. As outlined in document UNEP/CBD/SBSTTA/3/10 and elaborated further by the secretariat at this meeting, there will be opportunities at further meetings organized by the secretariat to express views verbally. Moreover, the secretariat indicated that they would be able to fully utilize submissions from interested participants in the production of the synthesis document called for in decision III/22 until 1 December 1997. It further noted that these matters could also be informally discussed at meetings to be held under the Convention prior to the fourth meeting of the Conference of the Parties. In this context the United Kingdom announced its intention to host a small workshop (5 to 7 January 1998) to provide further inputs to the preparation for the Conference of the Parties.

The Role of the SBSTTA

The meeting generally acknowledge the important role that the SBSTTA has to play in the overall Convention process. The effectiveness of the process will fundamentally depend upon being able to generate and develop the necessary scientific, technical and technological understanding of the issues raised by the Convention to build consensus and make decision. Developing the scientific understanding of biological diversity and the human processes which have an impact on biological diversity is necessary to avoiding adverse impacts that human activities have on biological diversity. Without science and the understanding that this brings we would be reduced to simply managing this impact in a reactive way.

Even though our understanding of these processes is far from comprehensive, there exists a vast body of knowledge of relevance to the process of the Convention on Biological Diversity. A central task of the SBSTTA is to take this knowledge and translate it into advice for the Conference of the Parties: advice which will present to the Conference of the Parties this knowledge in a relevant, useful and intelligent form; advice which will present a range of realistic and viable options for the Conference of the Parties; advice which will ultimately allow the Conference of the Parties to take decisions and implement actions which will address the management of human actions on biological diversity in a precautionary, anticipatory manner.

Generally, meetings of the SBSTTA should be open, flexible and collegiate. Delegates should not be afraid to develop advice which might be politically contentious.

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The significant contribution that the SBSTTA has already been able to make was acknowledged. In this respects the meeting believed it was worthwhile recalling that the SBSTTA has been extremely successful in conceptualising issues. For example, it has made a vital contribution to the development of the Jakarta Mandate on coastal and marine biological diversity. The meeting stressed that the importance that this role of conceptualizing issues should not be underestimated.

Improving the Operation of the SBSTTA

It was understood that the SBSTTA has been less successful in developing more detailed information needed to support detailed decision-making or national efforts to implement the Convention. In order to facilitate the development of this capacity a number of key preliminary suggestions were offered by the meeting, which can be described as:

1. Focusing the agenda or range of issues addressed by the SBSTTA;
 2. Relationship between the SBSTTA and other institutions;
 3. Preparations for the SBSTTA recommendations;
 4. Participation in the SBSTTA;
 5. The structure of the meetings of the SBSTTA
1. Focusing the agenda or range of issues addressed by the SBSTTA

It was recognized that this is a key issue to making the work of the SBSTTA more effective. The thematic approach where we focus on a given ecosystem has contributed to a focusing of agendas and should be continued. Discipline in all the institutions of the Convention are vital to achieve this. In this respects it was acknowledge that the last Bureau had exercised great discipline in its work. On balance it was felt that the agenda for the third session of the SBSTTA was about the right scope, although it was recognised that there was still some room for improvement in this respect. Clearer instructions from the Conference of the Parties are important. Each meeting of SBSTTA has only the capacity to respond to a very clear set of limited issues. Furthermore, the Conference of the Parties needs to recognise that many aspects of the Convention do not require the development of scientific advice for there to be action by the Conference of the Parties. In other words the Conference of the Parties needs to fully assume its responsibilities and not to avoid issues by requesting advice from the SBSTTA.

It was recognized that there also needs to be discipline in the advice developed by the SBSTTA itself and in the preparations of the secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity.

A structured agenda would contribute to being able to address issues more effectively. In this respect, there was wide spread support for classifying agenda items into those which require action and those which merely were reporting orientated or really only required information sharing (see paragraph 6 below).

2. Relationship between the SBSTTA and other institutions

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The SBSTTA has an important role in bridging the gap between the scientific community and the policy makers. It needs to use the existing scientific knowledge and expertise more effectively. Closer cooperation with other scientific bodies such as STAP, DIVERSTAS and ICSU, through exploring a more formal arrangement between such organizations, would make an important contribution to including them in the process more fully and ensuring better use of their networks. It was also agreed that relations with the private sector are important.

3. Preparations for the SBSTTA recommendations

The main dilemma in this respect is balancing the need for transparency versus efficiency in the process of preparation. It was acknowledged that rosters do provide an effective way to engage expertise. The use of liaison groups was also welcomed. Questions were raised regarding the criteria by which these liaison groups are constituted. It was felt that developing criteria in this respect would help with transparency, while not compromising efficiency. It was also felt that the transparency/efficiency balance was different for different types of activities. Assessments and information-gathering did not require as much transparency as decision-making.

The issue of future phasing or timing of the work of the SBSTTA also applies to the preparations for meetings. The experience to date is that in practice, there are really only six months for the preparation of documents. The Conference of the Parties needs to pay careful attention to this aspect if it is to assist the SBSTTA in developing effective advice.

4. Participation in the SBSTTA

This has not been adequate and raised great concern. Particularly Eastern European countries and developing countries are absent from the SBSTTA. Although the issue is largely a financial matter, it was recognized that the greater discipline with the agenda would also facilitate genuine participation of Parties in the SBSTTA process.

The issues of using the regional approach was also recognized as providing some possible solution to this issue. It was felt that given the scientific nature of the meeting that it should be possible to allow for regional representation on issues.

5. The structure of the meetings of the SBSTTA

The structure of its meetings was raised as an issue which might merit some attention.

Some thought might be given to looking at the way that the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change structures its meetings as an alternative model for the existing modus operandi of meetings.

6. Other Issues

Denmark proposed that the Conference of the Parties consider amending the proposed modus operandi as contained in recommendation II/11 by the addition of a new section XII, comprising the existing paragraph 10 of Annex 1 of recommendation II/11, together with the following paragraph:

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"Each meeting of the SBSTTA will endeavour to elaborate its findings and results to be presented to the forthcoming Conference of the Parties either as proposals to the Conference of the Parties to take note of SBSTTA's findings or to recommend that specific action is taken by the Conference of the Parties. Such action will be presented in the format of draft decisions containing, e.g. recommendations to the Parties or international bodies, (guidelines for) work to be undertaken by the secretariat, decisions affecting the Conference of the Parties itself, etc."
