



**CONVENTION ON  
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DIVERSITY**

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CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES TO THE  
CONVENTION ON BIOLOGICAL  
DIVERSITY

Sixth meeting

The Hague, 7-19 April 2002

Item 8 of the provisional agenda\*

**REPORTS OF REGIONAL MEETINGS**

*Report of the Asia and the Pacific regional preparatory meeting for the sixth meeting of the  
Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity*

*Note by the Executive Secretary*

1. The Executive Secretary is circulating herewith, for the information of participants in the sixth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity, the report of the Asia and the Pacific regional preparatory meeting for the sixth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity, which was convened by the Executive Secretary in Bangkok from 18 to 20 March 2002.
2. The report is being circulated without formal editing.

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\* UNEP/CBD/COP/6/1 and Rev.1/Corr.1.

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**REPORT OF THE ASIA AND THE PACIFIC REGIONAL PREPARATORY MEETING FOR  
THE SIXTH MEETING OF THE CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES TO THE  
CONVENTION ON BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY**

**INTRODUCTION**

1. In paragraph 33 of decision V/20, the Conference of the Parties recognized that activities at the sub-regional and regional levels have an important role to play in preparing for Convention meetings and enhancing the implementation of the Convention, called on Parties to participate actively in suitable sub-regional and regional activities, as well as on the Executive Secretary, subject to necessary voluntary contributions, to facilitate the involvement in such sub-regional and regional activities of developing country Parties, in particular the least developed and small island developing States, and other Parties with economies in transition.

2. In addition, the Open-ended Inter-sessional Meeting on the Strategic Plan, National Reports and Implementation of the Convention, convened in Montreal from 19 to 21 November 2001 pursuant to paragraph 38 of decision V/20, acknowledged the important role that regional and sub-regional mechanisms and networks play in promoting the implementation of the Convention and providing forums for the preparation of regional inputs to meetings of the Convention and for translating decisions of the Conference of the Parties into regional actions. Accordingly, the Executive Secretary convened a regional preparatory meeting for the sixth meeting of the Conference of the Parties for the Asia and Pacific Region in Bangkok, Thailand, from 18-20 March 2002.

***Participation***

3. The meeting was attended by representatives of the following countries in the Asia and the Pacific region: Bahrain, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Cambodia, China, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Jordan, Kiribati, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Malaysia, Maldives, Micronesia (Federated States of), Mongolia, Nepal, Pakistan, Philippines, Republic of Korea, Vanuatu, Viet Nam.

4. The Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific (ROAP) of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), the Secretariat of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification, and the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific were also represented.

**ITEM 1: OPENING OF THE MEETING**

5. The meeting was opened at 10:00 a.m. on Monday, 18 March 2002 by Mr. Olivier Jalbert, Principal Officer, Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity. Opening remarks were made by Mr. Jalbert on behalf of the Executive Secretary, Mr. Hamdallah Zedan, by Mr. Choei Konda, Deputy Regional Director, on behalf of Mr. Nirmal Andrews, Regional Director for Asia and the Pacific of the United Nations Environment Programme, and Mr. Mohammad A. Khan, Officer-in-Charge, Environment Section of the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific.

5. Mr. Jalbert welcomed the participants and thanked the Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP/ROAP), as well as the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific of the United Nations (ESCAP) for the support provided in the organization of the meeting. He recalled that the Conference of the Parties to the Convention had underlined the importance of regional meetings in preparing for meetings under the Convention and enhancing its implementation. COP-6 would consider items of great significance to the success of the Convention on Biological Diversity, such as a strategic plan for the Convention, an expanded programme

of work on forest biodiversity, a set of guidelines on access and benefit-sharing, as well as guiding principles on alien invasive species. He invited participants to review these issues in the light of their own experience and the particular circumstances of the region, and to inform the Conference of the Parties accordingly.

6. The Secretariat representative also recalled that COP-6 takes place at a critical juncture in international environmental agenda given the proximity of the World Summit on Sustainable Development to be held in Johannesburg, in August/September 2002. He invited participants to reflect on the accomplishments of the Convention thus far and on its role in the efforts by the international community to achieve sustainable development. It noted that COP6 would adopt a message to the Summit emphasizing the achievements of the Convention and the challenges ahead, as well as its role as an instrument to achieve the objective of sustainable development. Finally, he emphasized that the purpose of this meeting is to meet the particular needs and interests of the Parties to the Convention in this region. As such, the agenda was flexible.

7. Mr. Konda highlighted the importance UNEP places on biodiversity conservation. UNEP has played a catalytic role in the establishment of a number of environmental conventions and related protocols, and supported biodiversity assessment and capacity building efforts. UNEP has also been strongly encouraging the process of building synergies and interlinkages amongst the various Conventions. UNEP's role within the GEF has also been strengthened in recent years. Mr. Konda put an emphasis on the relationship between biodiversity and poverty since the poor in the Asian region are also at a great disadvantage due to lack of equitable access to natural resources, which forms the basis of livelihood for many. He called for an equitable sharing of the benefits arising from utilization of genetic resources. He further outlined the role of UNEP's Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific in implementing numerous capacity building projects and activities relating to biodiversity, in partnership with other organizations and governments, for instance, the ongoing implementation of the regional component of the UNEP Global Biosafety Project.

8. Mr. Khan welcomed the participants and informed them that the ESCAP Secretariat is undertaking a number of activities including assessment, regional policy dialogue, training and capacity building which are directly relevant to the implementation of the Convention on Biological Diversity. In terms of assessment, ESCAP publishes a State of Environment Report in Asia and the Pacific every five years, which incorporates a chapter on biodiversity. A Ministerial Conference on Environment and Development is organized every five years, which along with the Meeting of ESCAP's legislative bodies and expert meetings provides extensive opportunity for policy dialogue and the development of action programmes. In this connection, he informed the meeting of the Phnom Penh Regional Platform on Sustainable Development for Asia and the Pacific adopted at the High-level Regional Meeting for WSSD (Regional Platform), which identifies seven initiatives for action. One of the major initiatives contained in the Platform relates to biodiversity conservation. He added that under its new thematic structure, ESCAP will undertake training programmes on Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEAs) to develop negotiation and implementation skills in the countries of the region. ESCAP's activities in the area of capacity building also involve technical assistance to countries in the development of national plans of action. Already such action plans have been developed on desertification and coastal environmental management. ESCAP also effectively promotes the exchange of experiences and best practices through networking.

9. The representative of ESCAP further pointed out that in view of this expertise, ESCAP and the Secretariat of the Convention on Biodiversity could cooperate in effectively implementing the CBD in Asia and the Pacific, particularly in the areas identified by COP-6 for action. He expressed the hope that the

Meeting will come out with concrete recommendations which could be endorsed by COP-6 for follow-up action.

## **ITEM 2: ORGANIZATION OF THE MEETING**

10. At its first session in the morning of 18 March 2002, the representative of Bangladesh, Dr. Mahfuzul Haque, was elected by the participants to serve as President of the meeting, while the Representative of Malaysia, Dr. Leng Guan Saw, was elected to serve as Rapporteur.

11. The Secretariat proposed the addition of an additional item to the agenda entitled: "General Information on COP6". The meeting adopted the Provisional Agenda proposed in document UNEP/CBD/PREP.COP6.ASIA/1 including the amendment proposed by the Secretariat. The agenda is annexed to the present report. Participants decided to work in plenary throughout the meeting.

## **ITEM 2bis: GENERAL INFORMATION ON THE SIXTH MEETING OF THE CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES**

12. Under this item, the representative of the Secretariat briefed participants on various logistical and organizational issues relating to the sixth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the CBD.

## **ITEM 3: ISSUES FOR IN-DEPTH CONSIDERATION AT THE SIXTH MEETING OF THE CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES**

13. At its fourth meeting, the Conference of the Parties, by its decision IV/16, adopted a programme of work for the period from the fourth meeting of the Conference of the Parties until the seventh meeting of the Conference of the Parties, as contained in annex II to the decision. In accordance with the decision, the sixth meeting of the Conference of the Parties will focus on the following as issues for in-depth consideration: forest biological diversity, alien species, and benefit sharing. In addition, the Conference of the Parties will consider the report and recommendations of the Open-ended Inter-sessional Meeting on the Strategic Plan, National Reports and the Implementation of the Convention as one of the key issues. The regional preparatory meeting thus reviewed the respective recommendations contained on these issues in documents prepared for the sixth meeting of the Conference of the Parties following an introduction of each item by the Secretariat.

### ***Sub-item 3.1: Forest biological diversity***

14. Under this agenda item, the participants considered documents UNEP/CBD/COP/6/17 (Forest biological diversity: elaboration of elements for an expanded work programme on forest biological diversity – relation to the existing work programme, activities of the United Nations Forum on Forests, and framework for selecting priorities and defining activities), UNEP/CBD/COP/6/17/Add.1 (Potential priorities for the proposed expanded programme of work on forest biological diversity), UNEP/CBD/COP/6/17/Add.2 (Summary report on the Helsinki Workshop on Biological Diversity and Climate Change) and UNEP/CBD/COP/6/17/Add.3 (Summary report of the Accra Workshop on Forests and Biological Diversity). The representative of the Secretariat made presentation on main elements of these documents and expected outcomes at COP-6.

15. The Group affirmed its support to the expanded work programme on forest biological diversity, and proposed the following additions to the annex (Elements for an expanded work programme on forest biological diversity) contained in document UNEP/CBD/COP/6/4, which would be added to the chapeau on page 33:

(b) ....., in accordance with Article 8(j) of the Convention;

(e) The need to ensure capacity-building, including through technical cooperation,

(h) The need to consider measures to sustain forest biological diversity which are particularly relevant to poverty alleviation;

(i) The need to pay due regard to the role of women in sustainable forest biological diversity and its impact on them;

(j) The need to integrate forest biological diversity in the context of total sustainable development;

(k) The need to examine the implications of globalization on forest biological diversity;

(l) The need to recognize the heterogeneity of forest resources in the development of biodiversity strategies, action plans and programmes at sub-regional, regional and global levels.

#### ***Sub-item 3.2: Alien species***

16. Under this agenda item, the participants considered documents UNEP/CBD/COP/6/18 (Review and consideration of options for the implementation of Article 8(h) on alien species that threaten ecosystems, habitats or species) and UNEP/CBD/COP/6/18/Add. 1 (Review and consideration of options for the implementation of Article 8(h) on alien species that threaten ecosystems, habitats or species: use of terms). The representative of the Secretariat outlined the main elements of these documents and the expected outcome at COP-6.

17. The Group felt the need to give special consideration to the impact of alien species through maritime transport on islands states and countries with long coastlines. With respect to the guiding principles [guidelines] contained in document UNEP/CBD/COP/6/3, pp. 44-51, the Group considered the two versions of Guiding Principle 4 could be merged, and that the title could be changed to "Role of State". Guiding Principle 7 could be changed to "border cooperation and quarantine measures". Guiding Principle 8 could be changed to "exchange of information and best practice." Section C on introduction species should consider prohibition of unintentional introduction. The Group also felt that the wording "in particular small island developing States" should be added after "developing countries" in paragraph 16 of page 41 of the same document.

#### ***Sub-item 3.3: Access and benefit-sharing***

18. Under this agenda item, the participants considered documents UNEP/CBD/COP/6/6 (Report of the Ad Hoc Open-ended Working Group on Access and Benefit-sharing), UNEP/CBD/COP/6/19 (Access and benefit-sharing as they relate to genetic resources: progress report on the implementation of decisions V/26 A-C), and UNEP/CBD/COP/6/19/Add. 1 (Recent developments on access and benefit sharing). The representative of the Secretariat presented the main elements of these documents and the expected outcome at COP-6.

19. The Group proposed the following amendments to document UNEP/CBD/COP/6/6:

D. relationship (page 15)

Para. 8. The last line should read: “account regional legislation and regional and subregional agreements on access and benefit sharing.”

E. Objectives (pages 15 and 16)

Add 9(a) To ensure access to genetic resources and a fair and equitable sharing of benefits arising from their utilization.

Add to 9(e) To support national competent authorities through capacity building ...

Add 9(l) To promote joint and collective efforts with a view to strengthening the capabilities of the countries, that are vulnerable to natural disaster including floods, landslides, cyclones, typhoons, tidal bore and drought, to effectively undertake programmes to combat, mitigate and adapt to natural disaster.

Page 17

C. should read: “Roles and Responsibilities”

Para. 14, second line, should read: “list indicates their respective roles and responsibilities:”  
(add wording to the effect that “be encouraged” will be added to all subparagraphs)

Page 18 (Participation of stakeholders)

Add 18(c) Facilitating better understanding of access and benefit sharing arrangements through technical and financial support from regional and international organizations as well as from bilateral, regional and multilateral donors.

Page 23

Para. 42(f), to add: “any conditions on the possible application for patent of products related to the use of genetic resources.”

Page 31

Annex, para 5, to break the paragraph into two sentences. Thus, the third line should read: ...each country. Duplication of efforts between various capacity-building initiatives should be avoided.”

Page 33

To add para. 7(l) “The technical and financial cooperation to build effective mechanisms for access and benefit sharing in developing countries and countries with economies in transition.”

To add to para. 7(m) the wording “competent organizations/institutions”. It was noted that the selection from the list of competent organizations/institutions would be made by Parties, taking into consideration the need for regional parity.

***Sub-item 3.4: Strategic Plan, national reporting and implementation of the Convention***

20. Under this agenda item, the participants considered documents UNEP/CBD/COP/6/5 (Report of the Inter-Sessional Meeting on the Strategic Plan, National Reports and the Implementation of the Convention) and UNEP/CBD/COP/6/15 (Cooperation and the ten-year review of the implementation of

Agenda 21), and focused on the strategic plan. The representative of the Secretariat outlined the main elements of these documents and the expected outcome at COP-6.21. The Group proposed the following amendments to document UNEP/CBD/COP/6/5

Page 13

Para. 1.5 should read: “Key actors and stakeholders, including women, have increased awareness and are actively involved in the implementation of the Convention”

To add a new paragraph before para. 1.10: “The role of sustainable utilization of biodiversity in the promotion of public health and food security be strengthened”

Page 14

Para. 2.1 should be read as “Genetic diversity, species and ecosystems ...”

For para. 2.2, the term “population” needs to be clarified

For para. 2.4, the term “high biodiversity value” needs to be clarified

Page 18

Add to 1(d): “military and ethnic conflicts”

Add new para.1(f)      Competing national priorities

Add new para.1(g)      Linguistic and cultural differences

Add new para.2(f)      Lack of appropriate land tenure policies

Move 2(d) to para. 3

Add to 4(b)      Complexity of its procedures

Add new para.4(e) lack of integrating biodiversity conservation strategies into macroeconomic policies at international, regional and national levels

Page 19

Add new para. 6(b):      Lack of law enforcement

Page 22

Para. 2(f), to add “and suggestions on how these will be overcome as far as possible.”

#### **ITEM 4:   SELECTED CROSSCUTTING AND IMPLEMENTATION ISSUES**

22. The Conference of the Parties will also be considering a number of crosscutting and implementation issues. Most of these issues have been discussed in inter-sessional meetings held under the Convention. Specific recommendations have been made by such meetings for the consideration of the

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Conference of the Parties. The Executive Secretary has also proposed several recommendations regarding the way forward on these agenda items for the consideration of the Conference of the Parties. Crosscutting and implementation issues of specific interest to the Latin American and Caribbean region on the agenda of the Conference include: Article 8(j) and Related Provisions of the Convention; Financial Resources and Mechanism; Biological Diversity and Tourism; and Education and Public Awareness. Under this agenda item, the meeting considered various proposals regarding these agenda items as contained in the documents prepared for the sixth meeting of the Conference of the Parties.

***Sub-item 4.1: Article 8(j) and related provisions of the Convention***

23. Under this agenda item, the participants considered document UNEP/CBD/COP/6/7 (Report of the Open-ended Ad Hoc Working Group on the Implementation of Article 8(j) and Related Provisions). The representative of the Secretariat outlined the main elements of these documents and the expected outcome at COP-6.

24. The group supported the recommendations contained in the document with the following amendments:

Page 22

Para. 3.3, to add “and vice versa.”

Page 31

Para. (g). second to last line: to facilitate, as far as possible, the incorporation of the recommendations into policies, legal frameworks/procedures/guidelines, ...

Page 33

Under section part C, social impact assessment may be changed to: “socio-economic impact assessment”, provided that the emphasis on social dimension will not be diluted.

***Sub-item 4.2: Financial resources and mechanism***

25. Under this agenda item, the participants considered documents UNEP/CBD/COP/6/14 (Additional financial resources (decision V/11), UNEP/CBD/COP/6/INF/3 ( Compilation of previous guidance to the financial mechanism by substantive item of the provisional agenda), UNEP/CBD/COP/6/INF/4 (Review of the effectiveness of the financial mechanism: report of the evaluator), and UNEP/CBD/COP/6/13/Add.1 (Executive summary of the second review of the financial mechanism). The representative of the Secretariat presented the main elements of these documents and the expected outcome at COP-6.

26. The Group attached considerable importance to this issue, and noted the special significance of the report of the independent evaluator in light of the neutral character of the document (UNEP/CBD/COP/6/13/Add.1). It was proposed that COP-6 consider all recommendations contained in the report. The Group strongly recommended that COP-6 request an increase in funding levels for implementation of the Convention through the GEF as well as simplified access to GEF funding.

***Sub-item 4.3: Biological diversity and tourism***

27. At its fifth session, the meeting took up this agenda item. The participants considered recommendation VII/5 of document UNEP/CBD/COP/6/4 (Report of the seventh meeting of the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice). The representative of the Secretariat outlined the main elements of this recommendation and the expected outcome at COP-6.



28. Sustainable tourism was considered as a major issue of concern to the region since many countries depend on the revenue generated from this industry. The Group recognized that sustainable tourism can generate jobs and revenues, thus providing an incentive for preserving natural areas. It can also raise public awareness of the many products and services provided by natural ecosystems and biological resources and respect for traditional knowledge and practices. Sustainable tourism clearly has the potential to reconcile economic and environmental concerns and give a practical meaning to sustainable development. Timeframe for developing guidelines on biological diversity and tourism needs to be defined with greater precision.

#### ***Sub-item 4.4: Education and public awareness***

29. Under this agenda item, the participants considered documents UNEP/CBD/COP/6/13 (Progress report on the mechanisms for implementation) and UNEP/CBD/COP/6/13/Add.2 (Implementation of the Global Initiative on Education and Public Awareness). The representative of the Secretariat presented the main elements of these documents and the expected outcome at COP-6.

30. The Group considered that beneficiaries of the CEPA should be primarily Parties and thus the programme needs to focus on building capacities of focal points of the Convention to raise public awareness. Expensive communication was noted. It was recommended that COP-6 adopt the proposed programme of work for the Global Initiative on Communication, Education and Public Awareness (CEPA) contained in document UNEP/CBD/COP/6/13/Add. 2, and that necessary funding be allocated for its implementation by Parties. The Group noted that the CEPA should take into full account the role of the clearing-house mechanism, and be promoted by Parties particularly in rural areas. Other suggestions include:

- For programme element 1, there is a need to prioritize proposed actions for the global network.
- For programme element 2, expected result no. 2 should include expertise, traditional knowledge, practice and innovations of indigenous people and local communities.
- For programme element 3, the Group strongly recommended that the need to enhance the capacities of traditional leaders be included in the CEPA.
- It was also felt that timeframes set for implementing education and public awareness projects have been relatively short, and thus often hard to meet. In light of this, the timeframe for implementing the CEPA should be flexible at national level.
- Pilot projects should be included in the CEPA.

#### **ITEM 5: ISSUES OF SPECIAL CONCERN TO THE REGION**

31. The Group stressed the need for increased cooperation at regional and subregional levels. It noted that a great number of meetings have taken place in European and American regions, but much less in the Asian and the Pacific region. It was proposed that a regional biodiversity network/forum be established for the region to enable member countries to meet annually. It was suggested that the Convention Secretariat explore measures and mechanisms to establish and promote regional and subregional contacts and cooperation on traditional knowledge, communications, education and public awareness, exchange of information, list of threatened species for small island states, and especially implementation of biodiversity strategies and actions plans, and highlight the concerns of this region in CBD documents and activities.

32. The representative of the Secretariat of United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification provided an overview of its activities in the region. UNCCD has established six thematic programmes hosted by countries in this region, and a regional coordination unit has been established in collaboration with the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for the Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP). The unit has direct link to poverty alleviation and environment sections of ESCAP. Regional workshops on national programmes to implement UNCCD have been organized. Experience gained so far demonstrates that such a regional arrangement has been cost effective and enabled the timely provision of direct support and services to Parties in the region.

33. The Group also raised the following issues of particular concern to the region:

-- The Group noted that only one participant from developing countries had been funded for attending COP meetings. This has been a major constraint to the effective participation of the region in the activities of the Convention. There has been no enough participation from developing countries, in particular, the small island developing States, of this region. It was proposed that more than one participant should be funded, and this issue should be taken up at the budgetary committee of COP-6.

-- The Group felt that greater emphasis should be placed on the strategic interlinkages between the Convention and sustainable development, poverty alleviation, public health, water sanitation, migration, food security, and globalisation as well as the need to mainstream biodiversity in national policies and programmes.

-- Sustainable tourism was considered important to the region. The Convention Secretariat was called upon to facilitate cooperation on sustainable tourism within the region and across regions.

-- The Group noted with satisfaction the documentation prepared for COP-6. However, there is still room for improving notification and dispatch process concerning documentation, for instance, through hardcopies being sent to countries that have less access to Internet.

-- The Group highlighted the need for assistance in collecting baseline data as well as more timely information in particular for monitoring purposes, with particular attention to assessing impacts of invasive alien species.

-- The Group also stressed the importance of traditional knowledge and noted that it may not be possible to set up a database on traditional knowledge given its special nature. It suggested that efforts be made to set up community-based database.

-- The Group noted lack of human resources at ground levels, and called for capacity building for contracting Parties to implement the Convention, including strengthening national focal points through a regional network as well as identifying regional and subregional training facilities.

-- The Group noted the need to address loss of biodiversity in relation to vulnerable groups, such as women and indigenous groups.

-- The Group considered the need for close coordination at international, regional and subregional levels, to avoid duplications of work and maximize the benefits of using limited resources.

-- The Group suggested that requirements under the Convention and the Protocol, such as national reporting requirements, should take into consideration particular situations and capacities of individual countries.

-- The Group highlighted the need for greater financial support for more country-driven projects.

-- The Group called for greater use of national experts in the development and implementation of GEF-funded projects.

-- The Group noted lack of follow-up to established programmes, and called for more sustainable funding from GEF. The difficulties in accessing to GEF funding, including small grants programme, were a common concern.

#### **ITEM 6: OTHER MATTERS**

34. The Group recommended that the role of relevant existing regional and subregional organizations in promoting the implementation of the Convention at regional and subregional levels be recognized and acknowledged.

#### **ITEM 7: ADOPTION OF THE REPORT**

35. The draft final report was presented by the Rapporteur and approved by the participants, once the necessary modifications were made.

#### **ITEM 8: CLOSURE OF THE MEETING**

36. The Meeting was officially closed at 4 p.m., on 20 March 2002.

*Annex*

AGENDA

1. Opening of the meeting.
2. Organizational matters:
  - 2.1 Officers;
  - 2.2 Adoption of the agenda;
  - 2.3 Organization of work.
- 2.bis Information on the organisation of COP-6.
3. Issues for In-depth Consideration at COP 6:  
(Forest Biological Diversity; Alien Species; Benefit-sharing; Strategic Plan, National Reporting & Operations of the Convention).
4. Selected Cross-cutting and Implementation Issues:  
(Article 8j & Related Provisions of the Convention; Financial Resources & Mechanism; Biological Diversity & Tourism; Education & Public Awareness.)
5. Issues of Special Concern to the Region.
6. Other matters.
7. Adoption of the report.
8. Closure of the meeting.

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