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PROGRESS TOWARDS IMPLEMENTATION OF THE CONVENTION AND ITS STRATEGIC PLAN

An overview of the experience of other conventions in providing technical support, and of potential modalities by which international organizations can support implementation

I. INTRODUCTION

1. The Working Group on Review of Implementation requested the Executive Secretary to develop options for the provision of technical support to Parties for facilitating and promoting implementation of the Convention, such as a technical assistance programme, including consideration of the potential role of the Secretariat, the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), and other organizations as appropriate, and the financial implications of such options, drawing upon, *inter alia*, the experience of other conventions and international organizations.

2. Accordingly, the Executive Secretary contacted the above-mentioned organizations, as well as the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), the United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR), United Nations University (UNU), the World Bank, the Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research (CGIAR), the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), IUCN and WWF, inviting them to provide their views on how their organizations might provide technical support to Parties for implementation of the Convention, including thoughts on:

- (a) existing tools and services within their organization that already support implementation of biodiversity concerns, or that could be adapted to do so;
- (b) new tools and services to be developed in conjunction with the Secretariat and/or other organizations;
- (c) the financial implications of available options;
- (d) mechanisms for facilitating and coordinating technical cooperation among the agencies.

3. The Executive Secretary also surveyed practices in other relevant conventions, including the other biodiversity-related conventions and the Rio Conventions.

* UNEP/CBD/COP/8/1.

4. Based on these consultations, and other information available on organizations' and conventions' websites, the Executive Secretary has prepared the present note for the information of the Conference of the Parties. Section I reviews the experience of other environmental conventions in (1) providing technical support to Parties for implementation and (2) reviewing national implementation. Section II provides an overview of technical support available through other international organizations which presently serve to build capacity in Parties for implementation of the Convention, or could be adapted to do so. An analysis of how existing examples of technical support do or could contribute to enhanced implementation of the Convention is provided in UNEP/CBD/COP/8/15.

5. It should be noted that the examples presented in this note do not represent an exhaustive accounting of technical support mechanisms available to Parties through other organizations and conventions, but rather serve to illustrate the variety of possible options available.

I. THE EXPERIENCE OF OTHER CONVENTIONS IN PROVIDING TECHNICAL SUPPORT TO PARTIES FOR FACILITATING AND PROMOTING IMPLEMENTATION, AND IN REVIEWING NATIONAL IMPLEMENTATION

A. Experience in supporting national implementation

6. Environmental conventions have available a variety of mechanisms for providing technical support to Parties for implementation. Whereas a number of these mechanisms are established under convention bodies, others are provided by outside organizations, often in close collaboration with convention secretariats.

1. Support provided by Convention bodies

7. *Guidelines and toolkits.* Guidelines and other tools for implementation are common forms of technical support among environmental conventions. The Ramsar Convention, for example, has prepared a series of practical 'Handbooks for the Wise Use of Wetlands', on topics ranging from wetland inventory and management to policy development and legislative review. The handbooks incorporate guidelines adopted by the Parties, but also relevant material and case studies from other sources. The Convention on the International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) also has available a handbook for implementation, and a number of identification manuals to aid enforcement.

8. *In-house capacity-building units.* In addition to individual secretariat staff providing general support to national implementation—for example, by maintaining information websites, preparing guidelines, or answering Parties' requests for advice—secretariats may include dedicated capacity-building units. The CITES Secretariat, for instance, has a Capacity-Building Unit to coordinate training activities among Parties. These activities include workshops, seminars, training packages, and dissemination of information through the internet and newsletters. The CITES Secretariat also includes a Scientific Coordination Unit, Legislation and Compliance Unit and Convention Support Unit to provide technical assistance to Parties on relevant issues (through workshops, training manuals, and advice).

9. *Expert Groups.* The UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) has established several expert groups to aid Parties in implementation. The Expert Group on Technology Transfer (EGTT) provides scientific and technical advice to advance the development and transfer of environmentally friendly technologies under the Convention. The EGTT is composed of 20 experts (primarily government representatives from developing and Annex 1 Parties), and reports to the Subsidiary Body on Scientific and Technical Advice. The 'Least Developed Countries Expert Group' (LEG), composed of 12 experts from these regions, provides advice to LDCs on the preparation and implementation of national adaptation programmes of action. The LEG is linked by shared membership to the 'Consultative Group of Experts on National Communications' (CGE), established to provide technical advice and support to LDCs in preparing their national communications. The CGE's activities include capacity-building training workshops. All of these expert groups meet twice a year.

10. *Listings and Advisory Missions.* Sites inscribed to the Ramsar Convention or the UNESCO World Heritage Convention (WHC) can be registered on the Montreux Record or List of World Heritage in Danger, respectively, if found to be under important threat. Under both mechanisms, advisory missions are dispatched to listed sites, with visiting experts developing a final report in consultation with competent national authorities. These final reports are intended to provide the basis for conservation action at the site, and can provide a platform for requesting financial assistance (from Convention funds, or other sources).

11. *Funds.* The Ramsar Small Grants Fund for Wetland Conservation and Wise Use (SGF) provides assistance to Parties and others in the form of small grants (maximum Swiss francs 40,000 per project) for projects in developing countries and countries with economies in transition. The SGF relies entirely upon voluntary contributions, and is presently focused on funding activities related to the implementation of the Convention's Strategic Plan (2003-2008), including requests for emergency assistance. The WHC also maintains a trust fund to respond to requests by States Parties for assistance in protecting sites. The Fund is financed by compulsory and voluntary contributions from States Parties and contributions from private organizations and individuals. Rather than dedicated funds, Conventions may choose to support implementation projects out of general trust fund resources, such as activities under CITES to support domestic legislative development.

12. Major multilateral funds for assistance in implementing environmental conventions include the Multilateral Fund for the Implementation of the Montreal Protocol, to support Parties in the technological shift away from ozone-depleting chemicals. Similarly, the UNFCCC is establishing a 'Least Developed Countries Fund' to assist countries in preparing and implementing their national adaptation programmes of action, and considering a 'Special Climate Change Fund' to assist *inter alia* in capacity-building. Countries may additionally receive financial support for implementation through bilateral funds, such as Germany's Special Fund for Africa and Special Fund for Asia, under the UN Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD).

13. *Legislative review.* Countries have widely varying capacity for translating their international obligations under environmental conventions into appropriate domestic legislation. The 'National Legislation Project' (NLP) and a supporting 'Legal Capacity-building Strategy' under CITES addresses this problem directly, and are mechanisms unique to that convention. It should be noted however that, unlike the CBD, CITES sets out a number of explicit and precise obligations for Parties, whose translation into law can be readily evaluated. The Secretariat, as of July 2005, had reviewed and evaluated domestic legislation of 136 Parties, and provided related technical advice to Parties including through electronic communication, country missions, and national, sub-regional and regional legislative workshops. There are also plans to work more closely with UNEP's Partnership for the Development of Environmental Law and Institutions in Africa (PADELIA) and the Food and Agriculture Organization's Development Law Service (see Section II), and with the IUCN Commission on Sustainable Law to support countries' legislative efforts.

14. *Institutional strengthening.* The Montreal Protocol Unit (MPU) of the UNDP's Multilateral Fund for the Montreal Protocol manages 20 ongoing institutional strengthening projects to improve governmental capacity to direct and monitor national efforts to meet obligations for eliminating ozone-depleting chemicals.

2. *Support by other bodies*

15. *Education and training.* In addition to providing educational and training support directly through convention secretariats, several environmental instruments collaborate with outside research institutes or other organizations to assist Parties in these regards. Parties to the UNFCCC, for instance, have participated in "training of trainers" workshops organized by UNITAR and partners on issues related to climate change. The Basel Convention has established to date 14 Regional Centres for Training and Technology Transfer, in order to assist developing countries and countries with economies in transition to achieve sound management of hazardous wastes, and meet their obligations under the Convention.

Wherever feasible, Centres have been established as national institutions with a regional role, with the core staff provided by the host country, and the Secretariat providing guidance, general supervision and active support. ^{1/}

16. Knowledge networks, such as the Climate Change Knowledge Network (CCKN), are an additional means to increase information exchange, helping *inter alia* to build capacity among Parties for informed negotiation at the international level, and more appropriate implementation of activities domestically. The CCKN brings together relevant research institutes from developed and developing countries.

17. The World Heritage Centre supports research and training in the preservation of world heritage through its agreements with selected universities. On the basis of established Memoranda of Understanding, the partners agree to cooperate through joint research projects, student or academic staff exchanges, consultancy services and sharing of information.

18. *National committees.* Parties may establish national coordination bodies to provide an institutional focus for implementation of the convention, as is the case under Ramsar, and under UNESCO's Man and the Biosphere Programme. National Committees in support of Ramsar vary widely in size and composition from one country to the other, and can include representatives of government, NGOs, and relevant experts, preferably from as many sectors and stakeholder groups as possible.

19. *NGO support and partnerships.* NGOs can provide crucial support to Parties in implementing their obligations under environmental conventions. TRAFFIC, for example, was founded specifically to further implementation of CITES. Under the Ramsar Convention, an "NGO constituency" has developed in many countries to work with the government and to actively promote and implement the goals of the treaty. Formal partnerships—uniting NGOs, but also research institutions, intergovernmental organizations and others—can also move implementation forward (e.g., the Global Partnership for Plant Conservation under the CBD). NGO-driven action networks—such as the Basel Action Network and the Climate Action Network—can also support national implementation through awareness-raising and information gathering.

20. *Private sector involvement.* The Clean Development Mechanism (CDM) under the Kyoto Protocol provides an important opportunity for private sector involvement in developing the institutional and technical capacity of government agencies and civil society to implement CDM projects. The private sector, represented by the Groupe Danone and in collaboration with the French government, is also involved in supporting water-quality projects under Ramsar through 'Project Evian'. Support includes financing to technology transfer, training and awareness-raising activities.

3. *Review of experience*

21. The UNFCCC recently reviewed, in collaboration with the Global Environment Facility (GEF), UNDP and UNEP, experience in implementing a framework for capacity-building in developing countries (FCCC/SBI/2004/9). Their analysis of lessons learnt about the effectiveness of capacity-building exercises can provide useful insights for similar exercises under the CBD, and is as follows:

(a) Tools for assessing the effectiveness of capacity-building projects and programmes may assist in improving the implementation of these activities. These tools should be flexible enough to respond to differing national circumstances;

(b) Ensuring that a thorough self-assessment of needs has been conducted [through, for example, National Capacity Self-Assessments] and that proper consideration is given to the systemic, institutional and individual levels is crucial to the effectiveness of capacity-building activities;

^{1/} A framework agreement between the Centre, the Secretariat of the Convention and a representative of the host government serves to establish the operational framework and mutual legal and financial obligations of the signatories. For more information, see: UNEP/CHW/WGI/1/5.

(c) Long-term learning-by-doing approaches that favour the development of partnership and networks and that integrate capacity-building in wider sustainable development efforts have more chances of success;

(d) Ensuring national ownership and leadership as well as multi-stakeholder consultations and involvement at all stages of implementation creates a favourable environment for the achievement of results;

(e) The practice of adaptive management and consideration for the dynamic nature of capacity-building considerably increases the likelihood of an initiative achieving its intended results.

4. *Experience in reviewing national implementation*

22. This section provides an overview of existing mechanisms and processes used for review of national implementation under other environmental instruments (as requested of the Executive Secretary by decision V/20, paragraph 41), with the aim of identifying potential options for assisting Parties in undertaking a review of national implementation under this Convention (as requested in the Working Group's recommendation 1/1 paragraph C (d)).

23. As noted by Rastiala (2001), ^{2/} review institutions can examine implementation without considering issues of compliance (i.e., whether Parties are following specified rules) or effectiveness (i.e., whether the environmental instrument is causing desired changes in Parties' behaviour). The present note considers options for reviewing implementation only, which is in any case the most common form of review established under environmental instruments.

24. National reports provide the common basis for reviewing implementation under most conventions, although how the relevant secretariats treat the information contained in these reports varies widely. Several conventions compile all or some of the information received through national reports into searchable databases (e.g., CBD, Ramsar, CITES, the Convention on Migratory Species of Wild Animals, and UNFCCC), and/or provide text syntheses to Convention bodies (e.g., CBD, Ramsar, UNFCCC, UNCCD, WHC). However, most of these conventions lack a formal mandate to corroborate or verify the information provided in national reports, although secretariats may informally request clarification from Parties where gaps or inconsistencies are noted (e.g., Ramsar, the Montreal Protocol).

25. A notable exception is the review process under the UNFCCC, where national communications and annual greenhouse-gas inventories submitted by annex I Parties are both subject to individual in-depth review. The review is conducted by an international team of experts (consisting of experts from both annex-I and non-annex I Parties, and coordinated by the UNFCCC secretariat), and, in the case of inventories, typically involve a desk-based review at one central location (i.e., at the UNFCCC secretariat) and in-country visits to Parties according to a certain frequency. In-country visits are also used for the review of annex I Parties' national communications. All reviews result in a report, and in the case of the national communication reviews, these typically expand on and update the national communication. The review (particularly of the annual inventories) serves not only to better assess Parties' performance in meeting convention requirements, but also provides essential feedback to the Parties to help them improve the quality of their inventories.

26. Information submitted by Parties to environmental conventions, through their national reports, may be subject to further analysis by formal implementation review bodies. The UNFCCC Subsidiary Body on Implementation (SBI), for instance, generally meets twice a year in order to assess the Convention's overall effectiveness, examining the information in the national communications and emission inventories submitted by Parties. The SBI also advises the COP on guidance to the financial mechanism, budgetary and administrative matters. The body is open to participation by all Parties, and comprises government representatives who are experts on climate change issues.

^{2/} K. Raustiala. 2001. Reporting and Review Institutions in 10 Multilateral Environmental Agreements. United Nations Environment Programme.

27. Under the UNCCD, review of implementation occurs periodically, on a regional cycle, and is the responsibility of the Committee for the Review of the Implementation of the Convention (CRIC). The most recent session (CRIC-3, May 2005) considered implementation by African country parties, and the first review cycle will be complete at the fourth session (in 2007) when members other than Africa will complete their reports.

28. A key feature of CRIC-3 was the ‘Country Pilot Partnership’ established under the GEF to assist Parties in addressing national land degradation issues (including the preparation of the third national report). The International Fund for Agricultural Development, with the assistance of the UNCCD secretariat, implemented the exercise. ^{3/} Eligible countries (45) were asked to provide a request on their capacity building needs as a precondition for national reports financing, and to present national report findings and exchange experiences in a series of sub-regional workshops and national multi-stakeholder consultations. The submission rate of national reports by African Parties to CRIC-3 was high, although problems remained with reports’ content (e.g., very descriptive and insufficiently analytical, and focused on activities rather than progress made in implementation).

29. Like the UNFCCC and UNCCD, the Montreal Protocol has established a formal body to review implementation, complemented by a wide-ranging informal review process. In the formal system, the Secretariat prepares a synthesis of general trends in implementation based on the national reports, for review by the Meeting of the Parties. Specific issues of individual parties’ performances are referred to an implementation committee of ten members, which hold closed meetings twice a year. Members are government representatives, and may serve on the committee for up to four years. Also present at the meeting are representatives of the Multilateral Fund, UNEP, UNDP, the World Bank, GEF and other intergovernmental bodies, and the Technology and Economic Assistance Panel (TEAP). These organizations, in the course of their work, gather relevant data and engage in informal implementation review that can feed into the formal review process (see Rastiala 2001). ^{4/} For example, the TEAP, as part of its work of promoting the use of ozone-friendly substitutes, necessarily considers Parties’ current state of implementation of the Protocol.

30. Other environmental instruments do not have a dedicated body for reviewing implementation, but have established a Working Group to review these issues. This is the case for the CBD, and also for the Basel Convention. The Working Group for the Implementation of the Basel Convention looks broadly at implementation issues (rather than on a party-by-party basis).

III. TECHNICAL SUPPORT FOR IMPLEMENTATION PROVIDED BY INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

31. The major implementing agencies of the United Nations—FAO, UNDP and UNEP—either already provide technical support to Parties for implementation of the Convention, or have available mechanisms that could be adapted to do so. Other UN agencies and international organizations—such as UNITAR, UNESCO, CGIAR, IFAD, the World Bank, IUCN and WWF—can provide additional support. The major areas of technical support are identified here as: (1) preparation of guidelines and tools; (2) assistance to policy and legislation development; (3) national and regional capacity-building; (4) project planning and management; and (5) resource mobilization. In practice, different areas can be closely related and are generally promoted under a single programme or body (e.g., the UNDP’s Dryland Development Centre). Existing mechanisms provided by the above-mentioned international organizations are reviewed briefly here, by area, and summarized in Table 1.

A. Knowledge management: guidelines and tools

^{3/} ‘Supporting Capacity Building for the Elaboration of National Reports and Country Profiles by African Parties to the UNCCD’.

^{4/} Ibid.

32. Based on its policy research and field-experience, FAO is constantly preparing and updating guidelines and capacity-development materials for countries, in the form of manuals, guides, training software and case studies. For example, the Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries adopted by FAO Member Nations is supported by Technical Guidelines for implementation.

33. UNEP has prepared Guidelines and a Manual on MEA Compliance and Enforcement, which aim to provide countries with approaches and tools for implementation, including the CBD. In further support of coherent implementation of the biodiversity-related conventions, UNEP is developing issue-based modules (that identify and group requirements under the different conventions, to, *inter alia*, simplify planning, make more efficient use of resources, and facilitate cross-sectoral discussion), and exploring options for the harmonization of national reporting (to reduce reporting burdens on Parties).

34. A number of environment-related knowledge-sharing networks, databases and tools are available on the internet, maintained by international agencies. Among these are the online resources of the UNDP Capacity 2015 initiative (including a learning network to leverage resources for achievement of the Millennium Development Goals), and networks and learning programmes developed by the World Bank.

B. Training workshops and seminars

35. The in-country presence of international organizations can be the basis for providing capacity-building support at national and regional levels. FAO's on-the-ground staff in 131 developing countries, for instance, can directly support practical projects for reducing poverty and fighting hunger. At present, the focus of FAO's projects in these areas includes training and capacity building of local administrations and promotion of learning exchanges between developed and developing countries.

36. Examples of FAO's support to human capacity development are many.^{5/} At the regional level, for instance, in partnership with IUCN and RIFFEAC (Réseau des Institutions de Formation Forestières et Environnementales d'Afrique Centrale), FAO has provided an assessment of how to redress problems in forestry education in the region. On a larger scale, FAO developed a major training, capacity building and country support programme to assist countries in preparing reports as part of the 'State of the World's Animal Genetic Resources' process. Between January 2001 and May 2004, regional training workshops were conducted involving nearly 400 professionals from 181 countries, followed by 13 sub-regional workshops for discussion of country reports and priorities, involving national coordinators from 147 countries.

37. At the national level, Farmer Field Schools (FFS) is considered one of the best practices in FAO for developing human capacity. FFS provide effective community-based education to farmers, but also build capacity (in technical and participatory methods) among the government and non-government extension staff who implement the mechanism. The FFS programmes examine a range of issues of direct concern to the Convention on Biological Diversity (including water management, conservation agriculture, community forestry), and serve as a practical and cost-effective means to increase local stakeholders participation in rural development (and so conservation and sustainable use) processes.

38. UNEP directly supports national capacity-building on implementation of biodiversity-related conventions through training workshops. For instance, UNEP's Regional Seas Coordinating Unit, in collaboration with the CBD Secretariat and the Global Invasive Species Programme has developed regional training courses on marine invasive alien species. Through the Global Biodiversity Forum—founded in collaboration with IUCN, the World Resources Institute, and the African Centre for Technology and Science—UNEP further builds capacity at the national, subregional and regional level by promoting open dialogue and analysis on biodiversity-related issues.

^{5/} See: FAO Capacity Development Activities: Examples of Successful Cases (September 2005), for further examples: http://www.undg.org/documents/6569-FAO_Capacity_Development_Activities_Examples.doc.

39. Further technical support from UNEP includes strengthening of national capacity for Biodiversity Data Management, and assisting governments in inventorying biodiversity country studies, strategies and action plans.

40. The United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR) has as one of its primary functions to carry out training programmes in the field of social and economic development, including on issues of the environment. A recent initiative, developed in collaboration with IUCN, is the 'Capacity-building programme for local authorities on biodiversity', that aims to train these individuals to better integrate biodiversity conservation into local planning and management processes. Training activities will be developed with and for local authorities in response to expressed needs, and implemented through a network of 11 International Training Centres for Local Authorities/Actors (CIFAL) established by UNITAR. The programme will be launched at the eighth meeting of the Conference of the Parties.

C. Support to national policy development and legislation

41. FAO provides advice and builds capacity to support countries in the formulation and implementation of food, agriculture, fishery, forestry and rural development policies. Capacity development initiatives within these policy assistance programmes are generally in-country, and aimed at mid-level staff in government and in civil society organizations. FAO also maintains an on-line database of resource materials for policy-making ('EasyPol') that, although informative, appears to be under-used.^{6/}

42. FAO also engages in policy support at the level of high decision-makers, as in the activities of the Inter-departmental Working Group on Biotechnology. The group provides resource materials and training in policy development and deployment on biotechnology in food and agriculture.

43. UNDP's Biodiversity Global Programme works to help integrate biodiversity, ecosystem services, protected areas and other commitments under the CBD into national policies and programmes. These efforts address social, economic and policy frameworks such as the MDGs, Human Development Reports, Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers, and National Sustainable Development Strategies. Following from the September 2005 Millennium Summit, the UNDP has received a clear mandate to play a greater role in the development of countries' Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers, helping to ensure that these are compliant with the Millennium Development Goals, and are broadened to better incorporate environmental concerns.

44. UNEP, through its Environmental Law Programme, plays an important role in promoting the development and implementation of national environmental legislation. Technical assistance usually follows from a Needs Assessment Mission, undertaken at a State's request, and proceeds to a review of legislation and institutions, and drafting of legislation. Whereas UNEP's legal officers provide support throughout this process, emphasis is placed on enhancing local legislative capacity through the use of national experts, local consultants and cross-sectoral National Task Forces. Through the Environmental Law Programme, UNEP can also assist countries to develop model legislation for implementing a cluster of biodiversity-related conventions, to integrate environmental legislation into regulations, and to enhance integration of environmental impact assessment laws into national planning processes.

45. As part of its legal capacity-building, UNEP has also provided training for lawyers on implementation of ABS-arrangements within various MEAs, and support to the development and implementation of other environmental law training activities.

46. In collaboration with UNDP, FAO, the World Bank, IUCN and others, UNEP was additionally involved in the Partnership for Development of Environmental Law and Institutions in Africa (PADELIA), seeking to enhance national capacity in implementation of existing laws, developing legal instruments to fill gaps in the existing laws, and enhancing capacity for sustained development and

^{6/} As of 17 November 2005, the most downloaded module had been accessed 131 times.

implementation of environmental law. The project ended in 2004, but produced publications and generated experience of use in considering further options for technical support.

D. National institutional strengthening and technical field support

47. FAO's Special Programme for Food Security helps governments in 105 countries to plan and run National Food Security Programmes, and supports the development of Regional Programmes for Food Security. In-country technical support teams assist national governments in planning, mobilizing resources, and implementing their national programmes. Common elements of all programmes include integration with global poverty reduction initiatives (PRSPs) and the MDGs.

48. The UNDP Drylands Development Centre (DDC) similarly supports national planning processes, assisting Parties in the development and implementation of National Action Programmes called for under the Convention to Combat Desertification. The centre provides assistance in concept development and methodology, mobilization of resources, capacity-building, and assistance for partnership-building among stakeholders. The DDC also works with Sub-regional organizations in developing programmes of a transboundary nature.

49. Although now defunct, UNEP/UNDP's Biodiversity Planning Programme succeeded in strengthening national capacity for the preparation and implementation of National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans (NBSAPs) in compliance the Convention on Biological Diversity, and produced useful guidelines based on country experiences. In Europe, the Biodiversity Service run by UNEP, IUCN, the European Centre for Nature Conservation and the Regional Environmental Center for Central and Eastern Europe provides target groups with easy access to information and expertise for the elaboration and implementation of key European and global policies, including of NBSAPs.

50. The recently adopted joint UNDP/UNEP project financed by the GEF on the Global Support Programme to assist eligible countries in preparing their National Capacity-Building Needs Assessment for implementing the three Rio Conventions promises to deliver concrete suggestions for improving national capacity.

E. Financial resource mobilization

51. The GEF, established in 1991, helps developing countries fund projects and programs that protect the global environment GEF projects are managed by its three implementing agencies: UNDP, UNEP and the World Bank. In the case of UNEP, staff provide technical assistance to Parties in preparing project proposals for access to financial resources under the GEF, as well as to bilateral and multilateral funding. UNEP also promotes regional and sub-regional coordination among the other GEF Implementing agencies for capacity building activities and enhanced collaboration among the biodiversity-related MEAs. Considering GEF projects implemented under UNDP alone, to date over \$1.9 billion in grants and cost-sharing arrangement has been delivered to developing countries for biodiversity-related projects. In addition to large and medium-size projects, UNDP-GEF supports community-based approaches through a small grants programme (SGP; grants of up to \$ 50,000).

52. FAO's small grants programme draws on expertise located in technical and operational units at FAO headquarters in Rome, and in the decentralized offices, to identify the most appropriate solutions for specific problems in the agriculture, fisheries and forestry sectors. Since its creation in 1976, the TCP has funded almost 8 700 projects for a total value of more than US\$ 1 billion.

53. Agricultural and rural development activities can also receive support from the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD). The Fund prioritizes activities that strengthen technical and institutional capacity.

54. Recognizing the need for mobilizing additional resources for biodiversity conservation, the Conservation Finance Alliance (CFA) was established in 2002. The CFA aims to catalyze increased and sustainable public and private financing towards effective implementation of global commitments to conservation. Alliance members include UNDP, UNEP, major international conservation organizations,

and governments. Among its activities, the CFA has produced a Conservation Finance Guide, of use to national governments and others, and convenes an Interagency Planning Group on Environmental Funds (IPG) dedicated to supporting environmental funds in Africa, Asia and Latin America.

55. Other innovative resource mobilization mechanisms supported by United Nations agencies and international organizations include the Seed Initiative (Supporting Entrepreneurs in Environment and Development), and the Equator Initiative. The Seed Initiative uses an international award scheme, intensive capacity-building activities and a research programme to support and build the capacity of locally-driven entrepreneurial partnerships that contribute to the MDGs and Johannesburg Plan of Implementation. The Equator Initiative similarly includes a prestigious international award, recognizing outstanding local efforts to reduce poverty through the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity. Among other features, the initiative also features an investment program (Equator Ventures) focused on combining finance and capacity development for biodiversity enterprises in the most biodiversity-rich locations of the world.

Table 1. Examples of technical support mechanisms for implementation provided by environmental conventions and other international organizations

Area	Conventions	FAO	UNDP	UNEP	Other organizations
Knowledge management	- Handbooks for Wise Use (Ramsar) -Handbook and manuals (CITES)	- Technical Guidelines (e.g., for implementation of the Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries)		- Guidelines and Manual on MEA Compliance and Enforcement - Issue-based modules	
Training	Regional Centers (Basel Convention) Capacity-building unit (CITES) Expert groups (UNFCCC) National committees (Ramsar, UNESCO-MAB)	- Decentralized Cooperation Programme - Farmer Field Schools	- Capacity 2015, including networks and on-line resources - Technical Cooperation among Developing Countries (TCDC)	-national training workshops on implementation - Global Biodiversity Forum - support to Biodiversity Data Management	- Training workshops (UNITAR) - Knowledge and/or action networks (NGOs, research institutes)
Policy development	National Legislation Project (CITES)	- Policy Assistance Division - EasyPol online resource	- Biodiversity Global Programme (integration into national policies)	- Environmental Law Programme	- Partnership for Development of Environmental Law and Institutions in Africa (FAO, UNDP, UNEP, IUCN, World Bank, ...)
National planning and technical field support	Advisory missions and reports (Ramsar, WHC)	- Special Programme for Food Security	- Drylands Development Centre, support to National Action Plans	- Biodiversity Planning Programme (defunct)	- European Biodiversity Service
			-UNDP/UNEP Global Support programme to prepare National Capacity-building Needs Assessment of the 3 Rio conventions		
Financial resource mobilization	Small Grants Fund (Ramsar) World Heritage Fund (WHC) Multilateral Fund (Montreal Protocol) Clean Development Mechanism (UNFCCC) Evian project (Ramsar)	- Small grants facility	- UNDP GEF -UNDP-GEF Small Grants Programme	- UNEP GEF	- IFAD- Bilateral funding - Conservation Finance Alliance - Seed Initiative - Equator Initiative
