



## CONVENTION ON BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY

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### CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES TO THE CONVENTION ON BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY

Eighth meeting

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Item 20 of the provisional agenda\*

### PROGRESS TOWARDS IMPLEMENTATION OF THE CONVENTION AND ITS STRATEGIC PLAN

#### *Follow-up to the recommendations of the Ad Hoc Open-ended Working Group on the Review of Implementation of the Convention*

*Note by the Executive Secretary*

#### I. INTRODUCTION

1. In 2002, the Conference of the Parties adopted a Strategic Plan (decision VI/26), committing Parties to a more effective and coherent implementation of the objectives of the Convention, to achieve, by 2010, a significant reduction in the current rate of biodiversity loss at the global, regional, and national level. In order to evaluate global progress towards the 2010 target, the Conference of the Parties adopted, through decision VII/30, a preliminary framework of goals, subsidiary targets and indicators. By the same decision (paragraph 23), the Conference of the Parties established the Ad Hoc Open-ended Working Group on Review of Implementation of the Convention to, *inter alia*, consider progress in the implementation of the Convention and the Strategic Plan and achievements leading up to the 2010 target.

2. The first meeting of the Ad Hoc Working Group on Review of Implementation, held from 5 to 9 September 2005 in Montreal, reviewed, among other issues, the implementation of the Convention, including progress towards the goals and objectives of the Strategic Plan.

In considering this issue, the Working Group recommended, *inter alia*, that the Conference of the Parties consider, at its ninth meeting: the in-depth review of the implementation of goals 2 and 3 of the Strategic Plan; and consolidated guidance for the development, implementation and evaluation of national biodiversity strategies and action plans, and for the effective integration of biodiversity concerns into relevant sectors (recommendation 1/1 B, paragraph 3). In light of this work, the Working Group recommended that the Conference of the Parties, at its eighth meeting, consider appropriate mechanisms for undertaking the review, and developing the guidance called for (recommendation 1/1 A, paragraph 1). The Working Group further recommended that the Conference of the Parties consider options for the provision of increased technical support for developing countries in order to facilitate and promote

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\* UNEP/CBD/COP/8/1.

implementation of the Convention, and to support Parties' review of national implementation (recommendation 1/1 A, paragraphs 2 and 3).

3. To assist the Conference of the Parties in considering the above matters at its eighth meeting, the Working Group requested the Executive Secretary, in recommendation 1/1 C, to develop:

(a) An outline of issues to be addressed by the in-depth review of national biodiversity strategies and action plans;

(b) A proposal on the form and scope of guidance for the development and implementation of national biodiversity strategies and action plans and cross-sectoral integration;

(c) Options for the provision of technical support to Parties for implementation, drawing upon, *inter alia*, the experience of other conventions and international organizations;

(d) Options to support Parties to undertake, on a voluntary basis, a review of national implementation, as envisaged in paragraph 41 of decision V/20;

(e) A proposal on inviting the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and other biodiversity-relevant organizations to participate in the Biodiversity Liaison Group.

4. The present note responds to this request, addressing the issues outlined above in turn, in sections III, IV, V and VI respectively. The final request ('a proposal on inviting other organizations to join the biodiversity liaison group'), however, is addressed in a separate note by the Executive Secretary (UNEP/CBD/COP/8/25). To begin, section II of this note outlines the conclusions of the Working Group concerning the status of implementation of the Strategic Plan.

## II. STATUS OF IMPLEMENTATION OF THE STRATEGIC PLAN

5. The Working Group on Review of Implementation recommended that the Conference of the Parties take note of the analysis of progress towards the achievement of the goals of the Strategic Plan, as summarized below:

*Goal 1: The Convention is fulfilling its leadership role in international biodiversity issues.* Progress is being made towards this goal and many of the objectives could be reached by 2010 through current or planned activities. For future progress, focused attention is needed to integrate biodiversity concerns into global and regional instruments and processes that relate to major economic sectors (such as agriculture, forestry, fisheries and trade), and in improving coherence at the national level;

*Goal 2: Parties have improved financial, human, scientific, technical, and technological capacity to implement the Convention.* The current lack of significant progress towards this goal remains a major problem for the Convention, since lack of financial, human, scientific, technical, and technological capacity constitutes a major obstacle to implementation. There is a need for increased resources to be provided from both domestic and international sources. However, these are becoming increasingly linked as more development aid is provided through general budget support to developing countries. The underlying obstacles are lack of awareness of biodiversity and its importance among donors, other key actors and society at large, and lack of political will and support;

*Goal 3: National biodiversity strategies and action plans and the integration of biodiversity concerns into relevant sectors serve as an effective framework for the implementation of the objectives of the Convention.* Progress towards this goal remains poor. While some 100 Parties have developed national biodiversity strategies and action plans, this represents little over half of all Parties—12 years after the entry into force of the Convention. Satisfactory implementation of national biodiversity strategies and action plans is presumably limited to even fewer countries.

*Goal 4: There is a better understanding of the importance of biodiversity and of the Convention, and this has led to broader engagement across society in implementation.* Progress towards this goal is mixed. Indigenous and local community representatives and some stakeholders (such as many civil-society organizations) are well engaged with the Convention, although the involvement of indigenous and local communities at the national level is often limited. There is very little engagement of the private sector at any level, despite their significant impacts on biodiversity. Current communication, education and public awareness programmes are not sufficient to address the widespread lack of awareness and understanding of biodiversity.

6. Further analysis of the state of implementation of the Convention and the Strategic Plan is available (UNEP/CBD/WG-RI/1/2), and in particular in table 1 of that document.

7. Overall, it is apparent that while there is some progress in some areas, especially for goals 1 and 4, implementation of the Convention at the national level is still at an early stage. In light of this analysis, the Working Group recommended that the Conference of the Parties decide to consider, at its ninth meeting, the in-depth review of the implementation of goals 2 and 3 of the Strategic Plan.

### **III. REVIEW OF NATIONAL BIODIVERSITY STRATEGIES AND ACTION PLANS**

8. As part of the preparations for the recommended in-depth review of the implementation of goals 2 and 3 of the Strategic Plan, the Working Group on Review of Implementation requested the Executive Secretary to develop an outline of issues to be addressed by the in-depth review of national biodiversity strategies and action plans (NBSAPs).

9. Based on the discussions of the Working Group and, in particular, its recommendation 1/1 B (paragraph 4), the Executive Secretary has identified the main issues to be addressed by an in-depth review of NBSAPs, at the Convention level, as follows:

- (a) Obtaining a global overview of NBSAP status and development:
  - (i) Number - Number of Parties with national (or regional) biodiversity strategies and action plans (or alternative strategies) completed or in development;
  - (ii) Scope – Do NBSAPs (or alternative strategies) support implementation of all aspects of the Convention (e.g., the three objectives, programmes of work and cross-cutting issues, 2010 target and Strategic Plan);
  - (iii) Updates – where Parties have updated NBSAPs, useful lessons on changes made;
  - (iv) Goals and targets – whether Parties have developed national and/or regional goals and targets in line with decision VII/30, and integrated these goals and targets into NBSAPs and other relevant plans, programmes and initiatives;
  - (v) Process – for development and updating of NBSAPs, useful lessons on process followed, particularly with regards to involving all relevant ministries and stakeholders (including local and indigenous communities, non-governmental organizations, and the private sector);
- (b) Assessing implementation:
  - (i) Priorities and achievements – what areas/activities are assigned priority by Parties, and where have significant outcomes been achieved;
  - (ii) Measures – what are the most common/successful policies, programmes, activities, and other measures put in place to advance implementation, and to monitor implementation;
  - (iii) Obstacles to implementation;
- (c) Integration of biodiversity into other sectors:

- (i) Achievements – in what sectors is there evidence of consideration of biodiversity issues (including the adoption of biodiversity-related goals and targets), and what have been the facilitating factors;
- (ii) Obstacles to integration;
- (d) Ways and means to overcome obstacles:
  - (i) Review of options – identification of existing facilitating factors, support mechanisms, and approaches;
  - (ii) Strategies – identification of existing mechanisms, of opportunities for synergies among these, and of gaps in available support.

10. The above outline of issues corresponds closely to priorities identified under the Convention's Strategic Plan. Goal 3 of the Strategic Plan includes specific objectives on establishing NBSAPs (i.e., the issue of status, objective 3.1), integrating biodiversity concerns into other sectors (objective 3.3), and actively implementing NBSAP priorities (objective 3.4). (objective 3.2, specific to the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety, is not considered here).

11. Furthermore, issues of obstacles to implementation and integration, and ways and means to overcome these obstacles, are consistent with specific objectives under goal 2 of the Strategic Plan. All Parties are expected to have adequate capacity for implementation of priority actions in NBSAPs (objective 2.1), with technical and scientific cooperation providing significant support to capacity-building efforts (objective 2.5).

12. The Working Group on Review of Implementation recommended that the Conference of the Parties invite Parties to provide timely information in preparation for the called-for review (recommendation 1/1 B, paragraph 4). Accordingly, the Conference of the Parties should endeavour to make use of this information, particularly as involving Parties closely in the review process should help to facilitate and promote more effective implementation of the Convention. In this way, the review can be more than simply an information-gathering exercise.

13. To assist Parties in reviewing and reporting on the status, implementation and updating of national biodiversity strategies and action plans, and the extent to which biodiversity concerns have been effectively mainstreamed, the Executive Secretary has prepared the guidelines contained in the annex to the present note. These guidelines reflect the main issues to be addressed by the in-depth review (as outlined in paragraph 9), and are expected to serve both as a practical tool to help Parties structure their national review process, and as a reporting guide for eliciting consistent information from Parties on the results of their review.

14. Information provided by Parties through their national review process can be considered through several mechanisms, including at regional workshops (held in the first quarter of 2007), and/or at a second meeting of the Ad Hoc Open-ended Working Group on Review of Implementation of the Convention (held in the third quarter of 2007). The advantage of a combined approach (regional workshops followed by a second meeting of the Working Group) is that better-quality reports (obtained through pre-workshop preparation at the national level and experience sharing at the regional level) could be assessed comprehensively by the Working Group on Review of Implementation. A synthesis of information provided by Parties, the reports of the regional workshops, and/or the analysis undertaken by the second meeting of the Working Group on Review of Implementation would be considered by the Conference of the Parties at its ninth meeting.

#### **IV. GUIDANCE FOR THE DEVELOPMENT, IMPLEMENTATION AND EVALUATION OF NBSAPS**

15. In considering progress in implementation of the Convention and the Strategic Plan, the Working Group on Review of Implementation reviewed the guidance available for development and

implementation of NBSAPs. The information note on the subject, prepared for the Working Group (UNEP/CBD/WG-RI/1/INF/8), provides a comprehensive assessment of the available guidance (i.e., policy advice adopted by the Conference of the Parties) and supplementary guidelines (i.e., practical tools developed to assist Parties and stakeholders in developing NBSAPS). This assessment is summarized in a note by the Executive Secretary (UNEP/CBD/WG-RI/1/2).

16. The assessment found that, while decision VI/27 A provides useful general guidance on national biodiversity strategies and action plans, there are a number of shortcomings in the total body of guidance and guidelines developed:

(a) Guidance relating to the substantive scope of national biodiversity strategies and action plans is scattered among a large number of individual decisions, particularly among those dealing with the thematic programmes of work;

(b) There are a number of tools developed by the Conference of the Parties (including, for example, the principles and guidance on the ecosystem approach and the guidelines on environmental assessments) that are probably not used to their full potential in developing and implementing national biodiversity strategies and action plans;

(c) Parties have been encouraged to promote synergies among national biodiversity strategies and action plans and corresponding plans and strategies under other Conventions (including the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification), but little specific guidance has been made available regarding this issue;

(d) The guidelines recommended for use in 1995 have not been updated, and therefore do not reflect the growing body of guidance of the Conference of Parties, including guidance related to the thematic programmes of work. Moreover, the Biodiversity Planning Support Project, previously operated by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), is no longer operational.

17. Based on the above limitations, it is proposed that updated guidance on NBSAPs be developed according to the following steps:

(a) Rationalization of existing guidance from the Conference of the Parties, including:

- (i) Retaining general approaches (e.g., decision VI/27);
- (ii) Calling for the integration of all programmes of work into NBSAPs;
- (iii) Calling for the integration of tools developed under the Convention into NBSAP processes (implementation, monitoring and evaluation);

(b) A gap analysis to identify where new guidance may be required in order to enhance implementation of the Convention. This should include the cross-sectoral integration of biodiversity issues, which is understood to relate to:

- (i) Sectors outside environment (e.g., agriculture, fisheries, forestry, mining, trade, finance, etc.);
- (ii) Other national strategies (e.g., Poverty Reduction Strategies, the Millennium Development Goals as these are integrated into national development strategies, etc.);
- (iii) Activities under other conventions (e.g., the biodiversity-related conventions, the Rio conventions).

18. It is proposed that the consolidated and updated guidance would be drafted by the Executive Secretary and considered by the Working Group on Review of Implementation at its second meeting with a view to adoption by the Conference of the Parties at its ninth meeting.

19. This guidance would be complemented by the development of updated guidelines for the preparation, implementation and evaluation of national biodiversity strategies and action plans. These

guidelines should reflect the consolidated and updated guidance, and take into account the challenges related to the biodiversity planning process as identified through earlier assessments and experience. In particular, it is proposed that the new guidelines on NBSAPs should:

- (a) Be practical and useful to Parties;
- (b) Build on existing guidelines and national experience (through available assessments and successful national examples);
- (c) Focus on implementation and evaluation as well as preparation;
- (d) Contain tools to guide implementation and evaluation, including tools for assessing outcomes against the objectives of the Convention and its Strategic Plan as well as the 2010 target;
- (e) Contain tools to guide the integration of biodiversity concerns across sectors and across national strategies (e.g., PRSPs, MDG projects)
- (f) Contain guidance on how to involve all relevant sectors (including ministries) and stakeholders, particularly indigenous and local communities, and women, in the development, update, implementation and evaluation of NBSAPs, including through the development of communication, education and public awareness programmes;
- (g) Contain tools for enhancing synergies in implementation of relevant conventions;
- (h) Specifically address obstacles to NBSAP implementation identified in previous reviews.

20. In preparing the guidelines, it may also be useful to consider how the planning and evaluation process can result in multiple products. In addition to the NBSAP itself, these products could include a publication on the country's biodiversity for policy makers and/or the general public, a CD-ROM compiling existing biodiversity data, a newsletter on the process, a website, etc., as a means to increase public awareness and stakeholder engagement.

21. It is proposed that the Executive Secretary seek support from other organizations in preparing updated guidelines for the development, implementation and evaluation of NBSAPs, and the effective integration of biodiversity concerns into relevant sectors. The implementing agencies of the Global Environment Facility (i.e., FAO, UNDP and UNEP) and organizations involved in the development of earlier guidelines for biodiversity planning, such as the World Resources Institute, Fauna and Flora International and the World Conservation Union (IUCN), would be well-placed to assist in this work.

22. Updated guidance and guidelines alone may not be sufficient to overcome obstacles in the development and, in particular, the implementation and evaluation of national biodiversity strategies and action plans. Further technical and financial support will be required by some Parties. This issue is considered further in section V below.

23. It should be noted that the development of new guidance for the development, implementation and evaluation of NBSAPs, and for the integration of biodiversity concerns into other sectors, will take place in parallel to the process of updating guidelines on NBSAPs. At the same time, Parties and the Convention will be reviewing progress in implementation of NBSAPs. Given that lessons learned in reviewing NBSAPs can help to produce better guidance and guidelines, and that better guidance and guidelines could improve review processes, it will be important that efforts are made to keep each process abreast of work undertaken in the others.

**V. OPTIONS FOR TECHNICAL SUPPORT TO PARTIES FOR FACILITATING AND PROMOTING IMPLEMENTATION OF THE CONVENTION**

**A. *Survey of experience in other conventions and potential contributions of international organizations***

24. 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.

25. 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), the World Conservation Union (IUCN) and the Worldwide Fund for Nature (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.

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

27. In addition, these ideas were discussed among representatives of FAO, UNEP and relevant staff of the Secretariat on the margins of the eleventh meeting of SBSTTA, and between Secretariat staff and UNDP representatives in telephone and electronic communications.

28. An overview of the experience of other conventions in providing technical support to Parties for facilitating and promoting implementation, and of potential modalities by which international organizations can support implementation, is provided in an information document (UNEP/CBD/COP/8/INF/8, sections II and III).

29. It might be noted that this is an opportune time for exploring the role of partner organizations in supporting Parties' efforts to implement the Convention since: (i) UNEP is currently developing proposals to implement the Bali Strategic Action Plan for Technology Support and Capacity-building, adopted by the twenty-third session of UNEP's Governing Council/Global Ministerial Environmental Forum, Nairobi, February 2005 (where the Bali Plan emphasises cooperation with multilateral environmental agreements as well as with UNDP); and (ii) following decisions during the September 2005 World Summit, UNDP and other institutions are now focusing on assisting countries to integrate biodiversity and other environment-related issues into their MDG-based national development strategies (including PRSPs, MDG strategies, national strategies for sustainable development, etc.).

30. At the same time, it should be recalled that the Conference of the Parties has noted on several occasions that increased support for implementation of the Convention requires additional financial and other resources.

## ***B. Categories of technical support***

31. From the survey of practice in the Convention on Biological Diversity, other conventions and other international organizations, and taking a broad view of the term “technical”, the following categories of technical support can be identified. It should be noted that examples are provided for illustrative purposes only, and are not exhaustive; these and additional examples are described in an information document (UNEP/CBD/COP/8/INF/8).

32. *Knowledge management.* Guidelines and tools, including but not limited to those adopted by the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity, are a common form of technical support to Parties, providing practical knowledge and useful examples. Tools might include programmes of work, manuals, training guides, case-studies and other instruments, and are often made available in print, but also as CD-ROMs and online (in databases or otherwise). The Issue-based modules, for example, in development by UNEP in collaboration with UNEP-WCMC and IUCN, will be an online and paper-based tool for facilitating national implementation, by identifying and grouping implementation requirements under the different biodiversity-related MEAs. Specific mechanisms for disseminating and exchanging knowledge include the Convention’s clearing-house mechanism (CHM), the Technology Transfer Clearing-House of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, and the FAO Virtual Library.

33. *Global and regional training workshops and seminars.* Training workshops, seminars and similar events are key elements of capacity-building initiatives. The Secretariat has held several regional training workshops for CHM focal points, for example, while FAO developed regional training workshops as part of its support to countries preparing reports for the ‘State of the World’s Animal Genetic Resources’. Other types of events, such as the Global Biodiversity Forum founded, in part, by UNEP, and led by IUCN, builds capacity at regional level by promoting open dialogue and analysis on biodiversity-related issues.

34. *Support to national policy development and legislation.* Countries have widely varying capacity for translating their international obligations under environmental conventions into appropriate domestic legislation. FAO provides advice and builds capacity to support countries in the formulation and implementation of food, agriculture, fishery, forestry and rural development policies. UNEP, through its Environmental Law Programme, promotes the development and implementation of national environmental legislation, through, *inter alia*, legislative reviews, drafting of model legislation, and capacity-building. UNDP, through its global network of over 140 Country Offices and its capacity-development mandate assists countries in national policy issues related to its core practices of environment and energy, governance, poverty reduction, etc.

35. *National institutional strengthening and technical field support.* The United Nations’ specialized agencies and programmes provide focused support to institution-building and field projects. The FAO Special Programme for Food Security, for instance, organizes in-country technical support teams to assist national governments in planning, mobilizing resources, and implementing national programmes. The UNDP Drylands Development Centre similarly supports national planning processes, providing assistance in concept development and methodology, mobilization of resources, capacity-building, and assistance for partnership-building among stakeholders to combat desertification. A particular focus of UNEP is to strengthen national capacity for knowledge management, assisting Governments in inventorying biodiversity country studies, strategies and action plans. In addition, as many as 150 countries are participating in the three-year Global Support Programme for National Capacity Self Assessment (NCSA),<sup>1/</sup> a GEF initiative implemented jointly by UNDP and UNEP. The NCSA enables countries to assess their priorities and needs for capacity-building in order to address global environmental issues and to explore synergies across multiple GEF focal areas. The emphasis of the Global Support Programme will be on developing targets, indicators and resource materials for the NCSA process, analyzing effective

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<sup>1/</sup> [http://intra.undp.org/gef/programmingmanual/NCSA\\_Prodoc\\_13\\_Jan\\_05\\_final\\_version.doc](http://intra.undp.org/gef/programmingmanual/NCSA_Prodoc_13_Jan_05_final_version.doc).



capacity development activities, disseminating synthesis reports and good practice reviews and facilitating national capacity action plans and follow-up projects.

36. *Small grants.* Small grants can serve to support practical projects with significant, though necessarily limited, impact. FAO draws on in-house experts (located at its headquarters in Rome, and in the decentralized offices), to identify the most appropriate solutions for specific problems in the agriculture, fisheries and forestry sectors. UNDP-GEF also uses a small grants programme (SGP) to support community-based approaches to biodiversity-related problems.

37. *Major grants and investment.* The Global Environment Facility is the primary financial mechanism of the Convention, implemented by UNEP, UNDP and the World Bank. The implementing agencies provide technical assistance to Parties in preparing and implementing project proposals for the GEF, as well as for bilateral and multilateral funding. Major funds are also available under IFAD.

38. Technical support activities under the above categories could contribute to Parties' efforts in the development, review, and updating of NBSAPs, as well as in NBSAP implementation and evaluation.

### **C. *Identification of options for providing enhanced technical support to Parties***

39. In considering options for the provision of technical support to Parties for facilitating and promoting implementation of the Convention, and the respective roles of the Secretariat and other organizations, the Conference of the Parties may wish to take into account a number of factors, including the following:

(a) *Category of activity* (as per previous sub-section);

(b) *Scale of activity* (global, regional, national, and local). Some forms of support (particularly those under the category of knowledge management) can be provided effectively at the global level, while others require action at regional, national, or even local levels. The Secretariat can more easily provide support at the global level and, to some extent, at the regional level, while it is more difficult for the Secretariat to be involved in national level activities (beyond pilot studies and review of major project documents). An exception to this concerns support to the preparation of national reports and review of implementation. For country-based activities, those organizations, like UNDP and FAO, that have country representations have a comparative advantage;

(c) *Biodiversity expertise, mainstreaming and sense of ownership.* The Secretariat contains a high concentration of expertise on biodiversity-related matters and holds much of the institutional memory of the Convention itself. On the other hand, many other organizations contain a wide range of expertise on biodiversity-related matters and their application to particular sectors and to particular regions. Technical support can be provided most effectively when both types of expertise are drawn upon. In addition, Parties themselves hold the vast majority of the pool of total expertise. Both the Secretariat and other organizations can assist in accessing this pool. Furthermore, fostering the contribution of sectoral or geographically-based technical experts in the implementation of the Convention can help to mainstream biodiversity concerns and contribute to enhanced sense of ownership of common objectives;

(d) *Cost.* Costs vary by category of activity and by the means of delivering them. Knowledge management has relatively smaller cost implications, whereas support for workshops, policy development etc has intermediate costs implications, and full scale support for national implementation has major cost implications;

(e) *Secretariat capacity.* The Secretariat has limited capacity to provide technical support to Parties for facilitating and promoting implementation of the Convention. Even when additional financial support is provided for travel, capacity is limited because of staff time constraints.

40. There are a number of options for the provision of technical support to Parties for facilitating and promoting implementation of the Convention, as described below. The first three of these could be

pursued with relatively small cost implications, while the second three would have significant cost implications. The cost to the Convention on Biological Diversity itself however, would be large only in the case of option 4. The options are not all mutually incompatible. Several of the options could be pursued jointly to develop a technical assistance programme.

Option 1. *Incremental increase in current Secretariat activities.* The Secretariat is already engaged in activities such as the preparation of tools and guidelines; distribution of materials through the clearing-house mechanism; facilitation and promotion of contributions from partner organizations; participation in various global and regional workshops; review of selected GEF projects; review (to a limited extent) of NBSAPs and national reports; and provision of ad hoc advice on request from Parties. With an increase in the necessary resources combined with a re-allocation of resources there could be a commensurate increase in these activities. A priority activity in this context could be a more systematic approach to the review of NBSAPs and national reports. Advantages of this option are: that it requires minimal institutional change; and it may be useful for testing some approaches. Disadvantages of this approach are: that it is almost certain to be too little; and it risks being ad hoc.

Option 2. *Mainstreaming biodiversity in activities of other organizations.* The Secretariat already has cooperative arrangements with a large number of partner organizations, including through Joint Work Programmes and Memoranda of Cooperation, and these contribute to some extent in supporting implementation by Parties. A more concerted effort to engage partner organization in supporting implementation could be pursued as part of a strategic approach to cooperation, including through the proposed global partnership for biodiversity (See UNEP/CBD/COP/8/25). Advantages of this approach include a contribution to mainstreaming of biodiversity concerns into the programmes of work of other organizations. It would also have relatively small cost implications. (Although there is a need to invest Secretariat time in maintaining cooperative relationships). The disadvantages are that, without a more formally agreed framework for such cooperation, it could be difficult for partner organizations to raise the necessary resources to support their contributions, and there could be resistance in those organizations to what might be perceived as promoting the priorities of another organization.

Option 3. *Enhanced cooperation among a group of implementing agencies.* The previous approach could be enhanced through a mechanism for formulating a joint approach to the provision of technical support to Parties for facilitating and promoting implementation of the Convention—for example through a Liaison Group for Technical Cooperation. Such a group would include FAO, UNDP and UNEP as well as the Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity, and possibly other organizations such as the World Bank, UNESCO, UNITAR, IFAD and other specialized agencies, and IUCN. An advantage of this approach is that it would instil a common sense of purpose among the group, especially if the group was limited in size. The disadvantage is that it could be potentially cumbersome, especially if group is too large.

Option 4. *Dedicated Implementation Facility.* A dedicated implementation facility could provide a substantially higher level of support to Parties, but would require substantially greater resources than the options outlined previously. A facility could be established within the Secretariat (building on the model, for example, of the CITES Capacity-Building Unit, or the Montreal Protocol Unit), external to the Secretariat (as an independent entity), or as a joint endeavour with other organizations. Potential partners might include, for example, FAO, UNDP, UNEP, UNITAR and UNESCO.

41. In preparing proposals for enhancing the provision of technical support to Parties that can be implemented in the short-term (UNEP/CBD/COP/8/28/Add.1), the Executive Secretary has combined elements from options 1, 2 and 3, described above.

42. In developing a technical assistance programme through any combination of the options outlined above, it will be important to ensure consistency and avoid duplication with other initiatives, such as the

liaison group of the Rio Conventions, the liaison group of the biodiversity-related conventions, the proposed global partnership on biodiversity and other cooperation initiatives; work to engage the private sector; and further work under the clearing house mechanism and on the programme of work on technology transfer. It is also important to emphasize that the purpose of the technical assistance programme would be solely to facilitate and promote implementation of already-agreed objectives of the Convention, and would not, in itself, have any policy-making role.

## **VI. OPTIONS TO SUPPORT PARTIES TO UNDERTAKE, ON A VOLUNTARY BASIS, A REVIEW OF NATIONAL IMPLEMENTATION**

43. The Working Group on Review of Implementation requested the Executive Secretary to develop options to support Parties to undertake, on a voluntary basis, a review of national implementation, as envisaged in paragraph 41 of decision V/20. <sup>2/</sup>

44. An overview of existing mechanisms and processes used for review of national implementation under other environmental instruments and other relevant organizations is provided in an information document on the (UNEP/CBD/COP/8/INF/8, part III). It is noted that, because the national reports provide the common basis for reviewing implementation under most conventions, many of the support mechanisms relate to national report preparation.

45. Drawing upon this survey of other instruments, the following options to support Parties to undertake a review of national implementation are identified.

(a) *Guidelines.* Most conventions prepare guidelines for the preparation of national reports. This includes the Convention on Biological Diversity. Particularly detailed guidelines are provided by UNFCCC. <sup>3/</sup> The draft guidelines for the review of NBSAPs (annex I) represent an example of this type of approach to supporting review.

(b) *Workshops.* National or regional workshops are commonly used to support countries' reviews of their implementation of conventions or other plans or programmes. Examples include the FAO Global Plan of Action for the Conservation and Sustainable Use of Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture. National workshops tend to focus on promoting stakeholder engagement in the review process itself, while regional workshops emphasize the sharing of lessons and experiences in implementation, including obstacles to implementation. Support to such workshops might be technical and/or financial. It is proposed that regional workshops be convened as part of the preparations of national implementation for the in-depth review by the ninth meeting of the Conference of the Parties. Support for national workshops is identified as a possible option for the provision of technical support (See part V);

(c) *Individual in-depth review by an experts group.* A few conventions provide for independent reviews of national implementation by an external group of experts. Such an approach is used under the UNFCCC, for example, for reviewing national communications. A related approach is the use of advisory missions to sites inscribed to the Ramsar Convention or the World Heritage Convention, if those sites are found to be under threat. The approach could be adapted and used in a purely advisory function at the request of the Party undertaking a review of its national implementation;

(d) *Review by a formal convention body.* Both the UNFCCC (through its Subsidiary Body on Implementation), and the UNCCD (through its Committee for the Review of the Implementation of the Convention) provide for reviews of national implementation by subsidiary bodies of the conventions.

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<sup>2/</sup> Decision V/20 (para 41): The Conference of the Parties requests the Executive Secretary to provide an overview of existing mechanisms and processes for review of national implementation of environmental instruments, and invites Parties to undertake, on a voluntary basis, a review of national programmes and needs related to the implementation of the Convention and, if appropriate, to inform the Executive Secretary accordingly.

<sup>3/</sup> See also the analysis in UNEP/CBD/WG-RI/1/10, section III.

46. With the exception of the last approach (Review by a formal convention body), the modalities identified here overlap with the options for the provision of technical support to Parties for implementation of the Convention. It is proposed therefore, that such approaches be considered further as part of the proposed technical assistance programme (section V). It is emphasized that, given the nature of the Convention and its obligations, the approach of the review should be one to support Parties' efforts in reviewing implementation, and in strengthening their capacity to carry out their own reviews, rather than on "verifying" information or compliance with obligations.

**DRAFT DECISION**

*Note: The following part of the draft decision was developed by the Working Group on Review of Implementation (recommendation I/1-B)*

*The Conference of the Parties*

*Emphasizing* the need to address each of the three objectives of the Convention,

*Noting* that the major obstacles to the implementation of the Convention have already been identified in the Strategic Plan, and ways and means of overcoming these obstacles need to be identified,

*Stressing* the need for the provision of new and additional financial resources for the implementation of the Convention in accordance with Article 20, and looking forward to a successful replenishment of the GEF,

*Recalling* that paragraph 4 of Article 23 tasks the Conference of the Parties with keeping under review the implementation of the Convention,

1. *Decides* that review of implementation of the Convention should be a standing item on its agenda;
2. *Takes note* of the analysis of progress towards the goals of the Strategic Plan summarized in paragraph 5 of the note by the Executive Secretary on implementation of the Convention and the Strategic Plan and progress towards the 2010 target (UNEP/CBD/WG-RI/1/2);
3. *Decides* to consider, at its ninth meeting, the in-depth review of the implementation of goals 2 and 3 of the Strategic Plan, and consolidated guidance for the development, implementation and evaluation of national biodiversity strategies and action plans and the effective integration of biodiversity concerns into relevant sectors;
4. In preparation for the review process referred to in paragraph 3 above, *invites* Parties to provide timely information on:
  - (a) The status of national biodiversity strategies and action plans, their implementation and updating, and the extent to which biodiversity concerns have been effectively mainstreamed in accordance with Article 6 (b) of the Convention on Biological Diversity;
  - (b) The main obstacles to implementation of the Convention at the national level, including obstacles to the implementation of national biodiversity strategies and action plans, and to the effective integration of biodiversity concerns into relevant sectors (using as a framework the list of obstacles identified in the Strategic Plan), and ways and means by which these obstacles might be overcome;
  - (c) An update on actions taken in response to paragraph 41 of decision V/20 on reviewing implementation at the national level.

*Note: The following part of the draft decision is proposed by the Executive Secretary in follow-up to the Working Group on Review of Implementation (recommendation I/1. A and C).*

5. *Takes note* of the outline of issues to be addressed by the in-depth review of national biodiversity strategies and action plans (contained in paragraph 9 of this note), and *encourages* Parties, in providing the information referred to in paragraph 4, to make use of the guidelines provided in annex I,

6. *Requests* the Working Group on Review of Implementation, at its second meeting (in the third quarter of 2007), to:

- (a) Undertake, prior to the ninth meeting of the Conference of the Parties, an in-depth review of the implementation of goals 2 and 3 of the Strategic Plan (excluding consideration of the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety), including an assessment of obstacles to their implementation and of ways and

/...

means of overcoming such obstacles on the basis, *inter alia*, of information provided in the third national reports and supplementary submissions provided by Parties, focusing in particular on:

- (i) The provision of financial resources, capacity-building and technology transfer;
  - (ii) The status of national biodiversity strategies and action plans, their implementation and updating, and the extent to which biodiversity concerns are effectively integrated into relevant sectors and have been effectively mainstreamed in accordance with Article 6 (b) of the Convention;
- (b) Develop, on the basis of a draft prepared by the Executive Secretary, consolidated and up-to-date guidance for the development, implementation and evaluation of national biodiversity strategies and action plans and the effective integration of biodiversity concerns into relevant sectors, including financial considerations for implementing and updating national strategies and guidance on facilitating the involvement of indigenous and local communities;
7. *Recommends* that regional meetings be convened during the first quarter of 2007 in order to discuss national experiences in implementing NBSAPs and the integration of biodiversity concerns into relevant sectors, including consideration of obstacles and ways and means for overcoming the obstacles;
8. *Requests* the Executive Secretary, in consultation with regional groups and subject to the availability of the necessary funds, to convene the regional meetings referred to in paragraph 7;
9. *Further requests* the Executive Secretary to compile the information referred to in paragraph 4 above, and to prepare a synthesis/analysis of lessons learned, and to make this compilation and synthesis/analysis available to the regional meetings, and to the second meeting of the Working Group on Review of Implementation;
10. *Requests* the Executive Secretary, to prepare, for the consideration of the Working Group on Review of Implementation, draft updated guidance, according to the form and scope presented in section IV of this note;
11. *Requests* the Executive Secretary to liaise with relevant organizations, such as UNEP, Fauna and Flora International, IUCN, and the World Resources Institute, with a view to developing revised and updated guidelines to assist Parties in the development, implementation, evaluation and updating of NBSAPs, taking into account the elements listed in section IV of this note;
12. *Invites* UNEP, Fauna and Flora International, IUCN, the World Resources Institute and other relevant organizations to contribute to the development of revised and updated guidelines to assist Parties in the development, review, updating and implementation of NBSAPs.
13. *Recognizing* the need for increased capacity within Parties to implement the Convention, particularly with regard to national biodiversity strategies, policies, plans and legislation and national reports, and *having considered* options for the provision of increased technical support (section V of this note) for developing countries, in particular the least developed and small island developing States among them, and countries with economies in transition, for facilitating and promoting implementation of the Convention *requests* the Executive Secretary, in cooperation with relevant international organizations, to develop a technical assistance programme.
14. *Invites* FAO, UNDP and UNEP, and other relevant organizations, to contribute to the development and operation of the technical assistance programme.

*Annex***PROPOSED GUIDELINES TO PARTIES FOR REVIEW OF NATIONAL  
BIODIVERSITY STRATEGIES AND ACTION PLANS****A. *Introduction****Purpose*

The purpose of these guidelines is to:

- (a) Serve as a practical tool for Parties as they review implementation of their national biodiversity strategies and action plans; and
- (b) To elicit consistent information from Parties that will assist the Conference of the Parties to complete an in-depth review of implementation of NBSAPs under the Convention, and to develop updated guidance on the preparation, implementation and evaluation of NBSAPs.

The guidelines are framed for those Parties that have NBSAPs already in place, although we recognize that certain Parties may still be in the process of developing their strategies and/or action plans.

- (a) For those Parties that do not have NBSAPs, but do have other equivalent programmes in place to meet their obligations under the Convention, we ask that you indicate as such, and adapt these guidelines to your particular programme(s);
- (b) For those Parties that have not yet begun or are in the process of developing NBSAPs, we ask that you complete Parts 1 and 5 only. In your answer to Part 1, please provide an indication of when NBSAPs will be available, and (if possible) what their scope will be. For part 5, your answer can discuss obstacles to the preparation of NBSAPs, and national needs for overcoming these challenges.

*Style and length*

The format of the report is left to the discretion of individual Parties, although suggestions are given in the guidelines. We suggest you keep the report brief, and attach more detailed information, as required, in annexes.

If possible, it would assist the Secretariat if your report could be submitted electronically, as well as (or instead of) in paper form.

*Approach*

The biodiversity planning process, including the work of review, should be as participatory as possible. Parties may wish to assemble a team to undertake the review, composed of representatives from lead institution(s), other government sectors, local and indigenous communities and other stakeholder groups. There should be an emphasis on concrete outcomes (reviewing what has been achieved in terms of meeting national biodiversity priorities) rather than on simply reporting whether or not activities have taken place. Wherever possible, Parties are asked to document these outcomes, through indicators or other means.

## **B. Guidelines**

### **Part 1. Status of NBSAPs**

This section will serve to give a brief overview of the status and scope of your country's biodiversity strategies and action plans.

#### *Identification*

- (a) Please provide the title and date of adoption for your country's:
  - Original national biodiversity strategy and action plan
  - Updated national biodiversity strategy and action plan (if applicable)
  - Any sub-national biodiversity strategies and action plans (if applicable)
- (b) If any of these documents are available on the internet, please provide the website address.

#### *Scope*

- (a) If available biodiversity strategies and action plans have been updated since first adopted, what updates were made and why? (i.e., were the updates made in response to new guidance generated by the Conference of the Parties since the NBSAP was first developed, or put in place for another reason?)
- (b) Does the most recent version of your biodiversity strategy and action plan address all of the major thematic areas and cross-cutting issues of the Convention? (See list A). List here any major issues not covered, and briefly explain why each issue is not considered in existing NBSAPs.
- (c) Does the most recent version of your available biodiversity strategy and action plan include national targets and indicators? Please append a list of these.

*NB. Parties can refer to their Third National Reports if they have already provided information on NBSAP targets and indicators, and are asked only to give updates here if new targets/indicators have been developed since the report was completed.*

### **Part 2. Development of NBSAPs**

In this section, you are asked to provide a brief description of the methodology followed in developing (and, if applicable, in updating) the above biodiversity strategies and action plans. Your response can be in the form of a narrative answer.

Please include in your answer information on:

- Which institution(s) took the lead in preparing the NBSAP;
- Whether, and which, guidelines were used;
- Whether, and how, different sectors and stakeholders (including local and indigenous communities) were involved in the process;
- Whether, and what, financial or technical support was received;
- The principal advantages and limitations of the methodology followed.

#### *Appendices:*

If your country has developed its own guidelines for developing and/or updating NBSAPs, or has prepared reports on the NBSAP process, please append these to your report.



Please append a list of groups that were involved in the preparation of the NBSAP, including an indication of the type of group (NGO, government, private sector, etc.) and the extent of their involvement. *If this information is already available (e.g., in the NBSAP itself, or in an accompanying report) please simply refer to those documents.*

### Part 3. Evaluation of implementation

In this section, Parties are asked to review progress made in implementation, based on the framework provided by their own NBSAP. Progress should be considered in terms of concrete outcomes, with Parties asking, for each element identified under their NBSAP: To what degree has implementation helped to achieve national biodiversity priorities?

Options for demonstrating concrete outcomes include, but are not limited to:

- Using the global framework indicators adopted by decision VII/30;
- Using indicators developed nationally, as called for in decision VII/8
- Citing specific legislation, regulations or national strategies developed in response to specific elements.

Parties should pay particular attention to identifying obstacles or challenges encountered in implementation, as this forms the basis for completing Part 5 of the report.

Although Parties are free to structure their report as they see fit, one option is to present information on progress in implementation in a table, such as follows:

Element	Status of Implementation	Outcome	Obstacles
...			
...			

where:

- ‘Elements’ might correspond to specific goals or targets, objectives, activities or other organizational category, depending on the structure of the NBSAP under review.
- ‘Status of implementation’ provides information on the extent to which the element has been implemented. Parties may wish to use process indicators to measure state of implementation, such as whether a budget line exists for this element, staff have been assigned, etc.
- ‘Outcome’ corresponds, wherever possible, to concrete evidence of progress, as explained above.
- ‘Obstacles’ include challenges specific (though not necessarily unique) to this element. Obstacles might include, but not be limited to, those identified in the Strategic Plan (presented in List B).

### Part 4. Integration of biodiversity concerns

Parties are asked to review whether biodiversity concerns are being effectively integrated into relevant sectors. Integration can be considered in terms of:

- Other sectors besides the environment, such as agriculture, forestry, fisheries, mining, finance, trade and industry;

- Other national and sub-national programmes and strategies, including Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers, national reports on implementation of the Millennium Development Goals, National Development Plans, National Plans to Combat Desertification, and others;
- Other convention processes besides the Convention on Biological Diversity, such as the four other biodiversity-related conventions (CITES, CMS, Ramsar, WHC), the Rio Conventions (UNCCD, UNFCCC) and others.

As in reviewing implementation, progress made in integration should be considered in terms of concrete outcomes for achieving the priorities of the NBSAP. (See part 3 for some ideas of how to measure outcomes).

Although Parties are free to structure their report as they see fit, one option is to present information on the integration of biodiversity in a table, such as follows:

Sectoral Plan, Programme or Policy	Manner in which biodiversity is integrated	Outcome	Obstacles
...			

## Part 5. Ways and means

### *Success stories and lessons learnt*

Parties are invited to share any success stories and lessons learned in developing, implementing, evaluating and/or updating their NBSAPs, for the information of other Parties and of the Conference of the Parties as it seeks to update guidance on these processes.

Specific mention of factors that facilitated NBSAP processes would be particularly useful (e.g., technical or financial support received, but also political mandates, facilitating legal frameworks).

### *Needs for further support*

In light of the review process (reported on in Parts 3 and 4), Parties are asked to consider what resources they would need in order to overcome obstacles to implementation of NBSAPs, and obstacles to the integration of biodiversity concerns into other sectors. These needs might include, but need not be limited to, technical support from developed countries.

Please be specific in your response, and prioritize those needs that will make the greatest difference to implementation and integration.

**List A****MAJOR THEMATIC AREAS AND CROSS-CUTTING ISSUES UNDER THE  
CONVENTION ON BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY**

Thematic Areas	
Agricultural biodiversity	Island biodiversity
Dry and sub-humid lands biodiversity	Marine and coastal biodiversity
Forest biodiversity	Mountain biodiversity
Inland waters biodiversity	
Cross-Cutting Issues	
Access to genetic resources and benefit-sharing	Impact assessments
Invasive alien species	Indicators
Biological diversity and tourism	Liability and redress – Article 14(2)
Climate change and biological diversity	Protected areas
Economics, trade and incentive measures	Public education and awareness
Ecosystem approach	Sustainable use of biodiversity
Global Strategy for Plant Conservation	Technology transfer and cooperation
2010 Biodiversity Target	Traditional knowledge, innovations and practices
Global Taxonomy Initiative	

**List B**

**OBSTACLES TO THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE CONVENTION ON  
BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY**

(Reproduced from the Appendix to the Strategic Plan, Decision VI/26, annex)

1. Political/societal obstacles
  - a. Lack of political will and support to implement the Convention on Biological Diversity
  - b. Limited public participation and stakeholder involvement
  - c. Lack of mainstreaming and integration of biodiversity issues into other sectors, including use of tools such as environmental impact assessments
  - d. Political instability
  - e. Lack of precautionary and proactive measures, causing reactive policies.
2. Institutional, technical and capacity-related obstacles
  - a. Inadequate capacity to act, caused by institutional weaknesses
  - b. Lack of human resources
  - c. Lack of transfer of technology and expertise
  - d. Loss of traditional knowledge
  - e. Lack of adequate scientific research capacities to support all the objectives.
3. Lack of accessible knowledge/information
  - a. Loss of biodiversity and the corresponding goods and services it provides not properly understood and documented
  - b. Existing scientific and traditional knowledge not fully utilized.
  - c. Dissemination of information on international and national level not efficient
  - d. Lack of public education and awareness at all levels.
4. Economic policy and financial resources
  - a. Lack of financial and human resources
  - b. Fragmentation of GEF financing
  - c. Lack of economic incentive measures
  - d. Lack of benefit-sharing.
5. Collaboration/cooperation
  - a. Lack of synergies at the national and international levels
  - b. Lack of horizontal cooperation among stakeholders
  - c. Lack of effective partnerships
  - d. Lack of engagement of scientific community.
6. Legal/juridical impediments
  - a. Lack of appropriate policies and laws
7. Socio-economic factors
  - a. Poverty
  - b. Population pressure
  - c. Unsustainable consumption and production patterns
  - d. Lack of capacities for local communities.
8. Natural phenomena and environmental change
  - a. Climate change
  - b. Natural disasters.