



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 22.1 of the provisional agenda*

OPERATIONS OF THE CONVENTION

Note by the Executive Secretary

I. INTRODUCTION

1. The present note has been prepared by the Executive Secretary to assist the Conference of the Parties in its consideration of issues relating to the operations of the Convention, as well as in its review of the effectiveness and impacts of Convention bodies, processes and mechanisms.
2. In its decision VII/33, on operations of the Convention, the Conference of the Parties identified a number of issues to be considered at its eighth meeting, including: the review and retirement of decisions and elements of decisions taken at its fifth and sixth meetings (paragraph 3); the consolidation of decisions in the areas of forest biological diversity, access to genetic resources and benefit-sharing, and guidance to the financial mechanism (paragraph 4); the review and revision of the administrative arrangements between the United Nations Environment Programme and the Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity (paragraph 6); the review of the effectiveness of the changes to Rule 21 of the rules of procedure of the Conference of the Parties (paragraph 7); the review of rule 4 of the rules of procedure relating to the periodicity of meetings of the Conference of the Parties (paragraph 8); and options for a mechanism for setting priorities during the consideration of agenda items by the Conference of the Parties with a view to providing the budget group with clear guidance on how to address activities with financial implications (paragraph 9).
3. Some of the issues identified in decision VII/33 were considered by the meeting of the Ad Hoc Open-ended Working Group on Review of Implementation of the Convention (WGRI), which took place in Montreal from 5 to 9 September 2005. For this meeting, the Executive Secretary prepared two notes (UNEP/CBD/WG-RI/1/3 and UNEP/CBD/WG-RI/1/3.Add.1) summarizing the findings of previous

* UNEP/CBD/COP/8/1.

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reviews of Convention processes, external reviews and submissions from Parties, and analyze the impacts and effectiveness of Convention processes, to assist the Working Group in discharging its mandate.

4. Recommendation 1/2 of the Working Group on Review of Implementation, on review of processes (UNEP/CBD/COP/8/4, annex), contains a draft decision on operations of the Convention for the consideration of the Conference of the Parties at its eighth meeting. The Working Group, *inter alia*, made recommendations on a number of the specific issues raised in decision VII/33 for the consideration of the Conference of the Parties at its eighth meeting.

5. In addition, the Working Group, in its recommendation 1/2, requested the Executive Secretary to undertake a number of activities in preparation for the eighth meeting of the Conference of the Parties, namely further consolidation of decisions in a number of specific areas; exploring options for facilitating exchange of information and views on the items on the agenda of the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice (SBSTTA); the consolidation of the existing *modus operandi* of SBSTTA, the proposed Operational Plan of SBSTTA contained in annex I to recommendation 1/2 and the relevant recommendations of the Working Group on Review of Implementation; the compilation of information to assist the Conference of the Parties to consider improved working arrangements for ad hoc open-ended working groups; and preparation of a series of options for restructuring the meeting schedule of the Convention to streamline Convention processes, including the implications of changing the frequency of its ordinary meetings.

6. Section II of this note outlines the issues for consideration by the Conference of the Parties and also reports on the inter-sessional work undertaken pursuant to decision VII/33 and recommendation 1/2 of the Working Group on Review of Implementation. Section III contains recommendations on the operations of the Convention, which the Conference of the Parties may wish to consider in addition to the draft decision in recommendation 1/2 of the Working Group and the recommendations contained in the additional documents prepared under agenda item.

7. This note is accompanied by four addenda, on:

Proposals for the retirement of decisions taken at the fifth and sixth meetings of the Conference of the Parties (UNEP/CBD/COP/8/16/Add.1);

Proposals for the consolidation of decisions pursuant to paragraph 4 of decision VII/33 and paragraph 2 of recommendation 1/2 of the Working Group (UNEP/CBD/COP/8/16/Add.2);

Revised administrative arrangements between the United Nations Environment Programme and the Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity (UNEP/CBD/COP/8/16/Add.3);

The consolidation of the existing *modus operandi* of SBSTTA, the proposed Operational Plan of SBSTTA contained in annex I of WGRI recommendation 1/2 and the relevant recommendations of the Working Group on Review of Implementation (UNEP/CBD/COP/8/16/Add.4).

8. These are supplemented by two information documents on, respectively, Review and retirement of the decisions of the Conference of the Parties (UNEP/CBD/COP/8/INF/2) and compilation of information on working arrangements for ad hoc open-ended working groups (UNEP/CBD/COP/8/INF/10).

II. ISSUES FOR CONSIDERATION PURSUANT TO DECISION VII/33 OF THE CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES AND RECOMMENDATION 1/2 OF AD HOC WORKING GROUP ON REVIEW OF IMPLEMENTATION OF THE CONVENTION AND SUMMARY OF WORK UNDERTAKEN

A. *Retirement and consolidation of the decisions of the Conference of the Parties*

9. In paragraph 3 of decision VII/33, the Conference of the Parties requested the Executive Secretary to make proposals to the eighth meeting of the Conference of the Parties regarding the retirement of decisions and elements of decisions taken at its fifth and sixth meetings, and to communicate such proposals to Parties, Governments and relevant international organizations at least six months prior to its eighth meeting.

10. In paragraph 4 of the same decision, the Conference of the Parties requested the Executive Secretary, under the guidance of the Bureau, to propose draft consolidated decisions in the areas of forest biological diversity; access to genetic resources and benefit-sharing; and guidance to the financial mechanism for the consideration of the Conference of the Parties at its eighth meeting, and to communicate the proposed draft consolidated decisions to Parties, Governments and relevant international organizations for their review and comments at least six months prior to its eighth meeting.

11. In paragraph 5 of decision VII/33, the Conference of the Parties invited Parties, Governments and relevant international organizations to submit to the Executive Secretary written comments on the proposals referred to in paragraphs 3 and 4 of the decision, at least three months prior to its eighth meeting. By a notification dated 30 May 2005 the Executive Secretary submitted draft proposals regarding the review and consolidation of the relevant decisions to members of the Bureau and to Parties, Governments and international organizations and requested them to submit written comments thereon.

12. Noting the benefits of aligning the process for consolidating decisions with the schedule for in-depth review of issues outlined in the multi-year programme of work of the Conference of the Parties up to 2010, the Ad Hoc Open-ended Working Group on Review of Implementation of the Convention, in paragraph 2 of recommendation 1/2, requested the Executive Secretary, under the guidance of the Bureau, to propose draft consolidated decisions for issues proposed for in-depth consideration at its eighth meeting, namely dry and sub-humid lands biodiversity, Article 8(j), the Global Taxonomy Initiative, education and public awareness, national reports, cooperation with other bodies, and operations of the Convention. By a notification dated 24 October 2005 the Executive Secretary submitted draft proposals regarding the consolidation of the relevant decisions to members of the Bureau and to Parties, Governments and international organizations, and requested them to submit written comments thereon.

13. Comments on the draft proposals relating to the retirement and consolidation of the decisions of the Conference of the Parties were received from Australia, Canada, India, Poland, Thailand, the Secretariat of the Global Environment Facility, and the World Conservation Monitoring Centre of the United Nations Environment Programme (WCMC-UNEP) and were taken into consideration in the finalization of the relevant documents. The proposals for the retirement of decisions taken at the fifth and sixth meetings of the Conference of the Parties are contained in an addendum to the present document (UNEP/CBD/COP/8/16/Add.1) and the full review of these decisions is contained in an information document (UNEP/CBD/COP/8/INF/2). The proposals for the consolidation of the decisions of the Conference of the Parties pursuant to paragraph 4 of decision VII/33 and recommendation 1/2 of the Working Group on Review of Implementation are contained in a second addendum to the present document (UNEP/CBD/COP/8/16/Add.2).

B. *Administrative Arrangements between the United Nations Environment Programme and the Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity*

14. The Conference of the Parties, in paragraph 6 of decision VII/33, invited the Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme and the Executive Secretary of the Convention on Biological Diversity to review and revise the administrative arrangements between the United Nations Environment Programme and the Secretariat of the Convention, endorsed by the Conference of the Parties in its decision IV/17, and report thereon to the Conference of the Parties at its eighth meeting. The results of this review and revision are contained in an addendum to the present document (UNEP/CBD/COP/8/16/Add.3), which includes explanatory notes regarding the proposed changes.

C. *Changes to rule 21 of the rules of procedure of the Conference of the Parties*

15. In paragraph 7 of decision VII/33, the Conference of the Parties decided to review, at its eighth meeting, the effectiveness of the changes it made at its fifth meeting to rule 21 of the rules of procedure on the composition and terms of office of the members of the Bureau of the Conference of the Parties (decision V/20, paragraph 5). The Working Group on Review of Implementation considered this issue and recommended that the Conference of the Parties maintain the changes to rule 21 of the rules of procedure (recommendation 1/2).

D. *Periodicity of meetings of the Conference of the Parties and meeting schedule of the Convention*

16. The Conference of the Parties, in paragraph 8 of decision VII/33, decided to review rule 4 of the rules of procedure relating to the periodicity of its ordinary meetings at its eighth meeting and, if needed, make the necessary adjustments in the multi-year programme of work of the Conference of the Parties up to 2010. Upon consideration of this issue on the basis of a background document prepared by the Executive Secretary (UNEP/CBD/WG-RI/1/3), and in light of the current multi-year programme of work of the Conference of the Parties, the Working Group on Review of Implementation recommended that the Conference of the Parties maintain the current periodicity of its ordinary meetings until its tenth meeting in 2010 (recommendation 1/2).

17. Furthermore, in the same recommendation 1/2, the Working Group requested the Executive Secretary to prepare a series of options for restructuring the meeting schedule of the Convention to streamline Convention processes, including the implications of changing the frequency of its ordinary meetings. The options prepared by the Executive Secretary are contained in annex I to the present document. The Conference of the Parties may wish to bear these options in mind when further considering the issue of the periodicity of the ordinary meetings of the Conference of the Parties.

E. *Priority-setting to guide the allocation of financial resources by the Conference of the Parties*

18. In paragraph 9 of decision VII/33, the Conference of the Parties requested the Executive Secretary to seek the views of Parties on options for a mechanism for setting priorities during the consideration of agenda items by the Conference of the Parties with a view to providing the budget group with clear guidance on how to address activities with financial implications, and report thereon to the Conference of the Parties at its eighth meeting. The Executive Secretary, in notifications [2004-068](#) and [2004-042](#), invited Parties and Governments to submit such views. Submissions were compiled in an information document (UNEP/CBD/WG-RI/1/INF/2) and summarized in a note by the Executive Secretary (UNEP/CBD/WG-RI/1/3) for the consideration of the Working Group on Review of Implementation. In annex II to its recommendation 1/2, the Working Group developed guidance for a

process for priority-setting to guide the allocation of financial resources during the consideration of agenda items by the Conference of the Parties.

F. *Exchange of information and views on items on the agenda of the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice*

19. The Working Group on Review of Implementation, in its recommendation 1/2, requested the Executive Secretary, in consultation with the Bureau of the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice (SBSTTA), to explore options for facilitating exchange of information and views on the items on the agenda of SBSTTA, including through informal workshops, with a view to facilitating the formal discussion of such items at meetings of the Subsidiary Body, and to report on such options to the Conference of the Parties at its eighth meeting. Pursuant to this recommendation, the Executive Secretary, in consultation with the SBSTTA Bureau, identified and assessed the utility of a number of options for facilitating the exchange of information and views on SBSTTA agenda items. These options are listed in annex II to the present note for the consideration of the Conference of the Parties.

G. *Consolidated modus operandi of the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice*

20. The Working Group on Review of Implementation, in its recommendation 1/2, further requested the Executive Secretary, in consultation with the Bureau of the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice to consolidate the existing *modus operandi* of SBSTTA, the proposed Operational Plan of the Subsidiary Body contained in annex I to WGRI recommendation 1/2 and the recommendations of the Working Group. The Executive Secretary, in consultation with the SBSTTA Bureau, prepared a consolidated *modus operandi* of SBSTTA, building on the consolidated text of decisions of the Conference of the Parties on the operations of the Convention, prepared pursuant to the request of the Working Group on Review of Implementation in recommendation 1/2 (UNEP/CBD/COP/8/16/Add.2). The draft consolidated *modus operandi* of SBSTTA is contained in the fourth addendum to the present document (UNEP/CBD/COP/8/16/Add.4) for the consideration by the Conference of the Parties.

H. *Working arrangements for Ad Hoc Open-ended Working Groups*

21. Paragraph 5 of rule 26 of the rules of procedure of the Conference of the Parties provides that “unless otherwise decided by the Conference of the Parties, these rules shall apply *mutatis mutandis* to the proceedings of subsidiary bodies, except that:

A majority of the Parties designated by the Conference of the Parties to take part in the subsidiary body shall constitute a quorum, but in the event of the subsidiary body being open-ended, one quarter of the Parties shall constitute a quorum;

The chairperson of a subsidiary body may exercise the right to vote; and

Decisions of subsidiary bodies shall be taken by a majority of the Parties present and voting, except that the reconsideration of a proposal or of an amendment to a proposal shall require the majority established by rule 38.”

22. Rule 2 of the rules of procedure of the Conference of the Parties provides that “subsidiary bodies” includes committees and working groups.

23. In its recommendation 1/2, the Working Group on Review of Implementation recommended that the Conference of the Parties consider improved working arrangements for ad hoc open-ended working groups at its eighth meeting. In order to facilitate consideration of this issue by the Conference of the

Parties, the Working Group requested the Executive Secretary to compile the following information: relevant decisions of the Conference of the Parties (V/20); the mandates of previous and existing ad hoc open-ended working groups; submissions by Parties to the Ad Hoc Open-ended Working Group on Review of Implementation of the Convention; the note by the Executive Secretary on review of processes under the Convention (UNEP/CBD/WG-RI/1/3 and Add.1); existing materials on procedures for subsidiary bodies in other conventions; the rules of procedure for the Conference of the Parties; the *modus operandi* of the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice; and a reference list of final reports from ad hoc open-ended working groups. Existing materials on procedures for subsidiary bodies in other conventions and links to the other information identified above have been made available to this meeting as an information document (UNEP/CBD/COP/8/INF/9).

III. RECOMMENDATIONS

24. The following recommendations are additional to those included in the draft decision in recommendation 1/2 of the Working Group on Review of Implementation as well as to those contained in the addendums to the present document (UNEP/CBD/COP/8/16/Add.1-4).

25. The Conference of the Parties at its eighth meeting may wish to consider adopting a decision along the following lines:

“The Conference of the Parties,

1. *Decides* that, subject to the availability of the necessary budgetary resources and/or voluntary contributions, the Ad Hoc Open-ended Working Group on Review of Implementation of the Convention will meet prior to the ninth meeting of the Conference of the Parties for a period no longer than five days and, if possible back-to-back with the thirteenth meeting of the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice;

2. *Further decides* that at its second meeting, the Ad Hoc Open-ended Working Group on Review of Implementation of the Convention will undertake an in-depth review of the implementation of goals 2 and 3 of the Strategic Plan (excluding consideration of the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety) in accordance with any decision that may be taken by the Conference of the Parties at its eighth meeting relating to national biodiversity strategies and action plans and to financial resources and the financial mechanism, on the basis of draft decisions in documents UNEP/CBD/COP/8/15, UNEP/CBD/COP/8/20 and UNEP/CBD/COP/8/21;

3. *Decides* to consider, at its ninth meeting, the meeting schedule of the Convention after the tenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties in 2010, and *requests* the Executive Secretary, in consultation with the Bureau of the Conference of the Parties, to prepare options for the meeting schedule, including the financial implications of each option, taking into account, *inter alia*, the periodicity of ordinary meetings of the Conference of the Parties, the periodicity and scheduling of meetings of its subsidiary bodies and the possible need for an inter-sessional body on implementation, and to make those options available to Parties, Governments and relevant organizations for their review and comments at least six months prior to its ninth meeting;

4. *Requests* the Executive Secretary and the Bureau of the Subsidiary Body Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice to consider the options for facilitating information exchange and views on items on the agenda of the Subsidiary Body contained in annex II below when preparing for meetings of the Subsidiary Body.

*Annex I***OPTIONS FOR THE MEETING SCHEDULE**

1. The Conference of the Parties, in paragraph 8 of decision VII/33, decided to review rule 4 of the rules of procedure relating to the periodicity of its ordinary meetings at its eighth meeting. Upon consideration of this issue, and in light of the multi-year programme of work of the Conference of the Parties up to 2010, the Working Group on Review of Implementation recommended that the Conference of the Parties maintain the current periodicity of its ordinary meetings until its tenth meeting in 2010 (recommendation 1/2).

2. Furthermore, in its recommendation 1/2, the Working Group requested the Executive Secretary to prepare a series of options for restructuring the meeting schedule. These options have been divided into options for the meeting schedule up to the tenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties (section A) and options for the meeting schedule after the tenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties (section B).

A. *Options for the meeting schedule up to the tenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties*

3. Illustrative options for the meeting schedule up to the tenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties have been identified taking into account past practice, relevant decisions of the Conference of the Parties, relevant recommendations of its subsidiary bodies and draft decisions being considered by the Conference of the Parties at its eighth meeting, as well as a number of practical issues which are further discussed below.

4. The options for the meeting schedule are based on biennial meetings of the Conference of the Parties as recommended by the Working Group on Review of Implementation. They also are based on the likelihood that eight open-ended meetings will be held between each regular meeting of the Conference of the Parties: two SBSTTA meetings; two meetings of the Working Group on ABS; one meeting of the Working Group on Review of Implementation; one meeting of the Working Group on Article 8(j); one meeting of the Working Group on Protected Areas; and one meeting on incentive measures. This estimation was derived as follows:

(a) According to the *modus operandi* of SBSTTA, the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice will meet every year sufficiently in advance of each regular meeting of the Conference of the Parties. For practical reasons (i.e. to ensure enough time between meetings of SBSTTA and the Conference of the Parties), the Subsidiary Body has met twice in the calendar year falling between meetings of the Conference of the Parties (once a year on average);

(b) In paragraph 8 of its recommendation 1/2, the Working Group on Review of Implementation recommended that the Conference of the Parties consider that, subject to the availability of the necessary budgetary resources and/or voluntary contributions, the Ad Hoc Open-ended Working Group on Review of Implementation of the Convention meet prior to the ninth meeting of the Conference of the Parties;

(c) The Working Group on Access and Benefit-sharing met twice between the seventh and eighth meetings of the Conference of the Parties and is likely to meet on one or more occasions during the next inter-sessional period in view of its current mandate to negotiate an international regime on access and benefit-sharing;

(d) The Working Group on Article 8(j) and Related Provisions of the Convention has met once per biennium since the fourth meeting of the Conference of the Parties and is likely to meet once in the next biennium;

(e) The Working Group on Protected Areas was scheduled to meet twice in the last biennium, but the second meeting was postponed. Furthermore, in paragraph 28 of decision VII/28, the Conference of the Parties decided to assess, at each of its meetings until 2010, progress in the implementation of the programme of work on protected areas. Thus, the Working Group will likely meet at least once inter-sessionally;

(f) In recommendation XI/6, SBSTTA recommended that the Conference of the Parties identify the most effective mechanism to deliver the preparatory work for the in-depth review of incentive measures, which will occur at the ninth meeting of the Conference of the Parties. One of the potential mechanisms could be an ad hoc open-ended working group on incentive measures.

5. In deciding to convene, and defining a general schedule for, meetings, a number of practical issues must be taken into consideration. These include:

(a) The capacity of Parties and of the Secretariat to undertake substantive preparations for each of the meetings. In the twelve months leading up to the eighth meeting of the Conference of the Parties, nine open-ended meetings under both the Convention and the Cartagena Protocol were planned and eighth were held;

(b) The capacity of the Secretariat to make logistical arrangements for and service each of the meetings;

(c) *Timing between meetings.* Whether the outcomes of one meeting will influence the work being undertaken in preparation for or during another meeting will affect how closely together meetings can be scheduled. Meetings of subsidiary bodies, for example, should always be scheduled sufficiently prior to meetings of the Conference of the Parties to ensure that outcomes from those meetings can be integrated into documentation for meetings of the Conference of the Parties. This would suggest that no major meetings of subsidiary bodies should be held in the three months prior to a meeting of the Conference of the Parties. Similarly, subsidiary bodies that meet twice inter-sessionally must be scheduled far enough apart to ensure sufficient time for follow-up and preparation for the next meeting;

(d) *The cost of meetings.* Costs vary widely depending on where meetings are held, the number of sub-working groups at each meeting and the number of participants; however, the average cost of an open-ended meeting is approximately \$800,000. To date, funding for the convening of meetings of the Conference of the Parties, SBSTTA, and one meeting of the working groups on access and benefit-sharing and Article 8(j) has come from the core budget (BY), while funding for the convening of all other meetings (BE) and for participation in all meetings (BZ) has come from voluntary sources. In deciding to hold future meetings, the Conference of the Parties may wish to first ensure that funding will be made available for the convening of, and participation in, the meeting under consideration.

6. In order to minimize the cost of meetings, the Conference of the Parties may wish to consider holding meetings that may involve similar delegates back-to-back. The Working Group on Review of Implementation, for example, could be held back-to-back with a SBSTTA meeting, while, in keeping with past practice, the Working Group on Article 8(j) could be held back-to-back with the Working Group on Access and Benefit-sharing. Furthermore, although past practice has been to establish two simultaneous in-session working groups at meetings of subsidiary bodies, the Conference of the Parties, or its Bureau, may wish to consider conducting meetings with more limited agendas in plenary. Not only might this reduce costs, but it also might facilitate the participation of one-person delegations.

7. The exact dates for meetings under the Convention depend, *inter alia*, on the global calendar of biodiversity-related meetings and the availability of meeting venues at other constraints in the host country of the meeting. Thus, although the Conference of the Parties might make general recommendations, flexibility must be retained in order to allow the Executive Secretary, in consultation

with the relevant Bureau and the host country of the meeting, to select the most appropriate dates for meetings in the light of all relevant factors.

8. The options below represent potential meeting schedules for the next inter-sessional period. Although there is some flexibility in terms of during which quarter specific meetings are held, the options do not vary widely due to the considerations outlined above.

9. In options A and B, the ninth meeting of the Conference of the Parties is scheduled in the second quarter of 2008 to ensure that adequate time is available for follow-up from meetings of subsidiary bodies held in the last quarter of 2007. In option C, the Conference of the Parties is scheduled in the first quarter of 2008; thus, meetings of the Working Group on Access and Benefit-sharing and the Working Group on Article 8(j) have been moved forward to allow sufficient time for preparations for the Conference of the Parties. In option B, the Working Group on Protected Areas has been scheduled in the final quarter of 2006 to decrease the concentration of meetings in 2007. The Working Groups on Protected Areas and on Access and Benefit-sharing, however, could be held in 2006 only if they are funded from voluntary sources, as they were not included in the budget for the current biennium.

Option A

2006			2007				2008	
April-June	July-Sept	Oct-Dec	Jan-March	April-June	July-Sept	Oct-Dec	Jan-March	April-June
			SBSTTA WGABS	WGPA Other		SBSTTA:WGRI	WGABS:WG8J	COP

Option B

2006			2007				2008	
April-June	July-Sept	Oct-Dec	Jan-March	April-June	July-Sept	Oct-Dec	Jan-March	April-June
		WGPA	SBSTTA WGABS	Other		SBSTTA:WGRI	WGABS:WG8J	COP

Option C

2006			2007				2008	
April-June	July-Sept	Oct-Dec	Jan-March	April-June	July-Sept	Oct-Dec	Jan-March	April-June
		WGABS	SBSTTA	WGPA Other	WGABS:WG8(j)	SBSTTA:WGRI	COP	

B. Options for the meeting schedule after the tenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties

10. At its tenth meeting, the Conference of the Parties will adopt a new Strategic Plan, multi-year programme of work and budget, which will guide the work of the Convention from 2010 onwards. Because this will mark the beginning of a new stage of the Convention, the number and breadth of options for the meeting schedule are far greater than those discussed in section A above. They are also more general as it is difficult to predict which subsidiary bodies, other than SBSTTA, will meet after 2010.

11. There are two main options for the periodicity of the ordinary meetings of the Conference of the Parties after 2010: two years and three years. The rationale for longer periods between meetings is that meetings are highly resource-intensive and the current meeting schedule leaves little time for adequate preparation or follow-up. Thus, a longer period between ordinary meetings of the Conference of the Parties would allow more thorough preparation by Parties and the Secretariat and be beneficial to the process. In addition, as the Convention focuses more on implementation, shorter meeting periodicity may not provide an adequate time-frame for implementation of the decisions of the Conference of the Parties. The main argument for maintaining the periodicity at two years is that longer periodicity may result in a loss of momentum for implementation, since the Conference of the Parties is the only decision-making body of the Convention.

12. Within each option for the periodicity of meetings of the Conference of the Parties, there are a number of sub-options based on the meeting schedule of subsidiary bodies of the Convention. If, for example, the meeting periodicity of the Conference of the Parties were to be extended to three years, the momentum for implementation might be maintained if SBSTTA continued to meet twice inter-sessionally at yearly intervals, potentially back-to-back with a working group or other subsidiary body on implementation. Alternatively, SBSTTA could meet twice inter-sessionally for a two week period and focus one of its working groups on issues related to implementation. Either of these options would help to limit the number of meetings held annually.

13. On the other hand, if the periodicity were to remain at two years, SBSTTA could meet once inter-sessionally, either back-to-back with a subsidiary body on implementation or for two weeks as described above, and once during or directly following meetings of the Conference of the Parties. This would provide SBSTTA with the opportunity to respond to requests of the Conference immediately if possible, and allow a sufficient time-frame for the Subsidiary Body to initiate and assess scientific and technical work prior to the next meeting of the Conference of the Parties. It would also help to minimize the number of separate meetings. If the status quo were to remain, the Conference of the Parties would need to define limited and well-targeted agendas for meetings of its subsidiary bodies, particularly for SBSTTA, and decrease the number of meetings of subsidiary bodies convened annually.

14. Thus, defining a broad framework for the meeting schedule after 2010 not only involves considering the periodicity of meetings of the Conference of the Parties, but it also involves assessing the need for an inter-sessional body on implementation, as well as the meeting cycle for all subsidiary bodies. In order to ensure that the new strategic plan, multi-year programme of work and budget reflect any significant changes in the meeting schedule after 2010, and to facilitate planning for the implementation of the work of the Convention, the Conference of the Parties may wish to take a decision on the meeting schedule after 2010 at its ninth meeting. In order to facilitate its consideration of the meeting schedule, the Conference of the Parties also may wish to request the Executive Secretary to prepare options for the meeting schedule after 2010, including the financial implications of each option.

*Annex II***DRAFT OPTIONS FOR FACILITATING EXCHANGE OF INFORMATION AND VIEWS ON THE ITEMS ON THE AGENDA OF THE SUBSIDIARY BODY ON SCIENTIFIC, TECHNICAL AND TECHNOLOGICAL ADVICE**

Pursuant to recommendation 1/2 of the Working Group on Review of Implementation, the Executive Secretary, in consultation with the SBSTTA Bureau, has explored options for facilitating the exchange of information and views on SBSTTA agenda items in the table below. These options have been defined with a view to facilitating the formal discussion of agenda items at SBSTTA meetings and should be considered bearing in mind the time constraints during meetings of the Subsidiary Body.

Option	Commentary
Keynote speakers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keynote speakers may be asked to speak during the opening of SBSTTA meetings. Experience under the Convention suggests that keynote speakers can usefully set a constructive tone for a meeting either by providing an inspirational or provocative speech; however targeted introductory presentations facilitate the exchange of information and views on specific issues more effectively. • Selected keynote speakers may be from outside the Convention or from amongst delegates; however, in addition to being knowledgeable about the subject of discussion, they must also be animated and interesting speakers.
Introductory presentations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introductory presentations are often used to introduce specific issues in Plenary or in the working groups at SBSTTA. They may be given by Secretariat staff, delegates, or guests. They can be very effective in terms of raising awareness about and outlining key issues for delegates, especially technical or complex issues; however they do not provide an opportunity for in-depth discussion of issues.
Presentations in meetings of regional groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Experts could be invited to regional group meetings held during SBSTTA to give brief presentations and catalyze discussion within regions on key issues being addressed at SBSTTA meetings. Prior to SBSTTA meetings, SBSTTA Bureau members could determine for which agenda items presentations might be useful and invite the relevant experts.
Informal workshops	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Informal intra- and/or inter-sessional workshops on key agenda items could be held to enable delegates to exchange views on issues without the constraints of a formal negotiating process. Workshops would be held in response to an identified need from SBSTTA and would likely consist of presentations (from Secretariat staff, delegates, or guests) and discussion and could help to raise and resolve challenging issues in a less formal setting. Outcomes of the workshops could be in the form of a chair's text. It would not need to be agreed upon, but it could be referred to during the formal debate. • Intra-sessional workshops could be held in working groups prior to the formal negotiation of a particular agenda item, while inter-sessional workshops could be held just prior to SBSTTA meetings. In the case of intra-sessional workshops, participation would be guaranteed. • Inter-sessional workshops could be held a few weeks prior to, or back-to-back with, SBSTTA meetings. They could also be held simultaneous to other biodiversity-related meetings (e.g., Ramsar COP, UNCCD COP etc.). • Voluntary contributions for these meetings may be difficult to secure. • The Subsidiary Body for Scientific and Technical Advice of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change holds informal inter- and intra-sessional workshops to address key issues, e.g., on mitigation of, or

	adaptation to, climate change.
Side-events	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lunchtime or evening side events have long been part of SBSTTA meetings. They enable delegates to gather together, share information, and debate issues outside of the formal meeting. They also provide for a in which government, civil society and business can discuss issues on equal footing. • Side events are good for information sharing, but they are often too brief for in-depth discussion and debate. They are held outside the hours for formal negotiations, but sometimes simultaneous to friends of the chair, contact group, or drafting meetings and there is no guarantee that delegates will participate.
Roundtable debates	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Roundtable debates or panel discussions provide an opportunity for delegates to exchange views and debate specific issues informally. Outcomes of the discussion do not necessarily have to be agreed upon or approved, so delegates can freely explore and discuss issues. They may also involve non-delegates, therefore, broadening the perspectives represented in the debate. • Roundtable debates are most effective for exploring different perspectives on an issue, and may be less effective for awareness raising. • Side events following the roundtable format have sometimes been held during SBSTTA or COP meetings. Roundtable debates were also used to exchange views on key issues at the World Conservation Congress of IUCN – The World Conservation Union.
Poster sessions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Poster sessions on key agenda items are often held during SBSTTA meetings. They provide an opportunity for scientists, practitioners and policy makers to share information on ongoing activities and for those that are unable to attend SBSTTA meetings to inform the debate. • Posters are particularly effective for communicating basic ideas, trends or concepts. Detailed information or differing perspectives on an issue may best be conveyed through another medium. Posters also require time and effort to develop; however, there is no guarantee that delegates will read and use the information.
Provision of publications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Publications, such as the CBD Technical Series and other relevant documents are often distributed at SBSTTA. These documents provide delegates with background information on key issues being addressed; however, they are quite lengthy and may prove more useful as reference tools during national implementation. • Short publications or one-page briefs on specific issues enable Parties and organizations to share information and views quickly and are more likely to be read during SBSTTA meetings than lengthy documents. Currently, they are frequently used by organizations to make their views known outside the formal meeting. They could be used more broadly to provide background information on key issues during meetings.
Regional preparatory meetings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Informal regional preparatory meetings could be held either a couple of weeks prior to, or back-to-back with, SBSTTA meetings and could help to raise awareness about key issues and facilitate exchange of views within regions. • In the past, voluntary contributions for these meetings have been difficult to secure.