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 REVIEW OF IMPLEMENTATION OF THE
 CONVENTION
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**STATUS OF IMPLEMENTATION OF GOALS 2 AND 3 OF THE STRATEGIC PLAN
FOCUSING ON IMPLEMENTATION OF NATIONAL BIODIVERSITY STRATEGIES AND
ACTION PLANS AND AVAILABILITY OF FINANCIAL RESOURCES: AN OVERVIEW**

Note by the Executive Secretary

SUMMARY

At its eighth meeting, the Conference of the Parties decided to consider, at its ninth meeting, the in-depth review of goals 2 and 3 of the Strategic Plan and requested the Working Group on Review of Implementation to prepare for the in-depth review focusing in particular on: the status of national biodiversity strategies and action plans and their updating; the extent to which biodiversity concerns have been effectively mainstreamed in accordance with Article 6(b) of the Convention; the implementation of national biodiversity strategies and action plans (NBSAPs); and the provision of financial resources, capacity-building, access to and transfer of technology and technology cooperation.

The present document provides an overview of the status of implementation of goals 2 and 3 of the Strategic Plan 1/ to assist the Working Group in its work. The following are the main conclusions:

(a)   One hundred and forty-seven Parties (77 per cent of the total) have finalized their NBSAPs or equivalent instruments. Twenty-four Parties have informed the secretariat that they are preparing their NBSAP. Nineteen Parties have not prepared an NBSAP or initiated the process to do so, or have not informed the Secretariat that they have done so (see the annex to the present note);

(b)   Eleven Parties have revised NBSAPs, and eleven more have revisions in progress. Revisions are designed to identify and meet new challenges and to respond to recent guidance from the Conference of the Parties. Some Parties are developing biodiversity strategies and/or action plans at the sub-national level;

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*   UNEP/CBD/WG-RI/2/1.

1/   Excluding the strategic objectives related to the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety.

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(c)   Stakeholder consultations have been a major part of NBSAP preparation. However, the range of stakeholders involved is often not adequate to ensure effective ownership of NBSAPs or to ensure mainstreaming of biodiversity beyond the environment community;

(d)   While most NBSAPs include goals and targets few are quantitative and few respond directly to the 2010 biodiversity target or other targets established under the Convention. In part, this results from the fact that most NBSAPs pre-date the establishment of the targets by the Convention on Biological Diversity;

(e)   Similarly, reference to the ecosystem approach is absent from most NBSAPs, and most do not include reference to all of the relevant programmes of work and thematic issues under the Convention;

(f)   Most NBSAPs include action plans. However, frequently these tend to be focused on projects rather than on the fundamental issues that need to be addressed to achieve the objectives of the Convention. Few specify domestic funding sources;

(g)   Effective communication programmes are lacking from many NBSAPs;

(h)   Most countries report efforts to mainstream biodiversity into sectoral and cross-sectoral policies, plans and programmes. This is probably more effective with some sectors (eg: forestry, tourism) than others. Mainstreaming in national development and poverty reduction strategies and broader planning processes appears to be generally weak;

(i)   Most countries have identified priorities for implementation of their NBSAPs, but few of them have indicated in their national reports whether and to what extent they have been implemented. Some countries may have comprehensive reports on implementation but these are not systematically available to the Secretariat;

(j)   Parties report that the most widespread constraints to implementation of the Convention are "lack of financial, human and technical resources" and "lack of economic incentive measures". Articles 7, 12, 8(h) and 8(a-e) are reported to be the provisions most constrained by lack of resources;

(k)   While nearly all countries indicate that they provide some financial support or incentives to national activities that are intended to achieve the objectives of the Convention, budget cuts are a serious problem in some countries. There are many examples of private contributions and resources generated from revenue measures, but the resources are generally small at national or international levels;

(l)   Several countries have begun to introduce innovative financial mechanisms such as payments for ecosystem services, but, generally speaking, they have not yet borne fruit in generating sustainable financing. About one third of the reporting countries have adopted tax-exemption status for biodiversity-related donations

(m)   `Most countries do not have a process to monitor financial support in their countries, and only one fifth of reporting countries have conducted a review of how their national budgets (including official development assistance) support of national biodiversity activities;

(n)   According to data from the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Developmetn (OECD) about US$ 9 billion dollars of biodiversity-related donor assistance have been provided for the period 1998–2005. No clear long term trends in bilateral assistance can be discerned;

(o)   While some positive outcomes are reported for specific activities, in general, technology transfer and cooperation under the Convention appears to have been very limited;

(p)   Important progress has been made with respect to the exchange of information and scientific and technical cooperation in general. However, the overall role of the clearing house mechanism in supporting such cooperation need to be further elaborated. About one half of the Parties have developed a national clearing house mechanism;

(q)   Overall progress towards the implementation of the goals 2 and 3 of the Strategic Plan may be considered as follows:

(i)   Satisfactory, but incomplete for strategic objectives 2.5 (scientific and technical cooperation) and 3.1 (NBSAP development);

(ii)   Unsatisfactory for strategic objectives 2.1 and 2.2 (resources) and 3.3 (mainstreaming);

(iii)   Data concerning strategic objective 3.4 (NBSAP implementation) is insufficient to assess progress reliably;

(r)   Opportunities for increasing the effectiveness of NBSAP development and implementation exist at the national level (through activities by national focal points and agencies responsible for implementing NBSAPs) and at the Convention level (through guidance by the Conference of the Parties to the Convention, and support through the Secretariat and partner international organizations). Such opportunities are identified in the addendum to the present note (UNEP/CBD/WG-RI/2/2/Add.1), and recommendations are proposed therein.

I. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

A. Mandate, and scope of the note

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. The Strategic Plan contains four goals:

- *Goal 1*: The Convention is fulfilling its leadership role in international biodiversity issues.

- *Goal 2*: Parties have improved financial, human, scientific, technical, and technological capacity to implement the Convention.

- *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.

- *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

2.   The Working Group on Review of Implementation of the Convention, at its first meeting, in September 2005, examined progress in the implementation of the Strategic Plan and concluded that there is little progress towards goal 2 – and that this remains a major constraint on implementation – and that progress towards goal 3 is also poor.

3.   Noting this slow progress, the Conference of the Parties decided to conduct an in-depth review of the implementation of goals 2 and 3 of the Strategic Plan.

4.   Each goal of the Strategic Plan includes a number of strategic objectives. Subsequent sections of this note review progress towards the objectives, beginning with the objectives of goal 3 and continuing with those of goal 2. It should be noted that that strategic objectives 2.3, 2.4 and 3.2, concerning the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety are not considered in the present note.

5.   The present note is supplemented by the following additional documents:

- Synthesis and analysis of obstacles to implementation of NBSAPs, lessons learned from the review, effectiveness of policy instruments and strategic priorities for action (UNEP/CBD/WG-RI/2/2/Add.1)

- Guidance for the development, implementation and evaluation of national biodiversity strategies and action plans (UNEP/CBD/WG-RI/2/3)

- Options and a draft strategy for resource mobilisation in support of the achievement of the objectives of the Convention including innovative financial mechanisms (UNEP/CBD/WG-RI/2/4)

- Updated synthesis of information contained in third national reports (UNEP/CBD/WG-RI/2/INF/1)

- Review of the availability of financial resources (UNEP/CBD/WG-RI/2/INF/4)

- Status of NBSAPs: compilation of submissions(UNEP/CBD/WG-RI/2/INF/7)

- NBSAPs: a meta-analysis of earlier reviews (UNEP/CBD/WG-RI/2/INF/9)

- Review of national biodiversity strategies and action plans, biodiversity mainstreaming and implementation of the Convention: a bibliography (UNEP/CBD/WG-RI/2/INF/10)

B.   Sources of information

6.   In line with decision VIII/8, the Executive Secretary has synthesized and analysed information in NBSAPs, the third national reports, and other information submitted by Parties in response the invitation in decision VIII/8 to provide updates on the status of NBSAPs, obstacles to implementation, national reviews of implementation and the availability of resources. The secretariat has also consulted relevant academic studies and reports prepared by the Global Environment Facility (GEF) and its implementing agencies. The latter includes evaluations of GEF support for enabling activities, national capacity self-assessment reports and analyses of environment-related issues included in poverty reduction strategies and strategies for the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals. A full list of information sources is provided in the bibliography that is being circulated as an information document (UNEP/CBD/WG-RI/2/INF/10).

7.   Third national reports have been received from 127 Parties by the end of April 2007. The third national reports provide good information on obstacles to implementation (mainly summarized in UNEP/CBD/WGRI/2/2/Add.1), but rather little information on implementation of NBSAPs.

8.   Twenty-three Parties responded to the request from the Executive Secretary in May 2006 for voluntary submissions, or to a reminder notification sent in January 2007. Twelve of these provided more substantive responses which are being circulated in the compilation of submissions (UNEP/CBD/WG-RI/2/INF/7). Only five responses followed the guidelines.

9.   The various reports from the GEF provided a good overview of the status of NBSAP preparation in those countries that have received GEF support for enabling activities. However, some of these reports are now somewhat dated and therefore do not fully reflect the current status.

10.   Decision VIII/8 envisaged that regional or sub-regional meetings to review NBSAP development and implementation would have been held prior to the meeting of the Working Group. However, due to the need to hold the Working Group back-to-back with the twelfth meeting of the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice (SBSTTA), this has not proved to be possible. It is expected that further up to date information will be gathered through the regional or subregional workshops that are now planned for 2007/08, subject to the availability of the necessary financial resources.

II.   REVIEW OF PROGRESS TOWARDS STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 3.1 (DEVELOPMENT OF NATIONAL BIODIVERSITY STRATEGIES AND ACTION PLANS)

11.   Objective 3.1 of the Strategic Plan is: "Every Party has effective national strategies, plans and programmes in place to provide a national framework for implementing the three objectives of the Convention."

12.   This reflects the first part of Article 6 of the Convention, which states that:

"Each Contracting Party shall, in accordance with its particular conditions and capabilities, develop national strategies, plans or programmes for the conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity or adapt for this purpose existing strategies, plans or programmes which shall reflect, *inter alia*, the measures set out in this Convention relevant to the Contracting Party concerned."

A.   Status of the development and updating of national biodiversity strategies and action plans

13.   As of April 2007, 147 Parties to the Convention (77% of the total) had submitted final NBSAPs 2/ to the Secretariat or indicated in their third national reports that their NBSAP had been
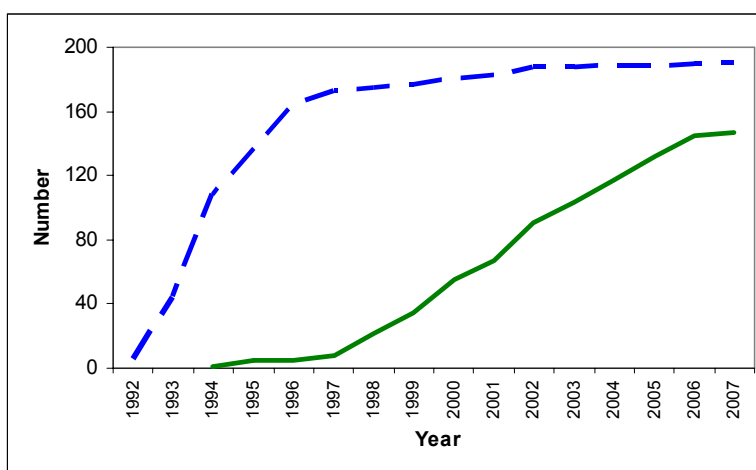

        2/   References to "NBSAP" in the present note include also equivalent instruments that have been developed by Parties consistent with Article 6 of the Convention.

completed. An additional 34 Parties (18% of the total) had submitted and an interim or draft version of the NBSAP, indicated in national reports that their NBSAP was under preparation, or informed the Secretariat of this (See the annex to the present note and chart 1 below).

14.   The Secretariat has written to all Parties that have not submitted NBSAPs, recalling the requirements of Article 6 of the Convention. Letters or notifications were sent in January 2006, May 2007 and January 2008.

15.   Nineteen Parties (10% of the total) have not prepared an NBSAP or initiated the process to do so, or have not informed the Secretariat that they have done so, despite reminders from the Secretariat. Two of these (Montenegro and Timor-Leste) became Parties only during the last two years. The others are: Afghanistan, Bahrain, Cook Islands, Cyprus, Equatorial Guinea, Haiti, Kuwait, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Liechtenstein, Luxembourg, Nauru, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Saint Kitts and Nevis, San Marino, Tonga, and United Arab Emirates.

Chart 1: Number of Parties (- - -) and completed NBSAPs (——)

16.   Eleven Parties have informed the Secretariat that their NBSAPs have been revised: Austria, Bhutan, Finland, Indonesia, Japan, Morocco, Netherlands, te Philippines, Sweden, Thailand and United Kingdom. 3/.   Another eleven Parties have indicated that their NBSAPs are undergoing revision: Australia, Bahamas, China, Cuba, Estonia, European Community, India, Lebanon, Romania, Spain and Tunisia.

17.   In addition some other Parties may have updated their biodiversity action plans or other elements within their NBSAPs. For example, Brazil has developed a set of national targets for 2010 and revised its priority areas for conservation. Nevertheless, it appears that most Parties have not revised their NBSAPs.

18.   Several countries (e.g.,: Austria, Poland, Finland, Saint Lucia, and Brazil) have undertaken reviews or evaluations of their NBSAPs and these have generally led to the need to adjust or revise them

19.   NBSAPs need to be periodically updated, in line with decision VI/27 A paragraph 2 (d). In fact, biodiversity planning should be a cyclical process as highlighted in the various guidelines available on NBSAP preparation (see UNEP/CBD/WG-RI/1/INF/8). Some of those Parties that have revised or are revising their NBSAPs mentioned that the revision process was designed to identify new and emerging needs and priorities, and to ensure that NBSAP was adjusted to new developments and requirements. Some also cited that the purpose of updating the strategy was to include new decisions and programmes of work adopted by the Conference of the Parties to the Convention. Mexico also noted that the new strategy should be the key policy document for mainstreaming biodiversity into all relevant sectors. This country is basing the revision of its national strategy lessons learned from state biodiversity strategies as

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3/   The earlier United Kingdom biodiversity action plan has been complemented by biodiversity strategies for England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland, respectively.

well as a new country study which, following the methodology of the Millennium Ecosystem Assessment, focuses on the state of ecosystem goods and services and their contribution to human and social well-being.

20.   In some Parties, sub-national biodiversity strategies and action plans have been developed or are under development. Besides Mexico, this applies to Canada, India, Pakistan and the United Kingdom. Noting its biological and cultural diversity, Mexico has emphasized the need to "downscale" biodiversity strategies to the state and local levels.

B.   The process of preparing national biodiversity strategies and action plans

21.   The need to involve stakeholders in the development of NBSAPs is widely recognized and reflected in guidance from the Conference of the Parties (decision VI/27 A paragraph 2 (e)). Stakeholder consultations have been a major part of NBSAP preparation funded through the GEF's enabling activities. However a recurring challenge initially identified by the GEF 1999 assessment is that a majority of stakeholders participating in NBSAP development (and one could now argue NBSAP review and updating processes) are actors without the mandates necessary to address many of the issues outlined in the action plan, and this can limit the effectiveness of mainstreaming efforts.

22.   The GEF study also concluded that, in several countries there was a lack of involvement from local communities, indigenous groups or the private sector, and a lack of consideration of gender issues. More recently, a number of Parties, including over 70% of least developed countries, identified "lack of capacities of local communities" as a significant constraint on implementation of the Convention.

C.   The form and content of national biodiversity strategies and action plans.

23.   Article 6 includes an option to adapt existing strategies, plans or programmes for the purpose of biodiversity conservation and sustainable use. Notwithstanding this option, most Parties have developed distinct NBSAPs. Exceptions include Brazil, Norway and Sweden which have developed a range of instruments and consider that these together comprise their NBSAP or equivalent instrument. Arguably these are among the more successful NBSAPs in being implemented and mainstreamed since, fitting into existing domestic structures, there is a well-developed sense of ownership over the instrument.

24.   At its second meeting, the Conference of the Parties invited Parties to set measurable targets (decision III/9, paragraph 5) and, at its seventh meeting, invited Parties to develop goals and targets within the flexible framework developed to assess progress towards the 2010 biodiversity target (decision VII/30, paragraphs 14-15, updated in decision VIII/15). While nearly all Parties include goals and targets of some kind in their NBSAPs, or report that they are developing targets, most of the targets established to date are qualitative. Only a few countries have set clear, quantitative targets, and most of these relate to forest cover and protected areas coverage. Most NBSAPs were developed too early to include reference to the 2010 biodiversity target. But even for those 38 NBSAPs developed or revised since 2004, few have incorporated targets related to the 2010 target. Examples include Brazil, which has developed a comprehensive set of national targets specifically related to the 2010 framework and the Global Strategy for Plant Conservation. Many of Brazil's targets are quantitative and relate to specific biomes. The European Community has developed an Action Plan to 2010, including some quantitative targets, and this is plan is being integrated into the NBSAPs of some member States. Other Parties (e.g., Micronesia, Australia) have set targets for protected areas. The England Biodiversity Strategy includes detailed quantitative targets for each of its various work-streams and an overall set of indicators.

25.   Few Parties (less than 10% of the total) have incorporated the Global Strategy for Plant Conservation and its targets in their NBSAPs (see also the note by the Executive Secretary prepared for the twelfth meeting of SBSTTA on the in-depth review of the implementation of the Global Strategy for Plant Conservation (UNEP/CBD/SBSTTA/12/3)).

26.   Reference to the ecosystem approach is absent from most NBSAPs, because, although the Conference of the Parties agreed at its second meeting, in 1995, that the ecosystem approach is the primary framework of action under the Convention, specific guidance was adopted only in 2000 at the fifth meeting of the Conference of the Parties. In fact, in their third national reports, only 12% of Parties

indicate that the ecosystem approach is being widely applied (see also the note by the Executive Secretary prepared for the twelfth meeting of SBSTTA on the in-depth review of the application of the ecosystem approach (UNEP/CBD/SBSTTA/12/2)).

27.   Similarly, while the Conference of the Parties has invited Parties to incorporate relevant aspects of the its many decisions into NBSAPs, because many NBSAPs have been developed some time ago, they do not incorporate all of the relevant thematic programmes of work or cross-cutting issues. Nevertheless, most NBSAPs include activities that are closely related to the various thematic programmes of work when such programmes of work are relevant to the country concerned.

D.   Action plans

28.   Most NBSAPs include action plans. For some Parties, these are updated more regularly than the strategy itself.

29.   Action plans should focus on fundamental issues such as policies and sub-policies, legislative measures, and related issues that can move the biodiversity agenda as an inter-connected entity. However, according to evaluations by GEF and its implementing agencies, action plans in NBSAPs are too often merely lists of projects for external donors. The GEF report argues that the action plan is the least understood part of the NBSAP.

30.   Most NBSAPs specify funding needs, but few indicate domestic funding sources. According to the 1999 GEF evaluation, very few action plans emphasize domestic resource mobilization. The report proposes that in government approval of NBSAPs, the approving body should ensure that "practical financing mechanisms are in place such as market-based instruments like user fees, tax incentives and trust funds."

E.   Communication, education and public awareness

31.   While many Parties are developing activities on communication, education and public awareness (CEPA), a much smaller number have linked their CEPA strategy to their NBSAP. Those that have include Israel, Kazakhstan, Latvia, Lebanon, Namibia, Poland and Swaziland. In addition, many Parties have education programmes. Effective strategies to promote awareness of biodiversity throughout the economic and social sectors are limited to a minority of Parties. Only a quarter of Parties report significant activities to promote public participation in support of the Convention.

F.   Effectiveness of national biodiversity strategies and action plans

32.   Little information is available from Parties concerning the effectiveness of NBSAPs, although effectiveness may be inferred from reports on implementation for those Parties that prepare such reports (see paragraph 44 below). Earlier reviews of NBSAPs noted some positive outcomes: the development of NBSAPs was raising awareness about the importance of biodiversity within governments and about countries' obligations under the Convention. But these reviews also noted that, generally, NBSAPs were not affecting the main forces driving biodiversity loss, and too often were not being effectively implemented. These issues are addressed in the next two sections of the present document.

III.   REVIEW OF PROGRESS TOWARDS STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 3.3 (MAINSTREAMING)

33.   Objective 3.3 of the Strategic Plan is: "Biodiversity concerns are being integrated into relevant national sectoral and cross-sectoral plans, programmes and policies."

34.   This reflects the second part of Article 6 of the Convention that: "Each Contracting Party shall, in accordance with its particular conditions and capabilities, integrate, as far as possible and as appropriate, the conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity into relevant sectoral or cross-sectoral plans, programmes and policies."

35.   In their third national reports, nearly all reporting Parties (90%) indicate that biodiversity issues are integrated into at least some sectors, with some (36%) reporting mainstreaming into all major sectors.

Three countries reported that this integration had been achieved in all sectors. Only seven countries indicated that mainstreaming did not occur yet at all. However, a considerable number of countries stressed that while integration is ongoing, full integration takes time and much work needs to be done to this end.

36.   In their detailed comments, reporting countries identify a number of ways of mainstreaming biodiversity:

        (a)   Development of sectoral strategies, plans and programmes to achieve the objectives of the Convention. Many sectors are mentioned, in particular forestry, agriculture, fishery, mining, tourism, industry, education, energy, water management (including wetland management), land use management, and rural or local community development;

        (b)   Incorporation of biodiversity issues into cross-sectoral or long-term development and/or environmental strategies and plans, such as national strategies for sustainable development, national long-term plan for social and economic development, national strategies for natural resources management, national environmental strategies or plans and poverty reduction strategies or papers. For example, Botswana's Vision 2016 calls for a fully integrated approach towards conservation and development, with equitable distribution of environmental assets and natural resources and their benefits. And Nambia's National Development Plan and Vision 2030 stress the integration of biodiversity concerns into development process;

        (c)   Development of specialized legislation, such as biodiversity acts, water resources management acts, the conservation of agricultural resources act and fishery acts. The three objectives of the Convention may be included in these laws and regulations as key objectives and guiding principles. For example, South Africa's National Environmental Management Act requires that environmental considerations, including biodiversity concerns, be integrated into relevant sectoral plans, programmes and policies, and relevant departments have to develop implementation plans every four years. Furthermore South Africa's Biodiversity Act (2004) calls for the development of a national biodiversity framework and a series of bioregional plans, which promotes the integration of biodiversity considerations into sectoral plans, programmes and policies, in particular development planning and land use decision-making at provincial and local level. Sweden's Environmental Quality Bill includes new environmental-quality objectives on biodiversity;

        (d)   Requirements that biodiversity-related concerns be included when undertaking environmental or strategic environmental impacts assessments. For example, Jordan requires that environmental impacts assessment be undertaken for all projects and programmes that may have impacts on the environment and biodiversity;

        (e)   Integration of biodiversity as key part of their programmes to address other related issues such as land degradation and climate change. A few countries have developed action plans to address climate change and its impact on biodiversity. In national action programmes to combat desertification, some countries have included biodiversity conservation and sustainable use as key actions to fight desertification. For example, Australia has developed an action plan to address climate change and biodiversity., and Lebanon has included biodiversity components in its national action programme to combat desertification;

        (f)   Establishment of various mechanisms and institutional frameworks to drive integration. For example, Thailand has established a National Committee for Sustainable Development, which is chaired by the Prime Minister. The main principle for sustainable development identified by this committee is to integrate nature conservation with actions undertaken in other relevant sectors including poverty reduction and local community development.

37.   Biodiversity is also mainstreamed into some regional strategies and policy frameworks, for example:

        (a)   The European Union Strategy for Sustainable Development included one key priority which is managing natural resources more responsibly. The 2003-2004 reform of the European Union

Common Agricultural Policy introduces measures for decoupling of support from production, including the establishment of a single farm payment scheme under which farmland must be kept in good environmental condition. In addition, the European Union Water Framework Directive includes principles of sustainable development and integrated management approaches;

(b) The NEPAD Environment Initiative and its action plan address a number of issues related to biodiversity, such as invasive alien species, marine and coastal resources, cross-border conservation of natural resources, conservation and sustainable use of plant genetic resources;

(c) The Association of South-East Asian Nations (ASEAN) adopted a regional approach to address the issue of benefit-sharing from use of genetic resources, by developing a regional framework agreement on access to genetic resources and benefit-sharing.

38. Analysis of cross-sectoral planning documents provide further insights on the extent that mainstreaming is being effectively pursued. Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (PRSPs), national strategies for the Millennium Development Goals and equivalent strategies have been analysed. While some progress has been observed in recent years, integration of environmental issues into these strategies remains weak for most countries, especially concerning issues related to biodiversity and ecosystem services. In cases where these terms are mentioned in the documents, frequently this is merely a reference to a decline in biodiversity of ecosystem services, and rarely is there a link made to a policy proposal in the plan. Most development or poverty reduction strategies do not include references to NBSAPs. Few include relevant indicators or baseline data for tracking progress in biodiversity-related issues.

39. There are some exceptions to the foregoing, with strong linkages in the analysis between biodiversity, ecosystem services and human well-being and development in some cases. For example:

(a) Namibia's NBSAP, finalized in June 2002, is explicitly linked to development objectives. Formally known as "Biodiversity and Development in Namibia: Namibia's ten year strategic plan of action for sustainable development through biodiversity conservation, 2001-2010", its goal is to 'protect ecosystems, biological diversity and ecological processes…, thereby supporting the livelihoods, self-reliance and quality of life of Namibians'. It is presented as a key strategic planning document for ensuring that the development process, set out in Vision 2030 and five-year development plans, works with, and not against, the natural resource base;

(b) In the case of the United Republic of Tanzania's National Strategy for Growth and reduction of Poverty (MKUKUTA), environmental issues – including a number of biodiversity-relevant matters – are well integrated. This has been due to proactive action of the Vice-President's Office and full engagement of the Ministry of Finance. However, it is not clear what role has been played by the country's NBSAP in this regard.

40. Overall, it appears that mainstreaming of biodiversity issues in cross-sectoral planning processes and in national development and poverty reduction strategies has been limited. There appears to have been more success in integrating biodiversity into some sectors, notably forestry, tourism and to some extent agriculture and fisheries.

IV. REVIEW OF PROGRESS TOWARDS STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 3.4 (NBSAP IMPLEMENTATION)

41. Objective 3.1 of the Strategic Plan is: "The priorities in national biodiversity strategies and action plans are being actively implemented, as a means to achieve national implementation of the Convention, and as a significant contribution towards the global biodiversity agenda."

42. Most countries have identified priorities for implementation of their NBSAPs, but few of them have indicated in their national reports whether and to what extent they have been implemented.

43. A few Parties provided information on implementation in their voluntary submissions:

(a) China notes extensive work with effective achievements. A large body of legislation has been put in place and action plans developed;

(b)   Rwanda reports on specific areas of progress such as better management of protected areas and wetlands, development of alternatives to the exploitation of biodiversity through agricultural technologies and energy saving stoves, and eco-tourism;

(c)   Saint Lucia reports on the implementation of specific projects;

(d)   The Czech Republic indicates that it is too early to evaluate the implementation of its 2005 national biodiversity strategy.

44.   Some countries have published comprehensive reports on implementation. Finland and the United Kingdom 4/ prepare regular and up-to-date reports. Previously (1995, 1996) Germany had prepared reports on implementation of the Convention on Biological Diversity domestically and through development cooperation. In addition IUCN has prepared a report on implementation in Nepal, and the GEF on the Russian Federation (2003). Working with six Parties in Central and Eastern Europe (Albania, Lithuania, Moldova, Czech Republic, Kyrgyzstan and Romania, 2002) and 5 Parties in Central America (Belize, Costa Rica, Guatemala, Honduras and Nicaragua, 2001) UNEP-WCMC has assessed the state of implementation of the Convention on Biological Diversity in these countries. Other Parties may prepare reports on implementation, but these are not systematically sent to the Secretariat.

V.   REVIEW OF PROGRESS TOWARDS OBJECTIVES 2.1 AND 2.2 (CAPACITY AND RESOURCES FOR IMPLEMENTATION)

45.   Objectives 2.1 and 2.2 of the Strategic Plan are, respectively: "All Parties have adequate capacity for implementation of priority actions in national biodiversity strategies and action plans", and "Developing country Parties, in particular the least developed and the small island developing States amongst them, and other Parties with economies in transition, have sufficient resources available to implement the three objectives of the Convention".

A.   General observations on resource availability

46.   Of the obstacles to implementation of the Convention identified in the Strategic Plan, the most widespread, according to the third national reports, is "lack of financial, human and technical resources", with 43% of reporting countries identifying this a "high-level" constraint and 85%   identifying it a "high-" or "medium-level" constraint. For the least developed countries, the figures are 50% and 94% respectively. The latter countries also identified lack of adequate research capacities to support the objectives as an important constraint (94% considering it "high-" or "medium-level"). "Lack of economic incentive measures" is also considered as a high or medium level constraint by 81% of reporting countries. (Further information and analysis of the constraints to implementation is provided in an addendum to the present note (UNEP/CBD/WGRI/2/2/Add.1.)). It is clear from this result alone that objective 2.1 of the Strategic Plan is far from being met.

47.   According to the third national reports, the provisions of the Convention that are considered to have highest financial challenges are Articles 7 (Identification and monitoring), 8(h) (Invasive alien species), 12 (Research and training) and 8 (*In situ* conservation). Ninety per cent or more of all reporting countries identify lack of financial, human and technical resources as a high or medium challenge for implementing these articles and provisions.

B.   Availability of financial resources

48.   Nearly all countries indicate that they provide some financial support or incentives to national activities that are intended to achieve the objectives of the Convention. However, public investment in environmental protection and mitigation is declining in some countries, but increasing in others. Budgetary cuts are a serious problem for biodiversity conservation and sustainable use in some countries. The budgeting method as regards biodiversity needs strengthening since budgetary procedures are not suited for assessing intangible costs. Provincial and local governments have considerable annual budgets allocated to nature conservation.

4/   Or, separately, the devolved administrations: England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland.

49.   About one third of the reporting countries have adopted tax exemption status for biodiversity-related donations, and some others are in the process of developing appropriate tax exemption measures.

50.   There are many examples of private contributions and resources generated from revenue measures, but the resultant resources are generally insignificant at national or international levels. Several countries have begun to introduce innovative financial mechanisms such as payments for ecosystem services, but, generally speaking, these have not yet borne fruit in generating sustainable financing.
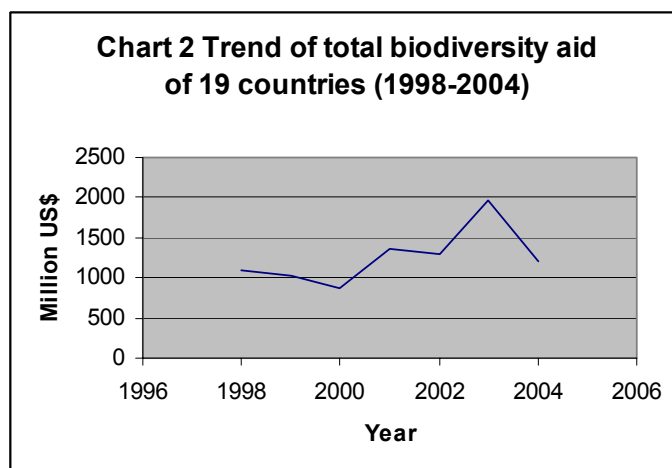
51.   Most countries do not have a process to monitor financial support in their countries. Similarly, only one fifth the reporting countries have ever conducted a review of how their national budgets including official development assistance support of national biodiversity activities.

C.   *International development assistance for biodiversity*

52.   According to data from the OECD Development Assistance Committee 5/ about US$ 9 billion from 21 developed countries and the European Commission have been provided for biodiversity-related assistance for the period between 1998 and 2005. Four countries (Japan, Germany, Netherlands and the United States) together provided 70 per cent of the marked total biodiversity-related assistance in this period. Other countries in the top ten supporting countries are Denmark, France, Norway, Canada, Sweden and Switzerland.

53.   Chart 2 presents the trend based on those 19 countries whose data are available for the whole period between 1998 and 2004. There was generally an increasing trend of biodiversity-related assistance from 1998 to 2003, but a downturn since. Overall, however, no clear trend can be discerned.

54.   The percentage of biodiversity assistance in total development assistance had a low of 1.32 percent in 2000 and a high of 2.94 percent in 2001. The period between 2001 and 2003 also witnessed a relatively high percentage. Overall, the data demonstrate that biodiversity accounts for around 2.10 percent of annual total official development assistance.

Chart 2 Trend of total biodiversity aid of 19 countries (1998-2004)

55.   According to information provided in the national reports, NBSAPs and development cooperation documents of developed countries, all reporting developed countries have taken into account conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity in their development assistance programmes. It is common practice to integrate environmental considerations into all aspects of development cooperation, in particular by applying environmental impact assessments. There is however only fragmented information from most recipient countries on bilateral cooperation.

5/   This is based on the data extracted on 1 March 2007, which contains funding information from Australia, Austria, Belgium, Canada, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Portugal, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, United Kingdom, United States and European Commission. The Rio markers allow for the identification of activities that target the objectives of the three Rio conventions (on biological diversity, climate change and desertification) were introduced by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development in 1998 as a pilot phase for a three-year period from 1998 and 2000, and continued thereafter. The Rio marker data is now publicly available at: **www.oecd.org/dac/stats/idsonline.**

56.   Biodiversity-related assistance from developed countries is mainly provided through official development assistance agencies, but other governmental agencies such as Ministries of Environment also provide significant amount of aid. Development assistance programmes have evolved rapidly in terms of geographical and thematic focus, and new aid initiatives often provide opportunities to address biodiversity concerns, for instance, by emphasizing that environmental management is a key to long-term poverty reduction. Biodiversity has featured into new policy documents, for example, Finland's process of adopting a strategy paper on how to support international environmental conventions via development cooperation, sustainable development charter of the French Development Agency, priority issues in Japan's official development assistance charter, Norway's Strategy for Environment in Development Cooperation, Sweden's Millennium Development Goals reports. However, the trend among many donors towards programmatic or budget-support to countries means that biodiversity-related initiatives will only be funded if they are identified as priorities by the recipient countries themselves.

57.   While many developed countries have set cooperation programmes for biodiversity, according to third national reports, only the Netherlands declared a specific commitment of 0.1% of its GNP for international nature and environment issues in the context of official development assistance, mostly related to the targets under the Convention.

58.   Biodiversity-targeted assistance programmes continue to play a valuable role in shaping international financial cooperation for biodiversity, such as: the Austrian Global Environment Cooperation Trust Fund; the Flemish Fund for Tropical Forests; the Equator Initiative; the Sustainable Use of Biodiversity Program of the Canadian International Development Research Centre (IDRC); the Environment, Peace and Stability Fund; the European Community's LIFE, PHARE and TACIS programmes and its environment and forests budget line; the World Bank Trust Fund for Environmentally and Socially Sustainable Development; the French Global Environment Facility; the UNEP/Development Cooperation Ireland Multilateral Environmental Trust Fund for Africa; the Netherlands International Policy Programme on Biodiversity; the Spanish Azahar and Araucaria programmes; the Swedish International Biodiversity programme (SwedBio); the Darwin Initiative and Flagship Species Fund of the United Kingdom Department of Environment, Food and Rural Affairs; and the Sustainable Development Global Opportunities Fund of the United Kingdom Foreign and Commonwealth Office.

59.   The Global Environment Facility (GEF) is considered by many donor countries as the primary vehicle for funding global biodiversity conservation under the Convention. However, other international organizations are also involved in channelling financial resources to biodiversity, in particular through new initiatives or trust funds. Developing countries confirmed that the GEF has been the main source of financing biodiversity projects. Some developing countries proposed aid programs and organized donor conferences. Emerging proposals include an Arab Environment Facility (AEF) to secure funds for environmental projects in the Arab region, and a Gulf Environmental Fund that will help to finance conservation in all the Gulf States.

D.   *Transfer of technology and technology cooperation*

60.   In their third national reports, a number of Parties reported on some positive outcomes of the activities undertaken to implement Article 16 and related decisions of the Conference of the Parties, including the programme of work annexed to decision VII/29. These included: increased knowledge and expertise; additional funding provided; access to new technology facilitated; and reduced adverse impact on biodiversity. Several Parties also pointed to specific examples of good practice cases and to successful activities in technology transfer and scientific and technological cooperation.

61.   However, in general, it appears that technology transfer and cooperation under the Convention has been very limited. Comments in third national reports by both developing and developed county Parties indicate that more needs to be undertaken at national and international levels to implement effectively Article 16 and the programme of work. Several Parties further noted the uneven speed of progress on technology transfer in different sectors and areas of work –noting that more activities need to be undertaken on the transfer of technology that make use of genetic resources. The need to establish national nodes of the clearing house mechanism was also noted.

62.   Major constraints identified include the lack of human capacity and financial resources, including the lack of capacity for the adaptation of technology, and the absence of legislation (including legislation on biosafety and access to genetic resources). Constraints identified by Parties also include a lack of information and knowledge with respect to technology needs, available technologies, and technology assessments, the low level of technology transfer from developed countries and of international technological cooperation, patents and a prohibitive level of fees.

VI.   REVIEW OF PROGRESS TOWARDS STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 2.5 (TECHNICAL AND SCIENTIFIC COOPERATION)

63.   Objective 2.5 of the Strategic Plan is: "Technical and scientific cooperation is making a significant contribution to building capacity."

64.   According to information provided in third national reports, important progress has been made in the fields of exchange of information (Article 17) and international technical and scientific cooperation, including the clearing-house mechanism (Article 18).

65.   Nearly all countries have undertaken measures to facilitate the exchange of information. Twelve countries report that they have implemented national networks. The fact that obstacles such as technological barriers have been diminishing has greatly contributed to the improvement in the capacity of many countries to access and exchange information.

66.   Some countries are participating in international biodiversity information networks, such the Global Biodiversity Information Facility (GBIF). In addition, there are numerous information networks specialized in specific areas related to the Convention. Bilateral cooperation agencies and other international organizations have also been major partners in supporting scientific and technical cooperation. Among the latter are not only United Nations system institutions (e.g. GEF, UNEP, UNDP, UNESCO, FAO) but also large international non-governmental organizations (e.g. IUCN, WWF) and regional institutions. Geographically, mega-diverse countries have benefited greatly from international cooperation and attracted the main players undertaking projects in the field of conservation and sustainable use.

67.   Eighty-two Parties have developed national clearing house mechanisms. Some have significantly invested in a comprehensive national biodiversity information network which constitutes their national clearing-house mechanism. Reported examples include Australia, Belgium, Canada, Chile, China, Colombia, Cuba, the European Community, Germany and Mexico. It is interesting to note that half of these countries are developing countries, and, as they have usually achieved this goal with very limited external support, their experience could be useful to other countries. Most of the remaining national clearing-house mechanisms consist mainly of a national website and efforts are being taken to enhance the information made available. Eighty-eight of the 190 Parties have yet to establish a national clearing-house mechanism. However, 78 of these (160 in total) have nominated a clearing-house mechanism focal point.

68.   Some limitations in exchange of information are apparent from the third national reports. Where measures have been undertaken to facilitate exchange of information, in many cases this does not include information specified in Article 17, paragraph 2, on exchange of research results, information on training programmes, specialized knowledge, indigenous and traditional knowledge, and access to technologies. Similarly the role of the clearing house mechanism in supporting international scientific and technical cooperation appears to be patchy: Even though most report cooperation initiatives on biodiversity, only a handful of national clearing-house mechanisms from developed countries have assisted other countries to gain access to information in the field of scientific and technical cooperation. Only nine developed countries report that they have developed their clearing-house mechanism to assist developing countries and countries with economies in transition by means of access to and transfer of technology.

69.   Overall, it is not clear to what extent these international cooperation initiatives have been facilitated by the clearing-house mechanism. Many factors, such as national strategies and global

awareness about the Convention, have to be taken into account. Another difficulty in assessing impact relates to the fact that the Secretariat receives very limited feedback on implementation. Such feedback would be extremely valuable, particularly if a link could be drawn between decisions and implementation. In addition, given the abundance of existing information sources on biodiversity, the new challenge is to acquire the most relevant information for decision-making.

Annex

STATUS OF DEVELOPMENT OF NATIONAL BIODIVERSITY STRATEGIES AND ACTION PLANS OR EQUIVALENT INSTRUMENTS (NBSAPS).

A. Parties that have revised NBSAPs

(dates refer to completion of each NBSAP)

1. Austria (1998, 2005)
2. Bhutan (1997, 2002)
3. Finland (1997, 2006)
4. Indonesia (1993, 2003)
5. Japan (1995, 2002) *2nd NBSAP revision currently in preparation
6. Morocco (2002, 2004)
7. Netherlands (1995, 2001)
8. Philippines (1997, 2002)
9. Sweden (1995, 2006)
10. Thailand (1997, 2002)
11. United Kingdom (1994, 2006)

B. Parties with NBSAPs under revision

(date refers to existing NBSAP)

1. Australia (1996)
2. Bahamas (1999)
3. China (1993)
4. Cuba (1997)
5. Estonia (1999)
6. European Community (1998)
7. India (1999)
8. Lebanon (1998)
9. Romania (1996)
10. Spain (1999) *Strategy only
11. Tunisia (1998)

C. Other Parties with completed NBSAPs

(date refers to completion)

1. Albania (1999)
2. Algeria (2005)
3. Angola (2006)
4. Armenia (1999)
5. Azerbaijan (2004)
6. Barbados (2002)
7. Belarus (1997)
8. Belize (1998)
9. Belgium (2007)
10. Benin (2002)
11. Bolivia (2001)
12. Botswana (2005)
13. Brazil (2002)
14. Burkina Faso (1998)
15. Bulgaria (2000) * Action Plan only
16. Burundi (2000)
17. Cambodia (2002)
18. Cameroon (1999)
19. Canada (1996)
20. Cape Verde (1999)
21. Central African Republic (2000)
22. Chad (1999)
23. Chile (2003)
24. Comoros (2000)
25. Congo (2001)
26. Costa Rica (1999)
27. Côte d'Ivoire (2002) *Strategy only
28. Croatia (1999)
29. Czech Republic (2005)
30. DR Congo (1999)
31. DPR Korea (1998)
32. Denmark (1996)
33. Djibouti (2001)
34. Dominica (2000)
35. Ecuador (2001)
36. Egypt (1998)
37. El Salvador (1999)
38. Eritrea (2000)
39. Ethiopia (2006)
40. Fiji (1997)
41. France (2004) *Strategy only
42. Gabon (1999)
43. Gambia (1999)
44. Georgia (2005)
45. Ghana (2002) *Strategy only
46. Grenada (2000)
47. Guatemala (1999)
48. Guinea (2001)
49. Guinea-Bissau (2006)
50. Guyana (1999)
51. Honduras (2001)
52. Hungary (2004)
53. Iran (2006)
54. Ireland (2002)
55. Jamaica (2003)
56. Jordan (2001)
57. Kazakhstan (1999)
58. Kenya (1999)
59. Kyrgyzstan (1998)
60. Lao PDR (2004)
61. Latvia (2000)
62. Lesotho (2004)
63. Liberia (2003)
64. Lithuania (1996)
65. Madagascar (2000)
66. Malawi (2006)
67. Malaysia (1998)
68. Maldives (2002)
69. Mali (2001)
70. Marshall Islands (2000)
71. Mauritania (1999)
72. Mexico (2000)
73. Micronesia, Federated States of (2002)
74. Mongolia (1996)
75. Mozambique (2001)

76. Namibia (2002)
77. Nepal (2002)
78. New Zealand (2000)
79. Nicaragua (2001)
80. Niger (1998)
81. Nigeria (2006)
82. Niue (2001)
83. Norway (2001)
84. Oman (2001)
85. Pakistan (1999)
86. Panama (2000)
87. Paraguay (2003)
88. Peru (2001)
89. Poland (2003)
90. Portugal (2001)
91. Qatar (2004)
92. Republic of Korea (1997)
93. Republic of Moldova (2000)
94. Russian Federation (2001)
95. Rwanda (2003)
96. Saint Lucia (2000)
97. Samoa (2001)
98. Sao Tome and Principe (2005)
99. Senegal (1998)
100. Seychelles (1997)
101. Sierra Leone (2003)
102. Slovakia (1998)
103. Slovenia (2001)
104. Sri Lanka (1998)
105. Sudan (2000)
106. Suriname (2006) *Strategy only
107. Swaziland (2001)
108. Switzerland (2006)
109. Syrian Arab Republic (2002)
110. Tajikistan (2003)
111. The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, (2005)
112. Trinidad and Tobago (2001)
113. Turkmenistan (2002)
114. Uganda (2002)
115. Ukraine (1998) *Strategy only
116. United Republic of Tanzania (2004)
117. Uruguay (1999)
118. Uzbekistan (1998)
119. Venezuela (2001)
120. Vietnam (1994)
121. Vanuatu (1999)
122. Yemen (2005)
123. South Africa (2005)
124. Zambia (2003)
125. Zimbabwe (2000)

D. Parties with first NBSAP under development
1. Antigua and Barbuda
2. Argentina
3. Bangladesh
4. Bosnia and Herzegovina
5. Colombia

6. Dominican Republic
7. Germany
8. Greece
9. Iceland
10. Italy
11. Israel
12. Kiribati
13. Malta
14. Mauritius
15. Monaco
16. Myanmar
17. Saint Vincent and the Grenadines
18. Saudi Arabia
19. Solomon Islands
20. Serbia
21. Singapore
22. Togo
23. Turkey
24. Tuvalu

E. Parties for which there is no information about the status of NBSAPs.
1. Afghanistan
2. Bahrain
3. Cook Islands
4. Cyprus
5. Equatorial Guinea
6. Haiti
7. Kuwait
8. Libyan Arab Jamahiriya
9. Liechtenstein
10. Luxembourg
11. Montenegro
12. Nauru
13. Palau
14. Papua New Guinea
15. Saint Kitts and Nevis
16. San Marino
17. Timor-Leste
18. Tonga
19. United Arab Emirates