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CAPACITY-BUILDING, TECHNICAL AND SCIENTIFIC COOPERATION, TECHNOLOGY TRANSFER AND THE CLEARING-HOUSE MECHANISM

Note by the Executive Secretary

I. INTRODUCTION

1. The Convention on Biological Diversity requires Parties to, inter alia, establish and maintain programmes for scientific and technical education and training in measures for the identification, conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity and its components and provide support for such education and training for the specific needs of developing countries (Article 12, para. (a)). It also requires Parties to promote technical and scientific cooperation with other Parties, in particular developing countries, in the implementation of the Convention and, in doing so, to give special attention to the development and strengthening of national capabilities by means of human resources development and institution building (Article 18, para. 2) and the development and use of technologies, including indigenous and traditional technologies (Article 18, para. 4). Furthermore, it calls for the establishment of a clearing-house mechanism to promote and facilitate technical and scientific cooperation (Article 18, para. 3).

2. The Conference of the Parties has adopted a number of decisions to strengthen commitments and activities related to these three related areas. Most recently, in decision XII/2 B, the Conference of the Parties adopted a number of measures to further enhance capacity-building, technical and scientific cooperation and technology transfer, and the use of available mechanisms and advanced technologies, including the clearing-house mechanism, to support the implementation of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 and the achievement of the Aichi Biodiversity Targets, recognizing the importance of adopting a coherent and mutually supportive approach to these items.

3. The above three items are interlinked. Capacity-building is a broad concept encompassing various activities, tools, mechanisms and processes for strengthening countries' systemic, institutional and human resources capabilities to effectively implement the Convention and its Protocols.¹ Technical and scientific

* UNEP/CBD/SBI/1/1/Rev.1.

¹ UNDP defines capacity development as a process through which individuals, organizations and societies obtain, strengthen and maintain the capabilities to set and achieve their own development objectives over time (UNDP Practice Note: Capacity

cooperation has been described as a process whereby two or more countries pursue their individual or collective goals through cooperative exchanges of scientific knowledge, skills, resources and technical know-how (technologies).² The clearing-house mechanism is a platform called for by Article 18.3 of the Convention to promote and facilitate technical and scientific cooperation.

4. The Secretariat's goal is to provide Parties with support for implementation in a more coherent manner. Strategic reviews of the Secretariat's work on capacity-building, technical and scientific cooperation and the clearing-house mechanism provided inputs to decision XII/2 B, and a number of steps have been taken to advance a more integrated approach in implementing this decision. The draft short-term action plan for capacity-building prepared by the Secretariat, pursuant to decision XII/2, also recognizes the need to coordinate and integrate the implementation of the Secretariat's mandate on capacity-building and technical and scientific cooperation and technology transfer (UNEP/CBD/SBI/1/6/Add.1). In addition, as part of the functional review, the Secretariat has grouped its core capacity-building functions, technical and scientific cooperation, and the clearing-house mechanism under Operational Goal 3 of its Medium Term Operational Results Framework.

5. The present document is relevant to other items on the agenda of the first meeting of the Subsidiary Body on Implementation, including items 4 and 7, and the associated documents, such as UNEP/CBD/SBI/1/2 (progress in the implementation of the Convention and the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 and towards the achievement of the Aichi Biodiversity Targets) and UNEP/CBD/SBI/1/5 (strategic actions to enhance implementation of the Convention and the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020).

II. CAPACITY-BUILDING SUPPORT FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE STRATEGIC PLAN FOR BIODIVERSITY (2011-2020) AND ITS AICHI BIODIVERSITY TARGETS

6. In paragraph 8(d) of the decision XII/2 B, the Conference of the Parties requested the Executive Secretary to undertake: (a) an evaluation of the effectiveness of capacity-building activities that the Secretariat has supported and facilitated, including recommendations on how to further integrate the needs expressed by Parties using participatory approaches; (b) a review of related partnership arrangements and opportunities for delivery; and (c) an analysis of the gaps in capacity-building activities supporting the implementation of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020, and, building on these elements, develop a short-term action plan to enhance and support capacity-building, especially for developing countries, in particular the least developed countries and small island developing States, and countries with economies in transition, and to convene an expert group to examine the proposed short-term action plan. Sub-sections A, B and C below present a summary of the outcomes of the above evaluation, review and analysis. The detailed results are presented in information document UNEP/CBD/SBI/1/INF/29.

Development, 2008: <http://www.undp.org/content/undp/en/home/librarypage/capacity-building/capacity-development-practice-note.html>. It encompasses a wide range of activities including: training courses/programmes, workshops, webinars, networking meetings for sharing of experience, provision of training and guidance materials, documentation and facilitation of exchange of lessons learned, facilitation of access to existing knowledge and data, individual and institutional mentoring (including through twinning programmes), staff exchanges and secondments, internships and fellowships, peer-to-peer learning, e-learning tools, curriculum development, institutional development, technical assistance and policy support.

² UNDP also describes scientific and technical cooperation as a process whereby two or more countries pursue their individual or collective goals through cooperative exchanges of scientific knowledge, skills, resources and technical know-how (technologies) and considers it as part of the broader strategic efforts to develop the capacity of countries to achieve their development objectives: <http://unpan1.un.org/intradoc/groups/public/documents/un/unpan015394.pdf>. In practice, some "capacity-building" and "technical and scientific cooperation" activities undertaken in the context of the CBD and its Protocols might not always fit neatly in these definitions and may overlap.

7. Sub-section D identifies possible ways and means of enhancing the implementation of Article 12 of the Convention, in particular training and capacity-building for developing countries to support implementation of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 which will be addressed by the Conference of the Parties at its thirteenth meeting as stipulated in its multi-year programme of work up to 2020 (decision XII/31).

A. Evaluation of the effectiveness of capacity-building activities

8. Pursuant to the request contained in para. 8(d) of decision XII/2 B, the Executive Secretary through notification 2015-147 of 15 December 2015 invited national focal points and participants (including government officials and representatives of indigenous peoples and local communities), who took part in capacity-building activities facilitated and/or supported by the Secretariat during the period 2013-2015, to complete an online survey to evaluate the overall effectiveness of those activities and make recommendations for improvement. The survey was designed to complement the findings of the mid-term review of the Japan Biodiversity Fund (JBF) activities carried out between 2011 and 2012, which was conducted by the Institute for Global Environmental Strategies to, inter alia, assess the relevance and effectiveness of capacity-building activities of the JBF and document the lessons learned.

9. The survey was conducted online using survey monkey from 15 December 2015 to 14 January 2016 and was available in English, French and Spanish. Participants were asked to respond to a total of 10 questions, six of which were multiple choice questions with the option of adding further information in a narrative form and four were narrative questions. A total of 144 responses to the survey were received from Africa (62 respondents), Asia and the Pacific (27), Central and Eastern Europe (7), Latin America and the Caribbean (44) and the Western Europe and Others Group (4). In analysing the 74 pages of the narrative responses received, the Secretariat focused on recurring issues and themes raised by various respondents, as well as innovative ideas provided by respondents.

10. In summary, most respondents indicated that they participated in capacity-building activities and/or accessed and used capacity-building materials related to Aichi Target 17 on the national biodiversity strategies and action plans (52 respondents or 36 per cent), Target 18 on traditional knowledge (52 participants), Target 16 on the Nagoya Protocol (51 respondents), Target 11 on Protected areas (48) and Target 20 on financial resources (46). The least covered areas were: Aichi Target 13 on maintenance of genetic diversity maintained (14), Aichi Target 7 on sustainable agriculture, aquaculture and forestry (13) Target 3 on incentives (10), and Target 8 on pollution (10).

11. Most respondents agreed or strongly agreed that the Secretariat's capacity-building support activities were useful and effective in increasing their ability and confidence to contribute to national processes for the implementation of the Convention and its Protocols, particularly the training and guidance materials (over 96 per cent), the case studies and lessons learned (95 per cent), the capacity-building/training workshops (94 per cent) and the technical support/policy advice provided (93 per cent).

12. A large number of respondents (71 respondents or 49 per cent) also strongly agreed that the Secretariat's capacity-building activities and materials were relevant to their work and responded to their country's capacity needs and priorities, 69 respondents (48 per cent) agreed and 4 respondents (3 per cent) disagreed. A number of respondents commented that the workshop material contributed to enhancing their skills to better perform at work and others said they used material provided by the Secretariat for their national capacity-building activities. Others noted that the case of real examples of success stories and the practical experiences shared by experts and other participants were relevant and useful for their work.

13. A majority of the respondents (73 respondents or 51 per cent) indicated that they had utilized/applied the knowledge, experience and skills acquired from the Secretariat's capacity-building activities to a large extent, while 36 respondents (25 per cent) had done so to a very large extent, 29 respondents (20 per cent) to a limited extent, and six respondents (4 per cent) to a very limited extent. Furthermore, a number of respondents mentioned that they used the knowledge and skills in the

development and implementation of projects; others applied them in training others and raising awareness at the local and national levels.

14. A number of recommendations were made to improve the effectiveness of the capacity-building activities supported and/or facilitated by the Secretariat. Many respondents recommended organizing more “train the trainers” activities as well as more webinars and online learning activities, developing more training and guidance materials, assessing countries’ specific needs before developing the content and the programme of capacity-building activities, better selecting participants to ensure that the same individuals do not attend all activities, providing follow-up support after workshops and creating networks for participants to continue sharing experiences. Others urged the Secretariat to ensure that concrete follow-up actions and work plans are agreed at the end of the workshops. Other suggestions included: allowing sufficient time for participants to complete preparatory work; dividing participants according to their level of capacity; incorporating more practical sessions in the training activities; and adding more practical sessions and field work to the workshop programmes.

15. A large number of respondents also called for organization of more capacity-building activities on access and benefit-sharing (ABS) and Article 8(j), while others suggested organizing workshops for subnational authorities and other stakeholders at the local level. Some respondents suggested that more regional organizations, local experts and representatives of indigenous peoples and local communities should be invited to take part in capacity-building workshops to share information and experiences about their work. Others recommended increasing the number of participants supported per country, especially for large countries; and providing countries with financial assistance to organize capacity-building activities at the national level.

16. The above results, to a large extent, corroborate the findings in the report of the Mid-term Review of Japan Biodiversity Fund Activities prepared by the Institute for Global Environmental Strategies in May 2013. The review found that the capacity-building activities funded by JBF were relevant and largely effective and contributed to creating partnerships, raising co-financing for the implementation of the Convention. According to the feedback from participants, workshops funded by JBF were deemed useful, the content of those workshops was considered relevant to countries’ needs and directly contributed to building their capacity to revise and implement NBSAPs. Some participants called for provision of more tailor-made training and guidance materials and in languages other than English. JBF funded projects also encouraged exchange of experiences and good practices which helped to fill key knowledge gaps. Some projects fostered regional collaboration and catalysed country-level capacity-building activities with other multilateral and/or bilateral donors.

17. The Subsidiary Body may wish to take note of the above evaluation results and request the Executive Secretary undertake the measures proposed in section V to improve the effectiveness of its capacity-building support activities, taking into account the results of the evaluation.

B. Partnership arrangements and opportunities for delivery

18. Partnerships have been an integral component of the Secretariat’s work since its establishment. Over the last decade the Secretariat has entered into more than 200 agreements with various national, regional and international organizations to assist implementation of the Convention and its Protocols.³ More than half of those agreements include collaboration to provide capacity-building support to Parties and stakeholders, particularly for indigenous peoples and local communities. However, not all of these agreements are still active. In addition, the Secretariat collaborates, on an ad hoc basis, with a number of

³ The partnership agreements are available on the CBD website at: <http://www.cbd.int/agreements/>. A list of some of the organizations with which the Secretariat has signed a formal agreement is contained in the annex to information document UNEP/CBD/SBI/1/INF/29.

intergovernmental, non-governmental, academic and research and business sector organizations in organizing or facilitating specific capacity-building activities.

19. The Secretariat is working closely with a number of partnership initiatives which are directly contributing to capacity-building for the effective implementation of the Convention and its Protocols, and in particular the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 and its Aichi Biodiversity Targets. Examples include: the PoWPA Friends Consortium, the Sustainable Ocean Initiative (SOI), the Global Taxonomy Initiative, the Collaborative Partnership on Forests (CPF), the Collaborative Partnership on Sustainable Wildlife Management, the International Partnership for Satoyama Initiative, the Global Island Partnership (GLISPA), the Global Invasive Alien Species Information Partnership (GIASIP), the Global Partnership on Forest and Landscape Restoration (GPFLR), the Consortium of Scientific Partners on Biodiversity, the Aichi Biodiversity Targets Task Force, the UNDP-GEF Small Grants Programme, the Equator Initiative partnership, the Poverty-Environment Initiative, the UN-REDD Programme, the WAVES partnership, the UNDP Biodiversity Finance (BIOFIN) initiative, the Biodiversity and Ecosystems Network (BES-Net) and the capacity-building forum of the Intergovernmental Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES). A brief description of these partnerships is provided in information document UNEP/CBD/SBI/1/INF/29.

20. The Secretariat is currently in the process of developing a partnership strategy to streamline and strengthen the establishment, management, coordination, monitoring and evaluation of its partnerships. With respect to partnerships for capacity-building, the Secretariat will be more strategic in identifying and establishing partnerships with organizations and other entities that have comparative advantages in terms of expertise, resources and networks and ability to add considerable value to capacity-building efforts.

C. Analysis of gaps in capacity-building activities

21. Paragraph 8(d) of decision XII/2 B calls for an analysis of the gaps in capacity-building activities supporting the implementation of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020. For the purposes of this document, pursuant to this mandate, the Secretariat analysed gaps in coverage of Aichi Biodiversity Targets, and various geographic regions by capacity-building activities facilitated and/or supported by the Secretariat in line with the mandate provided in previous COP decisions.⁴ The detailed analysis is presented in UNEP/CBD/SBI/1/INF/29, annexes I and II.⁵ The annexes also provide information regarding coverage of the targets by existing capacity-building tools and materials and COP decisions relating to capacity-building. The status of implementation of the Aichi Biodiversity Targets as reported by Parties in their fifth national reports is also presented in document UNEP/CBD/SBI/1/2/Add.2.

22. The analysis shows that Targets 4, 7, 8 and 13 have not had any capacity-building activities dedicated specifically to them in any region. The analysis also shows that, while capacity-building activities were undertaken in almost all regions in support of Target 14, those activities covered only the biodiversity and health aspect and not the target's broader intention of ensuring that ecosystems contribute to the livelihoods and well-being of poor and vulnerable groups. Activities supporting the implementation of Targets 1, 3 and 12 have also had relatively limited regional coverage.

⁴ This approach was chosen principally due to the limited information available. However it must be cautioned that, as many of the Aichi Biodiversity Targets are closely interlinked, an activity covering one target may also cover other associated targets. This "indirect" coverage is not captured in the table and graphs. The results of the analysis may be further refined by consideration of these linkages and the coverage it may have afforded the targets that it indicates have been least covered. Likewise, it should be considered that in some regions some Aichi Biodiversity Targets may be less relevant or less in need of support for their implementation.

⁵ A list of capacity-building activities supported since COP-12 builds on the list provided in previous documents prepared by the Executive Secretary, including UNEP/CBD/WGRI/5/3, UNEP/CBD/COP/11/13 and UNEP/CBD/COP/11/INF/13, reporting on the progress made by the Secretariat in providing capacity-building support to Parties for implementing the convention and the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020.

23. On the other hand, the information available indicates capacity-building activities supporting Targets 2, 5, 6, 9, 10, 11, 15, 16, 17, 18 and 20 as well as the Cartagena Protocol have been implemented in almost all the regions since the tenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties.

24. With regards to the geographic coverage, the analysis shows that there has been a good regional balance in capacity-building activities supported by the Secretariat with the slight exception of Central Asia.

25. The analysis of gaps in coverage of Aichi Targets by existing capacity-building tools and materials available⁶ also shows that there are no capacity-building materials supporting the achievement of Targets 13 and 19 and only a few (less than five) tools and materials are available to support the achievement of Targets 8, 9, 10, 12, 15, 18, and 20.⁷

26. There is also a substantial difference between Aichi Biodiversity Targets in terms of the number of COP decisions on capacity-building that have been adopted since the tenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to support their achievement. For example, there has been no single COP decision taken mandating capacity support for the achievement of Targets 12, and 13.⁸

27. The analysis of coverage of Aichi Targets by both capacity-building activities and available capacity-building tools shows that Targets 3, 4, 7, 8, 12 and 13 are least supported, followed closely by Targets 14 and 19. These can be considered key gaps in the coverage of capacity-building activities at the global level.

28. The status of implementation of the Aichi Targets as reported in the Parties' fifth national reports (see UNEP/CBD/SBI/1/2/Add.2) indicates that, while a majority of Parties are progressing (albeit at an insufficient rate) on most targets, some Parties are making no progress on almost all targets, and some Parties are moving away from a number of targets. The targets of most concern are: 5, 8, 9, 10, and 12 while targets 2, 3, 4, 6, 7, 9, 13, 14, 15 and 20 also seem to be lagging to varying degrees.

29. A comparative analysis of the above global "gaps" in the coverage of capacity-building activities supported by the Secretariat and the status of implementation of the different targets does indicate some unlikely completely coincidental relationship. For example, Targets 8, 12 and 13, which have received the least capacity-building support from the Secretariat's activities and are least covered by available tools are also among the targets on which little or no progress has been made. Targets 3, 4 and 7, which are supported by a few capacity-building tools and activities, are also lagging in terms of progress.

30. However, it is difficult to draw any general conclusions from the analysis of the relationship between gaps in Secretariat-supported capacity-building activities and the achievement of the Aichi Targets in order to set capacity-building priorities. This is due to evidence of targets with relatively limited capacity-building support which are showing some progress (targets 1 and 19) and targets with good coverage of capacity-building efforts which are lagging (target 5). The linkage of certain targets to the achievement of other Targets, such as Target 5 and Target 12, and the importance of targets that address the underlying causes of biodiversity loss (Targets 1–4), and enabling activities (Targets 17, 19 and 20), should also be considered in setting priorities. Finally, the analysis of gaps to inform priority setting should include the activities of partners and not only those explicitly supported by the Secretariat.

⁶ The tools considered for this analysis are those produced the Secretariat in collaboration with partner organizations. The Secretariat is aware of many partners have also produced different capacity-building tools and materials not in collaboration with the Secretariat. Many of these were reviewed in the review undertaken for SBSTTA-17 (see paragraph 31 of the present note). These tools and materials should be registered in the recently created database of capacity-building tools resources in order to be considered in future analyses of this type.

⁷ This analysis does not consider the quality of the capacity-building materials nor the need (or not) for additional materials. It also does not consider the availability of existing materials in different languages.

⁸ This analysis does not consider the contents of these decisions, only their existence/absence. The need (or not) for additional decisions depends a lot on whether previous decisions have been fulfilled and on the content of decisions.

31. This analysis of capacity-building gaps could be complemented with the results of the process undertaken under SBSTTA at its seventeenth meeting to identify key scientific and technical needs related to the implementation of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 (decision XII/1, annex I). This was based on a comprehensive review, prepared by the Executive Secretary, of the scientific and technical needs related to the implementation of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 (see UNEP/CBD/SBSTTA/17/2 and Add.1-4).⁹ These documents reviewed, for Aichi Biodiversity Targets 1 to 15, the existing policy support tools and methodologies developed or used under the Convention, their adequacy, their impact, the obstacles to their uptake, and gaps and needs for further development of such tools and methodologies, as well as the adequacy of observations and data systems for monitoring the biodiversity attributes addressed in the Aichi Biodiversity Targets. Further work was undertaken at the nineteenth meeting of SBSTTA to identify further opportunities and additional strategic issues/key actions for productive sectors. It can also be complemented by a needs assessment being undertaken as part of the Secretariat's work on technical and scientific cooperation, based on national reports and NBSAPs (UNEP/CBD/SBI/1/INF/29) as well as the analysis of the contribution of national targets established by Parties towards the achievement of Aichi Biodiversity Targets (UNEP/CBD/SBI/1/2/Add.2).

32. At the national level, one source of information regarding the Parties' capacity-building needs is the revised NBSAPs, which, according to decision IX/8, should contain a national capacity development strategy. The Secretariat notes, however, that, of the 79 post COP-10 NBSAPs received to date, only 5 contain such a strategy, while some 30 others make reference to capacity-building, albeit often in a very generic manner (see UNEP/CBD/SBI/1/2/Add.1). A preliminary analysis of the capacity needs expressed in the first 13 post COP-10 NBSAPs from developing Parties submitted to the Secretariat revealed that, while some information can be gleaned in this way, for the most part, Parties are not systematic or explicit enough in their NBSAPs regarding their capacity needs to allow conclusions to be drawn and capacity-building programmes developed based (solely) on this information.

33. Other sources of information regarding national-level capacity needs and gaps are the National Capacity Self-Assessments (NSCA), which were conducted between 2002 and 2010 with support from the Global Environment Facility.¹⁰ A total of 146 countries conducted these assessments to determine their capacity needs for implementing the Rio Conventions. While individual country reports can be examined, GEF's global summary report indicates the top five capacity development needs expressed by countries: (a) public awareness and environmental education; (b) information management and exchange; (c) development and enforcement of policy and regulatory frameworks; (d) strengthening organizational mandates and structures; and (e) economic instruments and sustainable financing mechanisms.

D. Ways and means of enhancing the implementation of Article 12 of the Convention

34. As stipulated in its multi-year programme of work up to 2020 (decision XII/31), the Conference of the Parties at its thirteenth meeting will address ways and means to enhance the implementation of Article 12 of the Convention, in particular training and capacity-building for developing countries to support implementation of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020. Accordingly, this sub-section reviews relevant past and ongoing initiatives and identifies possible ways and means of enhancing biodiversity-related education and training to support implementation of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020.

⁹ UNEP/CBD/SBSTTA/17/2/Add.1 (addressing the Targets of Goal A of the Strategic Plan, i.e. Targets 1-4), UNEP/CBD/SBSTTA/17/2/Add.2 (addressing Goal B, i.e. Targets 5-10), UNEP/CBD/SBSTTA/17/2/Add.3 (addressing Goal C, i.e. Targets 11-13), UNEP/CBD/SBSTTA/17/2/Add.4 (addressing Targets 14 and 15 of Goal D). These documents drew upon information provided by Parties in response to notification 2013-005, and updated information provided earlier on the review of programmes of work, guidance and tools developed under the Convention in UNEP/CBD/WGRI/1/3/Add.2.

¹⁰ Bellamy, Jean-Joseph and Kevin Hill (2010), "National Capacity Self-Assessments: Results and Lessons Learned for Global Environmental Sustainability", Global Support Programme, Bureau for Development Policy, United Nations Development Programme, New York, United States of America. It can be downloaded at: <https://www.thegef.org/gef/ncsa>

35. In general, education and training programmes fall into three broad categories: formal,¹¹ non-formal¹² and informal.¹³ Most of the education and training initiatives currently undertaken by the Secretariat and partner organizations fall under the category of non-formal programmes and include training workshops, seminars, conferences and lectures.

36. A number of initiatives have been implemented by Parties and relevant organizations in recent years to promote biodiversity-related education and training. Some Governments have formulated specific national policies aimed at promoting environmental education at all levels. For example, since the early 1990s, a number of countries in Latin America and the Caribbean, including Brazil, Costa Rica, Cuba, Ecuador and Mexico, have developed specific national policies or strategies to promote environmental education.¹⁴

37. Some of the work regarding the implementation of Article 12 of the Convention has been undertaken within the framework of the Global Initiative on Communication, Education and Public Awareness (CEPA), which was adopted in decision VI/19, and the implementation plan for the CEPA programme of work, which was adopted in decision VIII/6, annex III. A number of priority activities under component 1 (education) and component 3 (training) of the implementation plan are still pertinent.¹⁵ SBI may wish to recommend that those activities be further reviewed and pursued in the context of the proposed short-term action plan to enhance and support capacity-building for the implementation of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020.

38. A number of universities and training institutions around the world are also engaged in environment-related education, training and research programmes. Some universities are offering biodiversity-related degree programmes at undergraduate and graduate levels and others have created specialized short-term or continuing education (or summer) courses. The content of those courses varies depending on the level of instruction (graduate, undergraduate or basic levels), and the target audience (including government officials, professionals, students, and representatives of indigenous peoples and local communities, etc.).

39. Various global and regional training networks and partnership initiatives established over the past few years also provide opportunities for advancing biodiversity-related education and training programme. Examples include: the Global Universities Partnership on Environment for Sustainability (GUPES), the Network for Environmental Training at Tertiary Level in Asia and the Pacific (NETTLAP), the Environmental Training Network for Latin America and the Caribbean (ETN-LAC), the Alliance of Iberoamerican University Networks for Sustainability and the Environment (ARIUSA); the Canadian Universities Partnership for Biodiversity (CUPB); the Promotion of Sustainability in Postgraduate Education and Research Network (ProSPER.Net); the Global Training Programme on Environmental Policy Analysis and Law, the Train-Sea-Coast (TSC) Programme; the Global network of Regional Centres of Expertise (RCEs) on Education for Sustainable Development; the Partner Networks of the Global Action Programme on Education for Sustainable Development (ESD); and the Higher Education Sustainability Initiative (HESI). A brief description of these partnerships and networks is provided in information document UNEP/CBD/SBI/1/INF/29.

¹¹ Formal education involves organized formal approaches to impart knowledge and skills of individuals. It is curriculum-based and use of set standards to assess the learners' levels of achievement.

¹² Non-formal education involves structured educational/learning activities that take place outside the established formal educational system. These usually don't have a set syllabus, assessment, accreditation and certification.

¹³ Informal education involves unstructured learning activities with no set learning objectives and outcomes.

¹⁴ See Article on "Higher Education, Environment and Sustainability in Latin America and The Caribbean" by Orlando Sáenz and Javier Benayas: <http://www.guninetwork.org/articles/higher-education-environment-and-sustainability-latin-america-and-caribbean>

¹⁵ See the short-list of CEPA priority activities at: <https://www.cbd.int/decision/cop/default.shtml?id=11018>

40. Furthermore, a number of research institutions, networks and initiatives are involved in capacity-building and training activities. These include Future Earth (which incorporates the activities of DIVERSITAS), the Quebec Centre for Biodiversity Science (QCBS), the Biodiversity Indicators Partnership, the Group on Earth Observations Biodiversity Observation Network (GEOBON), the Global Biodiversity Information Facility (GBIF) through its Capacity Enhancement Support Programme, and the Intergovernmental Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES).

41. The above networks and partnerships, and others of a similar nature, provide unique opportunities for enhancing the implementation of Article 12 of the Convention. Those networks could be encouraged to specifically advance biodiversity-related education and training in support of the implementation of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity, taking into account the specific needs of Parties. The Subsidiary Body may wish to invite those initiatives to develop or strengthen specific programmes for biodiversity and also urge Parties to provide support for such networks by, among other things, establishing an enabling policy environment, providing financial and technical support and/or facilitating networking and sharing of expertise and resources.

42. Another approach that may be considered is to develop more institutional capacity within universities, to support delivery of technical and scientific expertise, research, and other relevant activities for implementation. Models for such networks of universities exist at the national level and could be replicated at the global level.

43. In general, enhancing the implementation of Article 12 of the Convention, in particular education and training to support implementation of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020, will require a concerted effort between Parties and relevant institutions and organizations. Taking into consideration the experience of other relevant processes, significant efforts are needed to develop a critical mass of trained personnel that includes indigenous peoples and local communities and various stakeholders. One of the ways to sustainably achieve that is by strengthening the capacity of universities and training centres to effectively deliver the technical and scientific knowledge required to effectively implement the Convention and its Protocols.

44. Furthermore, Parties may wish to consider adopting the following ways and means to enhance the implementation of Article 12 of the Convention, in particular education and training:

(a) Developing a network of national universities and centres of excellence in the regions to provide long-term capacity for support for implementation, to develop and deliver tailored scientific and technical courses and programmes for government officials, indigenous peoples and local communities and stakeholders;

(b) Provision of short-term fellowships and on-the-job training opportunities to enable participants from developing country Parties and Parties with economies in transition to acquire specialized skills and exposure to new scientific and technological innovations;

(c) Incorporation of biodiversity-related education in broader national human resources development programmes.

III. TECHNICAL AND SCIENTIFIC COOPERATION AND TECHNOLOGY TRANSFER FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE STRATEGIC PLAN FOR BIODIVERSITY (2011-2020)

45. Article 18 calls on Parties, inter alia, to promote international technical and scientific cooperation in the field of conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity, in particular, with developing countries. The Convention's work on technical and scientific cooperation was given momentum through a number of decisions, including the adoption of the programme of work on technology transfer and

technological and scientific cooperation (decision VII/29). Activities towards its implementation are included in a number of decisions (decision VII/29; VIII/12; IX/14; X/16, X/23, XI/13, XII/2).¹⁶

46. In response to para. 2 of decision X/16, the Executive Secretary conducted a gap analysis of supportive activities with regard to technical and scientific cooperation and technology transfer under the Convention. The outcome of this process was reflected in documents UNEP/CBD/COP/11/13/Add.1 and UNEP/CBD/COP/11/INF/9. Subsequently, decision XI/2, item C on scientific and technical cooperation and technology transfer, requested the Executive Secretary to develop, in cooperation with relevant partner organizations and subject to the availability of resources, a coherent, consistent and coordinated approach to technical and scientific cooperation, and to facilitate implementation of the Convention by acting as a convenor, to build partnerships and capacity with a view to facilitating the full and effective implementation of Article 18 and related articles of the Convention, in support of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020, building upon existing mechanisms, and to develop operational options and proposals, including on the criteria and procedure for the identification of national and regional centres of excellence.

47. At its twelfth meeting, the Conference of the Parties requested the Executive Secretary to enhance technical and scientific cooperation and technology transfer under the Convention, and report on progress to the Subsidiary Body on Implementation at its first meeting (decision XII/2 B, para. 9). The decision called for a number of specific actions: facilitating the communication of technical and scientific needs and priorities of Parties; further enhancing the availability and accessibility of information with respect to best practices and expertise for technical and scientific cooperation; utilizing the clearing-house mechanism and other appropriate means; encouraging and supporting South-South and triangular cooperation for mutual strengthening of the capacities of developing country Parties; and facilitating the linking of the needs of Parties with support for technical and scientific cooperation by relevant global, regional and national organizations and initiatives.

48. The decision further requests the Executive Secretary, building on existing structures, to promote thematic, cross-cutting and regional pilot programmes for technical and scientific cooperation and technology transfer. The decision further encourages developing country Parties as well as indigenous and local communities to make available information regarding their technical and scientific needs and priorities, and needs for technology transfer, and to make them available through the clearing-house mechanism; and to participate in and contribute to technical and scientific cooperation and technology transfer under the Convention.

49. Finally, the decision also welcomes the Bio-Bridge Initiative of the Republic of Korea, which was launched at COP 12, as an important contribution to the enhancement of technical and scientific cooperation in the context of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 and the Aichi Biodiversity Targets.

50. The Secretariat's work to implement decision XII/2 B on technical and scientific cooperation has been focused mostly on the further development and strengthening of the Bio-Bridge Initiative, including the development of a 2016-2020 action plan and the mobilization to secure necessary human resources. The initiative's objective is to enable more systematic and sustainable technical and scientific cooperation among Parties (particularly developing countries, least developed countries and small island developing States) in their efforts to address Articles 17-19 of the Convention and achieve Aichi

¹⁶ Other references for the Convention's work on TSC include the mission, goals and objectives of the clearing-house mechanism for the period 2011-2020 (decision X/15), the work programme for the clearing-house mechanism (UNEP/CBD/COP/11/31), the Multi-Year Plan of Action on South-South Cooperation (welcomed in decision X/23), the LifeWeb Initiative, established by Germany at the ninth meeting of the Conference of the Parties, the Consortium of Scientific Partners created at the eighth meeting of the Conference of the Parties by the Executive Secretary, the emerging national biodiversity strategies and action plans, and the IPBES Capacity-Building Forum and associated BesNet initiative.

Biodiversity Target 19. For more information on progress, see UNEP/CBD/COP/12/INF/33 and UNEP/CBD/SBI/1/INF/19.

51. In order to carry out these activities, the Secretariat has retained the services of two global institutions with expertise in technical and scientific cooperation related to biodiversity, the Quebec Centre for Biodiversity Science and the United Nations Environment Programme World Conservation Monitoring Centre (UNEP-WCMC), to act as external partners to the initiative. The Secretariat's work is also supported through an interim Project Officer and consultant, and efforts are underway to recruit a project manager and general support staff.

52. An international expert inception workshop was co-organized by the Secretariat and the Ministry of Environment of the Republic of Korea and held in Seoul on 17 and 18 December 2015, with the objectives of introducing the Bio-Bridge Initiative and its future work plan, of sharing perspectives and inputs of experts from various institutions for the development of the Initiative and of promoting technical and scientific cooperation in the Asia region. The workshop brought together about 50 experts from 10 countries, and was hosted by the Korea Environment Institute.

53. The Secretariat has made a number of efforts to coordinate and avoid duplication of efforts with other entities. To this end, it has participated in meetings of the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES), such as the first meeting of the IPBES Capacity-Building Forum, in Dehradun, India. The objective of the meeting was to develop dialogue among receivers, implementers and funders of capacity-building activities, with the aim of: exploring opportunities for cooperation on aligned investments in capacity-building needs; furthering partnerships for piloting and delivering the IPBES capacity-building programme; and planning further action, including preparation for future meetings of the IPBES Capacity-Building Forum, in line with decision IPBES-3/1. Cooperation has also been ongoing with the Forum's associated BES-Net initiative led by UNDP. The Secretariat's efforts are to optimize synergies considering BBI's specific mandate to focus on the implementation of the Aichi Biodiversity Targets, and IPBES' focus on global assessments and studies, and on the capacity to produce them.

54. Cooperation has also been ongoing with the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) Climate Technology Centre and Network (CTCN), created as the implementation arm of the UNFCCC Technology Mechanism, and mandated to stimulate technology cooperation and enhance the development and transfer of technologies to developing countries at their request, through a global consortium and network of climate technology innovators. In the light of future collaboration, the CTCN held discussions also on behalf of the CBD Secretariat with leading institutions in the Republic of Korea on 19 October 2015, during the OECD World Sustainability and Technology Forum, in Daejeon, hosted by the Government of the Republic of Korea, to strengthen collaborative action on technology transfer to address climate change and linkages with ecosystem-based approaches.

55. A preliminary needs assessment, through a review of literature and an internal consultation in the Secretariat, has been conducted as part of a scoping report to orient the work of the external partners towards the goal of producing the initiative's detailed 2016-2020 Action Plan and test its mechanisms through the implementation of pilot projects. The assessment showed that, while it is possible to identify implementation gaps with respect to specific Aichi Targets, the expressed needs are usually too vague or generic to permit the development of specific cooperation projects. At the same time, results show that, when needs are identified and articulated in the context of specific available and effective practices, they can generally be quickly addressed. This reaffirms the approach that COP supported in decision XII/2 B, and the development of a mechanism to help Parties request assistance for an articulated need that can be matched with potential providers of expertise and/or resources.

56. The scoping exercise also found that there is a significant network of capable organizations that already work on matters related to CBD, at global, regional, subregional, national and subnational levels. This also affirms the approach under decision XII/2 to develop a network of partners to help deliver Support for technical and scientific cooperation.

57. Further consultations with Parties for the Action Plan and the pilot projects will be conducted through side-events at SBI 1, during a workshop in Korea in June 2016, and at other events. A first iteration of criteria for the selection of pilot projects has been elaborated with the help of the external partners. These criteria are to be applied to identify and launch some early pilot projects that will provide lessons for the further development of the Secretariat's work on technical and scientific cooperation. The Secretariat, the Ministry of Environment of the Republic of Korea and the external partners are working to launch a more developed Action Plan and a related work at the thirteenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties, in Cancun, Mexico, in December 2016.

IV. THE CLEARING-HOUSE MECHANISM

58. This section provides a progress report on the clearing-house mechanism summarizing the main activities carried out by the Secretariat in response to section 3 of decision XII/2 B and in accordance with the mission, goals and objectives of the CHM adopted in decision X/15. These activities include steps taken to further develop the CHM information services and integrate the various clearing-houses hosted by the Secretariat of the Convention, as well as capacity-building activities to support the establishment and further development of national clearing-house mechanisms as a contribution to the global biodiversity knowledge network envisaged by para. 22 of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020.

59. Further details on these activities are available in the progress report on the clearing-house mechanism (UNEP/CBD/CHM/IAC/2015/1/2),¹⁷ prepared for the meeting of the Informal Advisory Committee to the Clearing-House Mechanism held in Montreal, Canada, on 30 and 31 October 2015. Also, pursuant to para. 12 of decision XI/2, the mandate of the Informal Advisory Committee to the Clearing-House Mechanism is expected to be reviewed by the Conference of the Parties at its thirteenth meeting.

A. Central clearing-house mechanism

1. *Online reporting tool*

60. In response to para. 18(a) of decision XII/2 B, the CBD online reporting tool has been further developed and a new version was made available for testing at <https://dev-chm.cbd.int> in August 2015. A number of interested Parties as well as members of Informal Advisory Committee to the Clearing-House Mechanism were granted access and provided feedback for improvement. The official version of the tool is available at <https://chm.cbd.int>. The current version of this tool allows Parties to report on progress in achieving national and/or Aichi Biodiversity Targets. Guidance on the online reporting tool has also been made available online.¹⁸ Feedback from Parties and members of the Informal Advisory Committee to the Clearing-House Mechanism has been received and compiled by the Secretariat.

61. In addition to the online reporting tool, the online tool for the financial reporting framework was made available at <https://chm.cbd.int/submit/resourcemobilization> to allow Parties to submit baseline information and report on their contribution to reach the global financial targets under Aichi Biodiversity Target 20.

2. *Online services for capacity-building*

62. With a view to increasing its support for capacity-building, the Secretariat has initiated a process to enhance its online services for capacity-building. This initiative includes the review of the current online searchable repository of capacity-building tools and resources, and the establishment of a CBD-branded learning management system in order to facilitate the hosting, delivery, administration, tracking and assessment of e-learning offerings (including e-learning courses/modules and webinars).

¹⁷ See www.cbd.int/doc/meetings/chm/chmiac-2015-01/official/chmiac-2015-01-02-en.pdf.

¹⁸ See www.cbd.int/chm/doc/chm-latest-guide-online-reporting.pdf.

63. A first version of the CBD e-Learning Platform has been developed and made available at <http://scbd.unssc.org> thanks to funding support from JBF and the partnership with the United Nations System Staff College.¹⁹ Currently, the platform has one course on the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety initially comprising two modules. It is expected that modules on ABS will be made available during the first half of 2016. CBD web users will be able to access this platform with their CBD accounts.

64. In addition, a capacity-building web portal is under development on the CBD website to serve as a user interface for accessing capacity-building information, tools and resources on various thematic issues, including access to e-learning courses in the Learning Management System, the searchable repository of capacity-building tools and resources, the match-making facility, the discussion forums, and other tools.

65. In terms of content, 51 draft records of ABS capacity-building initiatives (activities, projects, and programmes) have been registered on the CHM development site at: <https://dev-chm.cbd.int/submit/capacityBuildingInitiative>. In early 2016, relevant users and partner organizations implementing the registered initiatives will be invited to review and amend, as appropriate, these draft records before making them publicly available through the CHM and the ABS-CH. Also, a common format for capacity-building resources has been developed and is available on the CHM development site at: <https://dev-chm.cbd.int/submit/capacityBuildingResource>. Draft records of ABS capacity-building resources have been registered to test the system and make adjustments as needed.

3. *Technical and scientific cooperation*

66. Decision XII/2 B on technical and scientific cooperation calls for information on technical and scientific needs, as well as on best practices and expertise, to be made more readily and effectively available through the clearing-house mechanism and other appropriate means. As the work to implement this decision progresses, the Secretariat is considering how the clearing-house mechanism can better support both capacity-building and technical and scientific cooperation, in a coherent and integrated manner.

67. Elements of this approach would include a single platform for Parties to express needs, and for Parties and partners to express areas of support, both for capacity development and technical and scientific cooperation, together with an integrated matchmaking mechanism and helpdesk, taking advantage of the Secretariat's range of activities, projects, contacts and partners.

68. This approach would also take into account, and link with as appropriate, other relevant platforms, such as those being developed under IPBES and as part of the CTCN.

4. *Maintenance of a high-quality website in all official languages of the United Nations*

69. In line with para. 18(d) of decision XII/2 B, the content of the CBD website has been updated on an ongoing basis since the twelfth meeting of the Conference of the Parties, and more than 1,500 web posting requests have been processed so far. Web pages and sections that were substantively updated include the home page (www.cbd.int), the online version of the latest decisions (www.cbd.int/decisions) and recommendations (www.cbd.int/recommendations) for the Convention and its Protocols, the Nagoya Protocol web portal (www.cbd.int/abs), and the web pages on the International Day for Biodiversity for 2015 (www.cbd.int/idb). Such maintenance is continuously adapted to Secretariat's priorities with a view to meeting Parties' expectations.

70. As for web translation, terms of reference were prepared and advertised to establish a roster of translators for the CBD website and to hire them on a competitive basis. With support from JBF, web translation is ongoing with translators from the newly established roster.

¹⁹ See <http://www.unssc.org>.

71. Progress has also been made in the integration of the clearing-house mechanism, the Access and Benefit-sharing Clearing-House and the Biosafety Clearing-House under a common web infrastructure. Such progress includes improvements to the visual appearance of the new CHM information services, as well as unified user account component allowing users to create and maintain their user accounts (<https://accounts.cbd.int>).

5. *Interoperability*

72. As requested by para. 18 (b) of decision XII/2 B, efforts have been made to develop an application programming interface (API) in order to allow interoperability with national clearing-house mechanisms. Several interoperability endpoints have been made available to retrieve information records by type. This API also provides access to individual records by their unique identifier. Work has been initiated to provide web developers with online documentation for this API. The current status of this documentation can be viewed at <https://api.cbd.int/developers/2.15>. The goal of the Secretariat of the Convention remains to establish interoperability with national clearing-house mechanisms by the next meeting of the Conference of the Parties.

73. As requested by para. 18 (c) of decision XII/2 B, efforts have also been made to maintain the InforMEA application programming interface based on the specifications available at www.informea.org/about/api. Endpoints are also available to allow the InforMEA website to retrieve information on the Convention and its Protocols. Collaboration is ongoing with the MEA Information and Knowledge Management Initiative to further implement this API in accordance with the Internal Cooperation Agreement (ICA) between the Secretariat of the Convention and UNEP/DELIC.²⁰

6. *Web strategy*

74. In para. 19 of decision XII/2 B, the Executive Secretary was requested to prepare a web strategy to ensure centralized access to information common or relevant to all the clearing-houses and other platforms developed under the Convention. A preliminary draft of this web strategy (UNEP/CBD/CHM/IAC/2015/1/INF/2)²¹ was prepared through a collaborative process involving members of the Informal Advisory Committee to the Clearing-House Mechanism and relevant Secretariat staff. At its meeting held on 30 and 31 October 2015, the Committee provided advice on how to finalize the document for the first meeting of the Subsidiary Body on Implementation.²² The web strategy is available as document UNEP/CBD/SBI/1/6/Add.2.

B. National clearing-house mechanisms

1. Establishment of national clearing-house mechanisms

75. Pursuant to para. 14 of decision XII/2 B, Parties have been working on the establishment or further development of their national clearing-house mechanisms, thus contributing to goal 2 of the clearing-house mechanism as adopted by decision X/15. In terms of outcomes, seven Parties (Bahrain, Kenya, Maldives, Myanmar, Nigeria, Seychelles and Sudan) have national clearing-house mechanisms established since 2015. As of 23 February 2016, the total number of Parties having a national clearing-house mechanism is 100. Coincidentally, the last regional capacity-building workshop on the clearing-house mechanism was held from 5 to 9 May 2014 in Buea, Cameroon, and three of the above-mentioned Parties were represented at this workshop.

²⁰ See www.cbd.int/doc/agreements/agmt-unesp-delc-informea-2014-03-13-ica-web-en.pdf.

²¹ See www.cbd.int/doc/meetings/chm/chmiac-2015-01/information/chmiac-2015-01-inf-02-en.pdf.

²² See www.cbd.int/doc/meetings/chm/chmiac-2015-01/official/chmiac-2015-01-03-en.pdf.

2. *Support to national clearing-house mechanisms*

76. Thanks to JBF, the Secretariat has received funding for supporting the development of national clearing-house mechanisms during the period 2015-2016. Such support includes two capacity-building workshops and a component to develop a tool to assist Parties in the establishment of their national clearing-house mechanisms. This tool is a basic generic national clearing-house mechanism that can be made available online to interested Parties for them to easily share key information related to their NBSAPs and its implementation.

77. Preparation proceeded for the two regional CHM capacity-building workshops funded by. The first workshop, to be held in Belgrade from 4 to 8 April 2016, will cover Central and Eastern Europe and Western Asia. The next one, to be held on 13-17 June 2016 in Nadi, Fiji, in collaboration with the Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP), will cover the Pacific region. In addition, the Secretariat of the Convention participated in a capacity-building workshop for francophone partner countries of the Belgian Clearing-House Mechanism held in Cotonou, Benin, from 1 to 3 February 2016, and jointly organized by the Governments of Benin and Belgium.

78. Work on the development of the tool to facilitate the establishment of national CHMs started in July 2015. The first version of this tool was demonstrated at the meeting of the Informal Advisory Committee to the Clearing-House Mechanism held on 30 and 31 October 2015. This tool was well received by the Committee, which recommended further development. The progress made thus far can be visualized at <http://demo.chm-cbd.net>.

79. In February 2015, Belgium invited the member countries of its partnership for the clearing-house mechanism to respond to a call for project proposals for the reinforcement of national clearing-house mechanisms. The Secretariat participated in the review of 15 project proposals submitted by developing countries in response to this call.²³

3. *Award for national clearing-house mechanisms*

80. In para. 15 of decision XII/2 B, the Executive Secretary was requested to propose, in collaboration with the Informal Advisory Committee to the Clearing-House Mechanism, a process to grant, at the thirteenth, fourteenth and fifteenth meetings of the Conference of the Parties, an award to the Parties that have made the most significant progress in the establishment or further development of their national clearing-house mechanisms. In response to this request, a working group was established within the Informal Advisory Committee to the Clearing-House Mechanism in order to drive the CHM award process and define its modalities. In collaboration with this working group, the Executive Secretary issued notification 2015-068²⁴ on 17 June 2015 to (a) inform Parties of the modalities of the CHM Award at the thirteenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties, (b) give an overview of what is expected from a national CHM, and (c) request them to answer a questionnaire on their national CHM. Further to the advice from the Informal Advisory Committee to the Clearing-House Mechanism, a follow-up notification (2015-126)²⁵ was issued on 13 November 2015. As of 23 February 2016, 32 Parties have responded to this notification, as indicated in annex II. The applications received will be reviewed by a regionally balanced jury chaired by the representative of the President of the Conference of the Parties.

²³ More details on this cooperation initiative are available at http://www.biodiv.be/cooperation/chm_coop/chm-partnering/call_reinforcement/call-reinforcement-chm-web-sites-2015.

²⁴ See <http://www.cbd.int/doc/notifications/2015/ntf-2015-068-chm-award-en.pdf>.

²⁵ See <http://www.cbd.int/doc/notifications/2015/ntf-2015-126-chm-award-reminder-en.pdf>.

C. Other relevant initiatives

1. NBSAP Forum

81. Collaboration has been ongoing with the NBSAP Forum initiative jointly established by UNEP, UNEP-WCMC and the Secretariat of the Convention as a global community of practice that develops capacity, shares learning and offers countries support in updating and implementing their NBSAPs. A thematic section about the clearing-house mechanism is available on this forum and around 20 requests for assistance have been received through it. Such collaboration has allowed the Secretariat to be more aware of the needs and challenges of Parties in their process of establishing national clearing-house mechanisms that support NBSAP implementation.

2. MEA collaboration

82. The Secretariat also supported the organization of a workshop on synergies among the biodiversity-related conventions, held in Geneva, Switzerland, from 8 to 11 February 2016, at which knowledge management was one of the topics discussed. Further details are available in a note by the Executive Secretary on options to enhance synergies among the biodiversity-related conventions (UNEP/CBD/SBI/1/9) and in the report of the Workshop on Synergies among the Biodiversity-related Conventions (UNEP/CBD/SBI/1/INF/21).

83. The Secretariat participated in the expert meeting on enhancing the efficiency and effectiveness of MEA implementation: interoperability between reporting systems for biodiversity data, held in Geneva, Switzerland, on 15 and 16 December 2014 and co-organized by UNEP-WCMC and the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES).

84. Collaboration has been ongoing with the UNEP MEA Information and Knowledge Management (MEA-IKM) initiative, through a number of working group meetings to discuss matters related to the InforMEA web portal, terminology, e-learning, reporting and interoperability.²⁶ The Secretariat of the Convention was represented at the Sixth MEA Information and Knowledge Management Steering Committee Meeting, held from 15 to 17 September 2015 in Montreux, Switzerland, and organized by UNEP/DELIC.

3. Target Cross-linking Tool

85. The Target Cross-linking Tool (TCT) for the Aichi Biodiversity Targets is a stand-alone web-based tool developed by the European Environment Agency (EEA). While this tool is made available primarily to European national clearing-house mechanisms (<http://biodiversity.europa.eu/chm-network>), it can be used by any Party. The TCT enables cross-linkages between biodiversity-related targets defined at the national, European, and global CBD level, in order to support national and regional assessment of progress and facilitate related reporting obligations.

86. The Secretariat participated in the technical meeting on interoperability between the CBD online reporting tool and the Target Cross-linking Tool, held on 5 December 2014 in Copenhagen, and organized by the European Environment Agency (EEA). Follow-up meetings were held on the margins of SBSTTA 19 and through videoconferencing, and collaboration is ongoing in order to determine how to exchange relevant information between this tool and the CBD online reporting tool.

²⁶ See <http://www.informea.org/about>.

V. RECOMMENDATIONS

87. The Subsidiary Body on Implementation may wish to recommend that the Conference of the Parties adopt a recommendation along the following lines:

The Conference of the Parties,

Recalling decisions XII/2 B, XI/2, X/5, VII/29, VIII/12, IX/14, X/16 and XI/13,

Recognizing the need for a more integrated and coherent approach to capacity-building and technical and scientific cooperation in supporting the implementation of the Convention and its Protocols,

Noting with appreciation efforts by various national, regional and international organizations and initiatives, and the support provided by the Global Environment Facility, to support Parties in the effective implementation of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011–2020 and its Aichi Biodiversity Targets,²⁷

Taking note of the evaluation of the effectiveness of capacity-building activities supported and facilitated by the Secretariat and the analysis of gaps in capacity-building activities supporting the implementation of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020,

Noting with concern that a number of capacity-building activities which the Conference of the Parties, in its previous decisions, requested the Executive Secretary to carry out, have not been implemented due to a lack of funding,

Recalling the work programme for the clearing-house mechanism in support of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020,²⁸

Noting with appreciation the progress made by the Executive Secretary on the implementation of paragraphs 8, 9 and 18 of decision XII/2 B, including the progress on capacity-building, on technical and scientific cooperation, including the further development of the Bio-Bridge Initiative, the ongoing capacity-building support and the further development of the central clearing-house mechanism and the national clearing-house mechanism,

1. *Takes note* of the short-term action plan (2017-2020) to enhance capacity-building support and related actions on technical and scientific cooperation for the implementation of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity;²⁹

2. *Invites* Parties, other Governments and relevant organizations to contribute to the implementation of the action plan referred in paragraph 1 above, and share relevant information and lessons learned through the clearing-house mechanism and their national reports;

3. *Invites* Parties and other Governments to consider taking the following measures to enhance the implementation of Article 12 of the Convention:

(a) Encourage and support relevant education and training institutions to play a key role in organizing and delivering biodiversity-related education and training programmes to assist Parties, indigenous peoples and local communities, and stakeholders in the implementation of the Convention and its Protocols;

(b) Encourage relevant institutions to develop new, or update existing, biodiversity-related courses and programmes to address specific education and training needs for the implementation of the Convention and its Protocols;

²⁷ See UNEP/CBD/SBI/1/6 and UNEP/CBD/SBI/INF/29.

²⁸ UNEP/CBD/COP/11/31.

²⁹ UNEP/CBD/SBI/1/6/Add.1.

(c) Organize targeted training courses and workshops, tailored to the needs of specific countries, indigenous peoples and local communities, women and other target groups;

(d) Provide short-term fellowships and on-the-job training opportunities to enable participants from developing country Parties and Parties with economies in transition to acquire specialized skills and exposure to new scientific and technological innovations;

(e) Develop and exchange additional biodiversity-related education and training materials at the national, regional and international levels and make them available through the clearing-house mechanism;

(f) Encourage and support Parties to incorporate biodiversity-related education in their broader national human resources development programmes;

(g) Set up mechanisms to facilitate networking and sharing of experiences, best practices and lessons learned in promoting biodiversity-related education and training at all levels;

(h) Promote partnerships between Governments and academic institutions, as well as regional organizations and centres of excellence;

(i) Further implement relevant activities under components 1 (education) and 3 (training) of the implementation plan for the programme of work on communication, education and public awareness;³⁰

4. *Invites* Parties to contribute to technical and scientific cooperation by, inter alia, providing information on priority needs, offering examples of effective practices/bright spots for replication, identifying synergies with their plans, programmes and activities on science, technology, and technical and scientific cooperation, and facilitating the linking of the the needs of Parties with available support for technical and scientific cooperation;

5. *Also invites* Parties to encourage and support the engagement of relevant national or regional institutions, including scientific, technical and policy institutes, to contribute to technical and scientific cooperation;

6. *Decides* to extend the mandate of the informal advisory committee to the clearing-house mechanism, as defined by its operational guidelines, and to review it for review by the Conference of the Parties at its fifteenth meeting;

7. *Encourages* Parties to continue their efforts to establish, sustain and further develop effective national clearing-house mechanisms in support of the implementation of their national biodiversity strategies and action plans;

8. *Welcomes* the web strategy for the Convention and its Protocols prepared by the Executive Secretary;³¹

9. *Invites* Parties, other Governments and relevant organizations in a position to do so to provide the necessary financial, technical and human resources to support capacity-building and technical and scientific cooperation, and the further development of clearing-house mechanisms;

10. *Requests* the Executive Secretary, subject to the availability of funding:

(a) To continue efforts to promote a more integrated approach to facilitating capacity-building and technical and scientific cooperation, including through an integrated support platform for identifying the needs of Parties and linking them with available expertise and knowledge, using the clearing-house mechanism;

³⁰ Decision VIII/6, annex III.

³¹ UNEP/CBD/SBI/1/6/Add.2.

(b) To implement, in collaboration with Parties, indigenous peoples and local communities, international organizations, universities and other relevant organizations, the implementation of the action plan referred to in paragraph 1 above;

(c) To continue efforts to facilitate the effective implementation of decisions XI/14 B, X/40 A, IX/13 D, IX/13 E, and XII/2 concerning capacity-building, taking into account decision VIII/5, sections B and C, the annex to decision VIII/5, and V/16, annex II, task 4, including through the support of specific capacity development for indigenous peoples and local communities;

(d) To support efforts by Parties to build capacity for the implementation of the 2015-2020 Gender Plan of Action, in accordance with decision XII/7;

(e) To continue and strengthen the work on implementation of paragraph 9 of decision XII/2 B related to technical and scientific cooperation, and to report on progress at the next meeting of the Subsidiary Body on Implementation;

(f) To continue to support the efforts of Parties to establish, sustain, and further develop national clearing-house mechanisms in support of the implementation of their national biodiversity strategies and action plans;

(g) To proceed with the implementation of the web strategy for the Convention and its Protocols;³¹

(h) To further develop the information services of the central clearing-house mechanism, in line with the web strategy and with goal 1 of the work programme for the clearing-house mechanism in support of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020;²⁸

(i) To submit a report to the Subsidiary Body on Implementation at its second meeting on the above elements and on the progress made in implementing the short-term action plan (2017-2020) to enhance capacity-building support and related actions on technical and scientific cooperation for the implementation of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity,²⁹ taking into account information provided through the national reports, the clearing-house mechanism and the Traditional Knowledge Portal.
