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Sixth meeting

Montreal, 12-16 March 2001

Item 4 of the provisional agenda*

INVASIVE ALIEN SPECIES

*Report of the liaison group meeting on invasive alien species, Kirstenbosch,
Cape Town, 17- 22 September 2000*

Note by the Executive Secretary

1. The Executive Secretary has the honour to circulate herewith, for the information of participants in the sixth meeting of the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice, the report of the liaison group meeting on invasive alien species that was held in Kirstenbosch, Cape Town, from 17 to 22 September 2000.
2. The report is available in English only.

* UNEP/CBD/SBSTTA/6/1.

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I. INTRODUCTION

1. The liaison group on invasive alien species met at Kirstenbosch National Botanical Garden, Cape Town, South Africa, on 17, 18, 20 and 22 September, to assist in the work on alien invasive species under the Convention on Biological Diversity, in line with the *modus operandi* of the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice (SBSTTA), as provided for in annex I to decision IV/16 of the Conference of the Parties. The venue and timing of the meeting were chosen to take advantage of the participation of liaison group members at the synthesis meeting of phase 1 of the Global Invasive Species Programme (GISP), which was held in Cape Town from 18 to 22 September 2000.
2. Experts from the secretariat of the International Plant Protection Convention (IPPC), the secretariat of the Global Environment Facility (GEF), the World Bank, the International Maritime Organization (IMO), the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), the Convention on Wetlands (Ramsar), IUCN- the World Conservation Union, DIVERSITAS, the Global Invasive Species Programme (GISP), the Governments of Brazil, China, Colombia, New Zealand, Norway and South Africa and the CBD Secretariat were present at the meeting. A full list of participants is provided in annex I below.
3. Mr. Jo Mulongoy, Principal Officer, Scientific, Technical and Technological Matters, opened the meeting on behalf of Mr. Hamdallah Zedan, Executive Secretary of the Convention. The meeting was chaired by Mr. Peter Bridgewater (UNESCO) for the first two days, and then by Ms Paula Warren, New Zealand for its final two sessions.
4. The participants noted that the Conference of Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity, through decision V/8, sent a strong call for cooperation between international organizations. They expressed thanks to the Executive Secretary for convening a liaison group to assist in the preparation of the pre-session documents on invasive alien species for the next meeting of SBSTTA.

II. SCOPE OF WORK OF THE LIAISON GROUP

5. Members of the liaison group had been invited to provide a synthesis of current activities, as well as suggestions for the coordination of work on alien invasive species, including potential joint programmes of work, where possible. Relevant organizations not attending the meeting were also requested to provide written comments to be circulated at the meeting.
6. Members had also been invited to contribute case-studies and comments on the Interim Guiding Principles for the Prevention, Introduction and Mitigation of Impacts of Alien Species (decision V/8, annex I), to be used to provide direction on their further elaboration.
7. The group discussed the following items, on which a progress report had been called for in paragraph 15 (b) of decision V/8:
 - (a) The development of standardized terminology on alien species;
 - (b) The development of risk assessment criteria;
 - (c) The development of processes for assessing the socio-economic implications of alien invasive species, particularly the implications for indigenous and local communities;
 - (d) The further research requirements needed to understand the impact of alien invasive species;
 - (e) The development of means to enhance the capacity of ecosystems to resist or recover from invasive alien species invasions;

- (f) The development of reporting systems for new invasions;
 - (g) The development of priorities for taxonomic work on alien invasive species.
8. The liaison group also discussed the development of a Global Strategy by the Global Invasive Species Programme (GISP) and its possible contribution to the development of options for future work on invasive alien species under the Convention.
9. It was agreed that the main points emerging from the meeting should be communicated to the other relevant organizations not present for further comments. It was also agreed that the draft report would be revised in the light of all the comments made.

III. GENERAL ADVICE OF THE LIAISON GROUP

A. Outputs from the sixth meeting of SBSTTA

10. The liaison group agreed that delegates to the sixth meeting of SBSTTA should take back to their countries:
- (a) A vision of what can be achieved, including acceptance of the goals in the principles, and a sense of inspiration;
 - (b) A clear sense of the importance of the issue, including the cost of failure to address alien species problems, and that the size of the problem may be underestimated by many countries and alien species issues should be a priority for biodiversity work.
11. SBSTTA should provide to the Conference of the Parties:
- (a) An enunciation of the scope of the work under the Convention on the issue, with related definitions;
 - (b) Acknowledgement that the Convention on Biological Diversity has an overview role for the effect of alien species on biodiversity, but that it should not seek to duplicate work that is being done by other bodies;
 - (c) An agreed set of principles that are clear and precise;
 - (d) An analysis of the key barriers to implementation of the principles, and the best way to remove those barriers;
 - (e) A work plan, identifying the key products which are needed to support implementation, the relative roles of the Convention on Biological Diversity and other bodies in developing those products, and priorities and timeframes for the work;
 - (f) Some interim advice or some products arising from the decision of the Conference of the Parties at its fifth meeting or the work programme.

B. Use of terminology

12. The liaison group advised that the term “invasive alien species” should apply to species that are outside their natural range, even if they have not crossed a national border.
13. It also advised that the term should cover species that are a potential as well as an actual threat to biodiversity.
14. The group agreed that, while harmonization of terminology with other bodies is desirable, it is not essential.

15. The group suggested that information be provided to the Conference of the Parties on the key terms used in relation to invasive alien species, and how the terms used by different bodies relate. It also advised that the terms used in the principles should only be defined where there is significant uncertainty about their meaning.

C. GISP Global Strategy

16. The group agreed that the September draft GISP global strategy is a useful input to SBSTTA and the Conference of the Parties, but should remain a GISP document. They noted that all the strategic elements in the strategy are relevant to the work of the Convention, and recommended that material from the strategy should be used in developing options for future work.

D. Implementation of the Interim Guiding Principles

17. The group agreed that implementation of the principles will be primarily at the national and regional levels, although with global implementation in some cases. They also agreed that regional implementation should be through cooperation between groups of countries that have an appropriate biodiversity or political/cultural relationship, and that enhancing the development of regional approaches is a high priority.

18. The group noted that there are problems in obtaining funding for global and regional projects.

19. They also agreed that there is a need to better market the issue, in order to increase resources and effort devoted to it. A strategy for doing this would incorporate the use of effective champions, associating the work with popular causes, and backing winners.

E. Potential joint work programmes

20. The group explored options for improving co-ordination, including through joint work programmes. In particular they agreed:

(a) That the Ramsar–Convention on Biological Diversity joint work programme would address this issue;

(b) That UNESCO and Ramsar would explore the possibility of working together and with other site-focused conventions to look at cooperation between the Conventions and development of some effective coordinated work with on-the-ground managers, focusing initially on freshwater sites;

(c) That the secretariats of the Convention on Biological Diversity and the IPPC would explore effective cooperation arrangements;

(d) That CABI would examine possible ways to achieve coordinated approaches with forest-related conventions.

IV. SPECIFIC ADVICE OF THE LIAISON GROUP

A. Extent of elaboration of the principles

21. The liaison group proposed that the guiding principles document should contain the minimum possible explanatory material, with any elaboration placed in supporting documents.

B. Providing further guidance on the application of the principles

22. Given the wide range of sources and type of guidance which could be provided in supporting documents, the liaison group advised that the additional guidance should be provided separately from the principles, with the form of provision being adjusted depending on the nature of the guidance.

C. International instruments

23. The liaison group concluded that guidance on national implementation of Article 8(h) may best be addressed by a range of options. They considered that the development of instruments that contain binding rules would require more detailed assessment than was available to the liaison group. They advised that other options for strengthening national implementation should be fully utilised first, and further work on an international instrument under the Convention on Biological Diversity be reassessed in the light of implementation of all possible cooperative arrangements.

D. Options headings

24. In considering the development of options, the liaison group identified the following types of options, as a framework for SBSTTA consideration. Possible options for further work, drawing upon the discussions during the liaison group, are included in annex II below.

- (a) Increasing understanding of needs and priorities;
- (b) Capacity-building;
- (c) Developing national legal, institutional and economic arrangements;
- (d) Bilateral and multilateral cooperation;
- (e) Setting international standards and guidelines;
- (f) Developing tools and taking actions for prevention, early detection and early eradication of invasive or potentially invasive alien species;
- (g) Developing tools and taking actions for eradication and control of established alien species invasions.

E. Pilot projects

25. SBSTTA could facilitate the establishment of pilot projects for capacity-building. One option for doing so would be by taking a lead role in the development of pilot cooperative programmes based around sites that are managed pursuant to other conventions (particularly Ramsar, CMS, UNESCO-MAB and UNESCO-WHC). This work could focus on providing training and impetus for tackling alien species issues relevant to the implementation of Article 8(h), but also meeting the operational requirements of each relevant multilateral environmental agreement.

26. The liaison group have suggested that an initial pilot project could be developed in Africa, focused on the transboundary area between Senegal (Djoudj) and Mauritania (Diawling), which are both World Heritage Convention/Man and the Biosphere programme and Ramsar sites. Some work has already started to assist developing site-based management approaches focusing on Invasive alien species issues, which are key among the current management challenges for these sites.

V. CLOSING SESSION

27. The participants welcomed this opportunity to work together to facilitate ongoing collaboration between their organisations and synergies in relevant activities. On behalf of the Executive Secretary, Mr. Mulongoy thanked the chair of the meeting and all participants for their contributions.

Annex I

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*Annex II***OPTIONS FOR FUTURE WORK**

Need	Description	Possible process	Responsibilities and partners
Increasing understanding of needs and priorities			
Identifying the significance of the issue	Continue to refine knowledge and understanding of the significance of the issue to the implementation of the Convention, and convey that understanding to Parties.	SBSTTA to develop further technical advice. COP to consider and convey to Parties.	SBSTTA and COP.
Identification of national priorities	Assessment of issues related to the implementation of Article 8(h) at the national level, identifying priority actions for addressing those issues, in line with the Principles.	Undertake studies of alien species issues, either separately or as part of wider country studies. Identify priorities and incorporate them within national biodiversity strategies and action plans or alien species strategies.	Parties, with assistance from partners.
Tools for identification of priorities	Development or identification of tools for determining the cost-effectiveness of actions, setting priorities for alien species work, and to assist Parties to identify an overall level of effort that is justified by the biodiversity benefits.	Technical process, incorporating identification of detailed needs, identification of previous work and available tools, identification of gaps, and development of tools to fill the gaps.	SBSTTA with partners.
Public awareness and education	Provide advice to Parties on how to carry out effective public awareness and education work.	Consider the results of GISP phase 1, identify ways to provide the results to Parties, and consider whether further guidance is needed for Parties. If further guidance is needed, develop and disseminate it.	SBSTTA, through joint work programme with GISP or with other partners. Disseminate through the clearing-house mechanism.

Need	Description	Possible process	Responsibilities and partners
Public awareness and education	Provide advice to Parties on how to carry out effective public awareness and education work.	Consider the results of GISP Phase I, identify ways to provide the results to Parties, and consider whether further guidance is needed for Parties. If further guidance is needed, develop and disseminate this.	SBSTTA, through joint work programme with GISP or with other partners. Disseminate through CHM.
Agreeing needs and priorities with other conventions	Provide advice to other conventions on matters relating to the implementation of Article 8(h), and the relationship between this and the work of those conventions.	<p>Formal statements to meetings of the conferences of the parties of other conventions.</p> <p>Communication between the SBSTTA bureau and equivalent bodies of other conventions.</p> <p>Communication between secretariats.</p> <p>Incorporation of considerations relating to the Convention on Biological Diversity in Party responses to other conventions.</p>	<p>COP</p> <p>SBSTTA Bureau</p> <p>Executive Secretary</p> <p>Parties</p>
Research and information	Identify high priority research and information needs and fill those needs.	Identify high priority needs from national reports and other information sources. Encourage and support the development and maintenance of databases.	SBSTTA and partners.
Capacity-building			
Guidance to the financial mechanism	Provide further guidance to the GEF on priorities for capacity-building and ways to improve delivery of assistance.	<p>Undertake a review of priorities for GEF funding, drawing on information in national reports, national biodiversity strategies and action plans and the outcome of other work elements.</p> <p>Identify and address any problems with delivery of capacity-building assistance to Parties, including by surveying Parties.</p>	SBSTTA, COP
			GEF Council

Need	Description	Possible process	Responsibilities and partners
Encourage additional financial support	Encourage bilateral and multilateral donors to support sectoral, regional and national activities to implement Article 8(h).	Provide advice to Parties, countries and other organizations. Facilitate access by Parties to financial support, including by facilitating intergovernmental cooperative arrangements and providing information on potential sources of funds.	COP COP, SBSTTA, Executive Secretary
Facilitate scientific and technical cooperation	Develop and utilize improved mechanisms for facilitating scientific and technical cooperation.	Further develop the clearing house mechanism. Develop other mechanisms.	SBSTTA, Executive Secretary, IAC SBSTTA
Improving access to information	Improve Parties' access to information on alien species, invasions, control methods and other matters relevant to the implementation of Article 8(h).	Encourage Parties, Governments and other relevant organizations to contribute to the completion of the GISP database, and other information systems. Work with GISP and other partners to identify information needs and appropriate ways to meet them.	COP SBSTTA
Pilot projects for capacity-building	Facilitate the establishment of pilot projects for capacity-building, to enhance capacity within the project, develop improved methods for capacity-building, and develop tools and techniques applicable elsewhere.	Develop pilot cooperative programmes based around sites managed under other conventions.	SBSTTA, working with other conventions including Ramsar, CMS, UNESCO-MAB and UNESCO-WHC.

Need	Description	Possible process	Responsibilities and partners
Centres of excellence	Examine and if appropriate facilitate the development of centres which specialize in particular aspects related to the implementation of Article 8(h), and provide technical assistance to Parties.	<p>Identify key areas where this would be a valuable approach.</p> <p>Identify existing national, regional or international organizations which have particular expertise in these areas and could potentially undertake this role.</p> <p>Seek agreement from these and/or other organizations to undertake the role.</p> <p>Disseminate information on the centres.</p>	<p>SBSTTA with partners</p> <p>SBSTTA with partners</p> <p>SBSTTA with partners</p> <p>SBSTTA, CHM</p>
Developing national legal, institutional and economic arrangements			
Providing advice	Providing advice to Parties on how to develop such arrangements.	Consider the results of GISP phase 1, identify ways to provide the results to Parties, and consider whether further guidance is needed for Parties. If further guidance is needed, develop and disseminate this.	SBSTTA with partners Dissemination through the clearing-house mechanism
Bilateral and multilateral cooperation			
Facilitating intergovernmental cooperation	Identify mechanisms for encouraging greater cooperation between countries.	Identify barriers to cooperation, and develop mechanisms to overcome those barriers.	SBSTTA, drawing on the work of the group developing an intergovernmental invasive species initiative.
Cooperative work on islands	Identify mechanisms for encouraging greater cooperation between countries for work to implement Article 8(h) for islands.	Identify barriers to cooperation, and develop mechanisms to overcome those barriers.	SBSTTA, drawing on the work of the group developing an inter-governmental invasive species initiative.
Inventory of experience and expertise	Develop and maintain an inventory of experience and expertise to allow Parties to identify potential sources of assistance and information.	Development of database platform, initial data entry, and maintenance.	SBSTTA with partners. Possible dissemination through the clearing-house mechanism..

Need	Description	Possible process	Responsibilities and partners
Providing single point of contact within countries and organizations	Providing a single contact point within each country or regional/international organization to receive and pass on requests for involvement in cooperative initiatives.	Clarification of the role of the contact point, consideration of potential use of existing focal points, agreement on the point of contact, dissemination.	SBSTTA. Possible role for clearing-house mechanism and/or SBSTTA focal points. Role for the clearing-house mechanism in dissemination.
Support for risk assessment work	Development of techniques and advice on risk assessment, including a possible early warning system.	Identify the areas where support is desirable, identify existing work, develop cooperative approaches to provide the necessary support.	SBSTTA or Executive Secretary, working with partners including in particular FAO (IPPC) and Ramsar.
Clarification of terminology	<p>Clarify the use of terminology in the various international conventions, in order to reduce potential confusion and implementation problems.</p> <p>Seek to reduce the differences in future work of the Convention on Biological Diversity.</p>	<p>Undertake a review of terminology used, and provide a document to Parties setting out the various terms, how they are defined within the relevant conventions, and clarifying the significance of any differences.</p> <p>Develop guidance for the use of terminology in future work of the Convention on Biological Diversity, in association with other conventions.</p>	<p>Executive Secretary, in conjunction with the secretariats of other conventions.</p> <p>SBSTTA, in association with the equivalent bodies of other conventions.</p>
Improve the contribution of work under the site-based conventions	Improve the integration of work at sites designated under other conventions, and the degree to which those sites address the implementation of Article 8(h).	<p>Possible approaches are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pilot projects • Dissemination of information through the clearing-mechanism • Cooperation between secretariats • Work between SBSTTA and equivalent bodies 	SBSTTA and Executive Secretary to take a lead role in developing cooperative approaches, in partnership with the other conventions
Setting international standards and guidelines			
Clarify the effect of trade-related conventions	Provide clear guidance to Parties on the implications of provisions in the IPPC and Agreement on Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures (SPS) for the implementation of Article 8(h).	Develop technical guidance, and provide information on the experience of Parties that have ratified and implemented all three agreements.	SBSTTA working with equivalent bodies from the other conventions, or the Executive Secretary working with the other secretariats.

Need	Description	Possible process	Responsibilities and partners
Provide advice on export controls	Provide guidance on how best to reduce the risks that exports of organisms pose to receiving countries, in ways which accord with other international conventions.	Develop technical guidance and disseminate it.	SBSTTA working with equivalent bodies from the other conventions, or the Executive Secretary working with the other secretariats.
Improve management of shared biodiversity	Where biodiversity is the responsibility of more than one State and subject to bilateral or multilateral agreements, encourage an assessment to ensure that those agreements have a positive effect on implementation of Article 8(h).	Encourage Parties to review their agreements.	COP
Developing tools and taking actions for prevention, early detection and early eradication of invasive or potentially invasive alien species			
Develop cost-effective surveillance techniques	Develop cost-effective techniques for identifying new incursions of alien species.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify available tools and best practice in this area; • Analyse the adequacy of those tools and best practice; • Identify ways to fill any gaps in the toolkit; and • Disseminate the information to parties. 	SBSTTA and partners
Provide taxonomic support	Ensure that taxonomic information is adequate to allow the effective identification of alien species.	Include under the Convention's programme of work on the Global Taxonomy Initiative relevant elements of work to increase the taxonomic knowledge base both in terms of an understanding of the endemic ecosystem components, as well as introduced species	SBSTTA in conjunction with partners, including relevant taxonomic institutions, international organizations and programmes
Provide tools for inventory	Develop tools for undertaking baseline assessments of existing biodiversity as a basis for identifying new incursions and making decisions on deliberate introductions of alien species.	Technical process, incorporating identification of detailed needs, identification of previous work and available tools, identification of gaps, and development of tools to fill the gaps.	SBSTTA with partners, including potentially the Millennium Ecosystem Assessment and DIVERSITAS.

Need	Description	Possible process	Responsibilities and partners
Improving border control	Provide advice and tools to Parties to allow improvements to border control.	Consider the results of GISP phase 1, identify ways to provide the results to Parties, and consider whether further guidance is needed for Parties. If further guidance is needed, develop and disseminate this.	SBSTTA with GISP and other partners.
Controlling movement of species within national borders	Provide advice and tools to Parties to allow the development of any necessary controls on movement of species within national borders.	Undertake study of existing quarantine/movement restrictions within countries, and develop and disseminate guidance.	SBSTTA with partners.
Reduce the risks posed by vectors	Provide advice and tools to Parties to improve their ability to reduce the risks posed by vectors.	Consider the results of GISP phase 1, identify ways to provide the results to Parties, and consider whether further guidance is needed for Parties. If further guidance is needed, develop and disseminate this.	SBSTTA to lead the work. Joint work programmes between the Secretariat and those of the IPPC and IMO. Other partners.
Providing additional tools	Develop additional tools that are needed for effective implementation.	Identify the highest priority tool needs, drawing on national reports and other information sources. Seek partners to fill those needs.	SBSTTA and partners
Reduce the risks posed by international aid work	Provide advice to those involved in international aid work on the potential risk of creating or exacerbating invasions of alien species, and means to reduce that risk.	Identify past problems, and the major risk activities. Develop advice on reducing those risks. Disseminate the advice to relevant groups.	SBSTTA and partners
Provide an emergency response mechanism	Develop a mechanism for providing assistance to Parties to undertake rapid responses to newly identified alien species.	Identify possible mechanism and develop it.	SBSTTA with partners

Need	Description	Possible process	Responsibilities and partners
Improve prediction capacity	Develop tools for predicting the potential invasiveness of species.	Consider the results of GISP phase 1, identify ways to provide the results to Parties, and consider whether further guidance is needed for Parties. If further guidance is needed, develop and disseminate this	SBSTTA with GISP and other partners.
Developing tools and taking actions for eradication and control of established alien species invasions			
Apply the ecosystem approach	Provide guidance to Parties on how to apply the ecosystem approach to this work.	Assess the adequacy of existing advice and if necessary supplement it.	SBSTTA and Executive Secretary
Identify priority needs for further advice and tools	Identify the key impediments to national implementation and develop tools and guidance to help remove those impediments.	Analyse priorities in national biodiversity strategies and action plans, and other relevant information. Possibly survey SBSTTA focal points. Identify key needs and develop approaches to provide the tools or guidance.	SBSTTA.
Increase eradication work on islands	Increase the capacity of countries to undertake eradication of alien species that have invaded islands.	Develop islands database and document and disseminate experiences and lessons learnt Identify islands for “research by management” development of improved techniques Develop peer review mechanism	SBSTTA and partners. CHM for dissemination SBSTTA and partners SBSTTA and partners
Increase eradication work in continental situations	Increase the capacity of countries to undertake eradication of alien species that have invaded continental ecosystems.	Identify existing experience, perhaps through a survey of SBSTTA and/or CHM focal points, by commissioning a study, or by seeing a partner to undertake this work. Develop advice on the likely risk of success or failure of eradication techniques in relation to types of species, ecosystems, types of locations, or levels of establishment, and good practice.	SBSTTA, possibly with partner SBSTTA with partners