



**CONVENTION ON
BIOLOGICAL
DIVERSITY**

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**SUBSIDIARY BODY ON SCIENTIFIC, TECHNICAL AND
TECHNOLOGICAL ADVICE**

Eighth meeting

Montreal, 10-14 March 2003

Item 6.3 (a) of the provisional agenda*

**STRATEGIC PLAN OF THE SUBSIDIARY BODY ON SCIENTIFIC, TECHNICAL AND
TECHNOLOGICAL ADVICE**

Draft submitted by the Bureau

Note by the Executive Secretary

1. At its sixth meeting, the Conference of the Parties adopted a Strategic Plan for the Convention (decision VI/26, annex). It also adopted, for the first time, outcome-oriented targets for 2010, in decision VI/9, on the Global Strategy for Plant Conservation. In addition, the Conference of the Parties decided to consider its medium-term multi-year programme of work up to 2010 and requested SBSTTA to assess its recommendations so as to improve its advice.
2. Bearing in mind all these and other decisions of the Conference of the Parties regarding the operations of the Convention, the Bureau of SBSTTA decided, at a meeting held during the sixth meeting of the Conference of the Parties, in April 2002, to draft a strategic plan for SBSTTA that will ensure that the programme of work of the SBSTTA is coherent and realistic and responds fully to the needs of the Conference of the Parties.
3. The SBSTTA Bureau has prepared the attached draft SBSTTA Strategic Plan.

SUGGESTED RECOMMENDATION

The Subsidiary Body may wish to consider and endorse the draft Plan taking into account its mandate in Article 25 of the Convention, its *modus operandi*, the Strategic Plan of the Convention, the multi-year programmes of work and the Global Strategy for Plant Conservation.

* UNEP/CBD/SBSTTA/8/1.

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*Annex***DRAFT STRATEGIC PLAN OF THE SUBSIDIARY BODY ON SCIENTIFIC, TECHNICAL AND TECHNOLOGICAL ADVICE****A. Purpose of this Strategic Plan**

SBSTTA was established by the Convention, with its initial terms of reference set out in Article 25, paragraph 2. * This strategic plan elaborates that role, reflecting the evolving nature of the work of SBSTTA, as the Convention moves to an implementation phase.

The plan is intended to guide the work of SBSTTA. It is designed to support implementation of the Strategic Plan of the Convention (as adopted by the Conference of the Parties at its sixth meeting) and the multi-year programme of work. It has the same timeframe as the Strategic Plan of the Convention, i.e., until 2010.

B. Mission

To provide the scientific, technical and technological advice and support for the development and implementation of the Convention.

C. Outcomes

1. Advice to the Conference of the Parties that provides timely, up-to-date, policy-relevant and accessible scientific and technical perspectives on issues that the Conference of the Parties is considering.

* Article 25 of the Convention on Biological Diversity reads as follows:

“1. A subsidiary body for the provision of scientific, technical and technological advice is hereby established to provide the Conference of the Parties and, as appropriate, its other subsidiary bodies with timely advice relating to the implementation of this Convention. This body shall be open to participation by all Parties and shall be multidisciplinary. It shall comprise government representatives competent in the relevant field of expertise. It shall report regularly to the Conference of the Parties on all aspects of its work.

2. Under the authority of and in accordance with guidelines laid down by the Conference of the Parties, and upon its request, this body shall:

(a) Provide scientific and technical assessments of the status of biological diversity;

(b) Prepare scientific and technical assessments of the effects of types of measures taken in accordance with the provisions of this Convention;

(c) Identify innovative, efficient and state-of-the-art technologies and know-how relating to the conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity and advise on the ways and means of promoting development and/or transferring such technologies;

(d) Provide advice on scientific programmes and international cooperation in research and development related to conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity; and

(e) Respond to scientific, technical, technological and methodological questions that the Conference of the Parties and its subsidiary bodies may put to the body.

3. The functions, terms of reference, organization and operation of this body may be further elaborated by the Conference of the Parties.”

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2. Assessments of the status and trends of biodiversity, and analysis of threats and gaps, designed to support decisions by the Conference of the Parties, and inform Parties and other stakeholders, in particular to assist the preparation, review and implementation of national biodiversity strategies and action plans.
3. Improved scientific, technical and technological capacity to implement the Convention at the national and regional levels.
4. Increased engagement by the scientific and technical community in SBSTTA work and Convention implementation.
5. Enhanced scientific, technical and technological cooperation among Parties, governments and relevant organizations.

D. Strategies for achieving the outcomes

1. Improving the scientific, technical and technological inputs into SBSTTA papers, by:
 - (a) More systematically identifying the matters that need to be covered in the papers, with timely commencement of preparatory processes;
 - (b) Engaging a wider range of partners and using a wider range of contribution processes for the production of formal information papers and supporting material;
 - (c) Establishing effective exchange of information with and involvement by other relevant bodies;
 - (d) Making use of peer review and other processes to improve the quality of documents and their acceptability to the scientific community;
 - (e) Using innovative means to increase the breadth and depth of input into preparatory processes (e.g. the use of new information and communication technologies).
2. Improving the scientific, technical and technological debates during SBSTTA meetings, by:
 - (a) Encouraging Parties to send appropriate delegates with a scientific or technical background (particularly SBSTTA focal points), and increasing the number of Parties and implementing agencies represented;
 - (b) Facilitating participation by delegates, particularly those in one-person delegations and who have no United Nations experience;
 - (c) Using innovative means to overcome the disadvantages of the standard United Nations meeting format;
 - (d) Ensuring that chairs are carefully selected, well prepared and well supported;
 - (e) Increasing the scientific, technical and technological activities within the meetings, through key note speakers, posters, round table debates, etc.;
 - (f) Providing good scientific, technical and technological inputs as a basis for the debates, through papers, technical series documents, etc.
3. Improving the transmission of SBSTTA advice to Conference of the Parties and Parties, by:

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- (a) Providing concise, clear, understandable and well justified advice with clear linkages between topics;
 - (b) Using a wider range of tools for transmitting advice, including internet and paper-based tools;
 - (c) Increasing the visibility of SBSTTA (through the Chair and Bureau) at meetings of the Conference of the Parties;
 - (d) Capturing data and information that is identified or generated during preparatory processes, to make that raw material more accessible to Parties and other stakeholders;
 - (e) Encouraging delegates to ensure that delegations participating in meetings of the Conference of the Parties support the results of the work of SBSTTA.
4. Commissioning or encouraging the production of material to support implementation work by Parties, and in particular the preparation, review and implementation of national biodiversity strategies and action plans, by:
 - (a) Explicitly identifying priority needs as part of the consideration of issues;
 - (b) Actively expressing those needs to potential providers;
 - (c) Adjusting preparatory work (for example, the work of ad hoc technical expert groups) where appropriate so that it will provide additional material of value to Parties.
5. Providing a forum for initiating cooperative work, including through:
 - (a) Round table forums, workshops, etc., to allow experts to identify other experts with similar problems or relevant experience;
 - (b) Allowing countries with similar biodiversity issues to identify the potential for cooperation;
 - (c) Allowing countries with needs to identify scientific, technical or technological assistance that is available.
6. Improving the capacity for dialogue and cooperation between actors, by:
 - (a) Developing or promoting useful conceptual frameworks within which dialogue can occur;
 - (b) Identifying and promoting the use of standardised definitions, language, etc.;
 - (c) Identifying and promoting the use of standardised methodologies (e.g. for data management).
7. Actively building relationships with the scientific and technical community, by:
 - (a) Providing material about the work of SBSTTA that is accessible to the scientific and technical community (i.e. expresses it in language that is understandable by the scientific and technical community, and relates the material to the work of the scientific and technical community);
 - (b) Actively disseminating the results of the work of SBSTTA through the scientific literature, both as reporting items and as scientific papers;

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- (c) Building relationships with key individuals or organizations within the scientific and technical community, through the use of Bureau members, past chairs, delegates, chairs of ad hoc technical expert groups, and other individuals;
 - (d) Using other bodies as a bridge between SBSTTA and the scientific and technical community in relation to work programmes (e.g. international thematic focal points and key partners).
8. Helping the clearing-house mechanism to become an effective vehicle for scientific and technical cooperation, and to become a true partner in the work of SBSTTA, including by:
- (a) Stimulating cooperation between Convention/SBSTTA focal points and focal points for the clearing-house mechanism within Parties;
 - (b) Active involvement of the Chair and Bureau members in informal advisory committee work;
 - (c) Facilitating the work of clearing-house mechanism focal points, to allow them to expand their work from information management to supporting active cooperation between experts/organizations.
9. Creating an active and useful network of SBSTTA focal points, and using the network during the preparatory and follow-up work of SBSTTA, by:
- (a) Encouraging all Parties to appoint SBSTTA focal points, with an emphasis on appointing experts who are actively involved in the preparation, review and implementation of national biodiversity strategies and action plans;
 - (b) Encouraging attendance of SBSTTA focal points at SBSTTA meetings, and having a meeting of SBSTTA focal points at each SBSTTA meetings;
 - (c) Using SBSTTA focal points to provide comments on issues that cannot be included in SBSTTA agendas, or on preparatory documents;
 - (d) Encouraging SBSTTA focal points to play an active role in transferring information from SBSTTA to relevant agencies within their country, and supporting cooperation between SBSTTA and clearing-house mechanism focal points at the national level;
 - (e) Using SBSTTA focal points to connect experts within their country with other experts or with SBSTTA processes;
 - (f) Encouraging SBSTTA focal points to facilitate cooperation between agencies working on biodiversity-related conventions within their countries;
 - (g) Encouraging SBSTTA focal points to take an active role in facilitating national or regional discussions on SBSTTA agenda items, to allow a wider range of contributions to feed into the work of delegations;
 - (h) Encouraging SBSTTA focal points to work to achieve a consistency of approach between their national delegations to SBSTTA and the Conference of the Parties.

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