



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

Ninth meeting

Montreal, 10-14 November 2003

Item 5.5 of the provisional agenda\*

**REPORT OF THE AD HOC TECHNICAL EXPERT GROUP ON MOUNTAIN BIODIVERSITY**

**I. INTRODUCTION**

**A. Background**

1. At its fourth meeting, the Conference of the Parties (COP) selected mountain biodiversity as one of the three themes for in-depth consideration at its seventh meeting (decision IV/16, annex II). In its decision VI/30, the Conference of the Parties welcomed the proposals presented by the Executive Secretary in his note on preparations for its seventh meeting (UNEP/CBD/COP/6/2) and requested that such preparations continue as outlined in the note.

2. In order to provide advice to the Conference of the Parties, the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice (SBSTTA) considered mountain biological diversity as the main theme of its eighth meeting held in Montreal, from 10 to 14 March 2003. The Subsidiary Body adopted the structure of the proposed programme of work on mountain biological diversity, with its elements and goals, as specified in annex I to its recommendation VIII/1 A. Due to time constraints, the Subsidiary Body could only develop an indicative list of possible actions to be taken under the different goals of the proposed programme of work and decided to complete its work at its ninth meeting to be held from 10 to 14 November 2003, prior to the seventh meeting of the Conference of the Parties.

3. To gather as much information as possible on actions to be carried out under each programme element and goal, the Subsidiary Body:

(a) Requested the Executive Secretary to consult with Parties, Governments and relevant organizations on the proposed programme of work on mountain biological diversity and prepare a list of actions for possible inclusion in the proposed programme of work; and

(b) Established an Ad Hoc Technical Expert Group on Mountain Biological Diversity with the mandate to:

\* UNEP/CBD/SBSTTA/9/1.

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- (i) Review the suggested actions contained in the proposed programme of work on mountain biological diversity as stated in annex I to SBSTTA recommendation VIII/1 A;
- (ii) Review and consider for inclusion the results of the consultation referred to in (a) above in the proposed programme of work on mountain biological diversity; and
- (iii) Identify gaps in suggested actions, and include new actions whenever appropriate, under the relevant programme elements and programme goals.

4. In response to the request from SBSTTA, the Executive Secretary has convened, with the support of the Government of Italy, a meeting of the Ad Hoc Technical Expert Group on Mountain Biodiversity held from 1 to 3 July 2003 at the StarHotel Metropole in Rome, with the terms of reference as approved by SBSTTA at its eighth meeting. On 4 July, the Ministry of Environment and Land Protection organized a visit to the Gran Sasso e Monti della Laga National Park, a vulnerable mountainous area characterized by unique habitats and wildlife, and harsh climate.

### ***B. Attendance***

5. Members of the expert group were selected among government-nominated experts, taking into account the need for a balanced regional distribution, and to the extent possible, from those delegates that attended the eighth meeting of SBSTTA, which took place in Montreal from 10 to 14 March 2003. The meeting was attended by:

- (a) Government-nominated experts from Algeria, Brazil, Canada, Cuba, the Czech Republic, Ecuador, France, India, Italy, Nepal, Saudi Arabia, South Africa, the United Kingdom; and
- (b) Observer experts from the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), the International Center for Integrated Mountain Development (ICIMOD), the International Union of Forest Research Organization (IUFRO), the World Bank and from the University of Rome and the Ministry of Environment and Territory Protection in Italy. A list of participants is annexed to the present report.

## **ITEM 1            OPENING OF THE MEETING**

6. The meeting was opened by Kalemani Jo Mulongoy, Principal Officer, Scientific, Technical and Technological Matters Division, on behalf of the Executive Secretary of the Convention on Biological Diversity at 9.30 a.m., on Tuesday 1 July 2003. In his statement, he welcomed the participants and described the importance of this ad hoc technical expert group meeting. He paid tribute to the Government of Italy for generously sponsoring and hosting this meeting and for its excellent hospitality as well as all other Governments and organizations that supported participants.

7. Federico Cinquepalmi welcomed the participants on behalf of the Italian Minister of Environment and Land Protection and of Aldo Cosentino, Director of the Nature Conservation Department. He underlined the importance of conservation of biodiversity in mountain areas and expressed the wish that the meeting would be useful and successful in fulfilling its mandate.

8. Following the welcome addresses, the representative of the Executive Secretary referring to SBSTTA recommendation VIII/1 A and its annex, described the mandate of the group, the expected output, with reference to relevant provisions of the Convention on Biological Diversity. He emphasized in particular the criteria for review described by SBSTTA in paragraphs 4 to 8 of annex I of recommendation VIII/1 A. Members of the Group added to the list of criteria for review that actions should be feasible, realistic and precise and agreed that decision VI/9 of the Conference of the Parties on the Global Plant Conservation Strategy had to be taken into account.

9. The participants introduced themselves and highlighted their fields of expertise and key areas of their work relevant to the theme of the meeting.

## ITEM 2 ORGANIZATIONAL MATTERS

### *2.1. Election of officers*

10. Marco Marchetti from Italy and David Jury McDonald from South Africa were elected as co-chairs of the meeting.

### *2.2. Adoption of the agenda*

11. The Group adopted the following agenda on the basis of the provisional agenda proposed in document UNEP/CBD/AHTEG-PA/1/1 and agreed that the agenda as well as the organization of work (item 2.3 below) should be kept flexible while addressing the full breadth of its mandate:

1. Opening of the meeting.
2. Organizational matters:
  - 2.1. Election of Officers;
  - 2.2. Adoption of the agenda;
  - 2.3. Organization of work;
3. Substantive issues:
  - 3.1 Review of the structure of the programme of work adopted by SBSTTA at its eighth meeting;
  - 3.2 Review of the list of suggested actions within the structure of the programme of work;
  - 3.3 Review of the list of additional suggested actions submitted to the Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity by Parties, governments, and organizations;
  - 3.4 Identification of gaps in suggested actions and inclusion of new actions whenever appropriate;
  - 3.5 Drafting of the programme of work on mountain biodiversity;
4. Preparation and adoption of the report.
5. Other matters.
6. Closure of the meeting.

### *2.3. Organization of work*

12. The AHTEG agreed to consider all issues first in plenary and to establish three working groups as needed. In the Plenary on Wednesday 11 June, the participants agreed to establish three working groups (WG) to review actions suggested by SBSTTA and the list of actions from the consultation carried out by the Executive Secretary, identify eventual gaps and propose new actions as necessary under:

(a) Programme element 1 of the programme of work adopted by SBSTTA (WGI chaired by Jean-Patrick Le Duc, from France);

(b) Programme element 2 of the programme of work (WG II co-chaired by Desmond Thompson, from the UK and Federico Cinquepalmi, from Italy);

(c) Programme element 3 of the programme of work (WG III chaired by Sophie Zeichmeister-Boltenstern, representing the International Tropical Timber Organization, ITTO).

13. The group met in plenary six times and in working groups three times.

### **ITEM 3 SUBSTANTIVE ISSUES**

#### **3.1 *Review of the structure of the programme of work adopted by SBSTTA at its eighth meeting***

14. The structure and components of the programme of work adopted at the eighth meeting of SBSTTA was described as mentioned in paragraph 8 above.

15. In the second plenary, Thomas Hofer representing FAO summarized the output of 2002 the International Year of the Mountains.

#### **3.2 and 3.3. *Review of the list of suggested actions within the structure of the programme of work; and***

#### ***Review of the list of additional suggested actions submitted to the Secretariat of the CBD by Parties, other Governments and organizations***

16. The AHTEG reviewed the actions suggested by SBSTTA at its eighth meeting under each of the goals as well as the actions proposed through the consultation carried out by the Executive Secretary. They assessed their relevance taking into account the guidance from recommendation VIII/1 A of SBSTTA and other guidance agreed upon by the group.

#### **3.4 *Identification of gaps in suggested actions and inclusion of new actions whenever appropriate***

17. The AHTEG assessed whether the actions suggested by SBSTTA at its eighth meeting; and by Parties, other Governments and relevant organisations through the consultation undertaken by the Executive Secretary were sufficient to meet the goals of the programme of work taking into account the guidance agreed upon. The group then decided to continue its work in working groups.

#### **3.5 *Drafting of the programme of work on mountain biodiversity***

18. In the final two sessions, the Group revised all the actions and found it useful to attach to the report a short glossary of key terms including for example a description of mountain the upland-lowland contract. The Group finalized its report including the programme of work, which is reflected in section C of the note by the Executive Secretary on the programme of work for mountain biodiversity prepared for the ninth meeting of SBSTTA (UNEP/CBD/SBSTTA/9/12).

### **ITEM 4 PREPARATION AND ADOPTION OF THE REPORT**

19. The report of the meeting was adopted at the afternoon plenary meeting, on Thursday 3 July 2003.

### **ITEM 5 OTHER MATTERS**

20. Recognizing that there is no universally accepted definition of the term "mountain", some members of the AHTEG developed the following description that could serve as a basis for common understanding: "Mountains are characterized by distinctive abiotic, biotic, social, cultural, political and spiritual values. Structurally these areas tend to have a combination of the following physical/ biological characteristics: elevation, high or sloping terrain, diverse climates, a relatively high composition of endemic / native species, and degrees of fragility and remoteness. Functionally, these are the water towers of the world, and can serve as a refuge for many populations. Mountain regions also tend to be inclusive of lowland communities which depend on the provision of good and services, such as water, energy, food, timber, wildlife, game, recreation and spiritual value."

21. The AHTEG took note of this description.

**ITEM 6 CLOSURE OF THE MEETING**

22. Ms. Patrizia De Angelis of the Italian Ministry of Environment and Land Protection thanked all the participants for their effective contribution to the success of the meeting and stressed the importance accorded by the Government of Italy to a useful programme of work on mountain biodiversity.

23. Following the customary exchange of courtesies, the AHTEG meeting was closed at 4 p.m on Thursday 3 July 2003 by the two co-Chairs.

*Annex I*

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