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**ROLE OF THE CLEARING-HOUSE MECHANISM IN PROMOTING TECHNICAL  
COOPERATION TO ACHIEVE THE 2010 TARGET AND FACILITATING INFORMATION  
EXCHANGE ON PROGRESS MADE***Note by the Executive Secretary***EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

Paragraph 13 (b) of its decision VII/30, the Conference of the Parties at its seventh meeting recognized the essential role of the clearing-house mechanism in promoting technical cooperation to achieve the 2010 target and facilitating information exchange on progress made. Other decisions made by the Conference of the Parties also stressed the need for data and information to be made available through the clearing-house mechanism to assist Parties and other Governments to achieve the 2010 target.

The present note was prepared in response to decision VII/30 and discusses new activities undertaken by the clearing-house mechanism to promote and facilitate technical and scientific cooperation with regard to activities related to the 2010 target. Section I discusses the clearing-house mechanism and its role in the promotion and facilitation of technical and scientific cooperation among Parties and other Governments. Section II provides an overview of decisions made by the Conference of the Parties with regard to technical and scientific cooperation, information exchange and the clearing-house mechanism and the 2010 target.

Section III discusses activities in support of decisions related to technical and scientific cooperation and information exchange undertaken by the clearing-house mechanism to assist Parties and Governments to achieve the 2010 target. These activities include the development of Internet-based portals, databases, electronic forums, electronic collaborative spaces, efforts to promote interoperability of information and activities related to geographic information systems.

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\* UNEP/CBD/SBSTTA/10/1.

## SUGGESTED RECOMMENDATIONS

The Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice may wish to recommend that the Conference of the Parties:

- (a) *Requests* Parties to:
  - (i) Facilitate the exchange of information by using common formats, protocols and standards to make data and information interoperable;
  - (ii) Make accessible through the clearing-house mechanism cartographic and remote sensing data and information;
  - (iii) Make accessible through the clearing-house mechanism information on geo-referenced data and models based on that data;
- (b) *Requests* the Executive Secretary, in consultation with the clearing-house mechanism informal advisory committee, to:
  - (i) Provide information through the clearing-house mechanism on new tools to assist Parties and other Governments in assessing progress made in meeting the 2010 target, particularly tools related to geographic information systems, geo-referenced data and models based on that data;
  - (ii) Use the clearing-house mechanism to facilitate reporting on progress made by Parties in meeting the 2010 target;
  - (iii) Use the clearing-house mechanism to promote and facilitate greater synergies among Parties and other Governments with regard to activities related to the Millennium Development Goals and the 2010 target, especially activities on data and information exchange and assessment of progress made toward the meeting of goals.

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## I. INTRODUCTION

1. The clearing-house mechanism was established pursuant to article 18 paragraph 3, of the Convention on Biological Diversity to promote and facilitate technical and scientific cooperation. Within this broad context, the Conference of the Parties in paragraph 13(b) of decision VII/23 recognized the essential role of the clearing-house mechanism in promoting technical cooperation to achieve the 2010 targets and facilitating information exchange on progress made.
2. Other decisions made at the seventh meeting of the Conference of the Parties similarly voiced the need for the establishment and development of new tools to promote communication and exchange of information, assist the Parties in retrieving information on resources to assist with activities related to the 2010 target and facilitate technical and scientific cooperation, particularly with regard to assessment of progress in achieving the 2010 target.
3. In response to these requests, the Executive Secretary initiated a number of initiatives and activities through the clearing-house mechanism, including the establishment and the development of new tools such as thematic Internet-based portals, new databases, and electronic forums to promote discussion and exchange of expertise, electronic collaborative spaces to facilitate work and cooperation and other activities to encourage interoperability of information. The present note describes and reviews these initiatives and activities.
4. The note also considers future activities of the clearing-house mechanism with regard to facilitation of technical and scientific cooperation and the 2010 target.

## II. THE CLEARING-HOUSE MECHANISM

5. At its first meeting, the Conference of the Parties decided to implement the provisions of Article 18, paragraph 3 of the Convention on the establishment of a clearing-house mechanism to promote and facilitate technical and scientific cooperation, operating under the authority of the Conference of the Parties (decision I/3, para. 1). This central role highlighting technical and scientific cooperation has been reaffirmed explicitly throughout each successive meeting of the Conference of the Parties and reiterated in the strategic plan of the clearing-house mechanism, which states:

“The clearing-house mechanism (CHM) was established by the United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity to “promote and facilitate technical and scientific cooperation in biodiversity.” Its legal mandate comes from Article 18 of the Convention, covering technical and scientific cooperation, rather than Article 17 on exchange of information. This highlights that the role of the clearing-house mechanism goes beyond information exchange alone” (UNEP/CBD/SBSTTA/5/INF/2, p.7).

6. The strategic plan of the clearing-house mechanism also articulates the need to build partnerships among Parties and stakeholders: a major objective of the Strategic Plan will be to broaden the focus of the clearing-house mechanism to include technical and scientific cooperation between Parties to the Convention, their partners, and other stakeholders.
7. It is for this reason that the strategic plan of the clearing-house mechanism, in listing its three primary goals, places the promotion and facilitation of scientific and technical cooperation first, although the other two goals—information exchange and network development—are also understood as integral and essential components of the activities under the clearing-house mechanism. Indeed, effective information exchange mechanisms functioning through a well-defined network of national focal points and stakeholders provide the necessary infrastructure in support of the current activities under the clearing-house mechanism.

### A. *The pilot-phase of the clearing-house mechanism and information exchange*

8. During its pilot phase, pursuant to decisions II/3 and III/4, the clearing-house mechanism focused on the development of information-sharing and exchange tools to support and assist future initiatives and projects related to technical and scientific cooperation and the establishment of national clearing-house

mechanisms. These tools have been highly effective in facilitating information sharing/exchange and network development. These information-sharing/exchange initiatives resulted in the following mechanisms being put in place:

- (a) The website (<http://www.biodiv.org>) of the Convention on Biological Diversity;
- (b) A web-based search engine, BIOSEEK, to provide assistance in locating and retrieving global biodiversity-related information;
- (c) Web-based databases with information on focal points;
- (d) A roster of experts;
- (e) A clearing-house mechanism newsletter;
- (f) A clearing-house mechanism toolkit to assist countries in the development and establishment of clearing-house mechanism national focal points; and
- (g) A clearing-house mechanism brochure.

9. The clearing-house mechanism continues to invest in the use and development of new information exchange mechanism, particularly with regard to facilitating interoperability of information at the national and international levels. Indeed, the Convention website was redesigned in its entirety to facilitate interoperability and sharing of information. It also continues to develop new databases, thematic web-based portals and other tools to assist Parties and other Governments to more effectively use information resources. These tools and resources were further enhanced by the development of a Convention on Biological Diversity controlled vocabulary to be used as metadata descriptors on web pages and on other electronic resources such as the new online catalogue of the Information Centre of the Convention on Biological Diversity.

10. These mechanisms have been highly effective in facilitating information sharing/exchange and network development. Together with the underlying human logical and physical networks they entail, they established the requisite foundations for the development of technical and scientific cooperative activities.

#### ***B. Technical and scientific cooperation through the clearing-house mechanism***

11. On completion of the review of its pilot phase the clearing-house mechanism was able to implement more effectively such technical and scientific cooperation initiatives, particularly within the context of the Convention's programme of work. These initiatives coupled with established and new information-exchange mechanisms, offered Parties and other Governments new means to undertake collaboration projects and actions.

##### *1. Cooperation with international organizations and initiatives*

12. The clearing-house mechanism has endeavoured to optimize cooperation with other international organizations and initiatives, particularly the Inter-American Biodiversity Information Network (IABIN), the Global Invasive Species Programme (GISP), the Global Biodiversity Information Facility (GBIF), the Global Taxonomy Initiative (GTI) and BirdLife International, among many others. As one example of these joint work plans, the clearing-house mechanism is discussing with the IABIN ways and means to further develop a western hemisphere interoperable biodiversity information network.

13. As well, the clearing-house mechanism is supporting the scientific activities of GBIF through its participation in the Expert Group for Information and Communications Technologies. It is also working the GISP to develop a global invasive alien species information network to assist Parties and Governments to better manage invasive alien species.

##### *2. Cooperation with other conventions*

14. The clearing-house mechanism participated in the elaboration of an electronic joint calendar of events published by the secretariats of the Convention on Biological Diversity, the United Nations

Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) and the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) (see <http://unfccc.int/calendar/rioconv/index.html>). The joint calendar highlights those events mandated by the Convention on Biological Diversity, UNCCD and UNFCCC processes that are relevant to the work of all three conventions.

3. *Building capacity through the clearing-house mechanism: regional workshops*

15. Assisting Parties in building national, subregional and regional capacities for the implementation of the programmes of work under the Convention, in collaboration with other international organizations and initiatives, was and remains one of the primary goals of the clearing-house mechanism. To this end, regional and workshops were organized in Africa, Latin American and the Caribbean, and Central and Eastern Europe, to focus on assisting Parties to participate more effectively in the programme of work of the Convention.

16. Of particular interest is that the workshops in Latin America and the Caribbean and Central and Eastern Europe were co-organized with IABIN and the European Community respectively. Additional workshops are planned for 2004 to 2006. The clearing-house mechanism has also worked closely with the Government of Belgium to build capacity in the Africa region through its participation in technical workshops and with the Government of The Netherlands to assist small island and least developing countries to develop CHM websites.

**C. *The new clearing-house mechanism toolkit***

17. Another form of assistance and enhancement of national capacity provided by the clearing-house mechanism to Parties and Governments to build capacity is the development of a new clearing-house mechanism toolkit pursuant to paragraph 3 of decision VI/18. Divided into six different modules, the clearing-house mechanism toolkit assists Parties and Governments to develop and establish clearing-house mechanism national focal points. The toolkit also contains information on other toolkits, funding and partnership opportunities, and technical information related to formats, protocols and standards.

18. Of special note was the collaborative approach taken in the development of the toolkit. Participants included the European Community clearing-house mechanism, the clearing-house mechanism of the Governments of Belgium and the Netherlands and the Global Biodiversity Information Facility. Their respective toolkits are integral components of the final product of the clearing-house mechanism, and provide Parties, Governments and regions with technical and expert advice in the establishment of national and regional Clearing-House Mechanisms.

The clearing-house mechanism toolkit is being expanded into a meta-toolkit pursuant to paragraph 7(c) of decision VII/23 of the Conference of the Parties (Scientific and technical cooperation and the clearing-house mechanism) and enhanced to support activities under decisions VII/16 (Article 8(j) and related provisions) and VII/29 (Transfer of technology and technology cooperation).

**D. *Development of electronic collaborative spaces and tools***

19. The clearing-house mechanism developed a collaborative tool where, in discussions of working documents, participants are able to insert directly comments in the document, thereby conserving the context and history of discussions. Using this tool, it becomes possible to scroll through the document and see the rationale and source of the comments, understand the circumstances leading to certain decisions, and add new comments as needed. Every 24 hours, participants receive an automatic e-mail informing them of the number of new comments made to the document. In addition, to maintain person-to-person or person-to-group communication, the tool offers participants the ability to communicate directly with the author of a comment, or send a message to the entire group.

20. These electronic collaborative spaces have been expanded to support discussions on forthcoming meetings and to host electronic conferences on topics of relevance to the Convention, the development of indicators for the 2010 target being a case in point.

### ***E. The Biosafety Clearing-House***

21. The Biosafety Clearing-House was established as part of the clearing-house mechanism pursuant to Article 20 paragraph 1 of the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety in order to:

- (a) Facilitate the exchange of scientific, technical, environmental and legal information on, and experience with living modified organisms;
- (b) Assist Parties to implement the Protocol, taking into account the special needs of developing country Parties, in particular the least developed and small island developing States among them, and countries with economies in transition as well as countries that are centres of origin and centres of genetic diversity.

22. The BCH website is available at: <http://bch.biodiv.org>.

### ***F. Conclusion***

23. These initiatives have tightly woven the clearing-house mechanism with activities related to the Convention's programme areas and cross-cutting issues, and have given the clearing-house mechanism unique experience and knowledge on the tools required to promote and facilitate successfully technical and scientific cooperation among Parties and other Governments.

24. The Parties and other Governments have put this experience and knowledge to good use. For instance, the Conference of the Parties at its fifth and sixth meetings held in Nairobi from 15 to 26 May 2000 and in the Hague, from 7 to 19 April 2002 respectively, requested that the Executive Secretary, in consultation with the informal advisory committee, to use the clearing-house mechanism to implement activities well beyond those associated with information exchange and network development.

25. During the inter-sessional period leading to the seventh meeting of the Conference of the Parties, the clearing-house mechanism continued to invest in network development and in the development and establishment of new communications and information exchange tools with the understanding these investments would further support initiatives related to technical and scientific cooperation and the Convention's programme areas and cross-cutting issues. The high number of requests to the clearing-house mechanism made at the seventh meeting of the Conference of the Parties is indicative of its successful support role and ability to promote technical and scientific cooperation among Parties and other Governments.

26. In light of this experience and knowledge held by the clearing-house, it is able to implement tools and activities in support of technical and scientific collaboration required to assist Parties and other Governments in meeting the 2010 target.

### **III. CURRENT REQUESTS BY THE CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES TO THE EXECUTIVE SECRETARY WITH REGARD TO THE CLEARING-HOUSE MECHANISM TO ASSIST PARTIES IN MEETING THE 2010 TARGET**

27. Paragraph 32 of the final report of the "2010 – The Global Biodiversity Challenge" meeting held in London, from 21 to 23 May 2003 recognized that "at all levels there is a need *to make the biodiversity data that exists more readily accessible* and available in a timely manner. Actions to achieve this would include:

- (a) Disseminating information in *appropriate formats* for potential users;
- (b) Using *best-practice* in information management and dissemination;
- (c) Supporting the development and implementation of tools, standards and protocols for *data exchange* that allow more effective sharing of information;
- (d) Establishing *interoperable* electronic databases that allow for more effective integration of information from multiple sources in real time;

(e) Improving use of the *Internet* as a tool for access and dissemination of biodiversity data, including increasing access to the Internet;

(f) Reviewing the *adequacy* of the existing data, assessing gaps and the action that needs to be taken to fill them.”

28. In paragraph 3 of decision VII/30, the Conference of the Parties, at its seventh meeting stated that “full use should be made of the report of the London meeting”, as contained in document UNEP/CBD/SBSTTA/9/INF/9. Furthermore, the seventh meeting of the Conference of the Parties voiced the need for data and information to be disseminated through the clearing-house mechanism to assist Parties and other Governments in meeting the 2010 target. Indeed, this need was explicitly and implicitly recognized throughout many of the decisions reached during the meeting:

(a) In paragraph 14 of decision VII/8 on monitoring and indicators, the clearing-house mechanism was requested to develop an effective system of information-sharing on lessons learned on the development of national-level biodiversity indicators and monitoring, including through the presentation of worked examples and case-studies;

(b) The same concern for more effective access to information is found in paragraph 10(b) of decision VII/27 on Mountain biological diversity where the Executive Secretary was requested to compile information received from Parties, other Governments and relevant organizations and bodies, on the implementation of the programme of work, and analyse progress made towards the achievement of a significant reduction in the rate of mountain biodiversity loss by 2010. In paragraph 10(e) of the same decision, the Executive Secretary, in collaboration with relevant conventions and organizations, is also requested to collect, review, evaluate and share, through the clearing-house mechanism and other means, existing information about the role of mountain ecosystems in producing and maintaining freshwater resources, and about the consequences of climate change and desertification on mountain biological diversity;

(c) The need for accurate up-to-date data and information is reflected in paragraph 2 of the annex to decision VII/28 on protected areas (Articles 8(a) to (e)), where data is used to suggest actions in the programme of work on forest biological diversity: “according to the best available data on the status and trends on protected areas (see UNEP/CBD/SBSTTA/9/5), the current global systems of protected areas are not sufficiently large, sufficiently well-planned, nor sufficiently well-managed to maximize their contribution to biodiversity conservation. Therefore, there is an urgent need to take action to improve the coverage, representativeness and management of protected areas nationally, regionally and globally”;

(d) The annex to the programme of work on technology transfer and technological and scientific cooperation in decision VII/29 on transfer of technology and technology cooperation (Articles 16 to 19) likewise makes a clear link between the need for data and information and the transfer of and access to technologies from developed to developing countries necessary to ensure implementation of the three objectives of the Convention in support of the 2010 target. Even more, paragraph 4(f) of the annex explicitly points to the strengthening of national, regional and international information systems, including through the development and use of common formats, standards and protocols, providing, *inter alia*, access to information on existing technologies for the purposes of the Convention, and the improvement of the Convention clearing-house mechanism as a central gateway to such information systems and a crucial tool for the implementation of Articles 16 to 19 of the Convention;

(e) In paragraph 3 of decision VII/30 on the Strategic Plan of the Convention, there is a call to use existing data sets to identify or develop indicators, where feasible, to assess progress towards the 2010 target, and to communicate effectively trends in biodiversity related to the three objectives of the Convention. In addition, paragraph 13(b) recognizes the essential role of the clearing-house mechanism in promoting technical cooperation to achieve the 2010 targets and facilitating information exchange on progress made.

29. Other decisions implicitly point to the potential role of the clearing-house mechanism in assisting Parties and other Governments to achieve the 2010 target. Paragraph 2 of annex I of decision VII/5 on



marine and coastal biological diversity states that “the overall goal of the programme of work on marine and coastal biodiversity, consistent with the Strategic Plan of the Convention, is to promote the implementation of the three objectives of the Convention and achieve significant reduction of the current rate of marine and coastal biological diversity loss by the year 2010”. Following this mission statement, the clearing-house mechanism is mentioned 10 times in relation to activities pertaining to information exchange and sharing of expertise in support of the programme of work.

#### IV. ACTIVITIES UNDERTAKEN BY THE CLEARING-HOUSE MECHANISM

30. In response to the above, and with a view to facilitate the promotion of technical and scientific cooperation and information exchange in regard to the 2010 target, the Executive Secretary initiated a number of activities through the clearing-house mechanism during the current inter-sessional period.

##### A. *Development of Internet-based portals*

31. In support of decision VII/30, the Executive Secretary instructed the clearing-house mechanism to further develop Internet-based portals to encourage greater communication among Parties, other Governments and stakeholders and to improve on the exchange of information and expertise. To-date, 5 portals are functional and 5 more are under development. Among the portals currently active, two are for members of informal advisory groups (clearing-house mechanism and Communication, Education and Public Awareness), constituted and coordinated by the Executive Secretary, and three are broad-based information and communication mechanisms open to Parties, other Governments and stakeholders.

32. The collaborative web-based portals for informal advisory committee (IAC) members offer tools and services allowing for discussion and exchange of experience, workspaces, electronic forums and the ability to comment and work on draft documents. They also offer users the ability to convene electronic meetings and events. Other collaborative portals in support of other groups and committees are planned. The clearing-house mechanism IAC portal also supports work related to paragraphs 6 and 7 of decision VII/29 on the transfer of technology.

33. Thematic-based portals such as those for invasive alien species, forest biodiversity and communication, education and public awareness offer users a number of resources, links to information and data, projects, databases and communication tools to forward knowledge and awareness of relevant issues, the Convention’s work and progress made in ongoing projects and initiatives. In addition, the portals often act as meta-portals, linking together isolated systems of data and information.

34. A closer look at two such portals is offered below:

(a) *The forest biodiversity portal.* Its primary purpose is to allow Parties, other Governments, NGOs, research practitioners, project managers and other actors in civil society to reflect on and analyse their common experiences in implementing the objectives of the expanded programme of work. Toward this end, users have access to a database of best practices which will be continually updated based on user feedback, and will highlight key elements from the activities in the programme of work. Moreover, throughout 2004-2006, each month, the portal will feature focused information and discussions on a single topic drawn from the 27 objectives of the expanded programme of work. This focus will offer all stakeholders the chance to report on those activities related to each monthly objective that represents best practices of the implementation of the programme of work;

(b) *The invasive alien species portal.* The portal on invasive alien species (IAS) was developed in cooperation with the Global Invasive Species Programme (GISP) to allow Parties, other Governments and relevant organizations to share invasive alien species-related information among them. As outlined in paragraphs 24 and 25 of decision VI/23\* of the Conference of the Parties, “the clearing-house mechanism will be used to facilitate scientific and technical cooperation [...], in order to

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\* One representative entered a formal objection during the process leading to the adoption of this decision and underlined that he did not believe that the Conference of the Parties could legitimately adopt a motion or a text with a formal objection in place. A few representatives expressed reservations regarding the procedure leading to the adoption of the decision. See UNEP/CBD/COP/6/20, paras.294-324.

enhance the ability of the clearing-house mechanism to promote and facilitate scientific and technical cooperation, and [the Conference of the Parties] welcomes the Global Invasive Species Programme as an international thematic focal point for alien species under the clearing-house mechanism, and calls on Parties, countries and relevant organizations to contribute to the creation and maintenance of the global information network, in particular to: (a) Ensure effective international cooperation and expertise sharing; (b) Provide information to assist countries to perform effective risk analysis; (c) Provide information on potential pathway of alien invasive species; and (d) Provide support for management and control efforts, particularly for locating technical support for rapid response activities". The information shared on the portal will be used by the clearing-house mechanism, in cooperation with GISP, to build capacity for assessment, information sharing and analytical tools, including those dealing with risk assessment, in dealing with invasive alien species. Resources available through the invasive alien species portal include information on experts, databases and standards, reporting experiences on invasive alien species, anthologies of terminology, case-studies and access to the GISP's Global Information Map (GIM). In addition, users have access to a discussion forum on assessment, information and tools on invasive alien species. To date, ten different threads of discussion have been established.

35. Other thematic portals are under development, island biodiversity portal in support of paragraph 7(f) of decision VII/23 being a case in point.

#### ***B. Regional portals for cartographic information***

36. Work is ongoing on the development of regional portals to visualize and exchange national and regional cartographic information per paragraph 7(d) of decision VII/23, programme element 3.3.3 of decision VII/27 on mountain biodiversity, programme element 4.3.4 of decision VII/28 on protected areas and to use existing data sets per decision VII/30. The portal will be linked to existing data and information projects and initiatives, particularly those established as international focal points under the clearing-house mechanism.

#### ***C. Development of electronic forums dedicated to the 2010 target***

37. The Executive Secretary requested the creation of electronic forums dedicated to the 2010 target. To date, two forums are available, one in support of the task force on indicators and the other to review draft documents for the integration of goals and sub-targets into the programmes of work (inland water biodiversity and marine and coastal biodiversity). Up to 107 experts are participating in the forum on the task force on indicators, and 33 experts are participating in the forum on review of draft documents.

38. Another communication and collaborative tool created by the clearing-house mechanism allows users to comment directly on, and discuss, draft documents and reports. This tool, developed in response to paragraph 5 of decision VII/12 of the Conference of the Parties on sustainable use, is being used to gather further comments and proposals on issues pertaining to use of terms for sustainable use, adaptive management, monitoring and indicators. It was also used to establish the Island Biodiversity Electronic Forum which gathered information to assist in the development of a programme of work on island biodiversity pursuant to decision VII/31.

#### ***D. Informal meeting on interoperability among the three Rio and other environmental conventions***

39. In an effort to assist Parties and other Governments and meet requests pertaining to information systems and data interoperability, particularly within the context of programme element 2.1.3 of the programme of work on transfer of technology (decision VII/29, annex), programme element 3.1.4 of the programme of work on inland water ecosystems (decision VII/4, annex), and paragraph 3 (c) of decision VII/23 on the clearing-house mechanism, the Executive Secretary organized an informal meeting on interoperability of information among the three Rio and other environmental conventions. In addition, the modules on interoperability of information in the clearing-house mechanism toolkit were updated per paragraph 12 of decision VII/16 G on Article 8(j), and paragraph 7(c) of decision VII/23, on the clearing-house mechanism.

## V. FUTURE ACTIVITIES OF THE CLEARING-HOUSE MECHANISM WITH REGARD TO THE 2010 TARGET

### A. *Continue the development of new communication and information exchange tools*

40. The development of new communication and information exchange tools for use by Parties and other Governments offers the clearing-house mechanism opportunities to expand its efforts related to technical and scientific cooperation among Parties, other Governments and stakeholders. Such tools could offer Parties and other Governments the ability to collaborate and work more effectively through shared electronic spaces and systems. These tools could also be used to strengthen the communications strategy of the Secretariat with a view to increase public awareness and education of issues related to the 2010 target. This could be achieved by the development of electronic forums and other communication and information mechanisms devoted for dialogue by stakeholders and the public.

### B. *Access to new tools to assist Parties and other Governments to assess progress in meeting the 2010 target*

41. The clearing-house mechanism could facilitate access to and exchange of information on tools to assist Parties and other Governments in assessing progress made in meeting the 2010 target, particularly tools related to geographic information systems, geo-referenced data and models based on that data. These tools should facilitate work using indicators to assess progress made to 2010.

### C. *Encourage Parties and other Governments to make national and regional data accessible at a global level*

42. Greater awareness of issues related to making national and regional data and information interoperable could assist Parties and other Governments to more effectively assess progress made in meeting the 2010 target. In support of the above, the clearing-house mechanism could increase activities to raise awareness on the need for interoperability of national and regional information and by assisting Parties and other Governments to enhance national and regional capacities through workshops and training materials.

### D. *Encourage greater synergies with activities related to the Millennium Development Goals*

43. The clearing-house mechanism could facilitate greater synergies among Parties and other Governments with regard to activities related to the Millennium Development Goals and the 2010 target, especially activities on data and information exchange and assessment of progress made toward the meeting of goals.

## VI. CONCLUSION

44. Collaboration continues with international thematic focal points, international organizations and initiatives and stakeholders concerning access to and use of biodiversity-related data and information. Collaboration also continues in the development of databases of information and tools to assist in the compilation, dissemination and exchange of data and information.

45. These actions are intended to facilitate activities related to technical and scientific cooperation among Parties and other Governments aiming to achieve the 2010 target. Parties and other Governments may wish to avail themselves of the resulting products to enhance such cooperation and thus comply with their obligations towards the achievement of the target. Parties may also wish to adapt these activities to the national or regional level to facilitate work with relation to gaining knowledge on biodiversity resources.