



Convention on Biological Diversity

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SUBSIDIARY BODY ON SCIENTIFIC, TECHNICAL AND TECHNOLOGICAL ADVICE

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Agenda item 4.5

GLOBAL TAXONOMY INITIATIVE: RESULTS AND LESSONS LEARNED FROM REGIONAL TAXONOMIC NEEDS ASSESSMENTS AND IDENTIFICATION OF PRIORITIES

Draft recommendation submitted by the Chair of Working Group II

The Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice *recommends* that Conference of the Parties adopt a decision along the following lines:

The Conference of the Parties

1. *Recalls* that the ongoing taxonomic impediment not only threatens the generation of new taxonomic data, but also endangers the validation of taxonomic specimens and their associated data as deposited in natural history collections and other scientific resources;
2. *Recognizing* limited progress on taxonomic needs assessments at the national level, *urges* Parties and other Governments to conduct taxonomic needs assessments, where applicable, with particular regard to the full range of end-users and their need for taxonomic support in the implementation of all relevant articles and work programmes of the Convention;
3. *Acknowledging* the progress made at the global level with determining priority taxonomic needs for invasive alien species management, *encourages* Parties, other Governments and relevant organizations to determine priority taxonomic needs in the other thematic areas and cross-cutting issues of the Convention, taking into account the regionally specific needs in taxa and regionally determined capacity-building needs;
4. *Encourages* Parties and relevant organizations to make taxonomic and other necessary data and metadata from taxonomic and other relevant institutions and organizations and their collections available in response to the information needs identified as national and regional priorities such as, *inter alia*, information and expertise to manage invasive alien species and endangered species;
5. *Recognizing* the need for better and more comprehensive data of species distribution at bioregional scale, *urges* Parties and *invites* other Governments and organizations to better coordinate their taxonomic research in biogeographic regions, and to promote making new and existing information freely available;
6. *Further urges* Parties and *invites* other Governments and organizations to increase the knowledge base on ecological range and the condition of the species in order to better meet the user-needs in respect of bioindication of ecological health;

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7. *Requests* the Executive Secretary with the assistance of the Global Taxonomy Initiative Coordination Mechanism and in collaboration with relevant international organizations, to hold project development seminars in all subregions as needed;

8. *Urges* Parties and other Governments to endorse GTI-related project proposals relevant to their national biodiversity strategies and action plans prepared in collaboration with national, regional and global partner organizations and networks, to facilitate the process of project funding by the Global Environment Facility (GEF) and other relevant donors;

9. *Urges* Parties and *invites* other Governments to facilitate the development of the capacity, in collaboration with global, regional and subregional networks, as needed in:

(a) The use of shareable taxonomic knowledge, and associated materials, by enhancing the management and use of in-country collections of referenced specimens, subject to the provision of Article 15 of the Convention;

(b) Molecular techniques commonly used in taxonomy, such as DNA barcoding; and

(c) Training courses both for the users of taxonomic information and for young professional taxonomists;

10. [*Recognizing* the importance of exchange of taxonomic voucher specimens for non-commercial biodiversity research *encourages* Parties, other Governments and organizations to find ways of facilitating and benefiting from regional and subregional scientific and technical collaborations in accordance with relevant national legislation and subject to the outcomes of the Access and Benefit-sharing negotiations];

11. *Recognizing* that the number of professional taxonomists is predicted to decrease and that the rapid accumulation of information in DNA sequences will require an expansion of taxonomic expertise to reliably identify the taxa from which the sequences derive; allowing to maximize the potential of new technologies for a wide range of biodiversity assessments, *encourages* Parties and other Governments to enhance the activities of institutions related to taxonomy to provide job opportunities for young taxonomists and to strengthen the taxonomic capacity to conduct appropriate training for parataxonomists and relevant end-users of taxonomy at national, regional and global levels;

12. *Further recognizing* that taxonomic capacity is crucial for the implementation of the Convention and that the taxonomic capacity to inventory and monitor biodiversity, including the use of new technologies, such as DNA barcoding and other relevant information technology is not adequate in many parts of the world, *requests* the Global Environment Facility (GEF) and *invites* other donors to put higher priority for funding to GTI proposals;

13. *Welcoming* the progress on the establishment of a Special Trust Fund for the Global Taxonomy Initiative and *acknowledging with gratitude* the work of BioNET-INTERNATIONAL and relevant networks and organizations and Parties contributing to the development and promotion of the sponsorship strategy and global campaign, *invites* Parties and other Governments and organizations to respond urgently to make the trust fund operational;

14. *Welcomes* the section on taxonomy as part of the statement and recommendation from UNESCO International Year of Biodiversity Science Policy Conference, held at UNESCO Headquarters, Paris, from 25 to 29 January 2010 and *urges* Parties and *invites* other Governments and relevant organizations to support and implement, as appropriate, the following recommendations resulting from this Conference:

(a) Supporting indigenous and local communities in capturing and preserving their taxonomic knowledge;

(b) Applying cybertaxonomy, molecular and other innovative approaches to accelerate the taxonomic workflow of discovery and description;

(c) Using digital and molecular infrastructure tools to integrate taxonomic data with other types of life science information, thus also broadening the products available to support identification and other services;

(d) Prioritization of taxonomic efforts according to scientific knowledge gaps and user needs;

(e) Making communication and outreach standard practice, and using Internet media platforms to reach the public and others;

(f) Training a new generation of taxonomists, able to work flexibly and collaboratively and taking stock of new and emerging technologies and tools;

(g) Appreciating the valuable contributions of taxonomy and recognizing it as a branch of cutting-edge science;

15. *Requests* the Executive Secretary in consultation with GTI Coordination Mechanism, national focal points for the Initiative and relevant institutions, bodies and organizations, to develop a comprehensive capacity-building strategy for the Global Taxonomy Initiative at global and regional levels taking into account:

(a) The taxonomic needs and capacities as already reported and especially considering outcome oriented deliverables;

(b) Targets developed for the individual planned activities for the GTI programme of work;

(c) The relevant stakeholders and resources required as well as possible funding mechanisms; and

(d) Taxonomic needs and priorities for the thematic areas and other cross-cutting issues for the Convention, in particular for the work on protected areas and invasive alien species;

and present the draft progress report to the Conference of the Parties at its eleventh meeting, and *requests* the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice to review the draft strategy prior to the eleventh meeting of the Conference of the Parties;

16. *Requests* the Executive Secretary to develop a standard format for taxonomic needs and capacity assessments for use by Parties.
