



Convention on Biological Diversity

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Fifteenth meeting
Montreal, 7-11 November 2011
Agenda item 7

REPORT OF WORKING GROUP II

1. As decided at the 1st plenary session of the meeting, Working Group II met under the chairmanship of Ms. Gabriele Obermayr (Austria) and Mr. Alexander Shestakov (Russian Federation) to consider items 4.2 (Inland water biodiversity: implication of changes in the water cycle, and freshwater resources in the implementation of the programmes of work) and 4.3 (Arctic biodiversity). It held four meetings, from 8 to 11 November 2011. The present report was adopted at the 4th meeting of the Working Group on 11 November 2011.

ITEM 4. MATTERS ARISING FROM OTHER DECISIONS ADOPTED AT THE TENTH MEETING OF THE CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES

4.2 Inland water biodiversity: implication of changes in the water cycle, and freshwater resources in the implementation of the programmes of work

2. The Working Group took up agenda item 4.2 at its 1st meeting, on 8 November 2011. In considering the item, the Working Group had before it a note by the Executive Secretary on the implications of changes in the water cycle, and freshwater resources, in the implementation of the thematic and cross-cutting programmes of work (UNEP/CBD/SBSTTA/15/8); the report of the Executive Secretary and the Secretariat of the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands on the assessment of ways and means to address relevant inland water biodiversity needs in coastal areas (UNEP/CBD/SBSTTA/15/9); the report on the assessment of the status of implementation of the River Basin Initiative (UNEP/CBD/SBSTTA/15/10); the progress report on the work in addressing paragraphs 39 to 41 of decision X/28 on review of information, and the provision of key policy relevant messages, on maintaining the ability of biodiversity to continue to support the water cycle (UNEP/CBD/SBSTTA/15/11); and a note by the Executive Secretary containing further details of the work of the expert group on maintaining the ability of biodiversity to continue to support the water cycle (UNEP/CBD/SBSTTA/15/INF/15).

3. Introducing the item, the representative of the Secretariat drew particular attention to the recommendations contained in document UNEP/CBD/SBSTTA/15/8, as well as document UNEP/CBD/SBSTTA/15/INF/15, which was an update of the progress report contained in document UNEP/CBD/SBSTTA/15/11. The document contained more details on the nature of work undertaken by the expert group, building on the terms of reference given by the Conference of the Parties. The

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Secretariat would issue notification in the week following the present meeting requesting Parties to provide written feedback on the document.

4. Statements were made by representatives of Argentina, Australia, Belgium, Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, Botswana, Canada, Colombia, China, Finland, France, India, Liberia, Malawi, Mexico, Norway, Peru, Poland, South Africa, Sweden, Switzerland Thailand, Trinidad and Tobago, United Kingdom, United Republic of Tanzania and Uruguay.

5. Statements were also made by representatives of the Canadian Biotechnology Action Network, the Convention on Wetlands (Ramsar), the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and the International Indigenous Forum on Biodiversity.

6. Following the exchange of views, the Co-Chair Obermayr said that she would prepare a conference room document based on the views expressed by participants and written submissions to the Secretariat for consideration by the Working Group at a subsequent meeting.

7. At its 3rd meeting, on 10 November 2011, the Working Group considered a Chair's text containing revised suggested recommendations.

8. Statements were made by representatives of Argentina, Australia, Brazil, Canada, Colombia, European Union, Finland, Kenya, India, Malawi, Mexico, Norway, Peru, New Zealand, South Africa, Sweden, Switzerland, Trinidad and Tobago, United Kingdom, and United Republic of Tanzania.

9. At statement was also made by a representative of the International Indigenous Forum on Biodiversity.

10. The Working Group agreed to transmit the draft recommendation, as orally amended, to the plenary as draft recommendation UNEP/CBD/SBSTTA/15/L.4.

4.4 Arctic biodiversity

11. Working Group II took up item 4.4 at its 2nd meeting, on 9 November 2011. In considering the item, the Working Group had before it a note by the Executive Secretary on Arctic biodiversity (UNEP/CBD/SBSTTA/15/14) that had been prepared pursuant to paragraph 3 of decision X/13 which had invited the Arctic Council to provide relevant information and assessment of Arctic biodiversity.

12. Co-Chair Shestakov invited Ms. Courtney Price, Communications Officer of the Arctic Flora and Fauna Working Group of the Arctic Council (CAFF), to make a presentation.

13. Ms. Price, giving a brief overview of the work and mandate of the Arctic Council and CAFF and their cooperation with the Convention, said that the profound changes affecting the rich Arctic biodiversity threatened the resilience of natural ecosystems, the cultural traditions of the indigenous peoples of the North and the livelihoods of Arctic residents. While climate change placed by far the greatest stress on Arctic biodiversity, contaminants, habitat change, industrial development and unsustainable harvest levels also had an impact. Climate change had affected the Arctic twice as fast as other areas of the globe, with immense implications for Arctic biodiversity. In a warming climate, certain ecosystems could no longer be considered truly Arctic and, as a result, many species might no longer be able to survive in the Arctic in the future. The Arctic played a fundamental role in supporting global biodiversity and the global climate system. In order to facilitate better understanding of changing processes, leading Arctic scientists were currently engaged in a full and comprehensive Arctic Biodiversity Assessment, which was scheduled for completion by 2013. The Assessment would provide the baseline of the current state of Arctic ecosystems and biodiversity; create a baseline for use in global and regional assessment of biodiversity; provide up-to-date scientific and traditional ecological knowledge; identify gaps in the data record; identify key mechanisms driving change; and produce policy recommendations regarding Arctic biodiversity. The Circumpolar Biodiversity Monitoring Programme (CBMP) of CAFF worked to harmonize and integrate efforts to monitor the Arctic's living resources, in an attempt to help shorten the gap between data collection and policy response. The knowledge about the effects of climate change on biodiversity, fauna and flora, natural resources and local peoples remained partial. However, detecting the changes and understanding the complex interactions between the climate

and Arctic species was crucial for determining possible actions. The Arctic Biodiversity Assessment and the Circumpolar Biodiversity Monitoring Programme, in combination, provided the framework and tools necessary to create a baseline of current knowledge and provide dynamic assessments over time, thus producing more regular, timely and flexible analyses. As a regional forum for addressing biodiversity issues, the Arctic Flora and Fauna Working Group of the Arctic Council welcomed cooperation with the Convention. CAFF could contribute to the Convention process by providing integrated circumpolar expertise, data and analysis to enable sound decision-making and place the status of Arctic biodiversity in a global context and, at the same time, apply international targets and tools developed under the Convention in a regional context.

14. Statements were made by representatives of Argentina, Belgium, Canada, China, Denmark (representing also Greenland), France, Iceland, Malawi, New Zealand, Norway, Poland, Russian Federation, South Africa, Sudan, Sweden, United Kingdom and United States of America.

15. A statement was also made by a representative of the International Indigenous Forum on Biodiversity.

16. Following the exchange of views, Co-Chair Shestakov said that he would prepare a conference room document based on the views expressed by participants and written submissions to the Secretariat for consideration by the Working Group at a subsequent meeting.

17. At its 4th meeting, on 11 November 2011, the Working Group considered a Chair's text containing revised suggested recommendations.

18. Statements were made by representatives of Canada, Denmark, France, Germany, Iceland, Liberia, Malawi, New Zealand, Norway Poland, Sweden (on behalf of the Arctic Council), United Kingdom, and the Unites States of America.

19. The Working Group agreed to transmit the draft recommendation, as orally amended, to the plenary as draft recommendation UNEP/CBD/SBSTTA/15/L.6.
