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**AD-HOC OPEN-ENDED WORKING GROUP ON-
REVIEW OF IMPLEMENTATION OF THE
CONVENTION**

Fourth meeting
Montreal, 7-11 May 2012

**ADDITIONAL INFORMATION ON THE PROPOSED WORK PROGRAMME FOR THE
CLEARING-HOUSE MECHANISM**

Note by the Executive Secretary

I. INTRODUCTION

1. This note complements the note by the Executive Secretary on the proposed work programme for the clearing-house mechanism in support of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 (UNEP/CBD/WG-RI/4/3/Add.1) by providing interested Parties with additional information. It is structured as follows:

(a) Section II describes how the proposed work programme was elaborated based on comments received by Parties;

(b) Section III summarizes the progress made by the Executive Secretary on the clearing-house mechanism since the tenth conference of the Parties, and highlights current priorities.

2. The following annexes are also available:

(a) Annex I contains an updated list of potential indicators for the clearing-house mechanism;

(b) Annex II contains the recommendations made by the participants of the Subregional capacity-building workshop for South Asia on the clearing-house mechanism, held in Dehradun, India on 12-16 December 2011;

(c) Annex III contains the comments from Jamaica on the proposed work programme.

(d) Annex IV contains the comments from Switzerland on the proposed work programme.

(e) Annex V contains the comments from the United Kingdom on the proposed work programme.

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II. ELABORATION OF THE PROPOSED WORK PROGRAMME

3. This section explains how the proposed work programme evolved from its draft version, circulated for comments through notification SCBD/ITS/ODM/78741 (2012-017) issued on 26 January 2012, to its current version in document UNEP/CBD/WG-RI/4/3/Add.1. This latest version was prepared in response to the comments submitted by Parties, namely:

- (a) Jamaica;
- (b) Switzerland;
- (c) The United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.

4. The comments from Jamaica (available in annex III) were quite specific and could be addressed through corresponding adjustments or clarifications in the proposed work programme. Some of these comments were related to the potential indicators. As these indicators are no longer included in the proposed work programme, please refer to annex I to see the updated list of potential indicators that takes into account the comments received.

5. Through its comments (available in annex IV), Switzerland indicated its overall support to the proposed work programme, and particularly to key activities aiming at strengthening the central clearing-house mechanism. At the same time, Switzerland called for additional information on implementation activities in the form of an overall implementation plan. This point was incorporated in paragraph 5(b) of the proposed work programme, but in a way that also takes into account the need for flexibility as indicated by the United Kingdom. As each Party remains in control of the implementation of its own national clearing-house mechanism, the scope of such an implementation plan would be the activities under the responsibility of the Executive Secretary. Further details on implementation by the Executive Secretary are available in the next section.

6. The comments from the United Kingdom (available in annex V) included two concerns: one about the excessive number of potential indicators, and one about the high level of details on human resources for the Secretariat. Both have been addressed by removing the corresponding sections entitled “potential indicators” and “requirements and sustainability”. Some indicators may still be used to assess implementation, but only if they are relevant and cost-effective. Last but not least, the recommendation to use well-known contact networks such as LinkedIn has been directly incorporated as an activity of the proposed work programme.

7. In terms of recommended activities, the main differences between the draft and the current version of the proposed work programme are summarized below:

(a) Under Objective 1.1, the main purpose is to ensure that the Secretariat has the appropriate capacity, and not necessarily to strengthen this capacity;

(b) In Activity 1.3.5, it has been clarified that the data exposed should be related to the Convention;

(c) Activity 1.4.1 about a global contact database has been reformulated into the establishment of an online networking platform, which is directly related to the corresponding networking objective;

(d) Activities 1.4.3 and 1.4.4 about identifying experts and organizing communities of practices has been removed because they would be too time-consuming and resource-intensive;

(e) Activity 1.5.2 now explicitly indicates that guidance on how to exchange information should cover data validation processes;

- (f) In Activity 2.1.1, the expertise of the national focal point for the clearing-house mechanism has been removed because it was deemed too prescriptive;
- (g) In Activity 2.1.5, “as appropriate” has been added for not being too prescriptive;
- (h) In Activity 2.1.6 about tools and services, the term “publicly-available” has been removed to broaden the scope of potentially appropriate tools and services;
- (i) In Activities 2.2.1 and 2.2.2, “national clearing-house mechanism website” has been renamed into “national clearing-house mechanism” to encompass the whole national mechanism which may consist of several websites;
- (j) In Activity 2.3.1, “national databases” have been replaced by “national sources of biodiversity information” to specify the expected information independently of its technical implementation;
- (k) Activity 2.4.2 has been reformulated to ensure that national biodiversity knowledge is preserved in a repository, but without implying that this repository should be the national clearing-house mechanism;
- (l) The link between Activity 2.4.5 and the national strategy on communication, education and public awareness has been explicitly mentioned;
- (m) Activity 2.5.1 about guidance to Parties now indicates that a variety of implementation options should be taken into account.

III. SUMMARY OF PROGRESS AND PRIORITIES

8. This section summarizes the implementation activities of the clearing-house mechanism in which the Executive Secretary is involved. Under each goal, a distinction is made between the progress made since the tenth Conference of the Parties and the current priorities for future activities.

Goal 1: The central clearing-house mechanism provides effective global information services to facilitate the implementation of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020.

1.1. The Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity has the capacity to sustain an effective central clearing-house mechanism.

Progress

9. Since the tenth Conference of the Parties, a main priority of the Secretariat has been to increase its capacity for the central clearing-house mechanism in order to be able to respond to future needs and requests in a more efficient and cost-effective way. Progress has been made in the following areas:

- (a) Expertise - A Website Officer with expertise in developing online information systems joined the CHM team in January 2011, which ensures the availability of stable in-house expertise information and communication technology (ICT) for the CBD website and the central CHM information services;
- (b) Web technology - With a view to improving the quality and sustainability of the CBD website and its CHM information services in the long-run, a state-of-the-art content management system (CMS) was selected based on a series of evaluation criteria including cost, compatibility with the existing infrastructure, multilingual support, built-in features, extensibility, and availability of technical expertise and support;
- (c) Translation management - Computer-assisted translation (CAT) tools and processes have been introduced to optimize the use of the budget available for website translation;

(d) Project management - Professional staff of the CHM team have acquired the PRINCE2¹ certification in project management.

Priorities

10. In terms of capacity, the current priorities can be summarized as follows:

(a) Finalize the configuration of the new content management system and its integration into the CBD ICT infrastructure;

(b) Pursue the gradual migration from the legacy content management system to the new one, with priority given to new initiatives;

(c) Advocate for a component of the core budget dedicated to website translation in order to sustain the availability of the CBD website in all United Nations languages;

(d) Fill the vacant Documentation Officer post to increase the Secretariat's capacity to manage documentation and terminology;

(e) Adopt the PRINCE2 methodology when managing projects related to the clearing-house mechanism.

1.2. A high-quality CBD website is available in all United Nations languages.

Progress

11. After the tenth Conference of the Parties, the content of the CBD website was updated to reflect the major outcomes of this meeting, particularly the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020, the Nagoya Protocol on Access and Benefit-sharing, and other decisions. The database of Parties was updated to incorporate the two new protocols adopted in Nagoya.

12. During the first half of 2011, the priority was the preparation of a new version of the CBD website which was launched on 6 June 2011. Thanks to support from Spain and Saudi Arabia, major enhancements were made, including a more attractive look-and-feel, an improved navigation system, and support for the Arabic language. The web portal on the United Nations Decade on Biodiversity 2011-2020 and a first version of the Global Platform on Business and Biodiversity were also launched on 6 June 2011.

13. Throughout 2011, many sections of the CBD website were updated, including those on the national biodiversity strategies and action plans (NBSAPs), south-south cooperation, the clearing-house mechanism, and the Nagoya Protocol on Access and Benefit-sharing. Support was also requested, in the form of technical advice or programming, to contribute to the implementation of some web-based components for various programmes and initiatives under the Convention on Biological Diversity, including the prototype for ecologically or biologically significant marine areas (EBSAs), the case-studies on incentive measures, the blue carbon policy initiative, and the websites for GreenWave and the Rio Conventions Pavilion.

¹ Projects IN Controlled Environments 2 (PRINCE2) is a structured project management method endorsed by the government of the United Kingdom as the project management standard for public projects. The methodology encompasses the management, control and organisation of a project.

14. In parallel, a comprehensive website audit was undertaken and resulted in a web content enhancement plan with detailed recommendations. Progress in their implementation is taking place, but at a pace limited by staff time and time-bound deliverables. With voluntary funding from various donors, it was also possible to make further content of the CBD website available in all United Nations languages.

15. Since the beginning of 2012, work has shifted toward website development on the new content management system. The recent version of the Global Platform on Business and Biodiversity was developed on this system.

Priorities

16. A main priority is to continue the ongoing work to improve various qualitative aspects of the CBD website, such as search engine optimization, speed, usability, printer-friendliness, statistics, multilingualism, compatibility with web standards, typography, consistency, detection of broken links, content streamlining, etc. Some of these improvements will occur throughout the migration process to the new platform while others will require time to be addressed. As far as this migration process is concerned, it will have to be done in a way that maintains a single master update point for each information type.

17. Another priority for the Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity is the preparation of a web content strategy to determine how to make the CBD website as effective as possible to its target audiences. This strategy should combine important elements, such as the core mandate of the CBD Secretariat, the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020, the CBD programmes, and the overall strategy for communication, education and public awareness. In this exercise, it is important to keep in mind that effectiveness is determined by the ultimate indirect impact on biodiversity.

18. Other priorities are typically determined by major events, such as the forthcoming eleventh meeting of the Conference of the Parties, as well as web-based deliverables from programmes under the Convention on Biological Diversity which do represent a significant share of the work on the CBD website. Current projects in the pipeline already include new web portals for GreenWave, Local Authorities, Biodiversity for Development, and the clearing-house mechanism.

1.3. Effective information exchange services are fully operational.

Progress

19. The following projects were carried out thanks to support from Spain:

(a) An interoperability mechanism based on the Open Data Protocol was implemented to automate the transfer of key CBD information (treaties, decisions, news, national information) to the InforMEA web portal (www.informea.org) acting as a one-stop window for MEA information. This work was done in collaboration with UNEP's information and knowledge management initiative (MEA-IKM).

(b) A first version of the knowledge base search engine with multi-type search and dynamic result count was developed in 2011. This advanced search engine is under deployment under the new web infrastructure and a side event is planned at the fourth Meeting of the Working Group on the Review of Implementation.

20. To support the work of the Ad Hoc Technical Expert Group (AHTEG) on Indicators for the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020, an online database of potential indicators was developed prior to the fifteenth meeting Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice held on 7-11 November 2011. Recommendation XV/1 welcomed this database and requested that it be further developed, maintained, and periodically updated, with a view to maximizing its usefulness to Parties and other stakeholders, in collaboration with the Biodiversity Indicators Partnership and other relevant partners.

Priorities

21. As far as information services are concerned, the first priority is to fully integrate the new content management system (CMS) within the CBD infrastructure, in order to benefit from the built-in components and information services offered by this CMS. Once this step is completed, it will be possible to offer a user workspace with professional collaboration tools and submission mechanisms for Parties and partners. Part of this process will require data migration and redesign which should result in a more effective information model for the clearing-house mechanism.

22. Networking services will then enter into play to enable the two-way exchange of information between the central and national clearing-house mechanisms, and with relevant partners. Interconnections with LinkedIn will also be a priority to establish an online networking platform for national focal points, experts, practitioners, and other relevant contacts.

23. Dissemination services should be reviewed to align to current trends and demands. Mobile devices and e-publication should be considered. Another objective is to make the whole content of the knowledge base accessible through an open application programming interface (API) and/or feeds supporting querying and filtering features.

24. The establishment of the following information services is also envisaged:

(a) The use of selected indicators to assess the effectiveness of the clearing-house mechanism.

(b) A semi-automated mechanism to generate online versions of decisions and recommendations based on official documents;

(c) An information exchange mechanism with the Global Environment Facility (GEF) to make their biodiversity projects searchable through the knowledge base with CBD metadata;

(d) Interconnection with Mendeley Web (www.mendeley.com), an online social network for researchers.

1.4. The Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity facilitates the development of a network of experts and practitioners among Parties and partners.

Progress

25. No significant progress to report.

Priorities

26. The priority is the establishment of the online networking services mentioned above, because it is a pre-condition for significant progress towards this objective.

1.5. Guidance is available for Parties and partners to exchange information through the clearing-house mechanism network.

Progress

27. No significant progress to report.

Priorities

28. The priority is the establishment of the new online services mentioned above (user workspace, submission mechanism, collaboration tools, networking services). Once they are established, it will be possible to prepare corresponding guidance.

Goal 2: National clearing-house mechanisms provide effective information services to facilitate the implementation of the national biodiversity strategies and action plans.

Progress

29. The following meetings were organized in collaboration with Parties to provide support to national clearing-house mechanisms:

(a) The *2011 Meeting of the European Biodiversity CHM network* took place on 17-18 November 2011 at the European Environment Agency (EEA), in Copenhagen, Denmark. Major discussion topics included (i) the development of the European CHM and its integration with the Biodiversity Information System for Europe (BISE); (ii) the use of common tagging terms; (iii) the proposed new template of the European CHM portal Toolkit; and (iv) the role of the CHM in managing national targets;

(b) The *Subregional capacity-building workshop for South Asia on the Clearing-House Mechanism* was convened on 12-16 December 2011 in Dehradun, India, thanks to support from the Governments of Japan and Belgium. The objectives of the workshop were (i) to build capacity and provide guidance on how to establish and sustain effective national CHMs in South Asia; and (ii) to contribute to the establishment of a regional CHM for SACEP member countries. Annex II contains the list of recommendations made at this workshop, and the corresponding report is available online at www.cbd.int/doc/?meeting=chm-cbw-2011-sa (document UNEP/CBD/CHM/CBW/2011/SA/4);

(c) The *Workshop to review the implementation of the Clearing-House Mechanism in partner countries of the Belgian CHM* was organized on 23-25 April 2012 in Cotonou, Benin, by the Governments of Belgium and Benin. This workshop gathered representatives from ten African countries as well as a regional organization (COMIFAC) to support the development of national clearing-house mechanisms in the region in accordance with decision X/15.

Priorities

30. Current priorities to support national clearing-house mechanisms are:

(a) The organization of an additional regional capacity-building workshop for the clearing-house mechanism thanks to the financial support of Japan;

(b) The preparation on the new content management system of an enhanced web portal for the clearing-house mechanism with updated guidance and best practices for developing national clearing-house mechanisms;

(c) Collaboration with the European CHM to align their Portal Toolkit to recent guidance with a view to increasing the effectiveness of national clearing-house mechanisms making use of this toolkit.

Goal 3: Partners significantly expand the clearing-house mechanism network and services.

Progress

31. The Secretariat of the Convention contributed to the following partner initiatives with a view to expanding the clearing-house mechanism network and services:

(a) The Secretariat participated in the *Second Steering Committee meeting of the MEA Information and Knowledge Management Initiative* held on 14-16 June 2011 in Glion, Switzerland, as well as in subsequent working group meetings. This outcome of this collaborative work has been the InforMEA web portal (www.informea.org) acting as a one-stop window aggregating information from various multilateral environments (MEAs);

(b) The Global Biodiversity Information Facility (GBIF) convened the *Informatics expert meeting on invasive alien species* held on 5-6 September 2011 in Copenhagen, in collaboration with the CBD Secretariat. The outcome of this meeting is a *Joint work programme to strengthen information services on invasive alien species as a contribution towards Aichi Biodiversity Target 9*;

(c) The Secretariat facilitated the preparation process by the Conservation Commons of document UNEP/CBD/WG-RI/4/INF/13 entitled “*A review of barriers to the sharing of biodiversity data and information, with recommendations for eliminating them*”, in response to paragraph 5(c) of decision X/15 and paragraph 2 of decision X/7. This document highlights the importance of sharing biodiversity data and information for the implementation of the Convention and is a contribution towards the achievement of Aichi Biodiversity Target 19.

Priorities

32. Current priorities to support partners expanding the clearing-house mechanism network are:

(a) Ongoing collaboration with UNEP on the MEA Information and Knowledge Management Initiative starting with the participation in the *Third Steering Committee meeting of the MEA Information and Knowledge Management Initiative* held in Montreux, Switzerland on 24-26 June 2012;

(b) Collaboration with the Global Environment Facility to make information on biodiversity-related projects more accessible from thematic programmes under the Convention on Biological Diversity;

(c) Collaboration with interested thematic and regional partners to investigate ways to build capacity and improve services through the clearing-house mechanism network.

*Annex I***POTENTIAL INDICATORS ON THE CLEARING-HOUSE MECHANISM**

1. The draft proposed work programme for the clearing-house mechanism circulated for comments included a series of potential indicators as a way to measure the implementation of the clearing-house mechanism. In response to comments received (see annex V, paragraph 1), these potential indicators were removed from the official document (UNEP/CBD/WG-RI/4/Add.3). Nevertheless, given that other comments were related to the same proposed indicators (see annex III), the table below presents the corresponding updated list.

2. The point has been taken that while it is important to assess progress, it should be done in a meaningful way that does not represent an excessive burden on the implementation process.

<i>Item</i>	<i>Title</i>
Goal 1.	<i>The central clearing-house mechanism provides effective global information services to facilitate the implementation of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020.</i>
Obj. 1.1.	The CBD Secretariat has the capacity to sustain an effective central clearing-house mechanism.
i.1.	Number of operational indicators monitoring the clearing-house mechanism.
i.2.	Staff and expertise made available to the central clearing-house mechanism.
i.3.	Number of entries and categories in the CBD terminology.
i.4.	Number and type of tools adopted.
i.5.	Average time and cost to translate web content.
i.6.	Resources available to translate web content.
Obj. 1.2.	A high-quality CBD website is available in all United Nations languages.
i.7.	Availability of a web content strategy.
i.8.	Website statistics, such as visitors and page views per website section.
i.9.	Feedback from web users.
i.10.	Number of broken links.
i.11.	Number of technical issues and their status.
i.12.	Total number of web pages and number of pages which have been reviewed.
i.13.	Number of pages translated.
Obj. 1.3.	Effective information exchange services are fully operational.
i.14.	List of available information services and tools to support information exchange.
i.15.	List of information types available in the knowledge base and for online submission.
i.16.	Number of user accounts, and frequency of access to the user workspace.
i.17.	Number of entries in the knowledge base.
i.18.	Number of online submissions.
i.19.	Availability of an open interface exposing data held by the central clearing-house mechanism.
i.20.	Number of national CHM websites interoperable with the central clearing-house mechanism.
i.21.	Usage of each information service.

<i>Item</i>	<i>Title</i>
Obj. 1.4.	The CBD Secretariat facilitates the development of a network of experts and practitioners among Parties and partners.
i.22.	Number of entries in the global contact database.
i.23.	Number of national clearing-house mechanisms linked to the central clearing-house mechanism.
i.24.	Number of contributions and exchanges made through collaboration tools.
i.25.	Number of established communities of practices, and number of identified leaders.
i.26.	List of goals and common interests identified by communities of practices
i.27.	Feedback on benefits arising from collaboration and networking.
Obj. 1.5.	Guidance is available for Parties and partners to exchange information through the clearing-house mechanism network.
i.28.	List of available specifications.
i.29.	List of guidance provided.
i.30.	Feedback on usage and effectiveness of the guidance.
Goal 2.	<i>National clearing-house mechanisms provide effective information services to facilitate the implementation of the national biodiversity strategies and action plans.</i>
Obj. 2.1.	All Parties have the capacity to sustain effective national clearing-house mechanisms.
i.31.	Existence of a clearing-house mechanism national focal point.
i.32.	Existence of a national strategy for the clearing-house mechanism.
i.33.	List of roles and responsibilities for the national structure coordinating the clearing-house mechanism.
i.34.	Resources made available to the clearing-house mechanism for its long-term viability.
i.35.	List of key stakeholders and partners in information sharing.
i.36.	Number and type of tools adopted.
Obj. 2.2.	High-quality national clearing-house mechanism websites are available.
i.37.	Existence of a national clearing-house mechanism website.
i.38.	Availability of a web content strategy.
i.39.	Website statistics, such as visitors and page views per website section.
i.40.	Feedback from web users.
i.41.	Number of broken links.
i.42.	Total number of web pages, and number of pages which have been reviewed.
i.43.	Number of pages translated, and speed of the translation process.
Obj. 2.3.	National information is exchanged through the clearing-house mechanism network.
i.44.	Number of national databases connected automatically to the national clearing-house mechanism.
i.45.	Availability of an information exchange mechanism with the central clearing-house mechanism.
Obj. 2.4.	Parties collaborate and share knowledge through the clearing-house mechanism network.
i.46.	Existence of a national biodiversity knowledge management initiative.
i.47.	Log of information requests made to the national clearing-house mechanism and their responses.

<i>Item</i>	<i>Title</i>
i.48.	Number of information sources providing information to the national clearing-house mechanism.
i.49.	Number of links established with existing networks.
i.50.	Number of initiatives undertaken to dialog with civil society and their level of participation.
i.51.	Number of collaboration initiatives facilitated.
Obj. 2.5.	Partners and the CBD Secretariat have contributed to the development of national clearing-house mechanisms.
i.52.	A directory of available guidance.
i.53.	Number of partners involved in capacity building.
i.54.	Number of capacity-building workshops and budget allocated for them.
i.55.	Number of countries and participants that have benefited from capacity-building initiatives.
i.56.	Number of national clearing-house mechanism websites established or strengthened through capacity-building, collaboration initiatives or networking.
Goal 3	Partners significantly expand the clearing-house mechanism network and services.
Obj. 3.1.	Partners can sustain their participation in the clearing-house mechanism.
i.57.	Expected benefits from participation in the clearing-house mechanism.
i.58.	Existence of a contact or focal point.
i.59.	Resources allocated by the partner to the clearing-house mechanism.
i.60.	Capacity of the partner to develop and maintain its website.
Obj. 3.2.	High-quality regional and thematic clearing-house mechanism websites are available.
i.61.	Number of regional and thematic clearing-house mechanism websites.
i.62.	Number of regional and thematic websites with a strategy defining the purpose, target users, content, and services of their website.
i.63.	Website statistics, such as visitors and page views per website section.
i.64.	Feedback from web users.
Obj. 3.3.	Partner information is exchanged through the clearing-house mechanism network.
i.65.	Number of partners which have made their information available through the clearing-house mechanism.
i.66.	List of information services enabling global access to information from multilateral environment agreements.
i.67.	Number of projects made accessible through the interoperability mechanism with GEF.
Obj. 3.4.	Partners collaborate and share knowledge through the clearing-house mechanism network.
i.68.	Number of cooperation agreements which contain a component related to the clearing-house mechanism.
i.69.	Information and knowledge compiled by partners.
i.70.	Number of knowledge base entries provided by partners.
i.71.	Number of experts and practitioners participating in the clearing-house mechanism.

Annex II

**RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE SUBREGIONAL CAPACITY-BUILDING WORKSHOP
FOR SOUTH ASIA ON THE CLEARING-HOUSE MECHANISM**

Dehradun, India, 12-16 December 2011

A. *Funding (to the Financial Mechanism and other donors)*

1. Inform the financial mechanism that funding for the clearing-house mechanism through national biodiversity strategies and action plans (NBSAPs) may not be sufficient for countries that need further support to establish their national CHM.
2. Invite the financial mechanism to consider identifiable, predictable, adequate, new and additional funding for countries in order to establish, strengthen and maintain their national CHMs, including through a systematic component in biodiversity-related projects.
3. Provide funding to ensure that the information collected to prepare national reports is captured by the national CHM in a way that facilitates updates, maintenance and reuse.

B. *Development of national clearing-house mechanisms (to Parties)*

4. Develop a national strategy and action plan with targets and timelines for developing and maintaining the national clearing-house mechanism in line with corresponding guidance, and ensure that each CHM national focal point is operational, adequately equipped, and has appropriate human resources.
5. Encourage linkages or synergies, as appropriate, between the various clearing-houses under the Convention on Biological Diversity (Access and Benefit-sharing, Biosafety, CHM) and other multilateral environmental agreements (MEAs) related to biodiversity, for coherence, cost-efficiency and to avoid duplication.
6. Encourage a one-stop window approach for the national CHM with links to access and benefit-sharing, biosafety, and other biodiversity information resources available at the national level.

C. *Guidance and support (to the Belgian partnership and the Executive Secretary)*

7. Develop guidelines for national clearing-house mechanisms, including on information architecture and web content. (CBD)
8. Prepare recommendations for aligning the European CHM Portal Toolkit with CHM guidelines. (CBD)
9. Provide web hosting services if requested by countries. (Belgium and other volunteering Parties)
10. Organize capacity-building workshops to strengthen national CHMs.

D. Development of the regional CHM for South Asia (to SACEP)

11. Reach a common understanding among SACEP member countries about the supporting role of the regional clearing-house mechanism, based on available resources, and taking into account that it is expected to:

- (a) Support the development of national clearing-house mechanisms in SACEP member countries;
- (b) Facilitate cooperation between and among them, including through discussion forums;
- (c) Provide access to relevant regional information that complements information provided by national clearing-house mechanisms.

12. SACEP should consider the integration of the CHM in its proposed Environmental Data and Information Management System.

E. Central clearing-house mechanism (to the Executive Secretary)

13. Increase the capacity of the Convention Secretariat to assist countries, including through the provision of a budget to provide internet-based services to Parties, such as web hosting or mailing services.

14. Develop an online system to capture national targets.

15. Develop interoperability mechanisms with national clearing-house mechanisms.

F. Supporting tools, including the European CHM Portal Toolkit (to the CBD Secretariat and the European CHM national focal point)

16. Enhance the European CHM Portal Toolkit in line with CHM guidance and best practices.

17. The European CHM Portal Toolkit should improve its default information architecture, based on CHM guidance.

Annex III

COMMENTS FROM JAMAICA ON THE DRAFT PROPOSED WORK PROGRAMME²

Paragraph 21 (a) – Knowledge base as meta database.

The knowledge base could be a meta database.

Paragraph 21 (d) – Aggregator.

Jamaica agrees that making information on national CHMs more visible is important. If the Ajax code used in the BCH is an example of an aggregator, then I would urge that a more visually appealing layout be developed.

1.4.1. – Security implications of an open sign-up system.

Implications of an 'open sign-up' system need to be further explored. How would one indemnify against illegitimate contacts?

1.4.4. – Structuring communities of practices.

To organize communities of practices, we need specifics on how such communities would be structured and feasibility studies for developed and developing countries.

1.4.5. – Scientific and technical cooperation.

Several gaps under this activity need to be addressed. More guidance could be provided by central CHM and technologically advanced Partners on open source website development programmes, online database development, development of terms of use for online information where there may be intellectual property rights concerns.

Indicators i.23. & i.26. – To be deleted

Delete i.23 (Availability of an open sign-up system).

Delete i.26 (Number of Parties and partners involved in identifying experts).

New indicator – Number of capacity-building fora or technological tools.

Add a new indicator: "Number of regional or national capacity-building fora or technological tools developed to support information distribution and exchange."

Sections under Objective 1.4 – Contact database vs. capacity-building for information networking.

There is too much emphasis on building contact database. There is a need to stress capacity-building for information networking

1.5.1. – Validation of online data.

There should also be specifications on validation of online data and information submitted to national CHM .

i.35. – List of roles and responsibilities.

Reword i.35 as the "List of roles and responsibilities for the national structure co-ordinating the CHM".

i.37. – List of key stakeholders and partners.

Replace i.37 by the existence of a list of key stakeholders and partners in data and information sharing

² This annex has been produced by extracting the comments made by this Party on the draft document.

i.38. – Content management system.

Why being so specific about a content management system? This is not necessarily the first tool to be adopted or the easiest to implement.

Paragraph 38. – Periodic stakeholder analysis.

Add periodic stakeholder analysis on national level to identify changes in stakeholder composition and stakeholder data and info needs.

i.42. – User feedback.

Regarding indicator i.42, the Jamaican CHM website use has been monitored over the past 14 months, and less than 1% of the users provide voluntary feedback.

i.43. – Broken links.

Assess routinely indicator i.43 (e.g. per quarter)

i.44. – Technical issues.

Remove indicator i.44

2.4.2 – knowledge repository vs. linking.

Jamaica disagrees with the idea of a repository as a key function, except for assisting agencies that do not have the facility. Experience in Jamaica has shown that institutions such as national museums, national archives and universities already serve as repositories. A cost-effective approach is to have national CHM link to these repositories and also provide a referral service to their data and information.

2.4.4. – Develop links between the national CHM and existing networks.

This is Important as sometimes persons do not know where information is.

2.4.5. – Tool to dialog with civil society.

Please explain whether this is expected to be through public education and outreach activities.

i.49. – Knowledge management initiative.

Replace "Existence and outcomes" by "Existence".

i.50. – Logging requests.

Replace "Existence and content of the knowledge repository" by a log of requests for data and information received by the CHM and whether the CHM was able to assist.

i.52.-i.54. – CBD themes more important than number.

With respect to indicators i.52 - i.54, the “number” is less important than showing the CBD themes under which links were established and initiatives undertaken.

Paragraph 45. – Facilitating division of labour and sharing of resources.

Add that collaboration should facilitate, where appropriate, division of labour and sharing of resources.

i.55. – Directory.

Replace with: A directory of available guidance

*Annex IV***COMMENTS FROM SWITZERLAND ON THE DRAFT PROPOSED WORK PROGRAMME**

1. First of all, Switzerland congratulates the Secretariat for the development and maintenance of the central CHM, which makes accessible a huge amount of information on the multitude of issues addressed through the Convention. Switzerland agrees that a consolidation of services provided by the central CHM as well as the development of new instruments are needed in order to achieve the goals and objectives set out in COP decision X/15 in support of the strategic plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020.

2. The activities recommended in the draft work programme are well suited to guide the development of the CHM and to improve its impact in achieving the 2020 Biodiversity targets.

3. Switzerland wishes to specifically emphasize its support to:

(a) *Strengthening the Secretariat's capacity in information technology*, including the evaluation of a content management system. This activity is a prerequisite for the future development of the CHM.

(b) *The organization of the content* according to the four consolidated services described in paragraph 21 of the proposed work programme. The organisation of the CHM according to these services seems well adapted to facilitate access to information pursuant to the users needs. Today, it is difficult for users without appropriate prior knowledge of the CBD process to gather all relevant information on a specific issue.

(c) The activities devoted to *establishing effective information exchange services* and the development of networks. The establishment of information exchange services - alike the BCH - is likely to underpin the role of national CHM nodes, as well as to strengthen the common understanding of information to be included into the CHM. However, it will be a challenge to facilitate broad stakeholder participation while securing the quality of the information submitted. It is strongly recommended to develop the services based on the experiences made in establishing the BCH.

4. Switzerland shares the view that website translation is time-consuming and costly (the Swiss CHM node is maintained in German, French and English). Regarding activity 1.1.6, our experience show that the use of translation technology facilitates translation depending on the languages needed, however, does not substitute the revision of the texts by a translator familiar with the process. We share the opinion that translation is an ongoing requirement that should preferably be covered by a specific component in the core operational budget of the SCBD.

5. Switzerland is strongly concerned about the proposed ways and means to implement the work programme as described in paragraph 5 of the document. Switzerland supports the division of the implementation period into five management stages, however, calls for additional information for the COP to decide which activities should be undertaken. This additional information could be presented in form of a Plan of Implementation, a management tool that covers the overall implementation period and could be adapted by COP for each management stage as adequate. Such a plan should include:

(a) *A prioritisation of activities*: The work programme proposes activities that are a prerequisite for the well functioning of the CHM (e.g. multilingualism) whereas others can be postponed to a later management stage.

(b) *A decision tree*: Some activities are interrelated. We assume, for instance, that an adequate content management system is a precondition for the establishment of exchange services and the development of networks.

(c) *An estimation of resources needed*: This information is needed to estimate whether the implementation of an activity is realistic and to secure the availability of resources.

6. A Plan of Implementation would support a well structured, transparent and effective implementation of the work programme.

*Annex V***COMMENTS FROM THE UNITED KINGDOM ON THE DRAFT PROPOSED WORK PROGRAMME³**

1. The means of assessing the implementation of the CHM needs to be simple, effective and create the minimum of burden on the secretariat and Parties. In this regard the proposed list of 73 indicators seems excessive.
2. We believe the recommendations go into too much detail on the human resources. The Executive Secretary should have flexibility on how to undertake the work priorities agreed by COP.
3. The guidance to Parties is too prescriptive. Parties will have different ways of sharing this information, often in a wider national context, potentially delivering CBD information with other initiatives. They should not be obliged to follow a specific model or to use particular resources dedicated to the task. A flexible approach and guidance covering a wide range of situations will be most useful. Taking this approach (of a national implementation strategy and needs assessment) and given there are now many ways to share information through the web (not just through a single CHM), there could be other ways of meeting CHM needs other than through a single centrally managed website (e.g. through different nodes linked to a central search engine page). For the UK, with biodiversity strategies developed and implemented by the four country administrations, and much information already available in a number of different sites, we might want to take a different approach.
4. We should be very clear what are the needs for maintaining contact lists of experts. This can be very resource intensive and difficult to design for universal application given the very wide range of expertise required for implementation of the CBD. Parties may wish to consider whether professional on-line networks (such as LinkedIn) which are self-motivated and maintained could be easier, more effective and cheaper than designing and maintaining something specifically for CBD.

³ This annex is only a summary of the full comments which were provided in track changes by this Party.