



Ref: EDM/HZ/OJ

19 January 2001

Dear Madam/Sir,

NOTIFICATION

Ad Hoc Open-ended Working Group on Access and Benefit-sharing

By decision V/26, the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity decided to establish an Ad Hoc Open-ended Working Group on access to genetic resources and benefit-sharing composed of representatives, including experts, nominated by Governments and regional economic integration organizations.

In accordance with paragraph 11 of decision V/26, the Ad Hoc Open-ended Working Group is mandated: *“to develop guidelines and other approaches for submission to the Conference of the Parties and to assist Parties and stakeholders in addressing the following elements as relevant to access to genetic resources and benefit-sharing, inter alia:*

- *Terms for prior informed consent and mutually agreed terms;*
- *Roles, responsibilities and participation of stakeholders;*
- *Relevant aspects relating to in situ and ex situ conservation and sustainable use;*
- *Mechanisms for benefit-sharing, for example through technology transfer and joint research and development;*
- *and means to ensure the respect, preservation and maintenance of knowledge, innovations and practices of indigenous and local communities embodying traditional lifestyles relevant for the conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity, taking into account, inter alia, work by the World Intellectual Property Organization on intellectual property rights issues”.*

Decision V/26 also notes, in paragraph 14, that further development of capacities regarding all aspects of access and benefit-sharing arrangements is required for all stakeholders, including local governments, academic institutions, and indigenous and local communities, and that key capacity-building needs include:

- (a) assessment and inventory of biological resources as well as information management;
- (b) contract negotiation skills;
- (c) legal drafting skills for development of access and benefit-sharing measures;
- (d) means for the protection of traditional knowledge associated with genetic resources.

In this connection, decision V/26 further provides that in order to build capacity for access and benefit-sharing, *“the Open-ended Working Group shall consider issues of capacity-building, including those needs identified in paragraphs 14 (a), (b), (c) and (d)”* (above).

To: National Focal Points



The results of the deliberations of the Working Group, including draft guidelines and other approaches, shall be submitted for consideration by the Conference of the Parties at its sixth meeting.

In light of the above, Parties and Governments are hereby invited to submit to the Secretariat their detailed views on the above-mentioned elements to be addressed by the Working Group, as well as on capacity-building. The Secretariat will compile and synthesize the information received, and disseminate it in advance of the meeting.

To allow for the timely preparation of the documentation by the Secretariat and its circulation prior to the meeting, contributions should be submitted to the Secretariat no later than 31 March 2001.

I thank you for your cooperation and continued support to the work of the Convention.

Accept Madam/Sir, the assurances of my highest consideration.

Yours sincerely,

Hamdallah Zedan
Executive Secretary