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CONVENTION ON BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY

PRESS KIT

SIXTH MEETING OF THE CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES CONVENTION ON BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY

THE HAGUE

7 - 19 APRIL 2002

Contents

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PRESS RELEASE

Major UN biodiversity conference convenes in The Hague

Forests, genetic resources and invasive alien species top the agenda

The Hague, March 2002 – Ministers, senior officials and experts from 182 Governments plus the European Union are meeting here from 7 to 19 April to strengthen global cooperation on managing the Earth's biological resources.

This conference on the Convention on Biological Diversity will focus on achieving three priority results:

- A stepped-up war against invasive alien species – the number two cause (after habitat destruction) of extinction and biodiversity loss (see page 4);

- Adoption of the first-ever guidelines giving international companies and organizations access to genetic resources (such as plants for producing new pharmaceuticals) in return for a fair share of the profits and benefits going to the country of origin and local communities (see page 6); and

- Stronger economic incentives to convince companies and other stakeholders to pursue business opportunities that will help reverse the tide of deforestation (see page 8).

The two-week meeting, which will be attended by some 2,000 participants, will also evaluate progress and set new goals for the Convention's various work programmes. In addition to the priority focus on forests, the meeting will review the work programmes on inland waters, marine and coastal, dry and sub-humid lands and agricultural biodiversity (see page 10).

Other agenda items address so-called "cross-cutting" issues that are relevant to many ecosystems. In addition to the priority issues of invasive alien species and access and benefit-sharing, these include traditional knowledge, the ecosystem approach, the Global Taxonomy

Initiative, the Global Strategy for Plant Conservation, monitoring and assessments, and liability (see page 11).

The conference, known formally as the Sixth Meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity (COP 6), will be followed from 22 to 26 April by the Third Meeting of the Intergovernmental Committee on the Cartegena Protocol on Biosafety (ICCP 3).

The world's biological diversity is a vast and undervalued resource. Biodiversity encompasses every form of life, from the smallest microbe to the largest animal, plus the ecosystems that they form. It underpins the natural processes that help to minimize soil erosion, stabilize climate, purify water and air and recycle carbon and nutrients.

Biological diversity also sustains humanity with an abundance of goods and services, from food, medicines, clothing, fiber and energy to the genes that help us to fight pests and diseases. It has been estimated that some 40% of the world economy is derived directly from biodiversity.

Recognizing the importance of biodiversity to our daily lives and the pressure that human activities are placing on our living world, governments meeting under the auspices of the United Nations Environment Programme adopted the Convention on Biological Diversity in 1992 as a framework for action.

The Convention seeks to reverse the tide of destruction that humanity has wrought upon the natural world by integrating environmental conservation with economic development. "Sustainable development" must be pursued so that the earth's renewable resources are not consumed so intensively that they cannot replenish themselves.

The Convention's contributions to the World Summit on Sustainable Development include the issues cited above as well as the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety, the implementation of the ecosystem approach, the development of inter-agency cooperation, and the establishment of a forum for indigenous and local communities (see page 13).

Note to journalists: *COP 6 will start at 15h on Sunday, 7 April, at the Netherlands Congress Center in The Hague. The high-level segment for ministers and other senior officials will take place from 17 to 18 April. Accreditation forms, official documents, and other information are posted at www.biodiv.org/meetings/cop-06.asp. For further information, please contact Michael Williams at +41-22-917-8242 / 8244 / 8196, +41-79-409-1528 (cell), or michael.williams@unep.ch, or Cristina Stricker at +1-514-287-7031 or cristina.stricker@biodiv.org.*

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PRESS RELEASE

Governments to intensify war against invasive alien species

The Hague, March 2002 – Government officials meeting here to promote progress under the Convention on Biological Diversity will decide on the next phase in the international campaign against invasive alien species – the second biggest threat to biodiversity after habitat destruction.

"Few people recognize how profoundly invasive alien species have reshaped the natural landscape around them over the past decades and centuries," said Executive Director Klaus Toepfer of the United Nations Environment Programme.

"From tree-killing diseases to rats and other alien predators, invasives have traveled with traders, emigrants, and now tourists to new lands where the native species have not had time to evolve adequate protections against these sudden threats. As globalization continues to accelerate, the risks can only grow," he said.

At the Convention's last high-level meeting, in May 2000, governments decided to further develop Interim Guiding Principles for minimizing the damage caused by invasive alien species and preventing their introduction in the first place.

The principles relate to such matters as the precautionary approach, the ecosystem approach, border controls and quarantine measures, intentional and unintentional introductions, eradication, control, and containment. In The Hague, governments will consider adopting Guiding Principles and options for future work on invasive alien species under the Convention, including development of an international instrument.

"We urgently need a more effective international system to prevent bio-invasions in all areas of the world," said Hamdallah Zedan, the Convention's Executive Secretary. "Priority should be given to a stronger system for preventing entry in the first place. But where entry has already taken place, we need more effective measures to stop invasive alien species from establishing themselves and spreading. And where eradication is not feasible or cost-effective, we need to invest more in containment and long-term control measures."

All ecosystems – from forests and grasslands to marshes and coastal zones –are vulnerable to invasive alien species. Although isolated areas such as islands are the most vulnerable, every country in the world has experienced invasions. For example:

- It has been estimated that 20% of all freshwater fish species are at risk of becoming extinct in the near future unless alien fish invasions are stopped;
- Invasive plant species cover an estimated 100 million acres in the US and are spreading annually across three million additional acres, an area twice the size of Delaware. US farmers spend billions of dollars every year on pesticides to destroy invasive plants and weeds (altogether, an estimated $137 billion is spent annually in the US to control all kinds of invasive alien species);
- The corn rootworm, *Diabrotica virgifera*, was accidentally introduced into the Balkans in the late 1990s during the recent conflict. This pest is now spreading and threatening the region's maize production; and
- In the Galapagos Islands – a World Heritage Site that is renowned as a natural showcase for evolution – the number of introduced plants is almost as high as the number of natives due to introduced mammalian predators, herbivores, insects and plants.

Invasive alien species are sometimes introduced intentionally into the environment. Examples include bio-control agents to eliminate pests and species attractive for agriculture, forestry, horticulture, or fisheries. Alien species also enter the environment after being placed in containment or captivity for use in mariculture, aquaculture, horticulture, zoos, the pet trade, and scientific research.

Unintentional introductions occur due to transport, trade, travel and tourism. Alien species can hitchhike rides on boats, airplanes, tourists and travelers, timber, produce, and other exported items. Marine organisms, in particular, frequently travel from one location to another via ships. Some 10 million tons of ballast water are shipped annually, carrying diverse marine species with a planktonic life cycle and human pathogens. Ballast water is thus particularly significant for the global distribution of microorganisms and waterborne diseases affecting plants and animals.

Invasive alien species can affect ecosystems by changing light levels, decreasing dissolved oxygen in water, changing soil chemistry and structure, and increasing surface run-off and soil erosion. Most importantly, they can affect ecosystem processes such as nutrient cycling, pollination, soil regeneration, and energy flow.

They also compete with native biota, displace them, consume them, behave as parasites, transmit diseases, reduce growth and survival rates, cause the decline or extinction of local populations, and uproot or damage plants. Invasive alien species can diminish genetic diversity through the loss of genetically distinct populations, loss of genes and gene complexes, and hybridization of introduced species with native ones.

Invasive alien species are referred to by several names, which are often used interchangeably: non-natives, introduced, non-indigenous, exotic, foreign, noxious species, aggressive species, pest species, and harmful species.

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PRESS RELEASE

New guidelines to set terms for access to genetic resources and for benefit-sharing

The Hague, March 2002 – The Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity attending a two-week conference in The Netherlands expect to adopt the first-ever international guidelines on access to genetic resources and benefit-sharing.

The issue of gaining access to genetic resources and sharing the resulting benefits is highly complex. The idea is that by granting an international company or other organization access to its genetic resources (such as plants that can be used to produce new pharmaceuticals or fragrances), a country or local community will in return receive a fair share of the profits or other benefits.

"Because important principles and potentially large sums of money are at stake, an agreement on how to grant broad-based access to genetic resources while ensuring that the resulting benefits are equitably shared by all the parties concerned has proved elusive up to now," said the United Nations Environment Programme's Executive Director, Klaus Toepfer.

"Fortunately, negotiators are close to finalizing a package that promises to protect the interests of all relevant stakeholders, which may include indigenous and local communities, commercial firms, consumers and others. An agreement on the rules of the game will also give biodiversity-rich countries a greater stake in protecting their valuable biological resources," he said.

After years of talks, government delegates met last October and produced the "Draft Bonn Guidelines on Access to Genetic Resources and Fair and Equitable Sharing of the Benefits Arising out of their Utilization". If adopted here in The Hague, these voluntary guidelines will facilitate access to genetic resources on "mutually agreed terms" and on the basis of the country of origin's "prior informed consent".

The Guidelines recognize the right of the country of origin to benefit from the exploitation of its resources in the form of financial payments, samples of what is collected, the

participation or training of national researchers, the transfer of biotechnology equipment and know-how, and a share of any profits from the use of the resources.

"The Guidelines will play a crucial role in helping governments to develop administrative and contractual arrangements for access and benefit-sharing," said Hamdallah Zedan, the Convention's Executive Secretary. "By setting norms for all steps in the access and benefit-sharing process, they will pave the way for a transparent and credible international system."

Outstanding issues to be concluded in The Hague include the use of terms, the scope of guidelines with respect to products and derivatives of genetic resources, and stakeholder involvement.

Meanwhile, *sui generis* (stand-alone) legal regimes may have to be created for protecting traditional knowledge relevant to the exploitation of genetic resources.

Intellectual property rights as they relate to access and benefit-sharing also remain contentious; the relationship between the Convention on Biological Diversity and the World Trade Organization's agreement on Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPs) must be eventually clarified.

In addition to adopting the Guidelines, governments need to develop a plan of action for offering capacity building to local governments, academic institutions, indigenous and local communities, and other stakeholders. Required skills include assessing and inventorying biological resources, negotiating contracts, and drafting legal documents.

Until recently, all plants, animals and micro-organisms were considered to be part of the common heritage of humankind. Foreign prospectors felt free to take these biological resources from their countries of origin and use them to develop drugs and other commercial products.

The resulting products would be sold by foreign companies under the protection of patents or other intellectual property rights. Meanwhile, the country of origin – often from the developing world, where most biodiversity is found – would receive no benefit from the commercial exploitation of its resources.

Under the Biodiversity Convention, the international community has agreed that all States have sovereignty over their own genetic resources and are thus entitled to the "fair and equitable sharing of the benefits" that these resources provide. The Bonn Guidelines are an effort to translate this concept into practice.

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PRESS RELEASE

Deforestation crisis linked to market distortions

Create incentives to correctly value forest products and services, urge experts

The Hague, March 2002 – Policymakers participating in the Biological Diversity Convention's biannual meeting are being advised by a panel of experts that they could dramatically slowdown or reverse global deforestation by adopting better economic policies.

"The bad news is that the signals now being given to individuals and companies makes it cheaper for them to log forests in an unsustainable way than to manage them sustainably. This is one of the primary causes of today's high rates of deforestation and forest degradation," said Klaus Toepfer, Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme.

"The good news is that governments have it within their power to reshape policy and change economic incentives," he said. "They can start by forcing market prices to include the true value of biodiversity. They should also phase out public subsidies that encourage destructive behavior and publicly-funded projects that destroy habitats."

According to the Convention-appointed experts, sustainable forest management is, in the short term, generally less profitable in monetary terms than ecologically unsustainable forest practices. To find favor with the market, the non-timber benefits from sustainable forests must have a market price that exceeds this loss of profit.

Their analysis of the economic values of forest goods and services – timber, fuel wood, non-timber forest resources, genetic information, recreation and amenity, watershed protection, climate buffering, non-use values – suggests that forests are most valuable for timber and for carbon storage (as a way to combat climate change). These two values cannot be summed, however, since carbon is lost through logging.

"These results suggest that governments should seek to promote both the monetary and non-monetary values of healthy forests when setting regulatory and financial policies that affect forest management," said Hamdallah Zedan, the Convention's Executive Secretary.

"They should also encourage the development of new markets for non-timber goods and services. The latent demand for carbon storage, tourism, forest foods, and other forest values needs to be recognized, priced and encouraged," he said.

"The interlinkages between biodiversity and climate change are becoming more and more important. Natural forests, planted forests and reforestation are all considered means for mitigating climate change. Increased collaboration with other conventions, especially the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and the UN Convention to Combat Desertification, is therefore essential," Mr. Zedan added.

The policymakers will use the experts' report as a basis for considering whether to adopt a more ambitious plan to protect the world's forests. They could decide to expand their current programme of work to achieve such goals as:

- Prioritizing biodiversity conservation efforts on the most endangered and environmentally significant forest ecosystems and species, in particular primary forests;
- Ensuring that market mechanisms are complemented by other mechanisms, including legislation, regulation, certification, capacity-building, and efforts to address wider underlying causes;
- Reducing the impacts of alien species, acidification, eutrophication, climate change, forest fires and fire suppression, loss of necessary natural disturbances, fragmentation and land-use change, and other threats to forest biological diversity;
- Establishing clear, enforceable and transferable property rights for individuals or communities as a precondition for sustainable long-term conservation and use;
- Ensuring that people who bear the costs of human-induced changes in forest goods and services are compensated by those who acquire the benefits;
- Strengthening forest biodiversity assessment and monitoring;

Forests are the world's single most important reservoirs of biodiversity. Tropical, temperate, and boreal forests provide diverse habitats for plants, animals, and micro-organisms and are home to the vast majority of terrestrial species. They also play an important economic, social, and cultural role in the lives of many people, particularly indigenous and local communities.

Forest biodiversity is being lost to the rapid deforestation, fragmentation, and degradation of all forest types. The World Resource Institute estimates that one fifth of all natural tropical rain forest cover was lost from 1960 to 1990. The Food and Agriculture Organization estimates that, on average, over 15 million hectares of tropical forests disappeared every year during the 1980s, equal to about 1% per year and a 50% increase over the rate in the 1970s. A quick glance at these figures reveals that forest loss and degradation is the single most important direct cause of biodiversity loss.

Economic theory assumes that well-functioning markets will provide producers and consumers with good information about the value and scarcity of resources. In practice, however, the alarming loss of biological diversity can often be traced back to market imperfections, where market prices fail to reflect the actual value of biological resources. This value can include services to agricultural production, recreation, water supplies, and much more. Because markets do not assign monetary values to such services, prices give misleading market signals to individuals, companies and governments who may therefore overexploit biological diversity.

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PRESS BACKGROUNDER

The biodiversity agenda: A brief guide to COP 6

The Sixth Meeting of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity has a diverse and ambitious agenda for delegates to complete during the short period of two weeks. What follows is a thumbnail sketch of the key agenda items.

I) Review of thematic programmes

Over the past few years, the Conference of the Parties has regularly established new work programmes focusing on specific ecosystem types. While no new programmes will be launched in The Hague, the meeting will review many of the existing programmes and consider setting new goals and priorities.

*** Forests.** Forest ecosystems are one of the three priority issues for COP 6 – see page 8.

*** Inland water ecosystems.** Inland waters perform valuable ecological functions and contain species of great social, scientific, and economic importance. They provide humanity with food, incomes, freshwater, energy, transport, and recreation. At the same time, they are considered to be the most threatened of all ecosystem types.

Launched in 1998, the Convention's inland waters programme promotes "integrated watershed management" as the best way to reconcile competing demands with dwindling supplies of freshwater. It focuses on promoting appropriate technologies, making the first comprehensive global assessment of inland water biodiversity, analyzing best practices and policies for conservation and sustainable use, integrating biodiversity concerns into sectoral planning (such as fisheries and waterfront development), conducting Environmental Impact Assessments of water development projects, promoting transboundary cooperation, and involving local and indigenous communities in ecosystem management.

*** Marine and coastal biolo gical diversity.** The Convention has been working through the 1995 Jakarta Mandate on Marine and Coastal Biodiversity to reverse the destruction caused

by overfishing, pollution, the introduction of alien species, habitat destruction and degradation, and counter-productive policies. Alarmed by the accelerating decline of coral reefs – up to 10% have been degraded beyond recovery and a further 30% are expected to collapse over the next 10 to 20 years – the Parties recently decided to integrate coral reef bleaching and destruction into the Jakarta Mandate work programme. They also plan to collaborate more closely with the 17 existing regional seas programmes and conventions (see www.unep.ch/seas).

*** Dry and sub-humid lands.** Mediterranean areas, grasslands, savannahs and other dry and sub-humid lands are home to many of the world's most important domesticated food crops and livestock. Their wild relatives still survive in these areas and provide an essential source of genetic diversity. Unfortunately, these ecosystems are often extremely fragile and suffer from habitat conversion, over-grazing, over-harvesting, the introduction of alien species, changes in water availability and natural fire regimes, and climate change. The Convention's work programme focuses on supporting activities under the UN Convention to Combat Desertification, conducting assessments and ensuring that priority needs are being addressed.

*** Agricultural biodiversity.** Essential to food security and the livelihoods of billions of people, agricultural biodiversity has been developed over thousands of years by small-scale farmers and indigenous peoples in a wide range of ecosystems. Modern agricultural techniques have boosted productivity, but by introducing new and uniform crop varieties into farmers' fields they have displaced numerous local varieties and reduced diversity. According to the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), some 75% of the world's crop varieties have become extinct, with approximately 50,000 disappearing each year.

The Convention's agricultural work programme concentrates on country-driven assessments of current status and trends. It also seeks to promote adaptive management practices and technologies, incentive measures, and the conservation and sustainable use of genetic resources of actual or potential value for food and agriculture.

II) Progress reports on cross-cutting issues

"Cross-cutting" issues and strategies are of relevance to many ecosystems. Agenda items in The Hague include:

*** Invasive alien species.** A priority issue for COP 6 – see page 4.

*** Access and benefit-sharing as they relate to genetic resources.** Another priority – see page 6.

*** Traditional knowledge.** Known by Convention insiders as "Article 8(j)", this item refers to the knowledge, innovations and practices of indigenous and local communities. Developed over the centuries and adapted to the local culture and environment, traditional knowledge tends to be collectively owned and takes the form of stories, rituals, folklore, agricultural practices, and so on. Many modern-day products, such as plant-based medicines and cosmetics, are derived from traditional knowledge.

The Convention requires Parties to protect and promote this knowledge, to engage indigenous and local communities in policy planning, and to encourage the equitable sharing of the benefits arising from traditional knowledge (thus linking the issue to the access and benefit-sharing debate – see page 6). A Working Group has been tasked with helping to transform these goals into reality.

***The ecosystem approach.** Scientists have made enormous advances in their understanding of ecosystems – defined as dynamic complexes of plant, animal, and micro-organism communities (plus their non-living environment of air, soil, rock, and water) that interact as a functional unit. This understanding has inspired the ecosystem approach, which seeks to manage biodiversity in a way that meets human needs while maintaining ecosystem integrity. For example, if a forest and its watershed are viewed as a unified ecosystem, forestry and water management policies can be coordinated to prevent erosion and maintain flood control.

Working through the Convention, governments have recently developed a set of principles to provide decision-makers and ecosystem managers with more practical guidance on the ecosystem approach.

*** The Global Taxonomy Initiative.** The Convention recognizes that incomplete knowledge about what species live where is a major barrier to the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity. Unfortunately, the amount of work involved in identifying and cataloguing species is enormous. Basic information is often not available, particularly in tropical countries where many species have not even been named scientifically. The Global Taxonomy Initiative seeks to rectify this – but a great deal of money and training is still needed.

*** The Global Strategy for Plant Conservation.** Setting meaningful targets for plant conservation is feasible since scientific understanding of the higher plants, though incomplete, is better than for most other species. Elements of an effective strategy could include integrated *in situ* and *ex situ* conservation; research, monitoring and information management; emphasis on the social and economic benefits of plant diversity; and education and public awareness.

*** Identification, monitoring, indicators and assessments.** These workhorses of biodiversity programmes are vital for measuring progress and the effectiveness (or otherwise) of policies and measures. Current priorities include improving the quality of biodiversity indicators, training, and developing national monitoring and assessment networks.

*** Liability and redress.** It is now a generally accepted rule of international law that States are obliged to prevent activities within their jurisdiction or control from damaging the environment in other parts of the world. This principle of State responsibility has been confirmed in several international treaties and in judicial decisions. During the Convention negotiations, however, governments were unable to reach a consensus on a liability regime covering cases of transboundary damage to biodiversity. The Parties continue to work on this issue.

***Sustainable use and tourism**. The sustainable use of biological diversity – one of the three objectives of the Convention – means using the components of biological diversity in a way and at a rate that does not lead to the long-term decline of biological diversity, thereby maintaining its potential to meet current needs and those of generations to come. Sustainable tourism can generate jobs and revenues, thus providing an incentive for preserving natural areas. It can also raise public awareness of the many products and services provided by natural ecosystems and biological resources and respect for traditional knowledge and practices. Sustainable tourism has the potential to reconcile economic and environmental concerns and give a practical meaning to sustainable development. The Convention, under the Commission on Sustainable Development process, was invited to contribute to the development of a set of international guidelines for activities related to sustainable tourism development in vulnerable ecosystems.

III) Other agenda items

*** The strategic plan, national reporting and implementation.** To ensure that activities under the Convention are sustainable and stable, the Parties will adopt a strategic plan running through 2010. They will also consider submissions of the second round of national reports and progress on implementing the Convention at the national level.

*** The Global Environment Facility (GEF) and other funding.** The meeting will consider a recent review of the GEF, which is the main source of multilateral funding for Convention activities. It will also seek to give the GEF further guidance on the Convention's needs and priorities. Efforts to identify additional sources of funding will continue.

*** Cooperation with other environmental agreements.** Collaboration among treaties with similar goals can greatly contribute to the conservation and sustainable use of species and their habitats. COP 6 will therefore review progress being under the Memorandum of Understanding between the secretariats of the Biodiversity Convention and the 1979 Bonn Convention on Migratory Species (CMS).

Collaboration is also needed to ensure that climate and biodiversity policies remain mutually supportive. For example , the Climate Change Convention (UNFCCC) recognizes that forests can help minimize global warming by removing carbon from the atmosphere. Collaboration and use of the ecosystem approach should make it possible to ensure that forests managed as "carbon sinks" retain their full diversity of values.

The Convention also collaborates with the UN Convention to Combat Desertification and with the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands.

***The Clearing House Mechanism (CHM) and scientific and technical cooperation.** The Convention has established the CHM to ensure that all governments have access to useful information and technologies. The Mechanism seeks to support the Convention's thematic and cross-cutting programmes of work by promoting cooperation in six key areas: tools for decision-making, training and capacity-building, research, funding, technology transfer, and the repatriation of information. Delegates will hear a report about the Mechanism's activities.

*** Education and public awareness.** It is widely recognized that education and awareness raising are essential to generating public support for national biodiversity policies and for the Convention itself. A global initiative on education, training, and public awareness is currently being developed by the UN Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and the Convention Secretariat.

*** The World Summit on Sustainable Development.** The contribution of the Convention to the implementation of Agenda 21 and to the basic objective of the Johannesburg Summit includes:

- More than 100 countries have fulfilled an obligation to develop a national biodiversity strategy and action plan. This is the first time that such a comprehensive and wide-ranging planning initiative for the management of natural resources has been undertaken;

- The Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety, which provides a regulatory framework for the safe transfer of genetically modified organisms, represents a significant advance in international

environmental law and the most advanced and detailed operationalization of the precautionary approach;

- The development of guidelines on access to genetic resources and the sharing of the benefits arising from their utilization – which will be submitted to the Conference of the Parties in The Hague – is a major step forward in the implementation of the Convention's third objective, to which developing countries in particular attach great importance;

- The first edition of the 'Global Biodiversity Outlook', a periodic report on global biodiversity and progress under the Convention, was published in November 2001. Further details are available at www.biodiv.org/outreach/gbo www.biodiv.org/outreach/gbo;

- The development and progressive implementation of key principles, such as the ecosystem approach, to the various ecosystems and thematic programs constitutes a significant contribution to the objectives of conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity;

- The Convention has promoted strong inter-agency cooperation and synergies. The wide range of organizations participating in its programs and activities, whether scientific, social or economic, has given a new meaning to international cooperation;

- The Convention's Financial Mechanism is the single largest source of funding for biodiversity conservation in the world. Over the last nine years, it has invested approximately $1.2 billion and leveraged another $2 billion to fund projects in developing countries; and

- The Convention has provided an important forum for indigenous and local communities, which contributes significantly to promoting and integrating traditional knowledge into the management of ecosystems.

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