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INTER-AGENCY LIAISON GROUP ON
INVASIVE ALIEN SPECIES
Second meeting
Geneva, 14-15 February 2011

REPORT OF THE SECOND MEETING OF THE INTER-AGENCY LIAISON GROUP ON INVASIVE ALIEN SPECIES

INTRODUCTION

1. The Inter-agency Liaison Group on Invasive Alien Species was established to facilitate cooperation among relevant organizations to support measures to “prevent the introduction of, control or eradicate those alien species which threaten ecosystems, habitats or species”¹ (see annex I). It comprises representatives of the secretariats of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), the International Plant Protection Convention (IPPC), the World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE), the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), the World Trade Organization (WTO), the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO), the International Maritime Organisation (IMO), the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES), the International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN) and the Global Invasive Species Programme (GISP).
2. The Group was established following invitations from the Executive Secretary of the Convention on Biological Diversity to the secretariats of the aforementioned bodies, pursuant to decision IX/4 A, and in accordance with the *modus operandi* adopted in paragraph 9 of decision IV/16.
3. The first physical meeting of the liaison group took place at the headquarters of the World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE) in Paris, on 17 and 18 June 2010.

ITEM 1. OPENING OF THE MEETING

4. The second meeting of the liaison group took place at the headquarters of the World Trade Organization, in Geneva, on 14-15 February 2011. The meeting was opened at 11 a.m. on 14 February, with welcome remarks by Mr. Clemens Boonekamp, Director of the Agriculture and Commodities Division of the World Trade Organization. Mr Boonekamp briefly introduced the Committee on Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures (SPS) of the World Trade Organization and its standard setting bodies, OIE, IPPC and *Codex Alimentarius* and stressed the importance of the SPS Agreement for facilitating international trade, as well as the importance of capacity-building to implement the SPS Agreement. He also highlighted the coherence of the work of the SPS Committee with the Doha Development Agenda.

¹ Article 8(h) of the Convention on Biological Diversity.

5. The representative of the Executive Secretary of the Convention of Biological Diversity, Mr. David Cooper, thanked WTO for hosting the meeting and welcomed the Group. He briefly reviewed the main outcomes of the tenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties, held in Nagoya, Japan, in October 2010, including the adoption of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020, noting that action taken over the next ten years would be critical in determining the future of biodiversity and, consequently, human well-being over many decades and centuries. Recognition of this fact was the basis of the declaration of the United Nations International Decade for Biodiversity by the United Nations General Assembly.

ITEM 2. ADOPTION OF THE REVISED PROVISIONAL AGENDA AND ORGANIZATIONAL MATTERS

6. The meeting was co-chaired by Ms. Gretchen Stanton (WTO) and Mr. David Cooper (CBD).

7. Participants in the meeting briefly introduced themselves. A list of participants is attached as annex II.

8. The group adopted its agenda which is reflected in the headings of this report. Items 1 to 4, and the first part of item 5 were considered on Monday 14 February 2011. The remainder of item 5 and items 6 to 10 were considered on Tuesday 15 February 2011.

ITEM 3. REPORT OF CO-CHAIRS AT THE FIRST MEETING OF THE INTER--AGENCY LIAISON GROUP ON INVASIVE ALIEN SPECIES

9. The Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity outlined the main conclusions from the first meeting of the Inter-agency Liaison Group on Invasive Alien Species. These had been reviewed by members of the group and incorporated in a document prepared for the tenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity (UNEP/CBD/COP/10/21). The main points were as follows:

(a) IPPC was to prepare a discussion paper on invasive plants in aquatic environments for the Sixth Session of Commission on Phytosanitary Measures;

(b) OIE was to consider criteria for disease listing and the availability of relevant expertise, to consider whether organisms causing diseases in wildlife are adequately considered, and to explore options for developing a paper examining the possibility of broadening its mandate to address animals;

(c) IMO was to address the issue of bio-fouling of ships and the correspondence group would report on its work to the 15th Session of the IMO Sub-Committee on Bulk Liquids and Gases, in February 2011. The first set of Guidelines for the control and management of ships' bio-fouling in order to minimize the transfer of invasive aquatic species is expected to be approved by the Marine Environment Committee in July 2011. IMO was to continue collaboration with the Convention on Biological Diversity and other interested organizations towards the first set of Guidelines for the control and management of ships' bio-fouling to minimize the transfer of invasive aquatic species is expected to be approved by the Marine Environment Committee in July 2011;

(d) CITES has continued collaboration through the activities related to the CITES listed species;

(e) The needs for the Liaison Group to consider alien genotypes;

(f) The needs for capacity development in collaboration with the organizations participating in the Liaison Group, especially with Standards and Trade Development Facility (STDF);

10. The composition of the Liaison Group was briefly discussed, noting that the group currently comprised the organizations listed in decision IX/4 A. It was suggested that while the participation of

other bodies in a meeting of the liaison group, such as the Secretariat of the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands, might be considered, another option would be to hold a meeting of the Liaison Group on Invasive Alien Species in conjunction with a meeting of the Liaison Group of the Biodiversity-related Conventions which included the Convention on Migratory Species, the World Heritage Convention, the International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture, as well as the Ramsar Convention, CITES and the Convention on Biological Diversity. The Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity agreed to explore this matter with the secretariat of the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands.

ITEM 4. BRIEF REPORTS ON PROGRESS AND UPDATES FROM EACH ORGANIZATION

11. Mr. David Cooper outlined the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 (adopted by decision X/2) noting that it provided a framework for action by all stakeholders, including all of the biodiversity-related conventions. It contained five goals and twenty Aichi Biodiversity Targets, including Target 9: “By 2020, invasive alien species and pathways are identified and prioritized, priority species are controlled or eradicated, and measures are in place to manage pathways to prevent their introduction and establishment”. The decision urged Parties to set national targets within the framework of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 and to incorporate these into updated national biodiversity strategies and action plans. This was thus an opportunity for countries to integrate policies and actions related to address the threats from invasive species into biodiversity plans and broader policies and strategies. The Secretariat of the Convention would be organizing a series of regional workshops to support this process.

12. Ms. Junko Shimura (CBD) outlined decision X/38 on invasive alien species, which established the AHTEG on addressing risks associated with introduction of alien species as pets, aquarium and terrarium species, and as live bait and live food (see item 6). In this decision the Conference of the Parties welcomed the collaboration of international organizations through the Liaison Group and called for follow-up with the secretariats of the bodies referred to in decisions VI/23,² VII/13, VII/27 and IX/4, as well as the other biodiversity-related multilateral environmental agreements and regional organizations and further collaboration on the newly identified gap, namely introduction of species for hunting and game fishing;

13. Ms. Christiane Wolff and Gretchen Daley (WTO) briefed the Liaison Group on the outcome of the SPS Committee meeting held in October 2010. The issue of IAS was not raised by WTO Members at SPS Committee meeting. The request for observer status for the CBD Secretariat in the SPS Committee, was not approved and concerns were expressed by some Members (United States of America and Argentina). WTO and CBD would explore further input for consideration of observer status of CBD at the later SPS Committee meeting.

14. Mr. Brent Larson (FAO) reported that the IPPC Secretariat had prepared a discussion paper on plants in aquatic environment for consideration at CPM-6. He also noted progress in relevant standards:

- (a) A document on “movement of sea containers” prepared for standard setting process under IPPC;
- (b) Countries were carrying out consultations regarding “Plants as pest (plant for planting)” which could become a standard after the adoption by CPM7 in 2012;
- (c) Standard for air craft movement prepared by the International Air Transport Association (IATA).

² One representative entered a formal objection during the process leading to the adoption of this decision and underlined that he did not believe that the Conference of the Parties could legitimately adopt a motion or a text with a formal objection in place. A few representatives expressed reservations regarding the procedure leading to the adoption of this decision (see UNEP/CBD/COP/6/20, paras. 294-324).

15. Concerning work under the FAO Committee on Fisheries (COFI), Mr. Larson and Mr. Mathias Halwart noted that the 29th Session of the Committee on Fisheries had been held from 31 January 2011 to 4 February 2011. COFI had agreed to develop technical guidelines on the use of alien species in aquaculture. FAO would provide a full report of the session to members of the Liaison Group shortly.

16. Mr. Larson also noted that the FAO Forestry Department has prepared a Guide to implement phytosanitary standards in forestry. The Liaison Group noted that such guides were useful to assist understanding by different sectors of how the SPS Agreement and its standards could be used to address the risks from invasive alien species.

17. Mr. Wim Pelgrim (OIE) reported that new listing criteria had been under discussion. In this process, wildlife would be added as a criteria for disease listing. By the end of February 2011, the committee would provide this to public comment with a view to its recommendation for adoption in May 2011. Consideration of the possible widening of the mandate of OIE was still at an early stage. A document on this matter was being prepared for consideration by the Council in March 2011.

18. Marceil Yeater (CITES) noted that the CITES Secretariat would be cooperating with the Convention on Biological Diversity to support implementation of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 and was developing guidelines for integrating CITES issues in NBSAPs. She also reported that:

(a) The CITES Plants and Animals Committees of CITES would discuss the issue of the transport of live specimens;

(b) IATA and IPPC standards relevant to CITES cargo regulations, initiated on 1980 now needed to be updated;

(c) COFI and CITES were working on aquaculture, mariculture and captive breeding;

(d) CITES would organize a meeting on internet trade of endangered species in March 2011;

(e) CITES prepared a document to request observer status at SPS Committee.

19. Sarah Simons (GISP) informed the Liaison Group of its business plan for 2011 which included:

(a) Working closely with the CBD Secretariat to include IAS issues in the NBSAP workshops;

(b) Organizing specific capacity-building workshops on IAS in Africa and Latin America in 2011;

(c) Training for educators/trainers on IAS in Africa and Latin America in 2011.

20. Ms Simons noted that GISP was subject to a serious shortfall in funding. With respect to the proposed workshop in Latin America, collaboration with the Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture was suggested.

21. Mr. Geoffrey Howard reported on relevant activities of the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN). He noted that training conducted by IUCN should ideally be coordinated with broader efforts to support the revision of NBSAPs and that collaboration with the ministries of fisheries was needed as in many African countries, aquatic plant were dealt with by these ministries.

22. Mr. Piero Genovesi, Chair of the IUCN-SSG-ISSG reported on progress. The Invasive Species Specialist Group brought together some 250 experts on the subject. The Global Invasive Species Database (GISD) was constantly being updated and was being linked to the Red List database of IUCN. The GISD and other databases would be used to support early detection and rapid response tools.

23. The Liaison Group agreed that it would be useful to develop a web site to facilitate the work of the Group in order to provide ready access to publications and regular updates on each organization's

activities. The CBD Secretariat agreed to develop a portal for the Liaison Group and to update the Convention's web pages on invasive alien species. In addition, the CBD Secretariat would liaise with the IPPC Secretariat to consider the potential role of IPPC, as well as with CITES and other biodiversity-related conventions to consider the potential role of the project to improve knowledge management among these conventions. Links would also be made to the TEMETEA module on invasive alien species.

ITEM 5. COLLABORATION IN CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT OF RELEVANCE TO INVASIVE ALIEN SPECIES

24. The liaison group was informed of existing plans for capacity-building activities by organizations represented:

(a) Regional workshops on the SPS Agreement, convened by WTO (three-week course for 25 officials training for SPS implementation);

(b) Training workshops for OIE focal points (capacity-building activities of the OIE Regional Commissions);

(c) Capacity-development activities organized by FAO (under the Technical Cooperation Programme);

(d) Capacity-development workshops to support countries in the updating of NBSAPs, organized by the CBD Secretariat, with support of the Japan Fund and other donors;

(e) Specific capacity-building workshops on invasive alien species organized by GISP to support the CBD process and workshops for Africa and Latin America planned for 2011 and for Asia in 2012;

(f) STDF trainings and workshops regarding implementation of the SPS Agreement. STDF usually holds four regional or subregional workshops each year with the participation of the three standard setting organizations, as well as advanced courses in Geneva.

25. The liaison group also noted that WTO was holding a workshop once a year back-to-back with the SPS Committee. This year, in October, the focus would be on best practices at the country level for the food safety and animal/plant health community. About 50 countries would be invited.

26. The liaison group noted that the regional workshops organized by WTO and OIE and the annual WTO workshop could provide useful opportunities for raising awareness in the SPS-related community of the biodiversity-oriented approaches to addressing invasive species. At the same time, CBD workshops provided an opportunity to inform the biodiversity community of measures available under the SPS Agreement.

27. It was agreed that simple guides should be developed to facilitate this mutual awareness-raising and understanding. In addition, the organization of each of the above mentioned workshops could facilitate the distribution of such awareness-raising materials. Consideration could be given to the participation of relevant experts, subject to the programme of the workshops and the availability of necessary financial resources. Finally, the respective secretariats would exchange information regarding the schedules of these events and links to calendars would be maintained on the Liaison Group portal referred.

28. Melvin Spreij, Secretary of the STDF, described the work of the Facility. He explained that STDF was a joint initiative of WTO, FAO, UNDO, UNCTAD, ITC, OIE and the three standard setting organizations (OIE, Codex Alimentarius and IPPC) to assist developing countries to implement the SPS

Agreement and thereby facilitate trade and contribute to food security. The facility provided small project funds for development of manual and tools, and awareness raising. It organized regular seminars and workshops on relevant issues for the food safety and animal/plant health community, sometimes back-to-back with meetings of the SPS Committee. The STDF secretariat maintained a virtual library (risk assessment, tools, projects) that may be useful for capacity development. A new strategy for STDF was being developed for 2012.

29. Following the interest expressed in this idea at the first meeting of the Liaison Group, the Liaison Group proposed that an STDF seminar focussing on invasive species and biodiversity be organized during 2012 (either March 2012, or more likely June 2012). The Secretariat agreed to make a proposal to this effect to the next meeting of the STDF working group in March 2011. If there was agreement to proceed, the STDF Secretariat would develop a concept note for review by members of the Liaison Group in April and for subsequent submission to the working group in June. The STDF Secretariat would develop a background paper on the issue and make this available on its website

30. Noting the important role played by custom officers in controlling the transfer of invasive species and the potential for this role to be enhanced, it was agreed that consideration should be given to involving the World Customs Organization and the Green Customs Initiative in the work of the Liaison Group.

31. The Liaison Group also noted the potential role of the regional frameworks for the SPS Agreement (For example, for SADC, COMESA, EAC and ECOWAS).

32. GISP was invited to include the preparation of materials referred to in paragraph 27 above in its work plan.

33. Mr Piero Genovesi, Chair of IUCN-SSG-ISSG and Mr Geoffrey Howard, IUCN, noted useful examples of best practices for capacity development in small island developing States (SIDS):

(a) The Pacific Invasives Initiative supported by the Global Island Partnership (GLISPA) and the Government of New Zealand (see <http://www.issg.org/cii/PII/about.html>);

(b) South Atlantic Invasive Species Programme funded by European Union;

(c) Western Indian Ocean Partnership focusing on marine invasives.

He noted the “biosecurity” approach, modelled on experience in New Zealand, and the success of The Global Island Partnership (GLISPA) and its network in promoting this approach through capacity-building projects.

ITEM 6. PREPARATION FOR THE MEETING OF THE AD HOC TECHNICAL EXPERT GROUP ON ADDRESSING RISKS ASSOCIATED WITH INTRODUCTION OF ALIEN SPECIES AS PETS, AQUARIUM AND TERRARIUM SPECIES, AND AS LIVE BAIT AND LIVE FOOD

34. Participants discussed the role of the organizations in the meeting of the CBD AHTEG on addressing risks associated with the introduction of alien species as pets, aquarium and terrarium species and as live bait and live food which was to be held in the days following the meeting of the Liaison Group.

35. The Liaison Group recognized that the Agreement on the Application of Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures under WTO may largely cover the risks associated with introduction of alien species by international trade. However there was a lack of understanding on the SPS approach at national level. A practical approach to increase awareness on SPS measures at national level was to provide guidance to biosecurity/environment officials. Existing standards related to risk assessment referred to in Article 5.1 of the SPS Agreement, namely the OIE standard for animal diseases and ISPM 11 (Pest risk analysis for quarantine pests including analysis of environmental risks and living

modified organisms) was providing a generic methodology that could be applied to all situations, including trade in species as pets, aquarium and terrarium species and as live bait and live food. Countries that developed measures consistent with such standards would be compliant with the SPS Agreement and could use its infrastructure existing to implement such measures. In this context, and consistent with paragraph 1 decision IX/4 A, the Convention on Biological Diversity could help to channel information to its focal points on how the SPS measures could be applied.

36. The Liaison Group considered that it would be useful for OIE to develop guidance for animals that were not considered pests of plants. However, since ISPM11 could be considered as a generic methodology, it would be feasible to suggest that countries used ISPM11 until OIE was to develop a risk assessment standard for animal species.

37. The IPPC has developed more specific standards for many pathways. However, for potential invasive species introduced as pets, aquarium and terrarium species and as live bait and live food, there was no specific standard. Accordingly, and in line with its terms of reference, the AHTEG may consider developing concise technical guidance that could fill this gap. The Liaison Group recommended that any such guidance should be consistent with the SPS Agreement.

38. The risks associated with releases and escapes of introduced live species were outside the scope of the SPS Agreement as it was not associated with trade. Awareness raising was a reasonable approach on this. Total banning of import of live animals may not be effective due to the potential of illegal import.

39. Internet trade handled by WTO was only for the products physically transported across the borders. A loophole existed in personal use of live animals and private bred alien animals.

40. Concerning species lists, while recognizing that these could be useful tools for countries to inform measures at local or national level, the liaison group considered that compilation of lists at the global level could be problematic since invasiveness was environment specific and such global lists could discourage countries from conducting the necessary risk assessments. However, a global list of species that had been demonstrated to be invasive through risk assessments could be a useful resource if it contained information on the location of importation and on the result of risk assessment carried out by the importing country or other countries.

41. The Liaison Group also noted that the results of risk assessment had to be published and notified to the member countries under the SPS Agreement.

ITEM 7. PLANS FOR COLLABORATIVE ACTIONS IN 2011

42. The Co-chairs summarized the conclusions of the meeting as follows:

(a) The ongoing actions taken by members of the group in response to the first meeting were acknowledged and welcomed (see paragraph 5). The Group also noted that it would be useful if methodologies for risk assessment for animals were to be developed by OIE.

(b) The Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 and its implementation at the national level through National Biodiversity Strategy and Action plan (NBSAP) should incorporate the issue of invasive alien species. The CBD Secretariat will reach out to Parties through a series of NBSAP workshops;

(c) The Global Seminar on the SPS Agreement to be held in October 2011 and the regional capacity-building workshops of WTO and OIE would provide important opportunities to raise awareness about the issue of invasive alien species;

(d) The Liaison Group members should collaborate to develop simple explanatory guides:

- (i) For CBD Parties on the application of standards to address invasive alien species;
 - (ii) For the SPS-related community on the issue of invasive alien species from a biodiversity-perspective.
- (e) The Working Group of STDF would consider a proposal for a STDF seminar on invasive species and biodiversity in 2012;
- (f) The Liaison Group needs to share information on tools and guidance, case-studies, and on the capacity development workshops planned by the different organizations. The CBD Secretariat will develop a web site to this effect;
- (g) The Liaison Group noted that it would be useful to explore the potential advantages of stronger links with the World Customs Organization and the Green Customs Initiative, as well as with regional groups that have strategies related to phytosanitary measures and/or invasive alien species.

ITEM 8. NEXT MEETING

43. At the first meeting of the Liaison Group, the representative of FAO had mentioned that FAO or IPPC would offer to host a meeting in 2011. The Co-chair suggested that timing of the next meeting would be in the second half of the year 2011. The following dates were suggested:

- (a) October 2011, back to back with the STDF Global Seminar, in Geneva;
- (b) November 2011, back to back with SBSTTA-15, in Montreal;
- (c) Date not specified but in 2011 at FAO/IPPC in Rome.

44. It was agreed that a decision on the next meeting would be taken following further consultations among the members of the group. It was also agreed that it would be important to encourage ICAO and IMO to take part in the next meeting.

ITEM 9. OTHER MATTERS

45. There was no discussion under this agenda item.

ITEM 10. ADOPTION OF THE REPORT AND CLOSURE OF THE MEETING

46. The Co-chairs informed the Liaison Group that the Convention on Biological Diversity would circulate the draft report to the Group by e-mail as soon as possible.

47. The representative of CBD thanked WTO for hosting the meeting. The meeting was closed at 1 p.m. on 15 February 2011.

Annex I

INTER-AGENCY LIAISON GROUP ON INVASIVE ALIEN SPECIES

TERMS OF REFERENCE & *MODUS OPERANDI*

1. The Executive Secretary of the Convention on Biological Diversity is establishing an Inter-agency Liaison Group on Invasive Alien Species (the Liaison Group) pursuant to decision IX/4 A of the Conference of the Parties.

2. The purpose of the Liaison Group is to facilitate cooperation among relevant organizations to support measures to “prevent the introduction of, control or eradicate those alien species which threaten ecosystems, habitats or species” (Article 8(h) of the Convention on Biological Diversity), consistent with relevant decisions of the Convention and in particular:

(a) To address the gaps and inconsistencies in the international regulatory frameworks for the prevention, control and eradication of invasive alien species, consistent with the relevant decisions of the Conference of the Parties, in particular decisions VI/23,³ VII/13, VIII/27 and IX/4;

(b) To promote capacity-development activities for the prevention, control and mitigation of the negative impact of invasive alien species;

(c) To assist inter-sectoral cooperation and cooperation at the national level through each organization’s national and regional focal points or the equivalents;

(d) To cooperate in the development and use of relevant information and information systems;

(e) To coordinate activities, as appropriate and necessary, to ensure that they are complementary, so as to optimize efficiency and avoid any unnecessary overlap.

3. The secretariats of the following international organizations are invited to participate in the liaison group:

- The Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD)
- The International Plant Protection Convention (IPPC)
- The World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE)
- The Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO)
- The World Trade Organization (WTO)
- The International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO)
- The International Maritime Organisation (IMO)
- The Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES)
- The International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN)
- The Global Invasive Species Programme (GISP)

³ One representative entered a formal objection during the process leading to the adoption of this decision and underlined that he did not believe that the Conference of the Parties could legitimately adopt a motion or a text with a formal objection in place. A few representatives expressed reservations regarding the procedure leading to the adoption of this decision (see UNEP/CBD/COP/6/20, paras. 294-324).

4. Each organization shall designate a representative to participate in the meetings of the Liaison Group and act as focal point between meetings.
5. The CBD Secretariat shall act as Secretary of the Liaison Group and, in that capacity, shall convene meetings, teleconferences or e-mail exchanges. Meetings of the Liaison Group can also be called by any of the members of the Liaison Group if necessary, and the CBD Secretariat shall inform members of the Liaison Group about the meeting.
6. The Liaison Group may hold teleconferences or face-to face meetings as needed.

Annex II

LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

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