

ANNEX

RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE SBSTTA AT ITS SECOND MEETING

Recommendation II/1

AGENDA ITEMS 3.1: ASSESSMENT OF BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY AND METHODOLOGIES FOR FUTURE ASSESSMENTS
3.2: IDENTIFICATION, MONITORING AND ASSESSMENT OF COMPONENTS OF BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY AND OF PROCESSES THAT HAVE ADVERSE IMPACTS
and 3.3: REVIEW AND PROMOTION OF INDICATORS OF BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY

1. General advice

1. There was broad agreement that agenda items 3.1, 3.2 and 3.3 were inextricably interlinked and should therefore be considered together. It was acknowledged that the subject matter dealt with was highly complex and central to the Convention, particularly with respect to Article 7 but also to other Articles such as 6, 8, 16, 25 and 26. The background documents prepared by the Secretariat (documents UNEP/CBD/SBSTTA/2/2, UNEP/CBD/SBSTTA/2/3, UNEP/CBD/SBSTTA/2/4) were generally considered to contain useful approaches to dealing with these issues.

2. The importance of capacity-building, development and enhancement of institutions (and concomitant financial support) in assisting developing countries in all aspect of their assessments was repeatedly emphasized.

3. The role the clearing-house mechanism should have in improving the flow of information was stressed. The possible need to develop interim measures within the clearing-house mechanism was raised.

4. It was noted that improvement of taxonomic knowledge was fundamental to the development of indicators and assessments.

5. It was emphasized that the assessment of biological diversity was ultimately the responsibility of each Party, so that national reporting should be the focus of assessment efforts. When necessary, regional bodies should be called upon to provide information to facilitate the assessment of biological diversity beyond national jurisdictions. The question of how the Secretariat and the SBSTTA would deal with national reports when they began to arrive was raised.

6. There was wide agreement that assessments should be: transparent; based on scientific principles; based initially on existing knowledge; focused; pragmatic; cost-effective; within a socio-economic context; management- or policy-oriented. Indicators were recognized as being a vital aspect of such assessments with the pressure-state-response framework being particularly useful. A distinction was made between assessments of biological diversity itself and the assessment of the state of knowledge of biological diversity. The former was relevant principally at national level, the latter principally at regional and global levels.

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7. Calls were made for development and refinement of guidelines for national reporting. The UNEP country studies guidelines were mentioned in this context. The desirability of harmonization was emphasized as this would allow comparisons with similar ecosystems in different countries to be made, and also facilitate the development of overviews such as the Global Biodiversity Outlook. The need to develop a core set of indicators for national reporting which should be easily and widely measurable and policy-relevant was raised. Initially, emphasis should be laid on indicators already known to be successful. Traditional knowledge could play a valuable role in the development of indicators, as well as in monitoring and assessment.

8. However, the need for flexibility in approach to assessment, national reporting and indicator development in response to widely varying ecological conditions and national capacities was repeatedly raised. Regional or ecosystem approaches to the development of guidelines and indicators were widely advocated and it was noted that there was unlikely ever to be any one optimum method for assessment. The annex to the document prepared by the Secretariat (UNEP/CBD/SBSTTA/2/2) may be useful in this regard as it sets out a series of methodologies, allowing choice of the most appropriate for a given set of circumstances.

9. A two-track approach to assessment and indicator development was suggested. In the short term actual assessments should be carried out of sectors and components of biological diversity which were already reasonably well known and understood; longer-term programmes involving research and capacity-building should be developed in areas needing advances in knowledge.

10. The distinction was made between inventorying and assessment or monitoring of biological diversity. The latter must be related to human impacts. It was also noted that, although in themselves costly and difficult processes, inventories of biological diversity were more straightforward than assessment of impacts on and changes to biological diversity. The latter required both improved knowledge and long-term monitoring. Biosphere reserves were noted as being potentially extremely valuable in the latter regard.

11. Coordination with related international conventions and processes was considered of great importance. This should serve to minimize duplication of effort. In addition, experience gained in reporting to these could be used to develop guidelines for reporting and indicator development within the remit of the Convention on Biological Diversity.

12. The desirability of preparing thematic assessments in line with the major themes and specific needs of the Convention was underlined. In particular, freshwater ecosystems were widely recognized as being in urgent need of global assessment. Calls for assessment of coastal and marine, grassland and wetland ecosystems, in addition to those others mentioned in the Secretariat document (UNEP/CBD/SBSTTA/2/2), were also made.

13. The importance of assessing biological diversity in agricultural systems was widely acknowledged. It was stressed that such an assessment should take into account the work of the FAO. It was noted that there exists an interdependence between sustaining biological diversity and sustaining

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agriculture. It was also recognized that agricultural practices may affect biological diversity in agricultural ecosystems in both negative and positive ways and that when individual activities of many producers are considered in aggregate, the potential for significant offsite impacts on biological diversity exists. Because agriculture takes place across landscapes that often include other types of land-use, an improved understanding of the role of agriculture in the overall context of a region is needed.

14. It was also stressed that assessments of the status of biological diversity should, as a matter of priority, be incorporated into regional and global resource assessments as the basis for management decisions in sectors which had serious impacts on the status of biological diversity, particularly those concerning marine, agricultural and forest ecosystems. This would entail cooperation with agencies and organizations responsible for regional and global resource assessments, such as the FAO, and should operate with relevant conventions such as that covering straddling and highly migratory fish stocks.

15. It was noted that coordinated thematic assessments by countries would allow development of thematic overviews within the Global Biodiversity Outlook.

16. The proposed framework of processes and categories of activities that are or are likely to have significant adverse impacts on biological diversity (paragraphs 39-41 of document UNEP/CBD/SBSTTA/2/3) received general support. A number of specific recommendations for amendment or modification were made. Radioactive contaminants were identified as an additional proximate threat, improper land management was identified as an activity having adverse effects on biological diversity, and national policy failure was considered an additional ultimate cause of threats. In addition, it was noted that consumptive use of wild species could be a contribution to conservation. It was suggested that assessments should be carried out using this framework to set priorities, it being acknowledged that these priorities would differ in different countries.

17. Some form of intersessional activity (for example a liaison group or informal working group) was considered appropriate to examine issues such as development of guidelines for national reporting and a review of indicator initiatives. It was also suggested that indicators and monitoring should be considered together as a standing item on the agenda of the SBSTTA.

2. Conclusions and recommendations

18. The SBSTTA recognizes the vital importance of monitoring and assessment of biological diversity, particularly with regard to Article 7 of the Convention, and further recognizes that the primary responsibility for undertaken monitoring and assessment of biological diversity lies with individual Parties.

19. The SBSTTA advocates a two-track approach to assessment and indicator development. In the short term, actual assessment should be carried out of sectors and components of biological diversity which were already reasonably

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well-known and understood. Use should, in particular, be made of indicators known to be operational. Longer-term programmes involving research and capacity-building should be developed in areas needing advances in knowledge.

2.1. Priority tasks

20. The SBSTTA considered that the following tasks should be accorded a high priority:

- (i) Enhancing capacity-building, strengthening of institutions and funding in developing countries to carry out identification, monitoring and assessment within the remit of the Convention;
- (ii) Development of the clearing-house mechanism to improve the flow of information both from national reporting and from the international scientific community;
- (iii) Development and refinement of national guidelines to include: assessment and monitoring methodologies; indicators; thematic approaches; definition and clarification of terms; recommendations for harmonization;
- (iv) Provision of a critical review of methodologies for inventory and assessment along the lines of that provided in Annex 1 of document UNEP/CBD/SBSTTA/2/2;
- (v) Development of a core set of indicators for national reports. Such indicators should in the first instance be based on those which are known to be operational;
- (vi) Development of indicators in thematic areas important to the Convention, particularly coastal and marine ecosystems (including mangroves), agricultural biological diversity, forests and freshwater ecosystems;
- (vii) Development of an indicative framework of processes and categories of activities that are or are likely to have significant adverse impacts on biological diversity;
- (viii) Development of methods to strengthen links between natural resource assessments and assessments of biological diversity by introducing biological diversity dimensions into resource assessments, including assessments of forests, land resources, soils and marine living resources.

21. The SBSTTA noted that development of a core set of indicators would entail a review of current approaches to indicator development and development of indicators in thematic areas important to the Convention.

22. The SBSTTA considered that the following tasks were also important:

- (i) Development of regional- or ecosystem-based guidelines for assessments;

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- (ii) Preparation of thematic assessments of knowledge and status of biological diversity on one or more of the following ecosystems: freshwater; coastal and marine; forests and woodlands; montane systems; rangelands, arid and semi-arid lands; grasslands; wetlands; agricultural systems;
- (iii) Establishment of the costs and benefits of the conservation of biological diversity and its sustainable use;
- (iv) Assistance in preparation of the Global Biodiversity Outlook;
- (v) Elaboration and further interpretation of the terms in Annex I of the Convention, as discussed in detail in document UNEP/CBD/SBSTTA/2/3;
- (vi) Development of a review of methods for monitoring activities which have or may have adverse impacts on biological diversity, particularly with regard to pressure indicators and to the socio-economic context of the use of biological diversity as well as the impact from technology including biotechnology. Such a review should include options for mitigating the effects of these activities.

2.2. Proposed specific recommendations

23. In response to these priorities, the SBSTTA recommends to the Conference of the Parties that the Executive Secretary be requested to produce in consultation with a liaison or expert group, and for consideration by the next SBSTTA:

- (i) A guideline report to assist Parties in addressing these issues. Such a report should contain an elaboration of assessment methodologies for meeting the requirements of the Convention, taking into account the contents of those national reports already prepared and reports to other conventions and international processes. Such a report should also contain: information on indicators and monitoring techniques; definitions and clarification of terms and recommendations for harmonization. Preparation of the guidelines should not delay production of national reports already in progress;
- (ii) A list of options for consideration by the SBSTTA for capacity-building in developing countries in the application of guidelines and indicators for subsequent national reports;
- (iii) A listing of current approaches to indicator development to be tabled at the next meeting of the SBSTTA and recommendations for a preliminary core set of indicators of biological diversity, particularly those related to threats.

24. The SBSTTA recommends that the Conference of the Parties request that any guidelines or other products so produced be peer-reviewed by a roster of experts and competent institutions.

25. The SBSTTA also recommends to the Conference of the Parties that the Executive Secretary be requested to initiate consultation with other regional and global organizations, particularly the FAO, involved in assessments of biological resources within relevant economic sectors, to attempt to ensure that biological diversity is included in resource assessments undertaken by these regional and global organizations with the aim of influencing management decisions.

26. In view of the complexity of these issues and their central importance in the implementation of the Convention, the SBSTTA recommends that indicators, assessment and monitoring should be considered together as a standing item on the agenda of the SBSTTA.

Recommendation II/2

AGENDA ITEM 3.4: PRACTICAL APPROACHES FOR CAPACITY-BUILDING FOR TAXONOMY

The SBSTTA,

Recalling paragraph 7 of decision II/8, which requested the second meeting of the SBSTTA to address the issue of the lack of taxonomists that are required for Parties to implement the Convention and to advise the Conference of the Parties at its third meeting on ways and means to overcome this problem, taking into account existing studies and ongoing initiatives while adopting more practical direction of taxonomy linked to bio-prospecting and ecological research on conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity and its components;

Recognizing that biological collections are the basis of taxonomy and are also sources of genetic resources;

Having examined the note by the Secretariat (UNEP/CBD/SBSTTA/2/5) and finding an extraordinary level of agreement that enhanced taxonomic capacity is a sine qua non for the implementation of the Convention;

Recommends that the Conference of the Parties consider the following:

1. There is a scarcity of taxonomists, taxonomic collections, and institutional facilities, and there is a need to take measures to alleviate this situation worldwide, to facilitate and assist countries in implementing the Convention on Biological Diversity. In particular, national institutions and regional and subregional networks should be established or strengthened and linkages enhanced with taxonomic institutions in developing and developed countries. In strengthening the taxonomic base, consideration must be given to the information needs for bio-prospecting, habitat conservation, sustainable agriculture and the sustainable utilization of biological resources.

2. Capacity-building for taxonomy should be linked to the effective implementation of the Convention on Biological Diversity, particularly the national identification of areas of high diversity; improving the

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understanding of ecosystem functioning; giving priority to threatened taxa, taxa that are or may be of value to humanity, and those with potential use as biological indicators for conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity.

3. Development of guidelines and programme priorities for funding, including for the financial mechanism under the Convention, should take account of the specific needs for capacity-building in taxonomy to serve areas such as bio-prospecting, habitat conservation and the sustainable use of biological diversity. Such support should recognize the need for adequate, long-term housing of collections and records and long-term research.

4. For new taxonomists to be recruited, there is a need to provide employment opportunities. It is urgent that Parties take this need into consideration and integrate it into the programme of capacity-building.

5. Where appropriate, national taxonomic needs assessment and action plans should be developed by setting national priorities, mobilizing available institutional resources, and identifying available funds. Countries could benefit from regional and subregional collaboration.

6. The importance of establishing regional and subregional training programmes was recognized. Attention should also be given to the training of specialists, parataxonomists, and technicians in this field. The field of taxonomy must be integrated with training activities such as biological monitoring and assessments. Maximum use should be made of existing institutions and those organizations active in these fields.

7. There is an urgent need to make the information on existing taxonomic knowledge, including information about the taxa in worldwide collections, available to countries of origin.

8. Taxonomic information to assist capacity-building in taxonomy should be included within the clearing-house mechanism. The taxonomic work embodied in existing archives and inventories, field guides and publications needs to be updated and readily accessible through worldwide services and the duplication of work already conducted should be avoided. The dissemination of information should further the objectives of the Convention and be linked to user needs. This sharing of information will require greater international collaboration. It should also be recognized that traditional taxonomic systems offer a valuable perspective on biological diversity and should be considered part of the total taxonomic knowledge base at national, regional and subregional levels.

9. Since taxonomy generally involves the use of biological collections, those concerned should consider the adoption of mutually agreed upon material transfer agreements or equivalent instruments in accordance with the provisions of the Convention on Biological Diversity for exchange of biological specimens and information relating to them.

10. The Conference of the Parties should consider instructing the Global Environment Facility to support a Global Taxonomy Initiative, providing the necessary funds for the following actions related to capacity-building in taxonomy:

- (a) developing national, regional and subregional training programmes;
- (b) strengthening reference collections in countries of origin including, where appropriate, the exchange of paratypes on mutually agreed upon terms;
- (c) making information housed in collections worldwide and the taxonomy based on them available to the countries of origin;
- (d) producing and distributing regional taxonomic guides;
- (e) strengthening infrastructure for biological collections in countries of origin, and the transfer of modern technologies for taxonomic research and capacity-building; and
- (f) disseminating taxonomic information worldwide, inter alia, by the clearing-house mechanism.

Recommendation II/3

AGENDA ITEM 3.5: WAYS AND MEANS TO PROMOTE AND FACILITATE ACCESS TO,
AND TRANSFER AND DEVELOPMENT OF TECHNOLOGY, INCLUDING BIOTECHNOLOGY

The SBSTTA,

Recalling the relevant provisions of the Convention and, in particular, Article 25, paragraph 2 (c) and Article 20, paragraph 4;

Having examined the note produced by the Secretariat (UNEP/CBD/SBSTTA/2/6) and concluded that it met the terms of decision II/4 of the Conference of the Parties;

Recommends to the Conference of the Parties that:

(a) The work of the SBSTTA on access to and transfer of technology should now adopt an integrated approach. It should be conducted within sectoral themes related to the priority issues under the programme of work of the SBSTTA, for example technologies relevant to the conservation and sustainable use of, or making use of, marine biological diversity or agricultural biological diversity;

(b) The future work of the SBSTTA on access to and transfer of technologies should examine technologies that do not cause significant damage to the environment and are: (i) relevant to the conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity and that (ii) make use of genetic resources,

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pursuant to Article 16 (1) of the Convention. In this respect, the role of the financial mechanism to facilitate the transfer of technology to developing countries should be explored;

(c) The work of the SBSTTA on technologies should examine these categories of technology in the context of the three objectives of the Convention, and should emphasize the importance of the third objective, namely the fair and equitable sharing of the benefits arising from the utilization of genetic resources;

(d) The identification of appropriate technologies relevant to the conservation and sustainable utilization of biological diversity should be based on an assessment, at the national level, of technological needs in the Parties, and should focus, inter alia, on means of gaining economic and commercial value from genetic resources;

(e) The SBSTTA should consider ways and means to encourage the greater involvement of the private sector in its work on access to and transfer of technologies by all Parties, particularly by examining options for incentive mechanisms. The Conference of the Parties should encourage all Parties to facilitate the transfer of technologies from the private sector;

(f) The clearing-house mechanism should facilitate the sharing of information and experiences about technological innovation available for Governments to fulfil their obligations under the Convention;

Recommendation II/4

AGENDA ITEM 3.6: KNOWLEDGE INNOVATIONS AND PRACTICES OF INDIGENOUS AND LOCAL COMMUNITIES

The SBSTTA,

1. Recognizes the importance of addressing the issue of knowledge, innovations and practices of indigenous and local communities, and its importance for the implementation of the Convention on Biological Diversity.
2. Encourages the Chairman of Working Group 2 to prepare a paper reflecting the diverse views and suggestions discussed during the second meeting of the SBSTTA in time for the next meeting of the Conference of the Parties.
3. Encourages the production and distribution, by the groups representing local and indigenous communities participating in the meeting of the SBSTTA, of information on their views and recommendations on the implementation on Article 8 (j).
4. Recommends that the Conference of the Parties request specific advice from the SBSTTA on any technical and scientific issues relating to the implementation of Article 8(j).
5. Urges that the indigenous knowledge post within the Secretariat be filled as soon as possible.

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Recommendation II/5

AGENDA ITEM 3.7: CAPACITY-BUILDING FOR BIOSAFETY

The SBSTTA,

Recalling decision II/5 of the Conference of Parties that capacity-building related to biosafety was recognized as an area of priority requiring global attention as an element that will facilitate the effective implementation of any biosafety regulations, guidelines or future agreements on biosafety;

Recalling also decision II/5 of the Conference of Parties that established an Open-ended Ad Hoc Working Group on a Protocol for Biosafety, which held its first meeting from 22 to 26 July 1996 in Aarhus, Denmark, and its report contained in document UNEP/CBD/COP/3/24;

Having examined the Note by the Secretariat (UNEP/CBD/SBSTTA/2/8) and the report of the first meeting of the Open-ended Ad Hoc Working Group;

Recommends the following for the consideration of the Conference of Parties:

1. It is necessary to avoid duplication between the work of the SBSTTA and the work of the Ad Hoc Working Group. The SBSTTA offers full support and will only provide input into the work of the Ad Hoc Working Group upon request;

2. The UNEP International Technical Guidelines for Biosafety in Biotechnology represent a useful tool with respect to capacity-building and should not preempt the work of the protocol on biosafety. The guidelines can be used as an interim measure in view of the development of a biosafety protocol and to complement it after its completion and in the course of its implementation for the purpose of facilitating national capacities for risk assessment and risk management, adequate information systems, and to develop, through training, expert resources in the area of biotechnology.

3. Recognizing the importance of funding for capacity-building in biosafety (including scientific capacity and impact assessment) and considering its cross-sectoral nature, the Conference of Parties should consider the development of guidance to the Global Environment Facility for the provision of financial resources to developing countries in biosafety, including the implementation by them of the UNEP Guidelines. Furthermore, the Conference of Parties should encourage funding within programmes from organizations such as UNEP, the United Nations Development Programme, the United Nations Industrial Development Programme, World Health Organization, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations and other multilateral and bilateral sources, in the priority areas identified by the Conference of Parties;

4. Capacity-building for biosafety should also be discussed in conjunction with the issues of technology transfer, risk assessment and risk management in order to ensure the safe use of the products of biotechnology; and

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5. Specific information related to biosafety capacity-building should be included within the clearing-house mechanism as described in decision II/3.

Recommendation II/6

AGENDA ITEM 3.8: THE ROLE OF THE CLEARING-HOUSE MECHANISM
IN PROMOTING TECHNICAL AND SCIENTIFIC COOPERATION

The SBSTTA,

Recalling decision I/3 of the Conference of Parties that a clearing-house mechanism should be established in accordance with Article 18, paragraph 3, of the Convention to promote and facilitate technical and scientific cooperation;

Recalling also decision II/3 of the Conference of Parties on the development of the clearing-house mechanism through the establishment of a pilot phase for 1996-1997 and related activities to promote technical and scientific cooperation;

Having examined the Note by the Secretariat (UNEP/CBD/SBSTTA/2/9) which emphasizes the main features of the Operational Framework of the pilot phase of the clearing-house mechanism: information linking and organization, visualization and the decision-support function;

Noting the recent developments among the different active partners, and also noting the following:

1. Technical and scientific cooperation in all aspects of biological diversity, including taxonomy and transfer of technology, are crucial to ensuring the capacity of the clearing-house mechanism to play an important role for the implementation of the Convention;

2. The need for the clearing-house mechanism to be clearly focused on the implementation of the Convention;

3. The need for the clearing-house mechanism activities to include information exchange modalities additional to the Internet to ensure the participation of Parties without Internet access;

4. The need for capacity-building for the purposes of the clearing-house mechanism in developing countries, including training on information systems technologies that will allow developing countries to take advantage of the recent developments in electronic communication, including the Internet;

5. The advantages of pilot projects focused on priority areas identified by the Conference of Parties which would enable developing countries to begin to implement the main features of the pilot phase of the clearing-house mechanism;

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Recommends to the Conference of Parties that it:

1. Request the Global Environment Facility to support the activities in paragraphs 4 and 5 above as critical components in the implementation of the clearing-house mechanism at the national, subregional and regional levels, including in the pilot phase.
2. Request the Secretariat to facilitate regional workshops with a view to clearly defining country and regional-level scientific and technical information needs for the implementation of the Convention. The workshops could also review ventures of scientific and technical cooperation furthering the objectives of the Convention to identify the ways in which the clearing-house mechanism can best facilitate such cooperation. In view of the Conference of Parties budget decision it will be necessary to encourage voluntary contributions to enable the regional workshops.
3. Recognize the key characteristics of the clearing-house mechanism, i.e. that it should be compatible with national capacities, needs-driven, decentralized in nature, provide access to metadata, provide support to the decision-making process, and involve the private sector.
4. Recognize that ownership and control of all information remain with the providers, respecting the rights of countries of origin and of indigenous and local communities.
5. Endorse the proposal of the Secretariat for the publication of a clearing-house mechanism newsletter.
6. Ensure that the clearing-house mechanism is helped in its functioning by an informal advisory committee, constituted and coordinated by the Executive Secretary in a transparent manner, which will guide and integrate the development of the pilot phase activities and ensure that all Parties can participate in the pilot phase of the clearing-house mechanism.
7. Focus the work of the clearing-house mechanism at the national level on providing relevant information linkages to the National Focal Points and relevant thematic and international agencies, in order to facilitate the fair and equitable sharing of the benefits arising out of the utilization of genetic resources. Linkages to patent offices in each country for up-to-date information on new patent registrations and patents in the public domain provide an example of one mechanism.
8. Focus the work of the clearing-house mechanism at the international level on providing thematic focal points for linking to the activities at the national and regional level.
9. Recognize that close cooperation is needed with other conventions and agreements, and call for the Secretariat to identify those activities and organizations which could support the clearing-house mechanism.
10. Recognize the role of the Secretariat to coordinate the successful implementation of the clearing-house mechanism, and recommend that the clearing-house mechanism posts within the Secretariat should be filled as soon as possible.

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Recommendation II/7

AGENDA ITEM 3.9: AGRICULTURAL BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY

ADVISORY STATEMENT

I. IMPORTANCE OF BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY TO AGRICULTURE

1. The new challenge for agriculture in the expanding global economy is to achieve greater stability and productivity on a sustainable basis, by introducing technologies and management practices that would ensure a healthy environment, stability in production, economic efficiency, and equitable sharing of social benefits. Biological diversity conservation and sustainable use is a non-detachable part of the concept of sustainability.

2. An understanding of the dynamic evolutionary and environmental processes which shape and influence agricultural biodiversity is fundamental to improving sustainable management and conservation of agricultural ecosystems. Improved understanding of the impacts, either positive or negative, of agricultural practices, will depend upon the contributions of science and scientists, including traditional knowledge.

A. Socio-cultural Importance

(i) Food security and poverty alleviation

3. The conservation and sustainable utilization of agricultural biological diversity makes a key contribution to food security and poverty alleviation, through its application to improving agricultural productivity.

(ii) Farmers' knowledge

4. Actual and potential knowledge about local agricultural ecosystems generated by farmer communities is an important key to optimizing the management of those agricultural ecosystems. Much of the agricultural practices and knowledge are performed and maintained by women in local societies in many regions of the world. The role of women for maintaining those skills and knowledge is of fundamental importance.

B. Economic Importance

(i) Productivity

5. All domesticated crops and animals result from human management of biological diversity. The adaptation of agricultural biological diversity to different environments and uses has allowed farmers to respond to new challenges for maintaining and increasing productivity.

(ii) Biocontrol organisms

6. Biological diversity provides a reservoir of biological control organisms that can either naturally control pests or be used in integrated pest management, resulting in a reduction in the use of pesticides while maintaining high yields.

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(iii) Genetic adaptation to biotic and abiotic stresses

7. Traditional landraces of crops and livestock and wild species of plants and animals are a source of genetic variability for the maintenance and recovery of resistant traits.

(iv) Insect pollinators

8. A large proportion of crops depend on pollination for good yield. It has been reported that one in every three mouthfuls of food we eat depends on pollination by insects and other animals to reach our kitchen tables.

(v) Soil biological diversity

9. The biological diversity of the soil ecosystem is a prerequisite and a vehicle for nutrient circulation within agricultural ecosystems. Related to this is a number of mutualistic interactions where soil biota are involved, e.g. earthworms and mycorrhizal functioning. The long-term productivity of the agricultural ecosystem is directly dependent upon the integrity and function of the soil's biological diversity. It should be noted, however, that the knowledge of the soil biota is very incomplete.

10. Soil organisms and micro-organisms respond to the maintenance of organic matter of decomposition, nutrient cycling, soil structure, water balance, and fertility of soils.

(vi) Market responsiveness

11. Diversified crops are a protection against uncertainties in the market, especially for less-capitalized growers.

12. Biological diversity is adding to the value and variation of cultivated crops and offering new opportunities to farmers.

(vii) New species of economic importance

13. New species are continuously being added to our list of economically cultivated crops.

C. Environmental Importance

(i) Natural cycles/Life support

14. Living organisms play an important role in the resilience of all natural processes (life support). They are essential agents for nitrogen, carbon, energy and water cycles, inter alia, and therefore the species composition and their relationship may affect functioning and yields of agricultural ecosystems.

(ii) Wildlife management

15. Farmers all over the world have managed a variety of wild species and habitats which benefit the sustainability of agricultural ecosystems.

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(iv) Buffer against perturbation

16. A diverse environment offers a shield for agricultural ecosystems against perturbations, natural or manmade. The diversity of species and habitats confers alternative structures and functions, contributing to the resilience of agricultural ecosystems under environmental pressure.

II. THE IMPACTS OF AGRICULTURAL PRACTICES ON BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY

17. Agricultural production utilizes natural resources of diverse ecosystems worldwide and is the economic activity most representative as far as extension of land is concerned - nearly one-third of the world's land area is used for food production. As a consequence, many adverse effects may occur on biological diversity at on- and off-farm levels. Most of the world biological diversity on land is harboured by areas under exploitation by humans, so conserving biological diversity implies improving the ways agricultural ecosystems are managed.

18. Different agricultural practices lead to diverse impacts upon biological diversity. These impacts occur on ecosystem, species and genetic levels.

19. Unsustainable agricultural practices have resulted in the degradation of habitats by destruction of biotic and abiotic resources, as well as threats to the natural resource base to agriculture, and socio-economic problems created by destruction of the local resource basis.

20. Inappropriate reliance on monoculture, over-mechanization and misuse of agricultural chemicals diminish the diversity of fauna, flora and micro-organisms, including beneficial organisms. Those practices normally lead to a simplification of the components of the environment and to unstable production systems. In the same way, expansion of agriculture to frontier areas, including forest, savannas, wetlands, mountains, and aridlands, combined with overgrazing, and inadequate crop management and pest control strategies contribute to degradation of biological diversity, as well as to the loss of cultural diversity of traditional communities.

21. The world is changing rapidly in modern times, and agriculture along with it. The impacts of today's agricultural practices upon biological diversity are not all well known, neither in the present nor if they are extrapolated into the future. Agriculture has a history of over 10,000 years. The time perspectives for sustainability of agriculture ecosystems must be of a similar dimension.

22. Benefits to biological diversity have accrued from sustainable intensification of agriculture around the world. Hundreds of millions of hectares of land, often in fragile, biological diversity-rich environments, would have had to be ploughed were it not for the tremendous advances, often based on the use of genetic diversity. Agricultural fields can also have positive impacts in providing habitats for birds, insects and animals.

23. Agriculturalists have made strong efforts to preserve biological diversity important to agriculture, both in situ and ex situ. Currently, progress is being made in many regions of the world in implementing

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biological diversity-friendly agricultural practices in soil conservation, withdrawing production from marginal areas, mastering chemical and nutrient runoff, and breeding crop varieties which are genetically resistant to diseases, pests and abiotic stresses.

RECOMMENDATIONS

III. GENERAL RECOMMENDATIONS

24. The field of agriculture offers a unique opportunity for the Convention on Biological Diversity to link concerns with biological diversity conservation and sharing of benefits arising from the use of genetic resources with the mainstream economy.

25. The SBSTTA activities in this field should focus on the interface between agricultural sustainability and environmental issues. They should promote the integration of social, economic and environmental considerations and provide advice on common problems relating to agricultural biological diversity.

26. The SBSTTA recommends that the Conference of the Parties consider the contributions of conservation and sustainable use of agricultural biological diversity to sustainable agriculture as one of its key focal areas.

27. The SBSTTA recommends that the Conference of the Parties instruct the Secretariat to establish a process which may lead to the development of a work programme or activities in this field. There is a need to determine what issues are not being addressed in the activities and work programmes of other organizations.

28. The SBSTTA recommends that the Conference of the Parties take note of the willingness of FAO to continue serving countries in implementing the Convention on Biological Diversity in the area of agricultural biological diversity. It was noted that the representative of FAO recalled, in particular, the mandate of the FAO intergovernmental Commission on Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture as adopted in 1995 by FAO Council Resolution 1/110 which requested the Organization to "respond to requests from the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity in the specific area of genetic resources of relevance to food and agriculture, including the provision of information and other services to the Conference of the Parties and its subsidiary bodies, especially in the areas of early warning systems, global assessment and clearing house facilities, in particular and as appropriate, through the Global System for the Conservation and Utilization of Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture."

29. The SBSTTA recommends that the Conference of the Parties encourage Parties to actively implement the Leipzig Global Plan of Action on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture. The SBSTTA further notes the important of the country-based FAO Global Strategy of the Management of Farm Animal Genetic Resources.

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30. The SBSTTA recommends that the Conference of the Parties encourage Parties to evaluate and promote research and extension partnerships in research and development processes and in evaluation of research and development programmes for sustainable agriculture. To achieve this, countries should be encouraged to set up and maintain local-level forums for farmers, researchers, and extension workers to meet, discuss and debate in a partnership which creates an atmosphere of mutual respect and a free flow of information.

31. The SBSTTA recommends that the Conference of the Parties encourage:

- (i) the transformation of unsustainable agricultural technological approaches into sustainable production practices adapted to local biotic and abiotic conditions.
- (ii) the development, maintenance and mobilization of local knowledge of farmers and of farming communities, with special reference to gender roles in food production for sustainable development.

32. The SBSTTA recommends to the Conference of the Parties the need to study the positive and negative impacts on ecosystems and biomes of agricultural transformation resulting from intensification or extensification.

33. The SBSTTA recommends that the Conference of the Parties encourage at national and regional levels adequate and appropriate services to farmers and responsiveness of public research and extension services.

IV. SPECIFIC RECOMMENDATIONS

34. The SBSTTA should conduct a gap analysis of the activities and instruments related to agricultural biological diversity in order to promote the conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity in the agricultural sector. The SBSTTA recommends that the Secretariat invite the FAO's collaboration in this task and consult other organizations as appropriate. The results should be reported back to the SBSTTA with the objective of developing a multi-year workplan. Other agencies would be invited to participate, as appropriate, when the SBSTTA has identified priority issues to address.

35. Issues to be considered during the gap analysis could include, inter alia:

1. Pollinators, including consideration of the monitoring of the loss of pollinators worldwide; the identification of the specific causes of pollinator decline; the estimation of the economic cost associated with reduced pollination of crops; the identification and promotion of best practices and technologies for more sustainable agriculture; and the identification and encouragement of the adoption of conservation practices to maintain pollinators or to promote their re-establishment;

2. Soil micro-organisms in agriculture, including consideration of: the measurement and monitoring of the worldwide loss of Symbiotic Soil Micro-organisms (SSM), in particular nitrogen-fixing bacteria and mycorrhizal fungi; the identification and promotion of the transfer of technologies for the detection of SSM and their use to enhance nitrogen fixation and phosphorous absorption; the estimation of the potential and actual economic gain associated with reduced use of chemical N and P fertilization of crops with enhanced use and conservation of SSM; the identification and promotion of best practices for more sustainable agriculture; and the identification and promotion of conservation measures to conserve SSM or to promote their re-establishment;

3. Biocontrol organisms;

4. Wild sources of food;

5. The relationship between biological diversity-friendly agricultural practices and market forces;

6. Integrated land and resource management;

7. Traditional knowledge;

8. Possibilities for restoring degraded landscapes;

9. Role of botanical gardens as regards to agricultural biological diversity;

10. Interrelationship between agriculture and wildlife.

36. The SBSTTA recommends that the Conference of the Parties draw the attention of international funding agencies, in particular the Global Environmental Facility, to the urgent need to support the conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity important to agriculture and invite these agencies to provide information and feedback in this respect to the Conference of the Parties.

37. The SBSTTA recommends that the Conference of the Parties invite countries to share case study experiences addressing the variety of sustainable agricultural production systems and practices. These should be posted through the clearing-house mechanism of the Convention.

38. The SBSTTA recommends that the Conference of the Parties encourage relevant institutions to strengthen the culture of indigenous communities to encourage in-situ conservation (sustainable use and management) of biological diversity.

39. The SBSTTA should consider agricultural biological diversity in its work programme on indicators and methods of assessment in collaboration with other organization as appropriate.

40. The SBSTTA recommends to the Conference of the Parties that the development and transfer of technology relevant to the conservation and sustainable use of agricultural biological diversity be promoted through the

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clearing-house mechanism by facilitating contacts among (i) groups needing solutions to specific problems, (ii) holders of technologies developed and maintained by many sources, including not only the private sector but also universities, Governments and farmers, (iii) technology-transfer brokers, and (iv) enabling agencies which fund technology transfer.

41. The SBSTTA recommends that the Conference of the Parties encourage Parties to develop integrated resource management (IRM) to achieve sustainable high-yielding agricultural ecosystems, for instance, Integrated Plant Nutrition Management and Integrated Pest Management (IPM) with an emphasis on nutrient recirculation at the agricultural ecosystem level, including crop rotation and inter-cropping.

42. The SBSTTA recommends that the Conference of the Parties encourage Parties to:

1. Encourage the development of technologies/farming systems that not only increase productivity, but also arrest degradation as well as reclaim, rehabilitate, restore and enhance biological diversity. These could include, inter alia, organic farming, integrated pest management, biological control, no-till agriculture, multi-cropping, inter-cropping, crop rotation, agricultural forestry.

2. Encourage efforts to appraise and disseminate knowledge used or retained by indigenous and traditional communities, consistent with the Convention, in particular Articles 8(j) and 10(c).

3. Encourage ex ante and/or ex post evaluation of impacts to biological diversity from agricultural development projects, to assure the use of best practices to promote the conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity.

4. Encourage development and adoption of methods to assess and predict impacts on biological diversity of agricultural technologies, practices and production systems.

5. Identify key components of biological diversity in agricultural production systems responsible for maintaining natural processes and cycles, evaluating the effects of different agricultural practices and technologies on those components and encouraging the adoption of repairing practices to attain appropriate levels of biological diversity.

Recommendation II/8

AGENDA ITEM 3.10: TERRESTRIAL BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY

The Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD) at its third session, in its review of "sectoral cluster: land desertification, forests and biodiversity", reviewed progress in the implementation of chapters 10 to 15 of Agenda 21 and decided to establish an open-ended ad hoc Intergovernmental Panel on Forests (IPF) to pursue consensus and formulation of coordinated proposals for action.

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In decision II/9, the Conference of the Parties adopted a statement from the Convention to the IPF on biological diversity and forests and requested the Executive Secretary to provide advice and information pertaining to the relationship between indigenous and local communities and forests.

Decision II/9 of the Conference of the Parties also requested the Executive Secretary to produce a background document on the links between forests and biological diversity, in order to consider, at its third meeting, whether further input to the IPF is required and to transmit this document to the Intergovernmental Panel on Forests for information. This background document is contained in UNEP/CBD/SBSTTA/2/11 and was reviewed by the second meeting of the SBSTTA.

1. SUMMARY OF INTERVENTIONS

There was substantial discussion of a full range of issues arising from a review of the Secretariat note and the following recommendations resulted.

Having contemplated the issues considered by the CSD in light of the provisions of the Convention, the SBSTTA:

(a) recommends the Conference of the Parties to ask the Executive Secretary to explore ways and means to cooperate with the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification particularly in Africa on matters relating to biological diversity and drylands with a view to identifying common priorities for further consideration at the next meeting of the SBSTTA;

(b) recommends that the Convention examines the specific issues related to biological diversity arising out of the implementation of chapter 13 of Agenda 21 and further recommends that the Conference of the Parties asks the Executive Secretary to contact those agencies and networks working on sustainable mountain development with a view to examining forms of cooperation and report back to the next meeting of the SBSTTA.

2. INPUTS TO THE INTERGOVERNMENTAL PANEL ON FORESTS (IPF)

The SBSTTA also recommends the Conference of the Parties to ask the Executive Secretary to explore ways and means to cooperate with the Intergovernmental Panel on Forests on matters relating to biological diversity and forests with a view to developing common priorities for further consideration at the next meeting of the SBSTTA. In this process the Executive Secretary should take account of the research and technical priorities listed at the end of this document.

Based on the statement on biological diversity and forests sent from the second meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the IPF and reviewing the background document on links between forests and biological diversity prepared by the Secretariat (UNEP/CBD/SBSTTA/2/11), the SBSTTA recommends that the following additional inputs be sent to the IPF:

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- (i) Biodiversity considerations should be integrated fully into the IPF recommendations and proposals for action. IPF should also consider ways to deal with identified gaps in forest biodiversity knowledge.
- (ii) In relation to the programme element 1.1 of the IPF on national forest and land use plans, strategies for sustainable forest management should be based on an ecosystem approach, which will integrate conservation measures (e.g. protected areas) and sustainable use of biological diversity. Methodologies need to be developed to assist countries in identifying sites of high interest for biodiversity. These recommendations should take into account national financial circumstances, laws and regulations.
- (iii) In relation to the programme element of the IPF dealing with criteria and indicators, conservation of biological diversity and the sustainable use of its components, as well as the maintenance of forest quality, as part of sustainable forest management, should be substantively included in the deliberations of the IPF.

The SBSTTA also identified the following research and technological priorities:

- (i) Building the scientific foundation and methodologies necessary to advance the elaboration and implementation of criteria and indicators for forest quality and biodiversity conservation as part of sustainable forest management;
- (ii) Analysing the role of biodiversity in forest ecosystem functioning;
- (iii) Analysing measures for mitigating the underlying causes of biodiversity loss;
- (iv) Advancing scientific and technical approaches to (a) rehabilitating degraded and deforested ecosystems and (b) enriching biodiversity in forest plantations;
- (v) Identifying gaps in knowledge in the areas of fragmentation and population viability, to include mitigation options such as corridors and buffer zones;
- (vi) Assessing ecological landscape models, the integration of protected areas in the ecosystem approach to sustainable forest management and the representativeness and adequacy of protected areas networks;
- (vii) Analysing scientifically the ways in which human activities, in particular forest management practices, influence biodiversity and assessing ways to minimize or mitigate negative influences;

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- (viii) Developing assessment and valuation methodologies for the multiple benefits derived from forest biodiversity.

Recommendation II/9

AGENDA ITEM 3.11: ECONOMIC VALUATION OF BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY

The SBSTTA,

Recalling that recommendation I/9 decided that the SBSTTA would consider at its second meeting advice to the Conference of the Parties on the economic valuation of biological diversity and its components, in particular in relation to access to genetic resources,

Recalling also that decision II/11 of the Conference of the Parties requested the Executive Secretary to compile an annotated list of studies and other relevant information on the social and economic valuation of genetic resources, including the demand by industry for genetic resources,

Having examined the Note prepared by the Secretariat (UNEP/CBD/SBSTTA/2/13),

Recognizing that a better understanding of the full value of biological diversity at the genetic, species, and ecosystem level will greatly assist Parties in their efforts to implement effective policy and management measures to meet the threefold objectives of the Convention,

Recognizing that information on the economic value of biological diversity and its components is severely deficient, and that methods for providing this information need further development,

Recognizing also that biological diversity and its components provide a wide range of benefits, representing significant use and non-use values. Some of these values are difficult to define fully in terms of economic value. These include intangible, yet critical, socio-cultural values and existence values,

Further recognizing that, while more information on economic values is needed, the lack of this information need not delay the implementation of economically and socially sound incentive measures to sustainably manage biological diversity. In this regard, consideration of incentives having a perverse impact on biological diversity and its components should be regarded as a priority area,

Recommends:

1. That future work should include regular review and syntheses of current information, case studies of economic value, research into appropriate and cost-effective methodologies for determining these values, and means of facilitating access to this information.

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2. That economic valuation should be integrated into the sectoral and thematic items under the Medium-Term Programme of Work of the Conference of the Parties, and should be reflected as appropriate in relevant agenda items including, in particular, incentive measures, and also agricultural biodiversity, genetic resources, environmental impact assessments, inland water ecosystems, and marine and coastal biodiversity, taking the ecosystem approach as the primary framework of action to be taken under the Convention.

3. That the Conference of the Parties encourage Parties to draw upon research into the economic valuation of biological diversity produced by, inter alia, regional and economic groupings in order to assist the appropriate development of policy and management measures for conservation and sustainable use;

4. That the Conference of the Parties, in its consideration of Incentive Measures at its third meeting, emphasize the importance of developing well-targeted local level incentives, participatory approaches to the design of new measures, and capacity-building.

Recommendation II/10

AGENDA ITEM 3.12: COASTAL AND MARINE BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY

The Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice (SBSTTA) wishes to advise the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity that little substantial action on the area of marine and coastal biodiversity occurred this year other than building the roster of experts. The SBSTTA believes that decision II/10 on marine and coastal biodiversity taken by the second meeting of the Conference of the Parties should be implemented as quickly and efficiently as possible. At the third meeting of the SBSTTA, the Secretariat, on the basis of the outcome from the Meeting of Experts mentioned in decision II/10, should provide an interim report on recommendations for proceeding with positive action on the conservation and sustainable use of coastal and marine biodiversity. Recommendations should be made on the basis of priorities that consider (i) what resources are or will be available; (ii) which of the five issues (integrated marine and coastal area management, marine and coastal protected areas, sustainable use of coastal and marine living resources, mariculture, and alien species) the Convention on Biological Diversity can have the greatest effect; (iii) which of the five issues other non-Convention on Biological Diversity entities are adequately addressing the topic or will be; and (iv) where other planned or ongoing activities outside the Convention process can contribute to Convention proposed actions.

The Secretariat is urged to take the following actions towards implementing decision II/10:

1. Given the offer from Indonesia to host the first Meeting of Experts on Marine and Coastal Biological Diversity drawn from the available roster of experts, convene that meeting very early in 1997, and refer any

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available information, including document UNEP/CBD/SBSTTA/2/14, which the SBSTTA had before it, and any comments from Parties, to that meeting for information purposes.

2. Request that the Meeting of Experts assist the Executive Secretary in identifying priorities for implementing decision II/10, identifying options for a pragmatic but comprehensive approach in addressing marine and coastal biological diversity, and identifying products, timetables, and ways and means in line with paragraphs 1(b), 1(c) and 7 of decision II/10. The Meeting of Experts in formulating its recommendations shall have regard to the views of the roster of experts more widely.

3. Strengthen and develop special partnership arrangements with international organizations and institutions including regional bodies with particular competence in specific areas of marine and coastal biological diversity.

The SBSTTA recommends that the Conference of the Parties ensure resources are available to (a) implement the work of the Secretariat under the Jakarta Mandate and (b) fill the posts within the Secretariat associated with this mandate as soon as possible. The SBSTTA should encourage Parties to nominate candidates for the roster of experts.

Recommendation II/11

AGENDA ITEM 4: MODUS OPERANDI OF THE SUBSIDIARY BODY ON SCIENTIFIC, TECHNICAL AND TECHNOLOGICAL ADVICE

Recalling the relevant provisions of the Convention on Biological Diversity, in particular Article 25, and the principles contained in the preamble of the Convention;

Recalling also decision II/1 of the Conference of the Parties and particularly paragraph 3 thereof which requested the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice (SBSTTA) to keep under review its modus operandi with a view to improving its functioning on the basis of experience gained;

Taking into account the experience gained so far in the operation of the SBSTTA

The second meeting of the SBSTTA, held in Montreal from 2-6 September 1996:

1. Recommends that the third meeting of the Conference of the Parties, to be held in Buenos Aires, Argentina, from 4 to 15 November 1996, adopt the revised elements of the modus operandi of SBSTTA contained in Annex I hereto; and

2. Invites the third meeting of the Conference of the Parties to consider the further conclusions of the second meeting of SBSTTA with regard to its modus operandi contained in Annex II hereto.

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Annex 1 of Recommendation II/11

MODUS OPERANDI OF THE SUBSIDIARY BODY ON SCIENTIFIC,
TECHNICAL AND TECHNOLOGICAL ADVICE

I. Functions

1. The functions of the SBSTTA are those contained in Article 25 of the Convention. Accordingly, the SBSTTA will fulfil its mandate under the authority of, and in accordance with, guidance laid down by the Conference of the Parties, and upon its request.

2. Pursuant to Article 25, paragraph 3, the functions, terms of reference, organization and operation of the SBSTTA may be further elaborated, for approval by the Conference of the Parties.

II. Rules of procedure

3. The rules of procedure for meetings of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity shall apply, in accordance with rule 26, paragraph 5, mutatis mutandis to the proceedings of the SBSTTA. Therefore, rule 18 on credentials will not apply.

4. In accordance with rule 52, the official and working languages of the SBSTTA will be those of the United Nations Organization. The proceedings of the SBSTTA will be carried out in the working languages of the Conference of the Parties.

5. In order to facilitate continuity in the work of SBSTTA and taking into account the technical and scientific character of the input of SBSTTA, the terms of office of members of the Bureau of SBSTTA will be two years. At each meeting of the SBSTTA one of the two regional representatives shall be elected in order to achieve staggered terms of office. The members of the Bureau of SBSTTA will take office at the end of the meeting at which they are elected.

6. The Chairman of the SBSTTA, elected at an ordinary meeting of the Conference of the Parties, shall take office from the beginning of the next ordinary meeting of the SBSTTA and remain in office until the beginning of the following meeting of the SBSTTA.

III. Frequency and timing of the SBSTTA

7. The SBSTTA shall meet annually and sufficiently in advance of each regular meeting of the Conference of the Parties, for a duration to be determined by the Conference of the Parties which should not normally exceed five days. The number and length of the meetings and activities of the SBSTTA and its organs should be reflected in the budget adopted by the Conference of the Parties or other sources of extra-budgetary funding.

IV. Documentation

8. The documentation prepared for meetings will be distributed six weeks before the meeting in the working languages of the SBSTTA, will be concrete, focused draft technical reports and will include proposed conclusions and recommendations for consideration of the SBSTTA.

9. To facilitate the preparation of documentation, and in order to avoid duplication of efforts and ensure the use of available scientific, technical and technological competence available within international and regional organizations, including non-governmental organizations and scientific unions and societies, qualified in fields relating to conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity, the Executive Secretary may establish, in consultation with the Chairman and the other members of the Bureau of the SBSTTA, liaison groups, as appropriate. Such liaison groups will depend on the resources available.

V. Organization of work during the meetings

10. Each meeting of the SBSTTA will propose to the Conference of the Parties, in light of the programme of work for the Conference of the Parties and the SBSTTA, a particular theme as the focus of work for the following meeting of the SBSTTA.

11. Two open-ended sessional working groups of the SBSTTA could be established and operate simultaneously during meetings of the SBSTTA. They shall be established on the basis of well-defined terms of reference, and will be open to all Parties and observers. The financial implications of these arrangements should be reflected in the budget of the Convention.

VI. Ad hoc technical expert group meetings

12. A limited number of ad hoc technical expert groups on specific priority issues on the programme of work of the SBSTTA may be established, as required, for a limited duration. The establishment of such ad hoc technical expert groups would be guided by the following elements:

(a) The ad hoc technical expert groups should draw on the existing knowledge and competence available within, and liaise with, international, regional and national organizations, including non-governmental organizations and the scientific community in fields relevant to this Convention;

(b) The ad hoc technical expert groups shall be composed of no more than fifteen experts competent in the relevant field of expertise, with due regard to geographical representation and to the special conditions of least-developed countries and small island developing States;

(c) The SBSTTA will recommend the exact duration and specific terms of reference, when establishing such expert groups for the approval of the Conference of the Parties;

(d) Expert groups will be encouraged to use innovative means of communication and to minimize the need for face-to-face meetings;

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(e) The ad hoc technical expert groups may also convene meetings parallel to the proceedings of the SBSTTA;

(f) All efforts will be made to provide adequate voluntary financial assistance for the participation of experts in the expert groups from developing countries and countries with economies in transition Parties; and

(g) The number of ad hoc technical expert groups active each year will be limited to a maximum of three and will depend on the amount of resources designated to the SBSTTA by the Conference of the Parties in its budget or on the availability of extra-budgetary resources.

VII. Contribution of non-governmental organizations

13. The scientific and technical contribution of non-governmental organizations to the fulfilment of the mandate of the SBSTTA will be strongly encouraged in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Convention and the rules of procedure for meetings of the Conference of the Parties.

VIII. Cooperation with other relevant bodies

14. The SBSTTA shall cooperate with other relevant international, regional and national organizations, under the guidance of the Convention of the Parties, thus building upon the vast experience and knowledge available.

15. In this context, the SBSTTA emphasizes the importance of research to further increase available knowledge and reduce uncertainties, and recommends that the Conference of the Parties consider this issue in relation to the financial resources required for the effective implementation of the Convention.

IX. Regional and subregional preparatory meetings

16. Regional and subregional meetings for the preparation of regular meetings of the SBSTTA may be organized as appropriate for specific items. The possibility of combining such meetings with other scientific regional meetings, in order to make maximum use of available resources, should be considered. The convening of such regional and subregional meetings will be subject to the availability of voluntary financial contributions.

17. The SBSTTA should, in the fulfilment of its mandate, draw upon the contributions of the existing regional and subregional intergovernmental organizations or initiatives.

X. Focal points

18. A list of focal points and focal persons to the SBSTTA shall be established and regularly updated by the Secretariat, on the basis of information provided by Parties and other relevant regional, subregional and intergovernmental organizations.

XI. Roster of experts

19. A roster of experts, in the relevant fields of the Convention, will be compiled by the Secretariat on the basis of input from all Parties and, as appropriate, from other countries and relevant bodies. The roster of experts will be regularly updated and will be made accessible through the clearing house mechanism.

20. The ad hoc technical expert groups and liaison groups referred to above as well as the Secretariat should make full use of such a roster of experts, inter alia, through scientific peer review processes.

Annex 2 of Recommendation II/11

FURTHER CONCLUSIONS ON THE WORK OF
THE SUBSIDIARY BODY ON SCIENTIFIC, TECHNICAL
AND TECHNOLOGICAL ADVICE

In addition to the recommendation on the modus operandi of the SBSTTA contained in Annex I to Recommendation II/11, the SBSTTA draws to the attention of the Conference of the Parties the following broader concerns regarding the modus operandi of the SBSTTA which the Conference of the Parties may wish to consider:

1. While the SBSTTA has adopted, and the Conference of the Parties has endorsed, a modus operandi for the SBSTTA, the key challenge for the SBSTTA is to manage its workload effectively. This requires the prioritization of issues to be dealt with by the SBSTTA, linked to priorities identified by the Conference of the Parties. The Conference of the Parties may wish to consider criteria for establishing priorities of the SBSTTA, such as avoiding duplication of efforts of other bodies, the urgency of issues and the costs of measures required. Effective management of the workload of the SBSTTA also requires that adequate resources are made available for the SBSTTA to carry out its work.

2. The Conference of the Parties may wish to consider whether in order to increase its effectiveness, the SBSTTA should adopt a thematic approach to its work programme, as suggested in paragraph 10 of Annex I to Recommendation II/11.

3. In order for the SBSTTA to fulfil its tasks, some delegations felt that intersessional work is likely to be necessary. Where possible, intersessional work should be coordinated with relevant activities being undertaken by other international conventions and institutions. Unnecessary duplication should be avoided. Cross-representation between the SBSTTA and the meetings of other bodies may be useful and the Secretariat should be represented at such meetings.

4. However, some concern was expressed by delegations to the SBSTTA about the possible proliferation of intersessional activities of the SBSTTA, particularly with regard to the capacity of developing country Parties to participate fully and effectively in these activities, and the need to maintain transparency in intersessional activities.

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5. In order for the SBSTTA to manage its workload effectively and to assist coordination of work, it may be useful to establish a global calendar of all relevant work being undertaken by the different bodies of the United Nations and by other international conventions and institutions in the medium term (1997-2000). Such a calendar could be regularly updated by the Secretariat.

6. The SBSTTA noted the need for the Conference of the Parties to consider satisfactory transitional arrangements for the implementation of paragraph 5 of Annex I to the present recommendation.

7. Concern was expressed by several delegations that the proceedings of the SBSTTA are conducted only in the working languages of the Conference of the Parties. These delegations felt that this made adequate preparation for, and participation in, meetings of the SBSTTA difficult for delegations who worked in the other official languages, and therefore the latter should be included as working languages of the SBSTTA.

8. It was suggested that the Secretariat should prepare an information document for the Conference of the Parties on:

- (a) The implications, including financial implications, of adding to the working languages of the SBSTTA;
- (b) The preferred languages of the Parties.

Recommendation II/12

AGENDA ITEM 6: DRAFT PROVISIONAL AGENDA OF THE
THIRD MEETING OF THE SBSTTA

The Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice
(SBSTTA)

Having reviewed the draft provisional agenda for the third meeting of the SBSTTA included as the annex to this recommendation,

Notes that the draft provisional agenda is based on the suggestions contained in the medium-term programme of work of the SBSTTA as adopted in recommendation I/2 of the SBSTTA, the medium-term programme of work of the Conference of Parties as adopted in decision II/18, and the specific recommendations arising from the second meeting of the SBSTTA;

Considers that the draft provisional agenda contains too many items for each to be given the necessary consideration at the third meeting of the SBSTTA to allow the SBSTTA to advise the Conference of the Parties adequately;

Considers also that the workload for the Secretariat to prepare adequate documentation for the meeting of the SBSTTA in good time bears the danger of hampering the functioning of the Secretariat, taking into account that other meetings have to be covered;

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Concerned that the ability of the SBSTTA to fulfil its function under the terms of Article 25 of the Convention may thereby be compromised,

Requests the Conference of the Parties at its third meeting to provide guidance on the setting of priorities within those items on the draft provisional agenda for which it seeks advice.

Annex to Recommendation II/12

DRAFT PROVISIONAL AGENDA OF THE THIRD MEETING OF THE SUBSIDIARY BODY ON
SCIENTIFIC, TECHNICAL AND TECHNOLOGICAL ADVICE

1. Opening of the meeting.
2. Organizational matters:
 - 2.1 Election of officers;
 - 2.2 Adoption of the agenda;
 - 2.3 Organization of work.
3. Assessment of the status and trends of the biological diversity of inland water ecosystems and identification of options for conservation and sustainable use.
4. Other matters on which advice from the SBSTTA is required by the third meeting of the Conference of the Parties:
 - 4.1 Implementation of Article 7 on indicators and monitoring
 - 4.1.1 Advice to Parties in addressing issues of monitoring and assessment, including an elaboration of assessment methodologies for meeting the requirements of the Convention, taking into account the contents of those national reports already prepared and reports to other conventions and international processes.
 - 4.1.2 Options for capacity-building in developing countries in the application of guidelines and indicators for subsequent national reports.
 - 4.1.3 Current approaches to indicator development and recommendations for a preliminary core set of indicators of biological diversity, particularly those related to threats.
 - 4.2 Impact assessments
 - 4.2.1 What kind of scientific and technical information should be collected for impact assessment of projects and what ways and means should be used to share this information to promote minimization of adverse impacts in accordance with Article 14?

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- 4.3 Promotion of international technical and scientific cooperation
 - 4.3.1 Provision of advice on the scientific, technical and technological aspects of international cooperation in the area of conservation of biological diversity and sustainable use of its components, in accordance with Article 18.
- 4.4 Alternative mechanisms for linking in-situ and ex-situ conservation techniques
 - 4.4.1 Identification of alternative models and mechanisms for linkages between in-situ and ex-situ conservation.
- 4.5 Consideration of knowledge, innovations and practises of indigenous and local communities
- 4.6 Review of the implementation of the pilot phase of the clearing-house mechanism
- 4.7 Coastal and marine biological diversity
 - 4.7.1 Scientific, technical and technological aspects of the conservation and sustainable use of coastal and marine biological diversity.
- 4.8 Terrestrial biological diversity
 - 4.8.1 Ways and means to cooperate with the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in Those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, Particularly in Africa on matters relating to biological diversity and drylands with a view to identifying common priorities.
 - 4.8.2 Examination of specific issues related to biological diversity and sustainable mountain development arising out of the implementation of chapter 13 of Agenda 21.
 - 4.8.3 Ways and means to cooperate with the Intergovernmental Panel on Forests on matters relating to biological diversity and forests with a view to developing common priorities.
- 4.9 Agricultural biological diversity
 - 4.9.1 Gap analysis of the activities and instruments related to agricultural biological diversity in order to promote the conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity in the agricultural sector.

5. Overall assessment of the SBSTTA's work and of the effectiveness of its advice (1995-1997), in the light of possible future work of the SBSTTA.
 - 5.1 Review of the operations of the SBSTTA in light of the Conference of the Parties' review of its medium-term Programme of Work.
 - 5.2 Review of the operations of the SBSTTA in light of the Conference of the Parties' review of a longer-term work programme.
6. Draft provisional agenda of the fourth meeting of the SBSTTA.
7. Date and venue of the fourth meeting of the SBSTTA.
8. Other matters.
9. Adoption of the report.
10. Closure of the meeting.
