

Annex 1

RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE SBSTTA AT ITS THIRD MEETING

Recommendation III/1

AGENDA ITEM 3: THE MAIN ECOSYSTEM TOPIC: ASSESSMENT OF THE STATUS AND TRENDS OF THE BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY OF INLAND WATER ECOSYSTEMS AND IDENTIFICATION OF OPTIONS FOR CONSERVATION AND SUSTAINABLE USE

AGENDA ITEM 7.1: PROVISION OF SCIENTIFIC ADVICE AND FURTHER GUIDANCE TO ASSIST IN THE NATIONAL ELABORATION OF ANNEX 1 OF THE CONVENTION (As pertaining to inland water ecosystems)

AGENDA ITEM 7.2: REVIEW OF METHODOLOGIES FOR ASSESSMENT OF BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY (As pertaining to inland water ecosystems)

A. Recommendation concerning agenda item 3

The SBSTTA

Recalling that decision III/13 of the Conference of the Parties requested the SBSTTA to provide the fourth meeting of the Conference of the Parties with scientific, technical and technological advice on the status and trends of biological diversity in inland water ecosystems and the identification of options for conservation and sustainable use,

Having examined the Notes prepared by the Executive Secretary (UNEP/CBD/SBSTTA/3/2, UNEP/CBD/SBSTTA/3/7 and UNEP/CBD/SBSTTA/3/8); and the other information provided to the third meeting of the SBSTTA,

Recognizing the importance of inland water ecosystems for global biological diversity and human welfare, and also their vulnerability to human actions,

Recognizing the importance of adopting an ecosystem-based approach that integrates the conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity and the fair and equitable sharing of benefits of inland waters,

Recognizing the link between human communities, inland waters and biological diversity of inland waters and the importance of local community participation and awareness in achieving conservation and sustainable use of inland water biological diversity, and

Recognizing the crucial part played by technical and scientific cooperation in all aspects of biological diversity, including the transfer of technology, and recognizing also the necessity of capacity-building to enable Parties to carry out identification, monitoring and assessment of biological diversity as required by Article 7 of the Convention,

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Recommends to the Conference of the Parties:

I. General Recommendations

(a) That the Executive Secretary continue and further develop the collaboration with organizations, institutions, and conventions working with research, management and conservation of inland water biological diversity. These include (but are not limited to) the Ramsar Convention, FAO, ICLARM, Global Water Partnership, World Water Council, UNDP, UNEP, Diversitas, Wetlands International, IUCN, World Bank, Bonn Convention, et al;

(b) That, at the earliest opportunity, the Conference of the Parties should further encourage the Executive Secretary of this Convention and the Secretary-General of the Ramsar Convention to elaborate a work plan that ensures cooperation, and avoids overlap between the two conventions, noting the Memorandum of Cooperation with the Ramsar Convention, and decision III/21 of the Conference of the Parties, whereby the Ramsar Convention would be a lead partner in inland water ecosystems;

(c) That the Conference of the Parties should continue the close cooperation with the Commission on Sustainable Development in their development of the Strategic Approach to Freshwater Management to ensure that biological diversity issues are considered in this process;

(d) That the Conference of the Parties request that the Executive Secretary develop a roster of experts on the conservation and sustainable use of the biological diversity of inland waters, and urge Governments to nominate experts to the roster, noting also that the Ramsar Bureau is establishing a similar list of experts;

(e) That the clearing-house mechanism be used to promote and facilitate the exchange of information and the transfer of technology relevant to the conservation and sustainable use of inland water biological diversity.

II. SBSTTA Work Plan

The SBSTTA further recommends to the Conference of the Parties that a work plan for the SBSTTA be developed in cooperation with relevant organizations, Governments and Parties that should build upon the ongoing efforts in inland water ecosystem conservation. The work plan should include:

Status and Trends

(a) Using existing information and drawing upon relevant organizations and experts, develop an improved picture of inland water biological diversity, its uses and its threats, around the world. The output should identify areas where the lack of information severely limits the quality of assessments. This will help to focus attention on these areas;

(b) Developing and disseminating regional guidelines for rapid assessment of inland water biological diversity for different types of inland water ecosystems;

Conservation and Sustainable Use

(a) Compiling case studies of effective watershed management and best practices, to synthesize the lessons that emerge from these studies, and to disseminate information through the clearing-house mechanism. Five areas where the SBSTTA should concentrate their efforts include:

- (i) Examples of watershed management that incorporate inland water biological diversity with special reference to examples that use the ecosystem-based approach to meet water management goals;
- (ii) Examples of water resource development projects (water supply and sanitation, irrigation, hydropower, flood control, navigation, groundwater extraction) that incorporate biological diversity considerations;
- (iii) Impact assessment and other methodologies that address inland water biological diversity issues in an adaptive management framework;
- (iv) Successful case studies of remedial action, including restoration and rehabilitation of degraded inland water ecosystems;
- (v) Examples of equitable sharing of benefits derived from use of inland water biological diversity.

(b) Developing methods and techniques for the valuation of goods and services of inland water ecosystems, incentives and policy reform, and the understanding of ecosystem function.

III. Recommendations to Parties

SBSTTA further recommends to the Conference of the Parties that Parties:

Watershed Management

- Encourage the use of integrated watershed management approach as a basis of the planning and taking decisions in relation to the use of land and water resources, including biological resources, within river catchment;

Appropriate Technologies

- Encourage the use of low-cost (appropriate) technology, non-structural and innovative approaches to meet watershed management goals, such as using wetlands to improve water quality, using forests and wetlands to recharge groundwater and maintain the hydrological cycle, to protect water supplies and using natural floodplains to prevent flood damage, and to use indigenous species for aquaculture;

Technology transfer

- Emphasize more effective conservation and efficiency in water use, together with non-engineering solutions. Environmentally appropriate technologies should be identified, such as low-cost sewage treatment and recycling of industrial water to assist in the conservation and sustainable use of inland waters;

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Research

- Encourage research on the application of ecosystem-based approaches;

Monitoring and assessment

- Identify the most cost-effective approaches and methods to describe the status, trends and threats of inland waters and indicate their condition in functional as well as species terms;
- Promote the development of criteria and indicators for the evaluation of impact on inland water ecosystems from both physical infrastructure projects and watershed activities, including, inter alia, agriculture, forestry, mining and physical alteration, taking into consideration the natural variability of water conditions;
- Initiate studies on ecological functions and services to improve understanding of effects of exploitation on non-target species;
- Undertake assessments in such inland water ecosystems which may be regarded as important in accordance with the terms of Annex I of the Convention. Furthermore Parties should undertake assessments of threatened species and conduct inventories and impact assessments of alien species within their inland water ecosystems;

Sustainable use

- Encourage valuation of inland water biological diversity;
- Produce and promote guidance on the sustainable use of inland waters to maintain biological diversity;
- Consider the use and/or establishment of gene banks for fish and other species;

Environmental Impact Assessments

- Encourage environmental impact assessments (EIAs) of water development projects, aquaculture, and watershed activities including agriculture, forestry, and mining. EIAs need to gather adequate biological data to document effects on biological diversity, provide predictions on the effects of alternative project scenarios on ecosystems and consider the valuation of the goods and services of potentially affected ecosystems, and test predictions with well-designed sampling schemes that can adequately distinguish the effects of anthropogenic activities from natural processes;

Alien species, genotypes and genetically modified organisms

- Raise awareness of the possible problems and costs associated with the deliberate or accidental introduction of alien species, genotypes and genetically modified organisms which adversely affect aquatic biological diversity, bearing in mind the activities relating to the development of

a Protocol on Biosafety under the Convention. Policies and guidelines should be developed to prevent and control such introductions, and to rehabilitate sites where possible;

#### Education and Public Awareness

- Strengthen education and awareness programmes, recognizing that responsible environmental stewardship requires an informed public. Participatory-based management approaches are most effective when people are well informed of both the economic and environmental consequences of management. Inland waters provide both a challenge and an opportunity to educate the public and policy makers about the need to take an ecosystem-based approach to management. Environmental education should be built into school curricula and should emphasize integration using inland waters as a model subject to teach problem-solving;

#### Collaboration with Broader Water Resource Community

- Promote effective collaboration among ecologists, planners, engineers, and economists (both within countries and among countries) in the planning and implementation of development projects to better integrate inland water biological diversity with water resource development when considering projects likely to have an adverse impact on inland water ecosystems;

#### Transboundary Cooperation

- Develop effective cooperation for sustainable management of transboundary watersheds and migratory species including watershed planning commissions;

#### Involvement of Local and Indigenous Communities

- Involve, as far as possible and appropriate, local and indigenous communities in the development of management plans and in projects that may affect inland water biological diversity;
- Implement Article 8 (j) as related to inland water biological diversity;

#### Economic and Legal Instruments

- Review the range and effectiveness of national incentives, subsidies, regulations, and other relevant financial mechanisms which have the ability to affect inland water ecosystems, whether adversely or beneficially;
- Redirect financial support measures which run counter to the objectives of the Convention regarding the biological diversity of inland waters;
- Implement targeted incentive and regulatory measures that have positive impacts on the biological diversity of inland waters;
- Develop the policy research capacity needed to inform the decision-making process in a multi-disciplinary and sectorally integrated manner.

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IV. Financing

The SBSTTA recommends to the Conference of the Parties:

(a) That guidance be provided to the Global Environment Facility regarding the importance of projects concerning inland water biological diversity, and that the GEF be encouraged to consider the importance of inland water biological diversity in projects in its other focal areas;

(b) That ways be considered of mobilizing financial resources from other sources.

B. Recommendation concerning agenda item 7.1

The SBSTTA

Emphasizing that, since many inland aquatic ecosystems are highly modified and degraded, the elaboration of terms in Annex I of the Convention should be undertaken with a view to expediting the implementation of the Convention as a whole, and in particular Articles 6 and 8. Parties should give particular importance in this regard to the implementation of Articles 8 (f) and 10 (d) of the Convention concerning remedial action in degraded ecosystems,

Recommends that the Conference of the Parties advise Parties to prepare indicative lists of inland water ecosystems, using the criteria set out in Annex I of the Convention. The Conference of the Parties should direct the secretariat to work closely with the Ramsar Bureau and further direct the SBSTTA to work jointly with the Ramsar Convention Science and Technical Review Panel to achieve desirable convergence between approaches on criteria and classification of inland water ecosystems between the two Conventions,

Recommends to the Conference of the Parties that Parties take note of the work of the IUCN in the ongoing review and application of criteria for the assessment of threatened species and populations, including the further development of such criteria for application at the regional and national levels.

C. Recommendation concerning agenda item 7.2

The SBSTTA

Recognizing the importance of the clearing-house mechanism in the dissemination of methodologies for assessment of biological diversity:

1. Recommends that the Conference of the Parties urge Parties to adopt an integrated approach in their assessment, management and where possible remedial action of inland water ecosystems, including associated terrestrial and inshore marine ecosystems. Assessments should involve all stakeholders, should be cross-sectoral and should make full use of indigenous knowledge;

2. Recommends that suitable organisms be identified as being particularly important in the assessment of inland water ecosystems. Ideally, such groups should meet the following criteria:

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the group should contain a reasonable number of species with varied ecological requirements;

the taxonomy of the group should be reasonably well understood;

the species should be easy to identify;

the group should be easy to sample or observe so that density - absolute or as indices - can be assessed, used objectively and treated statistically;

the group should serve as indicators of overall ecosystem health or indicators of development of a key threat to ecosystem health;

3. Recommends that, in view of the great economic importance of some groups (e.g. inland water fish species), and of the large gaps in taxonomic knowledge for many species, the Conference of the Parties consider this as a specific focus of the capacity-building in taxonomy recommended by the SBSTTA in its recommendation II/2 and endorsed by the Conference of the Parties in decision III/10;

4. Recommends that the Conference of the Parties advise Parties and relevant international organizations that issues of biological diversity and subsistence use of fisheries should be more fully addressed in fisheries reporting and management. In particular species composition of total catch should be reported and the contribution that indigenous species make to capture fisheries should be reported separately;

5. Recommends to the Conference of the Parties that the transboundary nature of many inland water ecosystems be fully taken into account in assessments, and notes that it may be appropriate for relevant regional and international bodies to contribute to such assessments;

6. Stresses that, in accordance with recommendation II/1 of the SBSTTA, endorsed by the Conference of the Parties in decision III/10, assessments should be simple, inexpensive, rapid and easy to use. It stresses, however, that such rapid assessment programmes will never replace thorough inventories. The Conference of the Parties should take note of and evaluate specific rapid assessment programmes for inland water ecosystems currently under development;

7. Stresses that assessments should be carried out with a view to implementing other articles of the Convention and, in particular, to addressing the threats to inland water ecosystems within an appropriate framework such as that included in paragraphs 39-41 of document UNEP/CBD/COP/3/12. Of particular importance is the undertaking of environmental impact assessments on biological diversity of major development projects involving inland water ecosystems.

D. Recommendation concerning the urgency of needed action on taxonomy

The SBSTTA

Recalling recommendation II/2 of the SBSTTA and decision III/10 of the third meeting of the Conference of the Parties, which urged Parties to develop a global taxonomy initiative,

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Noting that, at the third meeting of the SBSTTA, there were continued calls in discussions on inland water ecosystems for improved taxonomic capacity, and that there remains a general concern for increased effort in taxonomic activity world-wide,

Recommends that the Conference of the Parties direct the Executive Secretary to take decisive action to advance the Global Taxonomy Initiative as detailed in decision III/10 of the Conference of the Parties, which should be implemented as soon as possible.

Recommendation III/2

AGENDA ITEM 4: SCIENTIFIC, TECHNICAL AND TECHNOLOGICAL ASPECTS OF THE CONSERVATION AND SUSTAINABLE USE OF COASTAL AND MARINE BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY: REPORT OF THE FIRST MEETING OF EXPERTS ON MARINE AND COASTAL BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY AND CONSIDERATION OF A DRAFT THREE-YEAR WORK PLAN

The SBSTTA

Recognizing the continued importance of conservation and sustainable use of marine and coastal biological diversity to all countries,

Recognizing the special significance of small island developing States in the global conservation of marine and coastal biological diversity,

Recognizing that the precautionary approach underlies effective use of all coastal and marine living resources,

Recommends to the Conference of the Parties that, in light of the Jakarta Mandate, and in light of the elaboration of the Mandate by the group of experts meeting on coastal and marine biological diversity, held in Jakarta in March 1997:

1. It direct the Executive Secretary to:

undertake the programme of work in the attached Annex;

maintain and develop liaison with partner and other organizations concerned with coastal and marine living resources, including those involved in both conservation and sustainable use of marine living resources, taking into consideration existing memoranda of cooperation between the secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity and other entities;

utilize to the extent possible the competence of the roster of experts to monitor and moderate the outputs for the program of work;

invite countries, Parties, regional governmental organizations and IGOs to propose contributions to implement specific elements of the programme of work;

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2. And that it recognize that there is a cost implication in the programme of work, and budget accordingly.

Annex to Recommendation III/2

Programme element 1. Implementation of integrated marine and coastal area management

Rationale: Integrated Marine and Coastal Area Management (IMCAM) constitutes the most effective tool for implementing the Convention with respect to the conservation and sustainable use of marine and coastal biological diversity, pollution control and environmental degradation. Such a tool may require implementation at different levels, ranging from the intra-national, or local, through national and regional, or supra-national to the global level.

Operational objective 1.1: To review the existing instruments relevant to IMCAM and their implication for the implementation of the Convention.

Activities

- (a) To identify existing mechanisms and instruments relevant to IMCAM;
- (b) To identify focal points for the implementation of IMCAM at different levels (national, regional and global);
- (c) To gather, compare and analyze information provided by the focal points;
- (d) To convene meetings involving representatives of stakeholders at different levels; and
- (e) To develop and promote as appropriate the implementation of IMCAM at the national and regional levels.

Time schedule and ways and means: The activities will be carried out during the three-year period by the secretariat, with the collaboration of an informal inter-agency task force.

Budgetary implications \*

Operational objective 1.2: To develop guidelines for ecosystem evaluation and assessments, paying attention to the need to identify and select indicators, including social and abiotic indicators, that distinguish between natural and human-induced effects.

Activities

- (a) To identify existing organizations and initiatives;
- (b) To promote exchange of information and experience to identify and select key indicators using appropriate mechanism; and

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\* To be developed by the Secretariat.

(c) To collaborate with relevant organizations in the preparation of guidelines.

Time schedule and ways and means: The activities should be carried out, under the guidance of the SBSTTA, as part of the work programme on indicators, monitoring and assessment.

Budgetary implications\*

Programme element 2. Marine and coastal living resources

Rationale: Very little is currently known about the loss of genetic, species and ecosystem diversity in marine and coastal ecosystems. A significant number of marine species have suffered population decline in recorded history and this process continues. Ecosystems have been degraded and, from the loss of populations, it is reasonable to infer that there has been a consequent loss of genetic diversity. The overall goal is to achieve conservation and long-term sustainable use of marine and coastal living resources in a manner that satisfies human needs and guarantees the integrity of ecosystems.

Operational Objective: To promote ecosystem approaches to the sustainable use of marine and coastal living resources, including the identification of key variables or interactions, for the purpose of assessing and monitoring:

- (a) Components of biological diversity;
- (b) The sustainable use of such components; and
- (c) Ecosystem effects.

Activities

- (a) To develop collaborative links with relevant organizations and institutions;
- (b) To promote exchange of information and experience using appropriate mechanism;
- (c) To develop and promote ecosystem approaches compatible with sustainable use of marine and coastal living resources;
- (d) To promote the identification of components of the ecosystems which are critical to the functioning and key threats;
- (e) To promote capacity-building at national and regional level; and
- (f) To carry out a study on the effects of stock enhancement on coastal and marine biological diversity.

Time schedule and ways and means: The activities should be undertaken throughout the three-year period. The information dissemination aspects should be included in the work plan of the clearing-house mechanism. The secretariat will seek to establish an informal inter-agency task force for this work.

Budgetary implications\*

Programme element 3. Marine and coastal protected areas

Rationale: Marine and coastal protected areas are useful and important tools of effective biological diversity conservation strategies. Individual protected areas can serve many conservation-related and sustainable-use functions by enhancing critical habitats, ecological features or processes, special or unique sites or features, ecologically representative or typical habitats, and control areas for research and monitoring. To be effective, however, such protected areas have to be integrated into wider strategies for preventing adverse effects to marine and coastal ecosystems from external activities and must take into consideration the sustainable use of resources and the needs of stakeholders, inter alia.

Operational objective 3.1: To facilitate research and monitoring on the value and on the effects of marine and coastal protected areas or similarly restricted management areas on sustainable use of marine living resources;

Activities

- (a) To collaborate with relevant organizations for the preparation of project proposals;
- (b) To work with relevant organizations to identify pilot projects;
- (c) To facilitate countries or international/regional organizations in conducting research on the effects of marine and coastal protected areas on population size and dynamics, subject to national legislation; and
- (d) To conduct a desk study to gather and assimilate information.

Time schedule and ways and means: The programme should be an ongoing activity, to be carried out by an ad hoc technical expert group under SBSTTA.

Budgetary implications\*

Operational objective 3.2: In collaboration with relevant intergovernmental, national and non-governmental organizations, to develop guidance on criteria for, and operational aspects of, marine and coastal protected areas.

Activities

- (a) To compile research findings on relevant aspects of marine and coastal protected areas through existing relevant literature, bibliographies and information networks;

(b) To facilitate the exchange of information on relevant incentive measures, including through the clearing-house mechanism and through regional workshops;

(c) To assist the development of national and regional capacity-building;

(d) To provide information on relevant legal and institutional issues, having regard to the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) and other related international agreements;

(e) To assist the development of appropriate education and public awareness programmes at all levels;

(f) To assist information exchange between sites aimed at networking;

(g) To provide guidance on the maintenance and wider application of local and traditional knowledge; and

(h) To identify the linkages between conservation and sustainable use.

Time schedule and ways and means: These should be ongoing activities over the three-year period. The basis for undertaking these activities should be collaboration between the secretariat, under the guidance of SBSTTA, and relevant intergovernmental, national and non-governmental organizations. The creation of an informal task force may be an appropriate mechanism, conducting its work through regular communication and through periodic meetings as required. The clearing-house mechanism will play a key role.

Budgetary implications\*

Programme element 4. Mariculture

Rationale: Mariculture offers possibilities for sustainable protein-rich food production and for the economic development of local populations, but poses risks for marine and coastal biological diversity.

Operational objective 4.1: To assess the consequences of mariculture on marine and coastal biological diversity and promote techniques which minimize adverse impact.

Activities

(a) To provide guidance on criteria and methods and techniques which avoid the adverse effects of mariculture on marine and coastal biological diversity;

(b) Collection and dissemination of information, data, literature and bibliography relevant to the objective and best practices of successful sustainable mariculture; and

(c) Evaluation of the current state of knowledge on the effects of mariculture on marine and coastal biological diversity.

Time schedule and ways and means: The coordination of this programme of activities within the secretariat creates the need for a professional with specific high-level expertise. This need could probably best be met through the secondment by a Party or specialized institution of an appropriate professional. To be successful and cost-effective, the work would need to draw upon specialist scientific knowledge worldwide. It would thus need to be supported by a specialist inter-agency task force or by the establishment of an ad hoc technical expert group under SBSTTA. Operational aspects thus suggest that this work be undertaken from 1999 onwards.

Budgetary implications\*

Programme element 5. Alien species and genotypes

Rationale: While some eradication and control technology options exist for alien species and genotypes in marine and coastal environment, the most effective strategy for limiting their effects on biological diversity is to prevent their introduction.

Operational objective 5.1: To achieve a better understanding of the impact on biological diversity of the introduction of alien species and genotypes, with particular attention to the characteristics of the species and of the recipient ecosystems.

Activities

- (a) To analyze and disseminate information, data and case studies on the subject;
- (b) To develop collaboration with relevant organizations; and
- (c) To ensure exchange of information and experience using appropriate mechanisms.

Time schedule and ways and means: The activities should be undertaken throughout the three year period. The secretariat, under the guidance of SBSTTA, will seek the assistance of relevant organizations through an informal inter-agency task force. In particular, the options will be investigated for collaboration with the Scientific Committee on Problems of the Environment (SCOPE)/IUCN efforts to develop a global strategy and action plan.

Budgetary implications\*

Operational objective 5.2: To identify gaps in existing and proposed legal instruments and guidelines related to the introduction of alien species and genotypes, including a process to deal with reckless or deliberate introductions of alien species and genotypes (especially where transboundary effects have occurred).

Activities

Parties and other bodies should be requested to provide the Executive Secretary with their views on the linkages between biological diversity-related matters, and on the possible need for additional legal

instruments, especially with regard to reckless or deliberate introductions.

Time schedule and ways and means\*

Budgetary implications\*

Operational objective 5.3: To establish an "incident list" on introductions of alien species through the national reporting process.

Activities

To distil references of incidents from the national reports.

Time schedule and ways and means: To be considered by the Conference of the Parties at its fourth meeting, as part of its consideration of the intervals and forms of subsequent national reports. If approved, appropriate guidance to Parties would need to be prepared and this distillation and dissemination would form part of the ongoing work of the national reports unit and of the clearing-house mechanism unit, when receiving national reports from Parties.

Budgetary implications\*

Programme element 6. General

Rationale: The Executive Secretary should pursue further collaborative linkages with a wide range of agencies and organizations whose mandates and activities are relevant to the conservation and sustainable use of marine and coastal biological diversity, in order to avoid unnecessary duplication and to ensure efficiency and cost-effectiveness in carrying out the work.

Operational objective 6.1: To assemble a database of ongoing case studies through a cooperative approach with relevant bodies and organizations, with special emphasis on integrated marine and coastal area management.

Activities

- (a) To identify sources of relevant information;
- (b) To request inputs from countries and from relevant organizations and bodies; and
- (c) To carry out desk evaluations of available information and to disseminate the findings.

Time schedule and ways and means: Ongoing activities to be carried out by the secretariat over the three-year period as previously described in programme element 1 above, involving collaboration between the Jakarta Mandate unit and the clearing-house mechanism unit.

Budgetary implications\*

Operational objective 6.2: To develop a database of experts, starting from the roster, to be available for the development and implementation of specific elements of national policies on marine and coastal biological diversity, giving full recognition to the importance of taxonomy and following closely the development of the Global Taxonomic Initiative. Special consideration should be given to regional perspectives and the setting up of regional centres of taxonomic expertise, as well as to the taxonomic efforts of other intergovernmental programmes, agencies and relevant institutions.

Activities

(a) To maintain and update regularly the database of information on experts on marine and coastal biological diversity nominated to the roster;

(b) To make the information database available through the clearing-house mechanism; and

(c) To promote strengthening taxonomic expertise at regional and national levels.

Time schedule and ways and means: Ongoing activity undertaken by the secretariat.

Budgetary implications\*

Recommendation III/3

AGENDA ITEM 5: SCIENTIFIC, TECHNICAL AND TECHNOLOGICAL ADVICE  
ON FOREST BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY, TAKING ACCOUNT  
OF RESEARCH AND TECHNICAL PRIORITIES  
PREVIOUSLY IDENTIFIED

Decision III/12, paragraph 6, of the Conference of the Parties requested the Executive Secretary to develop a focused work programme for forest biological diversity, focusing initially on research, cooperation and the development of technologies necessary for the conservation and sustainable use of forest biological diversity, and indicated that this programme should:

(a) Take account of the outcome of the Intergovernmental Panel on Forests and other forest-related forums;

(b) Facilitate the application and integration of the objectives of the Convention on Biological Diversity in the sustainable management of forests at the national, regional and global levels, in accordance with the ecosystem approach;

(c) Complement and not duplicate the work of relevant international forums, notably the Intergovernmental Panel on Forests;

(d) Complement existing national, regional or international criteria and indicator frameworks for sustainable forest management;

(e) Incorporate traditional systems of forest biological diversity conservation.

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Paragraph 9 of the same decision also requested the SBSTTA to contribute advice on this draft focused programme of work for forest biological diversity and to report back to the fourth meeting of the Conference of the Parties. The SBSTTA, in providing this advice, was requested to bear in mind for possible future action, inter alia, the remaining forest research priority items listed in its recommendation II/8.

In paragraph 10 of that decision, the Conference of the Parties further directed the SBSTTA, in the light of the proposed work programme and taking account of the research and technical priorities already identified in its recommendation II/8, to advance its scientific, technical and technological consideration of forest biological diversity by focusing initially on the synthesis and development of scientific information in the following areas:

(a) Methodologies necessary to advance the elaboration and implementation of criteria and indicators for the conservation of biological diversity as part of sustainable forest management;

(b) Scientific analysis of the ways in which human activities, in particular forest management practices, influence biological diversity and assessment of ways to minimize or mitigate negative influences.

Paragraph 5 of the decision requests the Executive Secretary to explore ways and means to cooperate with the Intergovernmental Panel on Forests or any successor process on matters relating to biological diversity and forests, including intersessional work, with a view to developing common priorities for further consideration.

#### The SBSTTA

Recalling decisions II/8, paragraph 1, and III/12, paragraphs 1 and 5, of the Conference of the Parties and proposal 17a of the Final Report of the Ad Hoc Intergovernmental Panel on Forests, that encouraged countries, in accordance with their national sovereignty, specific country conditions and national legislation, to develop, implement, monitor and evaluate national forest programmes, which include a wide range of approaches for sustainable forest management, taking into consideration the following: consistency with national, sub-national or local policies and strategies, and - as appropriate - international agreements; partnership and participatory mechanisms to involve interested parties; recognition and respect for customary and traditional rights of, inter alia, indigenous people and local communities; secure land tenure arrangements; holistic, intersectoral and iterative approaches; ecosystem approaches that integrate the conservation of biological diversity and the sustainable use of biological resources; and adequate provision and valuation of forest goods and services,

Having examined the Draft Programme of Work for Forest Biological Diversity prepared by the Executive Secretary (UNEP/CBD/SBSTTA/3/5),

Taking note of the report of the meeting of the Liaison Group on Forest Biological Diversity, which took place from 25 to 28 May 1997 in Helsinki (UNEP/CBD/SBSTTA/3/Inf. 5) and other relevant information documents made available for the meeting,

Bearing in mind the interventions made by all participants;

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Taking into account that the work programme should initially focus on research, cooperation and the development of technology, and that it should be time-bound in order to provide the Conference of the Parties with a more effective tool to review and monitor progress,

Noting a need for additional activities that focus on the synthesis of scientific information on decision III/12, paragraphs 10(a) and (b), and which are necessary to provide a comprehensive foundation for the SBSTTA to advance effective scientific programmes of work in these areas,

1. Recommends that the Executive Secretary consider initiating additional activities to further efforts in these areas. Guidance on the types of activities needed is provided in cells 1A, 2A, 3A and 4A of the organizational matrix in the Annex to the present recommendation;

2. Further recommends that the draft programme of work be organized in a matrix structure based on this format;

3. Recommends also that, in developing and implementing the draft programme of work, the following ways and means be considered, inter alia, workshops, regional meetings, the clearing-house mechanism, and scientific meetings;

4. Recommends, in addition, that the draft programme of work reflect a rolling three-year planning horizon, subject to periodic review by the SBSTTA;

5. Recommends that the draft programme of work contain a section documenting and highlighting the linkages between the activities of the draft programme of work and the work being conducted in other intergovernmental forums with a view, inter alia, to improving the effective and efficient allocation of resources;

6. Further recommends:

(a) That the activities identified in the draft work programme be demand-oriented and selected according to the interests expressed by the countries;

(b) That, in the selection of activities of the draft work programme, due care is taken to minimize duplication with similar ongoing activities in other forums;

(c) That the activities in the draft programme of work be consistent with the proposals for action of the Intergovernmental Panel on Forests, and in close cooperation with the Intergovernmental Forum on Forests and other related forums, taking into account the decisions of the United Nations General Assembly in June 1997;

(d) That the activities of the draft work programme, where appropriate, reflect the following issues, inter alia:

(i) capacity-building;

(ii) forest management;

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- (iii) land-use management;
- (iv) equitable sharing of benefits;
- (v) good national practices;
- (vi) harmonization of ecosystem and socio-economic considerations.

7. Recommends to the Conference of the Parties that it recommend that Parties and countries and international funding institutions, including GEF, give priority to the allocation of resources to aid progress towards achieving the objectives of the Convention with regard to forest biological diversity.

Annex to recommendation III/3

		1	2	3	4	5
		Holistic and intersectoral ecosystem approaches that integrate the conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity as well as socio-economic considerations	Scientific analysis of the ways in which human activities, in particular forest management practices, influence biological diversity (decision III/12, paragraph 10(b))	Assessment of ways to minimize or mitigate negative influences (decision III/12, paragraph 10(b))	Methodologies necessary to advance the elaboration and implementation of criteria and indicators (decision III/12, paragraph 10(a))	Remaining research and technological priorities identified in the SBSTTA Recommendation II/8
A	Research <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Approach</li> <li>• Activities</li> <li>• Ways and Means</li> <li>• Collaborative efforts and capacity-building</li> <li>• Outcomes</li> </ul>	1A	2A	3A	4A	
B	Cooperation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Approach</li> <li>• Activities</li> <li>• Ways and Means</li> <li>• Capacity-building</li> <li>• Outcomes</li> </ul>					
C	Development of technologies <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Approach</li> <li>• Activities</li> <li>• Ways and Means</li> <li>• Collaborative efforts and capacity-building</li> <li>• Outcomes</li> </ul>					

\* The following research and technological priorities identified in SBSTTA Recommendation II/8 will be taken into consideration as future work is developed: analysing the role of biological diversity in ecosystem functioning; analysing measures for mitigating the underlying causes of biological diversity loss; advancing scientific and technical approaches to (i) rehabilitating degraded and deforested ecosystems and (ii) enriching biological diversity in forest plantations; identifying gaps in knowledge in the areas of fragmentation and population viability, to include mitigation options such as corridors and buffer zones; 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; and developing assessment and evaluation methodologies for the multiple benefits derived from forest biological diversity.

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Annex to recommendation III/3 (cont.)

The following paragraphs refer to the numbered cells in the table above: These provide examples of activities according to which a programme of work could be organized.

**1A** - Foster activities to synthesize existing knowledge of holistic and intersectoral ecosystem approaches and socio-economic considerations to set the context for the development of a science programme and identify and prioritize remaining research needs.

**2A** - Foster activities to assemble management experiences and scientific information at the national level to provide for the sharing of approaches and tools that lead to improved forest practices with regard to forest biological diversity.

Ways and means: inter alia, electronic information network, clearing-house mechanism, case studies

**3A** - Foster activities to synthesize existing knowledge to set the context for the development of a science programme and identify and prioritize remaining research needs.

Ways and means: inter alia, regional workshops that bring together experts in forest management and science from the forestry sector with experts on biological diversity.

**4A** - Foster activities to determine and advance methodology for implementing the indicators of forest biological diversity that have already been developed or require further development, in coordination with the IPF/IFF, and drawing upon existing and ongoing work to synthesize criteria and indicators. This includes measurement protocols and statistical sampling theory to allow for the expression of national trends.

Recommendation III/4

## AGENDA ITEM 6: REVIEW OF ONGOING ACTIVITIES ON AGRICULTURAL BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY

The SBSTTA

Taking note of the important information contained in document UNEP/CBD/SBSTTA/3/6 and in the supporting documents, both those that had been provided by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) following the seventh session of the Commission on Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture (CGRFA) (UNEP/CBD/SBSTTA/3/Inf.6, Inf.7 and Inf.8) and those prepared specifically for the third meeting of SBSTTA (UNEP/CBD/SBSTTA/3/Inf.9, Inf.10, Inf.20 and Inf.21),

1. Congratulates the secretariat for the significant progress made in initiating the review of the identification and assessment of ongoing activities and instruments at international and national levels, and in particular the proposed process outlined for the development of a multi-year work programme to implement decision III/11 and the focus provided on farming systems and agro-ecosystems approaches, contained in document

/...

UNEP/CBD/SBSTTA/3/Inf.10. The SBSTTA notes that the completion of this review, well ahead of its consideration at the next meeting of the SBSTTA, is a top priority;

2. Thanks the Government of the Netherlands for its support in facilitating the joint secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity - Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations technical workshop;
3. Congratulates the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations for its work to promote the implementation of decision III/11;
4. Commends the establishment of collaboration between the secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity and FAO in response to decision III/11 and related decisions and, noting the important progress made, encourages the further development of the joint collaboration between the Convention on Biological Diversity and FAO, so as to reflect the results of the analysis of activities and instruments at international level and the identification of gaps and complementarities resulting from the review;
5. Notes the progress made by the CGRFA at its seventh session in May 1997, and recalls the importance, for the implementation of the Convention of Biological Diversity, of a successful conclusion to the negotiation for the adaptation of the International Undertaking in harmony with the objectives of the Convention;
6. Acknowledges the complexity of agricultural biological diversity and the breadth and scope of decision III/11; notes the need to address ecosystems, species and genetic levels, to focus on the interface between environment and agriculture and to consider linkages with other ecosystems; and further notes the importance of agricultural biological diversity in ensuring food security and sustainable development and the need for countries to recognize the importance of agricultural biological diversity as an integral component of their overall biodiversity strategies;
7. Emphasizes the importance for the conservation and sustainable use of agricultural biological diversity of respecting the knowledge, innovations and practices deriving from traditional farming systems;
8. Agrees to expand the focus placed on soil micro-organisms in Annex 2 of decision III/11 to address all soil biota, so as to include other key organisms such as earthworms;
9. Welcomes the efforts being made by GEF to incorporate agricultural biological diversity into its operational programmes, revised operational criteria for enabling activities, and short-term response measures;
10. Notes the granting, to the secretariat of the Convention of Biological Diversity, of observer status in the Committee on Trade and Environment of the World Trade Organization, and supports the proposed collaboration between these bodies, and with FAO, in order to consider ways to develop a better appreciation of the relationship between trade and agricultural biological diversity and to initiate the identification of issues that will need to be addressed by the Conference of the Parties, while providing an opportunity for Parties and Governments to provide inputs;

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11. Further notes that relevant information, at national, regional and global levels, should be made available through the clearing-house mechanism and that this mechanism should be used as widely as possible to promote the transfer and development of technology and information exchange;

12. Agrees that work undertaken on the development of indicators for agricultural biological diversity be carried out in context of recommendation III/5;

13. Notes the contributions received to date in response to paragraphs 1 to 6 of decision III/11, emphasizes the importance of the identification and assessment of relevant activities and existing instruments related to agricultural biological diversity to be conducted at national level, and hopes that such information will become more widely available following further contributions and submission of the first national reports;

14. Recommends that the Conference of the Parties:

(a) Note the significant progress made so far in initiating the development of the multi-year work programme on agricultural biological diversity called for in decision III/11;

(a) Encourage the Executive Secretary, in collaboration with FAO, to continue ongoing efforts to compile and assess the findings of the review being conducted by Governments and Parties and by international and regional organizations, and to seek closer collaboration with other relevant United Nations bodies, as well as with other regional and international organizations, in particular the Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research (CGIAR) centres, and including non-governmental organizations, with a view to drawing on their experience and expertise;

(b) Reaffirm that the reporting on, and development of, the multi-year work programme is an iterative and phased process;

(c) Provide guidance to GEF and invite other funding institutions to assist countries with the implementation of decision III/11, in particular, through responding to urgent and priority national needs.

#### Recommendation III/5

AGENDA ITEM 7.3: CURRENT APPROACHES TO INDICATOR DEVELOPMENT AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR A PRELIMINARY CORE SET OF INDICATORS OF BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY, PARTICULARLY THOSE RELATED TO THREATS, AND OPTIONS FOR CAPACITY-BUILDING IN DEVELOPING COUNTRIES IN THE APPLICATION OF GUIDELINES AND INDICATORS FOR SUBSEQUENT NATIONAL REPORTS

#### The SBSTTA

Reaffirming the vital importance of indicators of all levels of biological diversity in the implementation of the Convention, particularly with respect to Article 7, and recognizing the need to provide urgent, practical advice to Parties in the implementation of identification and monitoring,

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Having examined the documents prepared by the Executive Secretary in consultation with a liaison group concerning recommendations for a core set of indicators of biological diversity (UNEP/CBD/SBSTTA/3/9 and UNEP/CBD/SBSTTA/3/Inf.13),

1. Considers that these provide a good basis for the development of further work on indicators and generally supports the proposed work programme on indicators as set out in UNEP/CBD/SBSTTA/3/9;

2. Stresses that the primary role of indicators in this context should be as a tool for management of biological diversity at local and national levels and assessing the implementation of the Convention, but recognizes also that they may have a wider role, for example in increasing public awareness;

3. Stresses that, in the future, the development of regional and global indicators will be necessary to assess specific aspects of the world's biological diversity;

4. Stresses also that all work undertaken by the secretariat and any liaison group on indicators should be integrated with any work on indicator development undertaken within thematic areas under the Convention, for example concerning forests, inland water ecosystems and agricultural biological diversity;

5. Recognizes that the development and application of indicators requires the collection and analysis of data on a continuing basis, and that this is likely to be a costly activity;

6. Recognizes also that every attempt should be made to avoid duplication of effort in the development and application of indicators;

7. Recommends to the Conference of the Parties:

(a) That any liaison group on indicators of biological diversity have as wide as possible a range of expertise, both geographical and sectoral, represented on it;

(b) That the secretariat and any such liaison group be requested to ensure that all their work on indicators take as full as possible account of other relevant indicator initiatives undertaken by different international processes and organizations, particularly those relating to sustainable development and biological diversity;

(c) That the secretariat and any such liaison group be requested to develop a key set of standard questions, using as a basis the material on pages 12 and 13 of document UNEP/CBD/SBSTTA/3/Inf.14;

(d) That the secretariat and any such liaison group be requested to compile a set of principles for designing national-level monitoring programmes and indicators. These should address matters such as:

(i) the way indicators relate to management questions;

(ii) the ability to show trends;

/...

- (iii) the ability to distinguish between natural and human-induced change;
- (iv) the ability to provide reliable results (i.e. through the establishment of standard methodologies);
- (v) the degree to which indicators are amenable to straightforward interpretation;
- (vi) the question of baselines for measurement, in light of the fact that application of a pre-industrial baseline may often prove problematic;

(e) That the Executive Secretary be requested to invite countries and relevant organizations to forward case studies to the secretariat. The secretariat and any liaison group should use these to provide a menu of possible approaches and a synthesis of best practice and lessons, to provide further advice to Parties on identification and monitoring;

(f) That consideration be given to providing means for regional coordination of indicator development;

(g) That Parties be urged to share relevant experience concerning the development and application of indicators through the clearing-house mechanism and other means; and also be urged to include in their future National Reports specific reference to indicator development activities and their capacity to implement indicators;

(h) That the need for capacity-building in indicator development and application be stressed;

(i) That the work programme on indicators as set out in Table 5 of UNEP/CBD/SBSTTA/3/9 be adopted, as amended, in the annex to the present recommendation.



Annex to recommendation III/5Preliminary outline of work under the two-track approach

ACTIVITY	DETAILS	WAYS AND MEANS	TIME SCALE
<b>FIRST TRACK</b>			
Roster of experts	Establish a roster based upon submissions of names by Contracting Parties, countries and relevant organizations	Secretariat	Immediately
Contributions	Contact relevant institutions and processes to seek information and expertise, and to explore collaboration	Secretariat	Immediately
Further development of indicator framework, including standard questions and principles.	Incorporate recommendations from SBSTTA 3 and other reports	Liaison group, incorporating further expertise	Further meeting in 1997 if funds available
Support from financial mechanism	Liaison with GEF secretariat on methodologies and priorities for supporting national development of indicators	Secretariat	Ongoing
Development of menu of indicators in thematic areas	Case studies (compilation and synthesis) of indicators for coastal and marine, agro-biological diversity, forest and freshwater systems	Liaison group	For SBSTTA 4
Capacity assessment	Questionnaire distributed to countries following agreement on indicator framework and analysis of first national reports	Developed by secretariat with assistance of liaison group	Questionnaire ready by COP 4
Training	Development of methodology sheets, guidelines and public information.	Liaison group	Guidelines by SBSTTA 4
Training	Development of training systems to meet identified needs.	Liaison group	After COP 4
Agreed indicator framework	Recommendations made available to Parties for inclusion in the second national report.	Secretariat	As soon as available, and one year prior to deadline for report
<u>Global Biodiversity Outlook</u>	Data from initial national report and other sources for inclusion in GBO-2	Secretariat	Publication likely by COP 5
<b>SECOND TRACK</b>			
Research and development	Develop research proposal		Submission to agencies by mid-1999
Pilot programme	Set up pilot programmes to develop and test indicators		Completed by May 1999
Second set of indicators	Further development of indicators		Available for preparation of third national reports

Recommendation III/6

AGENDA ITEM 8: PROMOTION OF INTERNATIONAL TECHNICAL AND SCIENTIFIC COOPERATION: REPORT ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PILOT PHASE OF THE CLEARING-HOUSE MECHANISM

The SBSTTA,

Recalling decision I/3 of the Conference of the 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 the Parties on the development of the clearing-house mechanism through the establishment of a pilot-phase 1996-1997, extended by decision III/4 until December 1998, and related activities to promote technical and scientific cooperation,

Recalling further decision III/4 of the Conference of the Parties that the clearing-house mechanism is expeditiously implemented in accordance with the expectations of the Parties,

Recalling decision III/4 of the Conference of the Parties that the key characteristics of the clearing-house mechanism are, inter alia, that it should be demand-driven, decentralized in nature and provide support for the decision-making process,

Notes that the clearing-house mechanism is still in its pilot-phase and will be developed in a step-by-step process, based on the experiences gained by the partners of the Convention and the expectations and needs expressed by the Parties,

Notes further that the clearing-house mechanism is a mechanism with a variety of functions and services to the Parties, inter alia exchange of information, identification and facilitation of the transfer of technologies and capacity building,

Acknowledges the concrete recommendations for the functioning of the clearing-house mechanism formulated in the information document UNEP/CBD/SBSTTA/3/Inf.12,

Acknowledges further decision III/4 of the Conference of the Parties that recognizes the role of the secretariat in the coordination of the implementation of the clearing-house mechanism,

Notes that the Conference of the Parties decisions (I/3, II/3-4, II/7-8, II/10-11, II/14, II/16-17, III/4-5, III/9-11, III/15, III/17-19) have clearly stressed and broadened the roles of the clearing-house mechanism as a key instrument to promote and facilitate the implementation of all aspects of the Convention,

Noting also:

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(a) 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;

(b) The advantages of country-driven 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;

(c) The clearing-house mechanism activities to include communication technologies appropriate to all countries and exchange modalities additional to the Internet to ensure the participation of Parties without Internet access;

(d) The need for the clearing-house mechanism to be clearly focused on the implementation of the Convention;

Recommends to the Conference of the Parties that it:

1. Request the Global Environment Facility to play a substantial role as a major catalyst in the full development and implementation of the clearing-house mechanism so that it can play its role in promoting and facilitating the implementation of the Convention, in a participatory manner and fully incorporating the modern information and communication tools available;

2. Provide guidance to the Global Environment Facility so that financial resources are provided:

- to support the pilot phase as an enabling activity, including: regional workshops, regional efforts, sub-regional and national studies and training materials;
- to strengthen national biological diversity information systems and networks and their linkage to the clearing-house mechanism;

3. Request all Governments and bilateral and multilateral funding institutions to provide funding for the development and implementation of the clearing-house mechanism as an important instrument for the implementation of the Convention, including financial support to the regional clearing-house mechanism workshops;

4. Request the Parties to develop concrete examples on best practices of the use of the clearing-house mechanism to facilitate the implementation of the Convention and disseminate the information also in printed form;

5. Request all Parties to make available best practices and access to expertise on the implementation of the Convention's objectives and recommendations by the Parties, as well as advice on the best ways and means to promote and facilitate scientific and technological cooperation among the Parties in particular with developing country Parties;

6. Invite the Parties to disseminate, through the clearing-house mechanism, information on funding sources regarding the implementation of the Convention;

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7. Further recommend that Parties include in their National Reports activities undertaken to implement their national clearing-house mechanisms;

8. Recommend that Parties should organize a national clearing-house mechanism Steering Committee or Working Group composed of multisectoral and interdisciplinary representatives, to achieve broad participation of different stakeholders on national level in the implementation process of the clearing-house mechanism;

9. Invite the Parties and other partners to use the clearing-house mechanism logo as a unifying element creating a clearing-house mechanism identity;

10. Recommend that, in building up the content of information in the clearing-house mechanism either at the secretariat or other level, the following major content elements, among others, be used:

Secretariat level: Convention on Biological Diversity and its implementation, national focal points, international themes, financial sources;

Other level: country profile, national strategy and action plans, national legislation, scientific and technological information;

11. Direct the secretariat to implement a list-server with all officially designated clearing-house mechanism national focal points and other partners to disseminate information on new and recent developments in regard to the clearing-house mechanism, on either the national, regional or international level;

12. Direct the secretariat to improve synergy in regard to information exchange with Convention on Biological Diversity-related conventions and ongoing international/supranational information initiatives in order to encourage and optimize cooperation and collaboration;

13. Support the Executive Secretary to implement decision III/4, paragraph 10, in convening the informal clearing-house mechanism Advisory Committee;

14. Ensure that the clearing-house mechanism must be practical, innovative, decentralized and creative and based on a network of partners, use a simple structure, and be designed to continue effectively beyond the pilot phase;

15. Recommend the regional workshops to examine, inter alia, aspects that:

- identify potential users of information;
- define information needs and priorities of Parties;
- examine ways and means to exchange information;
- assess information and communication resources available for the implementation of the Convention;

- identify actions that contribute to capacity-building at the national level;

and make the reports on the regional meetings available to the next meeting of the Conference of the Parties,

16. Recommend that the principal role of the secretariat, following establishment of the framework of the clearing-house mechanism, be that of providing a gateway and facilitate access to the clearing-house mechanism network and making available information arising from the secretariat's own functions as outlined in Article 24 of the Convention;

17. Direct that the secretariat undertake an independent review of the pilot phase of the clearing-house mechanism in 1998, to be presented to the fourth meeting of the SBSTTA for its consideration;

18. Recommend that, in launching the independent review of the clearing-house mechanism pilot phase, the following elements for evaluation, among others, be used:

- number of national focal points fully and effectively connected;
- number and relevance of thematic focal points connected;
- amount of information transferred from participating nodes;
- number and effectiveness of training events;
- effectiveness of guidelines in achieving their aims;
- whether the clearing-house mechanism is being effectively used by parties to further the aims of the Convention;
- number of nodes supplying relevant information such as national reports, legislation and policies;
- use made of discussion lists;
- financial support provided for the implementation of the clearing-house mechanism.

#### Recommendation III/7

#### PARTICIPATION OF PARTIES IN THE CONVENTION PROCESS

##### The SBSTTA

Recalling that the Conference of the Parties has decided to rely on additional voluntary contributions for ensuring the participation of Parties in meetings convened under the auspices of the Convention,

Considering that a decline in support for participation of representatives from developing countries and countries with economies in transition in meetings convened under the auspices of the Convention is one of the most significant threats to the implementation of the Convention,

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Acknowledging the efforts made by the secretariat for mobilizing additional financial resources, but also the limitations resulting from the absence of authority for such activity,

1. Expresses gratitude to donor Governments and Parties who have made contributions in favour of participation of least developed countries and small island developing States in the third meeting of the SBSTTA, in pursuance with decision III/24 of the Conference of the Parties;

2. Recognizes that these contributions were generous, particularly on the context of the budgetary difficulties encountered by many donor countries, but were insufficient to enable the full participation of developing countries and countries with economies in transition in the SBSTTA;

3. Appeals to more Parties and donors to join the group of donors in their efforts to ensure full participation in the meetings convened under the auspices of the Convention;

4. Commends those developing countries and countries with economies in transition who have found alternative means of ensuring participation in the third meeting of the SBSTTA;

5. Encourages all Parties to join forces to defeat the present declining trend in the availability of addition resources in its effects by demonstrating more generosity and exerting extreme care in the use of the additional voluntary resources provided;

6. Recommends to the Conference of the Parties at its fourth meeting to give urgent consideration to the resolution of this serious problem in relation to the SBSTTA, the SBSTTA Bureau and other meetings held under the auspices of the Convention,

7. Recommends further to the Conference of the Parties to adopt a similar approach for other meetings convened under the auspices of the Convention.

Annex 2

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

1. Opening of the meeting.
2. Organizational matters:
  - (a) Election of officers;
  - (b) Adoption of the agenda;
  - (c) Organization of work.
3. Assessment of the status and trends of terrestrial biological diversity: scientific, technical and technological advice on matters relating to dryland and mountain biological diversity and options for conservation and sustainable use.
4. Review of ongoing activities under the Convention on Biological Diversity:
  - (a) Implementation of the pilot phase of the clearing-house mechanism;
  - (b) Implementation of the three-year work plan on the conservation and sustainable use of marine and coastal biological diversity;
  - (c) Implementation of Article 8 (j);
  - (d) Implementation of the work plan for the conservation and sustainable use of forest biological diversity;
  - (e) Inland waters.
5. Advice on activities, instruments, issues and priorities relating to agricultural biological diversity: consideration of the draft multi-year programme of work.
6. Impact assessment: scientific analysis of the ways in which human activities influence biological diversity and identification of ways to minimize or mitigate negative impacts.
7. Consideration of matters related to benefit-sharing:
  - (a) Benefit-sharing with regard to promoting and facilitating access to and transfer and development of technology, including the knowledge and practices of local and indigenous communities;
  - (b) Measures to promote and advance the distribution of benefits from biotechnology, in accordance with Article 19.
8. Identification of alternative models and mechanisms for linkages between in situ and ex situ conservation techniques.

/...

9. Review of existing conventions and other international agreements relevant to the various paragraphs of Article 8.
10. Review of the operations of the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice, in the light of the review by the Conference of the Parties of its operations and those of subsidiary organs.
11. Draft provisional agenda for the fifth meeting of the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice.
12. Date and venue of the fifth meeting of the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice.
13. Other matters.
14. Adoption of the report.
15. Closure of the meeting.



Annex 3

REPORT ON THE INFORMAL MEETING ON ISSUES DEALING WITH  
THE OPERATION OF THE SBSTTA

Introduction

The informal meeting was conducted between 13:00 and 14:30 on Thursday, 4 September 1997; 27 representatives participated. The discussion focused on those issues dealing with the operation of the SBSTTA which the participants felt were important to the overall review of the operations of the Convention, but which were not covered by recommendation II/11 on the modus operandi of the SBSTTA. A wide range of issues were raised, and what follows presents only a summary of the major points. It must be stressed that this summary is by no means the only opportunity of Parties, participants and other relevant institutions to make submissions on the operations of the SBSTTA. As outlined in document UNEP/CBD/SBSTTA/3/10 and elaborated further by the secretariat at this meeting, there will be opportunities at further meetings organized by the secretariat to express views verbally. Moreover, the secretariat indicated that they would be able to fully utilize submissions from interested participants in the production of the synthesis document called for in decision III/22 until 1 December 1997. It further noted that these matters could also be informally discussed at meetings to be held under the Convention prior to the fourth meeting of the Conference of the Parties. In this context the United Kingdom announced its intention to host a small workshop (5 to 7 January 1998) to provide further inputs to the preparation for the Conference of the Parties.

The Role of the SBSTTA

The meeting generally acknowledge the important role that the SBSTTA has to play in the overall Convention process. The effectiveness of the process will fundamentally depend upon being able to generate and develop the necessary scientific, technical and technological understanding of the issues raised by the Convention to build consensus and make decision. Developing the scientific understanding of biological diversity and the human processes which have an impact on biological diversity is necessary to avoiding adverse impacts that human activities have on biological diversity. Without science and the understanding that this brings we would be reduced to simply managing this impact in a reactive way.

Even though our understanding of these processes is far from comprehensive, there exists a vast body of knowledge of relevance to the process of the Convention on Biological Diversity. A central task of the SBSTTA is to take this knowledge and translate it into advice for the Conference of the Parties: advice which will present to the Conference of the Parties this knowledge in a relevant, useful and intelligent form; advice which will present a range of realistic and viable options for the Conference of the Parties; advice which will ultimately allow the Conference of the Parties to take decisions and implement actions which will address the management of human actions on biological diversity in a precautionary, anticipatory manner.

Generally, meetings of the SBSTTA should be open, flexible and collegiate. Delegates should not be afraid to develop advice which might be politically contentious.

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The significant contribution that the SBSTTA has already been able to make was acknowledged. In this respects the meeting believed it was worthwhile recalling that the SBSTTA has been extremely successful in conceptualising issues. For example, it has made a vital contribution to the development of the Jakarta Mandate on coastal and marine biological diversity. The meeting stressed that the importance that this role of conceptualizing issues should not be underestimated.

#### Improving the Operation of the SBSTTA

It was understood that the SBSTTA has been less successful in developing more detailed information needed to support detailed decision-making or national efforts to implement the Convention. In order to facilitate the development of this capacity a number of key preliminary suggestions were offered by the meeting, which can be described as:

1. Focusing the agenda or range of issues addressed by the SBSTTA;
  2. Relationship between the SBSTTA and other institutions;
  3. Preparations for the SBSTTA recommendations;
  4. Participation in the SBSTTA;
  5. The structure of the meetings of the SBSTTA
1. Focusing the agenda or range of issues addressed by the SBSTTA

It was recognized that this is a key issue to making the work of the SBSTTA more effective. The thematic approach where we focus on a given ecosystem has contributed to a focusing of agendas and should be continued. Discipline in all the institutions of the Convention are vital to achieve this. In this respects it was acknowledge that the last Bureau had exercised great discipline in its work. On balance it was felt that the agenda for the third session of the SBSTTA was about the right scope, although it was recognised that there was still some room for improvement in this respect. Clearer instructions from the Conference of the Parties are important. Each meeting of SBSTTA has only the capacity to respond to a very clear set of limited issues. Furthermore, the Conference of the Parties needs to recognise that many aspects of the Convention do not require the development of scientific advice for there to be action by the Conference of the Parties. In other words the Conference of the Parties needs to fully assume its responsibilities and not to avoid issues by requesting advice from the SBSTTA.

It was recognized that there also needs to be discipline in the advice developed by the SBSTTA itself and in the preparations of the secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity.

A structured agenda would contribute to being able to address issues more effectively. In this respect, there was wide spread support for classifying agenda items into those which require action and those which merely were reporting orientated or really only required information sharing (see paragraph 6 below).

2. Relationship between the SBSTTA and other institutions

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The SBSTTA has an important role in bridging the gap between the scientific community and the policy makers. It needs to use the existing scientific knowledge and expertise more effectively. Closer cooperation with other scientific bodies such as STAP, DIVERSTAS and ICSU, through exploring a more formal arrangement between such organizations, would make an important contribution to including them in the process more fully and ensuring better use of their networks. It was also agreed that relations with the private sector are important.

### 3. Preparations for the SBSTTA recommendations

The main dilemma in this respect is balancing the need for transparency versus efficiency in the process of preparation. It was acknowledged that rosters do provide an effective way to engage expertise. The use of liaison groups was also welcomed. Questions were raised regarding the criteria by which these liaison groups are constituted. It was felt that developing criteria in this respect would help with transparency, while not compromising efficiency. It was also felt that the transparency/efficiency balance was different for different types of activities. Assessments and information-gathering did not require as much transparency as decision-making.

The issue of future phasing or timing of the work of the SBSTTA also applies to the preparations for meetings. The experience to date is that in practice, there are really only six months for the preparation of documents. The Conference of the Parties needs to pay careful attention to this aspect if it is to assist the SBSTTA in developing effective advice.

### 4. Participation in the SBSTTA

This has not been adequate and raised great concern. Particularly Eastern European countries and developing countries are absent from the SBSTTA. Although the issue is largely a financial matter, it was recognized that the greater discipline with the agenda would also facilitate genuine participation of Parties in the SBSTTA process.

The issues of using the regional approach was also recognized as providing some possible solution to this issue. It was felt that given the scientific nature of the meeting that it should be possible to allow for regional representation on issues.

### 5. The structure of the meetings of the SBSTTA

The structure of its meetings was raised as an issue which might merit some attention.

Some thought might be given to looking at the way that the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change structures its meetings as an alternative model for the existing modus operandi of meetings.

### 6. Other Issues

Denmark proposed that the Conference of the Parties consider amending the proposed modus operandi as contained in recommendation II/11 by the addition of a new section XII, comprising the existing paragraph 10 of Annex 1 of recommendation II/11, together with the following paragraph:

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"Each meeting of the SBSTTA will endeavour to elaborate its findings and results to be presented to the forthcoming Conference of the Parties either as proposals to the Conference of the Parties to take note of SBSTTA's findings or to recommend that specific action is taken by the Conference of the Parties. Such action will be presented in the format of draft decisions containing, e.g. recommendations to the Parties or international bodies, (guidelines for) work to be undertaken by the secretariat, decisions affecting the Conference of the Parties itself, etc."

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