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THE GLOBAL TAXONOMY INITIATIVE: DEVELOPMENT OF THE PROCESS AND THE GUIDELINES FOR THE IN-DEPTH REVIEW OF THE PROGRAMME OF WORK

Note by the Executive Secretary

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In response to paragraph 6 of decision VII/9 of the Conference of the Parties (COP), the Executive Secretary developed, in collaboration with the Coordination Mechanism for the Global Taxonomy Initiative (GTI), a process and guidelines for the in-depth review of the implementation of the programme of work for the GTI, including mechanisms for monitoring progress, for the consideration of the tenth meeting of the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice (SBSTTA).

Section II of the note presents the process for assessing the implementation and effectiveness of the programme of work for the GTI, reviews information sources, provides as an annex, the mechanisms/approaches and tools for the collection of information for assessing progress, and proposes ways in which the tools/ approaches could be applied.

Section III, proposes ways and means for updating the GTI programme of work and suggests additions that should be made to the programme of work, including thematic areas currently not reflected in its programme of activities, such as protected areas, island and mountain biodiversity. A review is also provided of the thematic work programmes of the Convention and cross-cutting issues that have been revised by the Conference of the Parties and may require a revision of taxonomic inputs.

Finally, section IV summarizes how practical support could be provided to Governments for national and regional implementation of the programme of work for the GTI.

SUGGESTED RECOMMENDATIONS

The Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice (SBSTTA) may wish to:

1. *Welcome* the proposed process and guidelines for the in-depth review of the implementation of the programme of work for the Global Taxonomy Initiative (GTI) put forward by the Executive Secretary in collaboration with the GTI Coordination Mechanism, as contained in the present note;

* UNEP/CBD/SBSTTA/10/1.

2. *Request* the Executive Secretary to carry out the activities described in the annex to this note and report to SBSTTA at its eleventh meeting; and

3. *Invite* Parties, other Governments and relevant organizations to contribute information needed for the review.

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I. INTRODUCTION

1. Pursuant to the multi-year programme of work of the Conference of the Parties up to 2010, the programme of work for the Global Taxonomy Initiative (GTI) will be one of the items for in-depth review at the eighth meeting of the Conference of the Parties in 2006. As a contribution to the review, the Conference of the Parties, in paragraph 6 of decision VII/9 on the GTI, requested that Parties report on the status of implementation of the programme of work for the GTI and invited national and international, taxonomic institutions, funding organizations, financial agencies, and the financial mechanism of the Convention to contribute information on their relevant activities. In paragraph 7 (b) of the same decision, the Conference of the Parties requested the Executive Secretary in collaboration with the GTI Coordination Mechanism to develop the process and guidelines for the in-depth review, including mechanisms for monitoring progress in the implementation of the programme of work for the GTI to be finalized during the tenth meeting of SBSTTA for consideration at the eleventh meeting of the Subsidiary Body.

2. In paragraphs 1 and 4 of decision VII/31, on the multi-year programme of work of the Conference of the Parties, the Conference of the Parties provided the following guidance on how to undertake the in-depth reviews of the work carried out in the context of the Convention:

(a) Items identified as priorities by the World Summit on Sustainable Development held in 2002, should be considered in relation to the existing thematic programmes of work and work on cross-cutting issues of the Convention; including the use, as appropriate, of relevant indicators at the national, regional and global level. Items identified as priorities by the World Summit on Sustainable Development include poverty alleviation, human health, sustainable communities and livelihoods, hotspots, ecological networks and corridors (document UNEP/CBD/COP/7/20, para.26);

(b) Focus should be placed on: (i) assessing the implementation and effectiveness of the programmes of work; (ii) updating the programmes of work if necessary, by retiring or replacing activities and by making adjustments to reflect changes in the international context; and (iii) providing practical support for national and regional implementation.

3. Section II of the present note describes how the implementation and effectiveness of the programme of work for the GTI could be reviewed. Section III focuses on ways and means for updating the programmes of work taking into account the priority items identified by the World Summit on Sustainable Development. In section IV, some proposals are described for the provision of practical support for national and regional implementation of the programme of work for the GTI.

II. PROCESS FOR ASSESSING THE IMPLEMENTATION AND EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROGRAMME OF WORK FOR THE GTI

A. *Assessing implementation of the programme of work*

4. Each of the activities described in the programme of work for the GTI includes a rationale; expected outputs; a timetable/timing; actors; mechanisms; financial, human resources and other capacity requirements; and pilot projects. Each activity thus contains the necessary elements needed for assessing the level/stage of implementation of the activities, and understanding factors that influence the level of implementation, such as limited financial or human resources if an activity has not been implemented as planned. Some of the activities have been initiated but not others. It is important to identify the opportunities and constraints for each of them.

5. There is therefore a need to gather information on implementation of the planned activity and the related pilot projects from the various actors listed, taking into account the availability of the identified resources needed and other requirements, and the contribution of the mechanisms identified in the annex to this note. Additional information can be obtained from: (i) national reports; (ii) the national biodiversity strategies and action plans (NBSAPs) and documentation prepared during their development; (iii) reports on taxonomy projects funded by the Global Environment Facility (GEF); (iv) reports of regional GTI workshops; and (v) reports on GTI-related activities prepared by international organizations,

non-governmental and inter-governmental organizations. Additional sources of information are listed in the report on progress and status of the GTI prepared for the sixth meeting of the Conference of the Parties (UNEP/CBD/COP/6/INF/23).

6. The process for the in-depth review of the programme of work for the GTI is presented in the annex to the present note in which the mechanisms/approaches and tools for the collection of information and assessing progress, and ways in which the tools/approaches could be applied including a timeframe between now and the eighth meeting of the Conference of the Parties.

B. Assessing effectiveness of the programme of work

7. The assessment of the effectiveness of the programme of work entails an assessment of whether the output of a given planned activity and related pilot projects has contributed or would contribute to the achievement of the main goals of the GTI, as described in the rationale of the planned activity, and indirectly to the achievement of the objectives of the Convention.

III. WAYS AND MEANS FOR UPDATING THE PROGRAMME OF WORK FOR THE GTI

8. In paragraph 7 (c) and (d) of decision VII/9, the Conference of the Parties requested the Executive Secretary in collaboration with the Coordination Mechanism for the GTI to undertake:

(a) An analysis of the existing thematic programmes of work and cross-cutting issues with respect to taxonomic components, in order to more effectively build taxonomy into the work programmes and to develop an understanding of the taxonomic capacity necessary to accomplish the targets of these programmes of work; and

(b) A gap analysis of missing elements of the existing programme of work in the light of the decisions at the sixth and seventh meetings of the Conference of the Parties, considering also the result of the regional workshops held after the adoption of the programme of work in April 2002.

9. In response to these requests, the Executive Secretary in collaboration with the Coordination Mechanism for the GTI is reviewing the GTI components of the programmes of work on thematic areas and on cross-cutting issues in order to build taxonomy more effectively into them and develop a better understanding of the taxonomic capacity required for the achievement of the targets of the programmes of work. The results of this review will be partly reflected in the GTI guide and reported at the eleventh meeting of SBSTTA.

10. In the light of the decisions of the Conference of the Parties at its sixth and seventh meetings, the following elements, currently missing in the programme of work for the GTI, could be considered for addition under operational objective 4 (Within the major thematic work programmes of the Convention include key taxonomic objectives to generate information needed for decision-making in conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity and its components) and operational objective 5 (Within the work on cross-cutting issues of the Convention include key taxonomic objectives to generate information needed for decision-making in conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity and its components): island biodiversity, mountain biodiversity and protected areas.

11. In addition, the following programmes of work have been revised to include additional activities which may require a revision of the taxonomic input: the programmes of work on forest biodiversity (decision VI/22), inland water ecosystems (decision VII/4), and marine and coastal biodiversity (VII/5). Implementation of the guidelines developed, *inter alia*, in decision VI/7 (for incorporating biodiversity-related issues into environmental impact assessment legislation and/or process and in strategic environmental assessment), decision VI/24 (the Bonn Guidelines on Access to Genetic Resources and Fair and Equitable Sharing of the Benefits Arising out of their Utilization) and decision VII/16 (the Akwé: Kon Voluntary Guidelines for the Conduct of Cultural, Environmental and Social Impact Assessment regarding Developments Proposed to Take Place on, or which are Likely to Impact on, Sacred Sites and on Lands and Waters Traditionally Occupied or Used by Indigenous and Local Communities), and implementation of the Plan of Action for the International Initiative for the

Conservation and Sustainable Use of Pollinators (decision VI/5, annex II) require input from the GTI. In addition, the development of the International Initiative on the Conservation of Soil Biodiversity, and indicators for assessing progress in implementation of the Convention may require some adjustment of the activities in the programme of work for the GTI.

12. Finally, the conclusions from the assessment of implementation and effectiveness of the programme of work in section II above will also provide information for deciding on the future of the planned activities, whether they should be retired, continued, adjusted or replaced in accordance with paragraph 5 of decision VII/31, on the multi-year programme of work of the Conference of the Parties up to 2010.

13. The Executive Secretary is carrying out a comprehensive gap analysis of missing elements of the existing programme of work in the light of the decisions at the sixth and seventh meetings of the Conference of the Parties, considering also the result of the regional workshops held after the adoption of the programme of work in April 2002, for reporting at the eleventh meeting of SBSTTA as part of the in-depth review of the implementation of the programme of work for the GTI.

IV. THE PROVISION OF PRACTICAL SUPPORT FOR NATIONAL AND REGIONAL IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PROGRAMME OF WORK FOR THE GTI

14. In paragraph 2 of decision VII/9 the Conference of the Parties invited Parties, other Governments, regional and international organizations to take full account of the importance of taxonomic capacities in achieving the goals of the Convention, to support taxonomic activities to attain the 2010 target, and to provide all necessary support to national, and where appropriate regional, taxonomic centres of research and expertise. In the same vein, the Conference of the Parties also urged Parties, other Governments and relevant funding organizations to provide adequate and timely support to developing countries to assist in the implementation of the Global Taxonomy Initiative, and for integrating taxonomic capacity-building activities into thematic and cross-cutting programmes, including supporting activities and projects, such as, where appropriate, stand alone capacity-building projects.

15. Many of the needs to support national and regional implementation of the GTI programme of work, as well as ways in which they can be applied, have been identified in thematic reports and other reports submitted by Parties, in regional workshops, ^{1/} in SBSTTA recommendation II/2, and in decisions III/10, IV/1D and V/9 of the Conference of the Parties.

16. There will be a need to compile that information, share it among stakeholders for example through the clearing-house mechanism and electronic discussions and partnership-building workshops (see annex to this note).

^{1/} See, for example, section II (a) of the note by the Executive Secretary on progress and status of the GTI (UNEP/CBD/COP/6/INF/23) prepared for the sixth meeting of the Conference of the Parties, in 2002, and other reports on regional workshops, in particular the note on progress and implementation of the programme of work of the GTI prepared for the ninth meeting of SBSTTA (UNEP/CBD/SBSTTA/9/INF/16) and the preliminary report of first GTI workshop in Asia in September 2002 (UNEP/CBD/SBSTTA/9/INF/17).

*Annex***PROCESS, GUIDELINES AND MECHANISMS FOR MONITORING PROGRESS IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PROGRAMME OF WORK FOR THE GTI**

Action	Mechanisms/ Tools	Guidance/Guidelines on the use of tools and application of mechanisms, and timeframe
1. Information acquisition	1.1. National reports	
	1.1.1. Guidelines/format for the section on GTI in the third national reports due in May 2005	<p>1.1.1. The guidelines for the third national report ^{2/} will assist Parties in preparing a comprehensive report on their implementation of the GTI programme of work, due in May 2005. Guidelines on how to fill the questionnaire re accessible at http://www.biodiv.org/programmes/cross-cutting/taxonomy/gti/gti-review-en.doc .</p> <p>Compilation of the third national reports will take place prior to SBSTTA 11 in December 2005</p>
	1.1.2. Questionnaire ^{3/} for a thematic report addressing the 18 planned activities identified in the programme of work for the GTI annexed to decision VI/8	<p>1.1.2. Because the number of reports submitted by May 2005 may not be enough for a comprehensive study, and to be able to prepare in time the note by the Executive Secretary on review of implementation of GTI for consideration by the tenth meeting of SBSTTA, a questionnaire was sent out to CBD and GTI national focal points on 23 April 2004, with a 30 June 2004 deadline for action. This deadline was further extended to 31 August 2004. To date, 32 Governments have responded.</p> <p>A letter requesting for information on the status of implementation of the programme of work for the GTI was also sent on 28 May 2004 to relevant organisations including all categories of actors listed in the programme of work for the GTI.</p> <p>It is expected that a multi-stakeholder process will be used during national-information acquisition for the thematic and national reports, with the participation of all categories of actors listed in the programme of work,</p>

^{2/} UNEP/CBD/COP/7/17/Add.2.

^{3/} <http://www.biodiv.org/programmes/cross-cutting/taxonomy/gti/gti-review-en.doc>.

Action	Mechanisms/ Tools	Guidance/Guidelines on the use of tools and application of mechanisms, and timeframe
		<p>including, <i>inter alia</i>, relevant Government entities, academia, research organizations, indigenous and local communities. As described in the guidelines for the thematic report referred to under item 1.1.1 above, information should be gathered on: (a) whether the planned activities for the programme of work of the GTI have been started or completed, including the progress that has been achieved; (b) the impacts of the activities carried out in meeting the goals of the programme of work and achieving the objectives of the Convention; (c) opportunities and constraints in implementation; (d) achievement of the goals of the Strategic Plan of the Convention, in particular the 2010 target; and (e) lessons learned.</p> <p>It is also expected that answers to the questionnaire will be used in the third national reports as appropriate.</p>
	<p>1.2. Previous national reports and thematic reports containing sections on taxonomic issues, National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans (NBSAPs); and other relevant documents prepared/considered during the preparation of NBSAPs.</p>	<p>1.2.1. Sections in NBSAPs and relevant documents used during the preparation of the NBSAPs will be compiled as part of national needs assessment for taxonomy and taxonomic capacity. This work is ongoing and should be finalized by June 2005.</p> <p>1.2.2. GTI sections in the first and second national reports submitted between June 1997 and January 1998, and in May 2001 respectively will be compiled and updated as needed, although they include activities carried out before the adoption of the programme of work. Some activities had been initiated in response to decisions III/10, IV/1 D and V/9 and have been summarized for the countries that submitted reports in document UNEP/CBD/COP/6/INF/10 and UNEP/CBD/COP/6/INF/23. Information on activities carried out by countries that did not submit their reports in time for inclusion in documents from the sixth meeting of the Parties will also be taken into account. This work is ongoing and should be finalized by June 2005.</p>
	<p>1.3. Reports on relevant GEF-funded projects (having a taxonomic component).</p>	<p>1.3. GEF funded a number of projects containing taxonomic components. Progress reports on these projects will contribute to the assessment of implementation of the GTI programme of work.</p>
	<p>1.4. GTI workshop reports.</p>	<p>1.4. Pursuant to decision V/9, a number of regional workshops took place in Central America (in February 2001), Africa (February/March 2001</p>

Action	Mechanisms/ Tools	Guidance/Guidelines on the use of tools and application of mechanisms, and timeframe
		and July 2002)), Europe (June 2004), and Asia and Pacific (September 2002 and October 2004). The outcomes of these workshop has been submitted to SBSTTA or the Conference of the Parties in information documents. They contain information that is useful for the assessment of implementation of the GTI programme of work. Compilation of this information is ongoing and should be finalized by June 2005.
	1.5. Reports relevant to the programme of work of the GTI from organizations at the regional and international levels; including the status of GTI pilot projects (see an indicative list in UNEP/CBD/COP/6/INF/23).	1.5. Various governmental, intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations are conducting work relevant or in the context of the GTI programme of work. The Executive Secretary requested these organizations to submit reports and is compiling that information. This work is ongoing and should be finalized by May 2005.
2. Assessment of the level of implementation	2.1. Synthesis of national and thematic reports using analytical tools developed by the Secretariat of the Convention for the Third National Reports.	2.1. The synthesis was started in September 2004 and will be completed in June 2005.
	2.2. Desk study: compilation of information from 2.1 above and relevant information from other sources.	2.2. The desk study is ongoing, and will be completed in February 2005.
	2.3. E-forum and/or, depending on availability of funds, workshop to consolidate the conclusions/findings	2.3. The E-forum is expected to be launched from March to May 2005.
3. Assessment of the effectiveness of the programme of work and its output in meeting the objectives of the Convention, including the 2010 target	3.1. Desk study by the Executive Secretary in collaboration. 3.2. E-forum and/or, depending on availability of funds, workshop to consolidate findings.	3.1. The desk study is ongoing and expected to be completed in February 2005. 3.2. The forum is expected to be launched from March to May 2005.

4. Revision and updating of the GTI programme of work. adopted in decision VI/8 in 2002	4.1. Gap analysis taking into account results from assessments under items 2 and 3 above.	4.1.1. The Executive Secretary in collaboration with the Coordination Mechanism of the GTI will re-examine and re-evaluate the GTI programme of work after compiling and reviewing available information gathered above. This will explicitly consider decisions of the sixth and seventh meetings of the Conference of the Parties on the thematic areas and other cross-cutting issues, and earlier decisions, to ensure that all needs expressed by the Parties that are hindered by the taxonomic impediment are accommodated in the GTI programme of work, including thematic areas and cross cutting issues developed after endorsement of the GTI programme of work, e.g. mountain and island biodiversity, protected areas, and the international soil biodiversity initiative. This work is ongoing and should be finalized by June 2005.
		4.1.2. For the purpose of revising and updating the programme of work for the GTI, the following are being considered: the Strategic Plan and the 2010 target, the goals, targets and sub-targets being developed as well as the indicators for progress in achieving the targets. This work is ongoing and should be finalized by June 2005.
	4.2. E-forum, including for considering GTI contribution to the 2010 target.	The e-forum is expected to be launched in March 2005 and closed in May 2005
5. Enhancing practical support for national and regional implementation of the GTI programme of work	5.1. Desk study on good practices and success stories for dissemination and use in training workshops.	5.1. The desk study is ongoing, to be completed in February 2005.
	5.2. E-forum to assist activities under 5.1 above.	5.2. The E-forum is expected to be launched from March to May 2005.
	5.3. Partnership building workshop, depending on availability of funds.	5.3. A partnership building workshop is envisaged in May-June 2005, depending on availability of funds.
