

# **Report on the expert meeting in preparation of the fifth meeting of SBSTTA, December 2 - 4, 1999**

convened by the  
German Federal Agency for Nature Conservation  
at the International Academy for Nature Conservation,  
Isle of Vilm

Horst Korn, Jutta Stadler & Ralf Grunewald (Eds.)

- **Pilot phase of the clearing-house mechanism**
- **Ecosystem approach**
- **Agricultural biological diversity**
- **Sustainable use of the components of biological diversity**
- **Indicators of biological diversity**
- **Guidelines for the second national reports**
- **Programme of work for dryland, mediterranean, arid, semi-arid, grassland and savannah biological diversity**
- **Ad hoc technical expert groups**

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German Federal Agency for Nature Conservation 1999

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Editors` addresses:  
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# Contents

**Introduction.....5**

**Summary of the discussions and recommendations:**

- 1. Pilot phase of the Clearing House Mechanism ..... 6
- 2. Ecosystem Approach: Further conceptual elaboration ..... 9
- 3. Agricultural Biological Diversity: assessment of ongoing activities and priorities for a programme of work ..... 13
- 4. Sustainable use of the components of biological diversity: identification of sectoral activities that could adopt biodiversity-friendly practices and technologies..... 15
- 5. Development of indicators of biological diversity..... 18
- 6. Establishment of guidelines for the second national reports, including indicators and incentive measures ..... 20
- 7. Programme of work for dryland, Mediterranean, arid, semi-arid, grassland and savannah biological diversity ..... 22
- 8. Ad hoc technical expert groups: terms of reference, and rosters of experts and proposal on a uniform methodology for their use..... 29

**Background paper on ad hoc technical expert groups ..... 30**

**List of participants..... 33**

**Programme of the workshop..... 39**

**Agenda of SBSTTA-5..... 42**

## INTRODUCTION

The "expert meeting in preparation of SBSTTA-5" was an informal scientific workshop, aiming to exchange information on the topics to be discussed at the upcoming fifth meeting of SBSTTA of the Convention on Biological Diversity. The 36 participants, including a member of the CBD Secretariat and representatives from national ministries, agencies and scientific institutions from 16 countries (EU-member states and PHARE countries) attended in their personal capacity as experts for the Convention.

The meeting was chaired by Dr. Horst Korn, German Federal Agency for Nature Conservation.

Each topic was introduced briefly by a specialist in this field. The following discussion was mainly based on the documents prepared for the SBSTTA-5 meeting by the Secretariat of the Convention. In this report the main points of discussion are summarized and general comments on the Secretariat's documents are given. In addition, amendments to the recommendations given in the Secretariat's documents are suggested. All major points raised during the discussion - even though they may have been controversial - are represented in this report. The aim of the workshop was not to reach a consensus on the individual points but rather to have an exchange of opinions and ideas. Nevertheless, a high degree of similar points of view was apparent.

This report is intended to help individuals and delegations in their preparation of the topics on the agenda of SBSTTA-5.

## **SUMMARY OF THE DISCUSSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

All participants pointed out the overall high quality of the documents prepared by the Secretariat of the CBD for SBSTTA-5. Nevertheless, the topics provided ample opportunities for discussion.

### **1 Pilot phase of the Clearing House Mechanism (CHM)**

#### Introductory remarks:

The document UNEP/CBD/SBSTTA/5/3 briefly summarizes the results of three information-documents provided by the Secretariat: the “Independent Review of the CHM” , the “Strategic Plan of the CHM” and the “CHM longer-term programme of work”.

The document highlights some important considerations made for the use of the CHM and its potential role within the Convention on Biological Diversity and within the creation of synergies between ongoing information initiatives and other related conventions.

The discussion revealed the need for further clarification of the functions and values of the CHM for its users. Clear needs and "niches“ of the CHM should be identified to have a better understanding on what to concentrate/focus on. This is also related to the question of "quality of data and information“ and its use for decision making as well as reporting purposes.

#### Proposed amendments/changes to the draft recommendations:

No changes or amendments were suggested.

### Additional recommendations:

- Facilitate and promote contact building among all partners of the Convention as well as the understanding of their ongoing activities and the potential role, function and use of the CHM as a facilitator. National, regional and global “Biodiversity-Fairs” could be a valuable tool to enhance technical and scientific co-operation, access and transfer of technology, exchange of information as well as capacity building.
- Each CHM-National Focal Point should be invited to summarize its identified needs in order to meet the demands of the users. This "list of demands“ could be updated periodically and made available via the CHM.
- Observe carefully the development of the Global Biodiversity Information Facility (GBIF) and consider its role in support of the CBD. If GBIF should be installed and implemented, its activities should be in line with the objectives of the CBD and in close relation with the CHM or part of it.
- Invite Parties to build on the experience gained in projects of joint development of clearing house mechanisms in industrialized and developing countries ("partnering-role“: e.g. between Belgium and some African countries like Congo (Democratic Rep.), Chad, Niger, Mauritania, Burkina Faso, Germany and Colombia and Cameroon).
- Each Party should make the general public more aware of the existence of the CHM and its role, functions, opportunities and services provided ("awareness building“).
- Enlarge the target group of the CHM by focussing its offers more on the general public.
- CHM could include abstracts of scientific thesis-papers related to biodiversity issues (usually "grey literature“) to make them accessible to a wider audience.

Other remarks:

A clear focus should be developed for the main CHM-objective “to facilitate scientific and technical cooperation” (Art.18.3). This and the recommendations presented in the Secretariat’s document will have strong implications for the staff and the financial resources in the Secretariat.

It was further highlighted, that the CHM can only be developed towards the information-, communication-, and co-operation system for the benefit of the CBD if all Contracting Parties to the Convention actively participate in the development and implementation of their National CHMs - creating the global CHM/Biodiversity-Network - as well as support the work of the Informal Advisory Committee to the CHM.

## 2 Ecosystem Approach: Further conceptual elaboration

### Introductory remarks:

UNEP/CBD/SBSTTA/5/11

#### A. Description of the ecosystem approach

6. The ecosystem approach is a strategy for the integrated management of land, water and living resources that promotes conservation and sustainable use in an equitable way. Thus, the application of the ecosystem approach will help to reach a balance of the three objectives of the Convention: conservation; sustainable use; and the fair and equitable sharing of the benefits arising out of the utilization of genetic resources.

7. An ecosystem approach is based on the application of appropriate scientific methodologies focused on levels of biological organization which encompass the essential processes, functions and interactions among organisms and their environment. It recognizes that humans, with their cultural diversity, are an integral component of ecosystems.

8. This focus on processes, functions and interactions is consistent with the definition of "ecosystem" provided in Article 2 of the Convention:

" 'Ecosystem' means a dynamic complex of plant, animal and micro-organism communities and their non-living environment interacting as a functional unit."

This definition does not specify any particular spatial unit or scale, in contrast to the Convention definition of "habitat". Thus, the term "ecosystem" does not, necessarily, correspond to the terms "biome" or "ecological zone", but can refer to any functioning unit at any scale. Indeed, the scale of analysis and action should be determined by the problem being addressed. It could, for example, be a grain of soil, a pond, a forest, a biome or the entire biosphere.

9. The ecosystem approach requires adaptive management to deal with the complex and dynamic nature of ecosystems and the absence of complete knowledge or understanding of their functioning. Ecosystem processes are often non-linear, and the outcome of such processes often show time-lags. The result is discontinuities, leading to surprise and uncertainty. Management must be adaptive in order to be able to respond to such uncertainties and contain elements of "learning-by-doing". As with the

precautionary principle, measures may need to be taken even when some cause- and-effect relationships are not fully established scientifically.

Proposed amendments/changes to the draft recommendations:

- It should be stated clearly, even though the focus of the ecosystem approach is on structure and function, that the maintenance of elements, like species is also important and a prerequisite for the proper function of the system.
- The term "management" needs to be adjusted in a sense that it does not imply that "managing an ecosystem" means to have complete control over it. Thus, using the phrase "adaptive management" may be a clearer term that implies having control over the use of an ecosystem and may also imply a "hands-off" policy.

Additional recommendations:

None

Other remarks/general discussion:

It was found that the ecosystem approach stresses the importance of ecosystem functioning. However, it should be noted, that this should not undervalue the importance of biodiversity, even though ecosystems seem to continue to perform their basic functions after the disappearance of some species.

Difficulties were encountered with the term "management", which may suggest a situation of complete control over an ecosystem and its components by man. However, managing an ecosystem should be defined by having control over its use. Thus, "adaptive management" might be a clearer term and controlling the use may also imply a "hands-off" policy.

The question was raised as to how the ecosystem approach could contribute to sharing

of benefits derived from the use of genetic or other biodiversity-related resources and for sharing of the costs or foregone benefits because of use restrictions. It does not specifically address these issues. The same may be true in part for the concept of sustainable use, which also includes elements not addressed by the ecosystem approach.

Some participants wished to give the definition of the ecosystem approach a different formulation by defining it as a "strategy for the integrated management of relationships between the natural capital and socio-economic systems that promote conservation of biodiversity and sustainable development of human society in an equitable way".

According to the suggested new definition, the ecosystem approach "is based on the application of appropriate scientific methodologies focused on levels of biological and ecological organization which encompass the essential processes, functions and interactions within biodiversity. It recognizes that the human population, with its cultural diversity, and associated domestic species as well as social and economic facilities are an integral component of biodiversity/the hierarchy of ecological systems". The rationale behind this proposed new formulation was seen as a change in the understanding of the environment: from an assemblage of abiotic and biotic factors to a hierarchy of ecological systems in which the ecosystem is the basic functional unit including social human systems.

The object of integrated management in this approach was seen as the relationship between socio-economic systems and the natural capital. In case the altered definition mentioned above is taken up by SBSTTA, the following definitions would have to be added to the draft glossary:

Natural capital: Goods and services provided by ecosystems

Socio-economic systems: The local, regional and global network of man-dominated systems including rural, urban and industrial settlements and associated artificial, transformed and semi-natural ecosystems with specific metabolism (synonym on the global scale: anthroposphere).

Anyhow, the majority of the participants felt that one should keep the description of the ecosystem approach given in the Secretariat's Paper (UNEP/CBD/ SBSTTA/5/11), which is the result of a long process of international discussion (e.g. 12 workshops/seminars on the topic and a liaison group).

The ecosystem approach as it is presented in the Secretariat's document was considered by some participants as too theoretical. There is a lack of understanding of how it could be applied in practice. On the other hand, a number of activities and programmes that are already being implemented can be considered as applications of the ecosystem approach although they make no specific reference to it. Examples cited were biosphere reserves, Integrated Coastal Zone Management and international river conventions in Europe (e.g. The International Commission on the Protection of the River Rhine against Pollution).

There were slightly differing views as to the relationship between the ecosystem approach and the basic actions of integrated management. The ecosystem approach may be seen as a tool to implement the objectives of the CBD. This implies that these objectives can also be reflected in the principles.

On the other hand, the three main CBD objectives mentioned above are themselves the basis of integrated management through which the ecosystem approach strategy is performed. According to this view, the ecosystem approach provides information for integrated management in terms of biological productivity, carrying capacity, ecological status (indicators) functional assessment and economic valuation of societal values for specific ecosystems. This knowledge is needed for the development and implementation of management programmes, including conservation, sustainable use, and benefit sharing.

The results of the implementation of management programmes can again be used to validate and/or improve the existing strategy and lead to new ecosystem studies. Already existing experiences should be considered.

### 3 Agricultural Biological Diversity: assessment of ongoing activities and priorities for a programme of work

#### Introductory remark:

The following issues were identified as of particular importance:

- Incentive measures
- Indicators

#### Proposed amendments/changes to the draft recommendations:

The proposed programme elements are, of necessity, rather general, and need to be elaborated in the context of each region and country. Compared to other regions, the emphasis of food security may not be as applicable to Europe, for example. Therefore, SBSTTA may wish to add the following to **recommendation 2** (changes underlined):

- *"Urges Parties, countries, international and regional organizations, civil-society organizations and other relevant bodies to promote, and, as appropriate, carry out, the programme of work and to elaborate regional programmes of work, as appropriate, within this framework."*  
(~~Text~~ = old text; Text = new suggested text)

The **operational objective of Programme Element three**, taken out of context, may be misleading. It should be amended, as follows:

- *"To strengthen the capacities of farmers, their communities, and other stakeholders, to manage agricultural biodiversity so as to increase ~~their~~ benefits derived from the sustainable use of agricultural biodiversity, and promote awareness and responsible action by producer organizations and agro-enterprises. (~~Text~~ = old text; Text = new suggested text)"*

Additional recommendations:

- To request Parties to increase the integration of biodiversity issues in agricultural policies.

Other remarks:

none

#### **4 Sustainable use of the components of biological diversity: identification of sectoral activities that could adopt biodiversity-friendly practices and technologies**

##### Introductory remarks:

The concept of sustainable use of biodiversity should be further elaborated taking into account its environmental, social, economic and institutional dimensions and specified for each sector (fisheries, forestry, agriculture, tourism, etc.) and each sectorial activity taking into account their specific characteristics.

##### Proposed amendments/changes to the draft recommendations:

Table 2 of the UNEP/CBD/SBSTTA/5/13 needs to be completed in order to include all related provisions of CBD relevant to sustainable use (e.g. benefit sharing, access to and transfer of technology, capacity building and institutional development, involvement of the private sector, as well as international cooperation regarding areas beyond national jurisdiction):

Table 2 of the background document (UNEP/CBD/SBSTTA/5/13) was seen as incomplete by some participants. The proposed amended table should read as follows:

Indicative classification of measures in the Convention relating to sustainable use

General Provisions	#	Measures	Articles	
International cooperation	1	Cooperation in respect of areas beyond national jurisdiction	5	
	2	Cooperation in case of adverse impacts	14	
	3	Research, scientific and technical education and training	12	
	4	Educational and public awareness programmes	13	
	5	Benefit sharing in relation to genetic resources	15.7	
	6	Access to and transfer of technology, involving the private sector	16	
	7	Information exchange	17	
	8	Technical and scientific cooperation, capacity and institution building	18	
Integration into national decision-making and policies	9	Sectoral or cross-sectoral plans, programmes, strategies and policies	10 (a); 6 (a), (b)	
	10	Cooperation between government and private sector	10 (e)	
	11	Identification and monitoring of components important for sustainable use	7 (a), (b)	
	12	Compatibility and integration of conservation and sustainable use	8 (i)	
	13	Protection and promotion of customary use and traditional knowledge	10 (c); 8 (j)	
	14	Benefit sharing in relation to the use of traditional knowledge	8 (j)	
	15	Incentive measures	11	
	16	Research, training, technical and scientific cooperation	12; 18.2	
	Avoiding or minimizing adverse impacts	17	Measures to avoid or minimize adverse impacts	10 (b)
		18	Identification and monitoring of processes and activities with an adverse impact	7 (c)
19		Regulation or management of biological resources (quotas etc.)	8 (c), (l); 10 (b)	
20		Remedial action	8 (f), 10 (d)	
21		Control of invasive alien species	8 (h)	
22		Environmental impact assessment and strategic environmental assessment	14	
23		Regulation of living modified organisms	8 (g); 19.3	

### Additional recommendations:

- Guiding principles for sustainable use should be elaborated to serve as a framework for sectorial guidelines and indicators. Case studies may serve as a basis for this work.
- Make use of the experience gained with sustainable use in related conventions and agreements (e.g. CSD, Ramsar).
- The cooperation between CSD's work on sustainable development and CBD's work on sustainable use should be strengthened and intensified. Accordingly, attention should be given to the environment, social, economic and institutional dimensions to achieve sustainable use.
- An assessment of the existing work programmes should be made with the aim to assess how sustainable use is integrated into the programmes and which experiences are gained up to now.
- Biosphere reserves may serve as "models" for the implementation of sustainable use measures of the Convention.

### Other remarks:

When elaborating a concept/strategy/approach of sustainable use of biodiversity, the level of use of the abiotic environment and its impact on biodiversity have to be considered. Therefore, a rationale use of abiotic resources should be achieved to minimize adverse impacts on biodiversity.

Sustainable use may be achieved by imitating natural processes.

A key issue is the definition of sustainable use outside protected areas.

The question was raised, on how to define which level of use of biodiversity is sustainable? Suggested answer: Within a certain frame proposed by scientists the level of use is chosen by society.

## 5 Development of indicators of biological diversity

### Proposed amendments/changes to the draft recommendations:

Not to ask the Parties to set up plans for the second-track indicator programme, but to ask the Executive Secretary to initiate the work and propose a core set of response and sustainable use indicators.

### Additional recommendations:

- To invite the Parties to include in their national report an indicator which shows the consequences of their use of natural resources from abroad on the biodiversity of these countries ("ecological footprint").
- To request the Executive Secretary to start a process of co-ordination between the different international biodiversity indicator activities.
- To encourage the Parties to start a similar process of co-ordination on the national level.
- Recommend to Parties to make the target value of the indicators a matter of societal choice.
- That the second track indicator programme addresses indicators for the application of the ecosystem approach including sustainability indicators.
- That SBSTTA examines options prepared by the Executive Secretary (see above) for the development of second-track indicators and report to COP on this matter.

Other remarks:

Some participants expressed their view, that this new paper is no step forward compared with the old indicator paper UNEP/CBD/SBSTTA/3/9 and that in some respects it even seems to be a step back.

Threatened species should be defined according to the IUCN Red list category criteria, as already recommended in UNEP/CBD/SBSTTA/3/9.

The causality between the proposed indicators and their relationship with biodiversity is sometimes not clear. This may become more clear when the model “driving force – pressure – impact – state – response“ is used.

The proposed core set (see document UNEP/CBD/SBSTTA/5/12) is rather heterogeneous (from general to very detailed). They should be made more uniform and aggregated.

Indicators should not be used in the first place to police and control countries, but rather to get a picture of the situation at the international and regional level. Nevertheless, it has to be kept in mind that the core set needs certain harmonization to allow for an overall picture at all.

Species indicators have to be developed according to biogeographical regions.

## **6 Establishment of guidelines for the second national reports, including indicators and incentive measures**

### Introductory remark:

The standardized matrix (Annex I of UNEP/CBD/SBSTTA/5/14) was felt to be helpful in providing the Parties with clear guidance on what to report on. Nevertheless, participants thought that this alone would not be sufficient.

### Proposed amendments/changes to the draft recommendations:

None

### Additional recommendations:

- Reports should incorporate a matrix of obligations in brief and focus on particular area(s) in detail, for example those relevant to the agenda of the next COP ("hybrid-report").
- Recommends that COP recognizes the importance of the CHM and uses it to provide appropriate linkages between different reporting requirements of biodiversity-related conventions and agreements.
- Recommends that COP encourages Parties to strengthen reporting at the regional level of different relevant treaties and agreements through new and established tools/instruments.

Other remarks:

Continuous reporting (changes and additions are reported whenever necessary) was discussed as an option to meet future reporting requirements. But it was felt that stakeholder involvement would be hampered, when using this procedure.

It was suggested to follow up on a possible pilot-project including several Parties and draw on the lessons learnt.

It was pointed out that the reporting cycle depends on the contents of the reports and should therefore be decided on after the contents are defined.

## 7 Programme of work for dryland, Mediterranean, arid, semiarid, grassland and savannah biological diversity

### Introductory remark:

The meeting endorsed the general structure of the programme of work and the suggested recommendations 1-6.

### Proposed amendments/changes to the draft recommendations

Comments on Section II (*Scope of dryland biodiversity, its importance, status and trends and a brief survey of ongoing activities*)

- Participants noted that the environment types (e) "savannah ecosystems" and (f) "other grassland ecosystems" do not necessarily fall outside categories (a) to (d):
  - (a) Hyper-arid ecosystems
  - (b) Arid ecosystems
  - (c) Semi-arid ecosystems
  - (d) Mediterranean ecosystems

If they do fall outside these categories, they might not fall under any definition of drylands. If (e) "savannah ecosystems" and (f) "Other grassland ecosystems" are sub-humid ecosystems then the term "Sub-humid" should appear in the long title instead of the terms "grassland and savannah ecosystems". A clearer definition of the scope of the programme of work still needs to be agreed.

Comments on Section III (*Draft Programme of Work*) are as follows:

B. "Overall objectives, approach and guiding principles

- **15(a):** *"To build upon existing knowledge and ongoing activities. The programme will promote a concerted response to fill knowledge gaps while supporting best management practices through partnership among countries and institutions."*

Comment:

It is important to retain the resource bases of the developed countries (the origin of their skills, technology, existing data, etc.). Through partnerships they may have an important role in enabling developing countries (and their resource bases) to implement their National Biodiversity Species Action Plans (NBSAP).

- **15(a), (b) & (f):**

15 (a) *"To build upon existing knowledge and ongoing activities. The programme will promote a concerted response to fill knowledge gaps while supporting best management practices through partnership among countries and institutions;"*

15 (b): *"To ensure harmony with the other relevant thematic programmes of work under the Convention, as well as the work on cross-cutting issues;"*

15 (f): *"To support the development of national strategies, programmes and to promote the integration of biodiversity concerns in sectoral and cross-sectoral plans, programmes and policies, in furtherance of Article 6 of the Convention."*

Comment:

Such partnerships need long-term commitments at both ends.

- **15 (d): "To promote effective stakeholder participation;"**

Comment:

Stakeholders are not identified. They should include *inter alia* not just governmental bodies but also resource bases (e.g. scientific institutions), NGOs, Community based Organizations, etc.

- **15 (e) & (f):**

15(e): *"To respond to national priorities. Hence, implementation of specific activities should be flexible and demand-driven;"*

15(f): "To support the development of national strategies, programmes and to promote the integration of biodiversity concerns in sectoral and cross-sectoral plans, programmes and policies, in furtherance of Article 6 of the Convention."

Comment:

In some cases, national strategies will involve the necessary research and consultations to establish national priorities. It is recommended to merge these last two items (15(e) and 15(f)) into one.

## C. Proposed elements of the programme of work

### Cluster A: Assessments

- **Rationale:**

*"Dryland ecosystems tend to be naturally highly dynamic disequilibrium systems. Assessment of the status and trends of dryland biodiversity is therefore particularly challenging. A better understanding of the ~~dynamics~~ elements of biodiversity in ~~drylands~~ dryland biodiversity, their dynamics, ~~its~~ their socio-economic value, and consequences of ~~its~~ their loss and change is needed. This should not, however, be seen as a prerequisite for targeted actions for the conservation and sustainable use of dryland biological diversity. Indeed, lessons learned from practice, including indigenous practice, contribute to the knowledge base."* (~~Text~~ = old text; Text = new suggested text)

Comment:

The insertion of "elements" and "dryland biodiversity" is to emphasise that at least at the species level there is still insufficient knowledge on taxonomy, population biology and ecology to interpret their dynamics etc. The insertion of "and change" recognises that change may also have adverse impacts.

- **Activity 1:**

*"~~Identification of local and global benefits derived from dryland biodiversity and the local and global benefits, and assessment of the socio-economic impact of its loss~~ and change".* (~~Text~~ = old text; Text = new suggested text)

Comment:

The insertion of "and change" recognises that change may also have adverse impacts.

- **Activity 2:**

*"Identification of specific areas, within drylands, of particular value for biological diversity, and/or under particular threat with reference to the criteria in annex 1 to the ~~Convention to Combat Desertification~~ on Biological Diversity".*

(~~Text~~ = old text; Text = new suggested text)

Comment:

It should also be pointed out that in the case of the Mediterranean ecosystems there is a rather good identification of specific areas of particular value for biological diversity, and/or under particular threat with reference to the criteria in annex 1. We need to recognise existing data, e.g. *Centres of Plant Diversity* (1994-1997; WWF/IUCN).

- **Activity 3:**

*"Further development of indicators of dryland biodiversity and its loss, in order to elucidate trends. "*

Comment:

Participants emphasised the importance and shortage of long-term ecological monitoring programmes in drylands.

- **Activity 5:**

*"Identification of best management practices, including indigenous knowledge and practices that can be broadly applied."*

Comment:

Indigenous (and local) knowledge was highlighted as being under threat. Its conservation is therefore a prerequisite for its application.

- **Ways & means:**

(a) *"Consolidation of information from various ongoing sources, including those under the Convention to Combat Desertification and other international conventions the Global Observing System, and other programmes. This process would draw upon ongoing work of these existing programmes, with additional catalytic activities, such as workshops, further use of the clearing-house mechanism under the Convention on Biological Diversity, and partnerships between organizations, including, where appropriate, joint activities of the secretariats of the Convention on Biological Diversity and the Convention to Combat Desertification. Some of these catalytic activities might be funded through the Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity, with in-kind support of participating organizations;"*

Comment:

This paragraph should include repatriation from the developed countries resource bases. This can be best achieved through the development of long-term partnerships between these resource bases and those of e.g. developing countries at an institutional level. Far from just training individuals capacity building must also aim at building a future of national institutions, for example in their ability to respond to the obligations and opportunities of the CBD process. It should also be noted that several European Parties with Mediterranean ecosystems within their boundaries should also be considered receivers of this repatriation process.

(b) *"~~Targeted research, including~~ Applied research, for example existing programmes of the international agricultural research centres and national agricultural research systems, with additional funding for priority areas needed to overcome barriers to the conservation and sustainable use of dryland biodiversity;" (~~Text~~ = old text; Text = new suggested text)*

Cluster B: Targeted actions in response to identified needs

- **Operational Objective:**

*"To promote the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity in drylands, and to combat ~~biodiversity loss in drylands and its~~ the socio-economic causes of its loss or change."* (~~Text~~ = old text; Text = new suggested text)

- **Rationale:**

*"The activity needed to promote the conservation and sustainable use of dryland biodiversity will depend on the state of the dryland resources and the nature of the threats. Hence, a range of options needs to be considered, from managed use to in-situ and ex-situ.*

*Many dryland resources must be managed at the level of watersheds, or at higher spatial levels, implying community or inter-community rather than individual management. This is often further complicated by multiple user groups (e.g., agriculturalists, pastoralists and fisherfolk) and the migratory habits of some animal species and users of biodiversity. Institutions need to be developed or strengthened to provide for biodiversity understanding and management at the appropriate scale and for conflict resolution. (Text = new suggested text)*

*Sustainable use of biodiversity in drylands may require the development of alternative livelihoods, and the creation of markets or other incentives to promote ~~responsible use~~ sustainable use."* (~~Text~~ = old text; Text = new suggested text)

- **Activity 6:**

*"Promotion of specific measures for the conservation, restoration, and sustainable use of dryland biodiversity, through, inter alia:"* (Text = new suggested text)

(a) *"The strengthening ~~use~~ of protected areas and other special measures for the conservation of dryland biodiversity, including zoning and the promotion of community participation in management."* (~~Text~~ = old text; Text = new suggested text)

- **Activity 7:**

*"Promotion of ~~responsible~~ sustainable resource management, within ecological principles, at appropriate levels, through an enabling policy environment, including, inter alia."* (~~Text~~ = old text; Text = new suggested text)

- **Ways & means:**

The meeting endorsed (a) to (e) but recommended that successful delivery depends on long term commitment through international and intranational partnerships multi-organisational and multi-disciplinary approaches and maintenance of the developed country resource bases (like skills, technology, and existing data).

#### Comments on Section IV (*Reporting Framework*)

- **Para. 19:**

*"It is proposed that the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice would review such reports after two years, and make recommendations for the further elaboration of the programme of work at that time. Thereafter, it is proposed that the implementation of the programme be reviewed every four years."*

Comment:

Participants recommended that no decision on reporting times should be made until procedures have been agreed by SBSTTA 5. It was also noted that no timeframe for the programme had been developed.

#### Other remarks:

-

The meeting recognised that *in situ* and *ex situ* approaches should be regarded as complements to one another rather than as alternatives or options. Some participants stressed that *ex situ* conservation must act as a complement to *in situ* conservation, not the vice-versa.

## **8 Ad hoc technical expert groups: terms of reference, and rosters of experts and proposal on a uniform methodology for their use**

### Introductory remarks:

Welcomes and supports the Joint work Programme 2000-2001 between the Convention on Biological Diversity and the Convention on Wetlands (Ramsar) which among other issues deals with inland water ecosystems and should be considered in the discussion of an ad hoc technical expert group on inland water biodiversity.

### Proposed amendments/changes to the suggested recommendations:

None

### Additional recommendations:

- To review the need of having "informal task forces", when acknowledging already another type of expert group ("liason group") to report to the Secretary General.
- Decides on a change in the Modus operandi of SBSTTA in that sense, that SBSTTA decides on the establishment of ad hoc technical expert groups, including the terms of reference, under the general budget of COP, in order to make the SBSTTA more flexible in its work.
- Not to focus on the topics of the ad hoc technical expert groups only on thematic areas, but also on cross-cutting issues.

## Ad hoc technical expert groups

### Preamble

During recent meetings of the COP and SBSTTA, a number of issues have arisen that suggest formation of ad hoc technical expert groups which could significantly advance the work of the Convention on Biological Diversity in different *thematic areas*, as well as assist SBSTTA in responding to requests from the COP in its work on thematic or cross-sectoral areas.

At its fourth meeting, the COP requested SBSTTA (*decision IV/16, paragraph 21*) to advise the fifth meeting of the COP on terms of reference for *ad hoc* technical expert groups in specific thematic areas. At its fourth meeting, the SBSTTA discussed this issue with specific reference to establishing technical expert groups in five priority thematic areas: 1) Marine and coastal biological diversity, 2) inland water biological diversity, 3) alien species, 4) biological diversity of drylands, and 5) forest biological diversity (UNEP/CBD/SBSTTA/4/5). However, SBSTTA deferred action until its fifth meeting, based on concerns with the need to update the existing roster of *ad hoc* technical experts, with the number of possible groups that might be operating simultaneously, and with the perceived lack of specificity and detail in the mandates and terms of reference proposed for the five groups.

*Paragraph 21* requests the SBSTTA, taking into *account its proposals for the programme of work*, to advise the fifth meeting of the Conference of the Parties of the terms of reference for the ad hoc technical expert groups on thematic areas. The terms of reference should take into account the need, to provide a peer reviewed scientific and technical assessment of the status and trends of, and impacts on, biological diversity, including the effectiveness of the types of measures for conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity.

### **Technical expert groups:**

The Modus operandi of the SBSTTA, decision IV/16 Annex 1, VI, paragraph 12:

*A limited number of ad hoc technical expert groups on specific priority issues on the programme of work of SBSTTA may be established, as required, for limited duration. The establishment of such ad hoc technical expert groups would be guided by the elements as presented in a)- h).*

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

b) The Executive Secretary will nominate scientific and technical experts drawn from roster for ad technical experts groups in consultation with the Bureau of the SBSTTA. The ad hoc technical groups shall be composed of no more than fifteen experts competent in the relevant field of expertise, with due regard to geographical representation and the special conditions of least-developed countries and small island developing States;

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

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

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

f) Reports produced by the ad hoc technical groups should, as a general rule submitted for peer review;

g) All efforts will be made to provide adequate voluntary financial assistance for the

participation of experts in expert groups from developing countries and countries with economies in transition Parties;  
and

h) The number of ad hoc technical expert groups active each year will be limited to the minimum necessary and will depend on the amount of resources designated to the SBSTTA by the COP in its budget or on the availability of extra budgetary resources.

#### **SBSTTA4 and terms of reference for ad hoc technical groups**

At the fourth SBSTTA meeting it was pointed out that the terms of reference for the ad hoc technical groups are important and issues strategic guidance in the form of the Programme of work for the Convention as contained in decision IV/16.

The terms of reference for an ad hoc technical expert group on *Marine and Coastal Protected Areas* was suggested by SBSTTA 4. The group should be established at the fifth meeting of the Conference of the Parties and endeavour to complete its work no later than the seventh meeting of the SBSTTA.

At the SBSTTA meeting many representatives believed that, if expert groups were formed, they should be small in composition and should have a clearly defined and time-limited mandate. The needs should be clearly evaluated by the Secretariat and they should be limited in number to no more than two or three at time.

Particular stress was made on the need to avoid duplication with other bodies, i.e. the work already

underway within the framework of the Convention on Wetlands, for inland waters, Convention on Desertification, for drylands and the global Invasive Species Programme, for alien species. Also the selection process for experts and the need to made use of existing roster of experts, which should be revised and updated accordingly was stressed.

## "Expert meeting in preparation of the fifth meeting of SBSTTA"

December 2 - 4, 1999

at the Federal Agency for Nature Conservation  
International Academy for Nature Conservation,  
Isle of Vilm, Germany

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## **Expert meeting in preparation of the fifth meeting of SBSTTA**

### **Programme**

#### **Wednesday, 01.12.1999**

Arrival on the Isle of Vilm

18.30        *Dinner*

#### **Thursday, 02.12.1999**

08.00        *Breakfast*

09.00        Welcome of the participants  
Introduction to the Federal Agency for Nature Conservation and the  
International Academy for Nature Conservation, Isle of Vilm  
Opening of the meeting

09.15        HORST FREIBERG  
Pilot phase of the Clearing-House Mechanism  
Discussion

10.30        *Coffee / Tea break*

10.45        HORST KORN  
Ecosystem approach - further conceptual elaboration  
Discussion

12.00        *Lunch*

13.30        Guided tour in the nature reserve of the Isle of Vilm

15.00        *Coffee / Tea break*

15.30        DAVID COOPER

Agricultural biodiversity: assessment of ongoing activities and priorities for a programme of work  
Discussion

17.00 *Break*

17.15 GERNOT BÄURLE  
Sustainable use of the components of biological diversity  
Discussion

19.00      *Reception at the invitation of the Federal Agency for Nature Conservation, Germany*

evening programme, adventure excursion (optional)

### **Friday, 03.12.1999**

08.00      *Breakfast*

09.00      JOHAN THISSEN  
Development of indicators of biological diversity  
Discussion

10.30      *Coffee / Tea break*

11.00      GORDANA BELTRAM  
Establishment of guidelines for the second national reports  
Discussion

12.30      *Lunch*

14.00      HEW PRENDERGAST  
Biological diversity of dryland, mediterranean, arid, semi-arid, grassland and savannah ecosystems: options for the development of a programme of work  
Discussion

*Coffee / Tea break*

MARINA V. WEISSENBERG  
Ad hoc technical expert groups: terms of reference, and roster of experts and a proposal on a uniform methodology for their use  
Discussion

Other topics

Final discussion

18.00      *Dinner*

evening programme

### **Saturday, 04.12.1999**

08.00      *Breakfast*

09.00      1. Ferry boat to Lauterbach

09.30      2. Ferry boat to Lauterbach  
All day excursion to Rügen Island

18.00      *Dinner*

**Sunday, 05.12.1999**

*Breakfast*

Departure

### PROVISIONAL AGENDA

1. Opening of the meeting.
2. Organizational matters:
  - 2.1. Election of officers;
  - 2.2. Adoption of the agenda;
  - 2.3. Organization of work.
3. Reports:
  - 3.1. Cooperation with other bodies;
  - 3.2. Pilot phase of the clearing-house mechanism;
  - 3.3. Review of the Global Taxonomy Initiative;
  - 3.4. Alien species: guiding principles for the prevention, introduction and mitigation of impacts;
  - 3.5. Specific issues in ongoing work programmes on thematic areas:
    - 3.5.1. Inland waters biological diversity: ways and means to implement the work programme;
    - 3.5.2. Marine and coastal biological diversity: consideration of implementation tools for the programme of work, and analysis of coral bleaching;
    - 3.5.3. Forest biological diversity: status and trends and identification of options for conservation and sustainable use.
4. Priority issues:
  - 4.1. Thematic areas:
    - 4.1.1. Programme of work for dryland, Mediterranean, arid, semi-arid, grassland and savannah biological diversity;

4.1.2. Agricultural biological diversity: assessment of ongoing activities and priorities for a programme of work;

4.2. Cross-cutting issues:

4.2.1. Ecosystem approach: further conceptual elaboration;

4.2.2. Development of indicators of biological diversity;

4.2.3. Sustainable use of the components of biological diversity: identification of sectoral activities that could adopt biodiversity-friendly practices and technologies;

4.3. Mechanisms for implementation:

4.3.1. Establishment of guidelines for the second national reports, including indicators and incentive measures;

4.3.2. Ad hoc technical expert groups: terms of reference, and rosters of experts and proposal on a uniform methodology for their use.

5. Draft provisional agenda for the sixth meeting of the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice.

6. Dates and venue of the sixth meeting of the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice.

7. Other matters.

8. Adoption of the report.

9. Closure of the meeting.