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CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES TO THE CONVENTION ON BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY

Tenth meeting

Nagoya, Japan, 18–29 October 2010

Item 4.3 (c) of the provisional agenda*

SCIENCE-POLICY INTERFACE ON BIODIVERSITY, ECOSYSTEM SERVICES AND HUMAN WELL BEING

Note by the Executive Secretary

1. In its decision IX/15, the Conference of the Parties noted the need for improved scientific information as related, *inter alia*, to the interests of the Convention on Biological Diversity and other biodiversity-related conventions with a view to strengthening the role of the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice (SBSTTA) under the Convention on Biological Diversity and the scientific advisory bodies of other biodiversity-related conventions. It also welcomed the agreement of the Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme to convene an ad hoc open-ended intergovernmental multi-stakeholder meeting to consider establishing an efficient international science-policy interface on biodiversity, ecosystem services and human well-being.
2. The Conference of the Parties requested the Ad Hoc Open-ended Working Group on Review of Implementation of the Convention, at its third meeting, to consider the outcome of the intergovernmental meeting and its implications for the implementation and organization of work of the Convention, including its Strategic Plan, and to make recommendations for consideration by the Conference of the Parties at its tenth meeting.
3. In its recommendation 3/4, the Working Group, took note of the outcomes of the two intergovernmental multi-stakeholder meetings held to date, welcomed the decision of the Governing Council/Global Ministerial Environment Forum on the matter and encouraged participation in the third and final ad hoc intergovernmental and multi-stakeholder meeting held in Busan, Republic of Korea, June 2010. Moreover, the Working Group recommended that the Conference of the Parties, at its tenth meeting, consider the outcome of the third and final ad hoc intergovernmental and multi-stakeholder meeting on an intergovernmental platform on biodiversity and ecosystem services and implications for the implementation and organization of work of the Convention, in particular, the work of SBSTTA (paragraph 5).
4. The third ad hoc intergovernmental and multi-stakeholder meeting concluded that an intergovernmental science-policy platform on biodiversity and ecosystem services should be established

* UNEP/CBD/COP/10/1.

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and reached agreement on the main elements of the proposed platform. The meeting further recommended that the United Nations General Assembly be invited to consider at its sixty-fifth session its conclusions and to take appropriate action for the establishment of the platform. The full text of the outcome of the meeting is annexed to this note, for consideration by the participants in the tenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention. The full report of the meeting and the reports of the first and second meetings are available at www.ipbes.net.

Experience under the Convention on Biological Diversity and other conventions in relating to external assessment bodies

5. In considering this issue, the Conference of the Parties may wish to refer to the relevant work of SBSTTA. For example, in its recommendation VI/5, the Subsidiary Body decided on principles for development of methodologies for scientific assessment,¹ agreed on a set of procedures for conducting these assessments,² decided to initiate five pilot studies, including one on the interlinkages between biological diversity and climate change,³ and provided guidance to the Millennium Ecosystem Assessment on topics to be included in its work.

6. The Conference of Parties may also wish to recall earlier practice of dealing with external assessment processes under the Convention. As noted above, SBSTTA, at its sixth meeting, provided guidance to the Millennium Ecosystem Assessment (recommendation VI/5). At its tenth meeting, the Subsidiary Body reviewed the draft reports, in particular the draft synthesis report prepared for the Convention on Biological Diversity (recommendation X/3). The implications of the findings of the Millennium Ecosystem Assessment for the future work of the Convention were discussed at its eleventh meeting (recommendation XI/4).

7. The Conference of Parties may also wish to take into account practice in related conventions, for example the relationship between the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC). IPCC prepares regular comprehensive assessments of climate change.⁴ The second and subsequent assessments have been examined by SBSTTA for implications for the Conference of the Parties. In addition to the main assessments, IPCC also produces special reports, methodology reports, technical papers, and supporting material, often in response to requests from the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate

¹ SBSTTA noted that assessment processes should:

(a) Be initiated as the result of an intergovernmental recommendation and conducted within a set of agreed procedures, rules, and frameworks;

(b) Be focused, cost-effective and transparent, avoid duplication and be delivered in a timely manner;

(c) Be based on scientific principles;

(d) Be based on existing knowledge and address knowledge gaps;

(e) Be management and/or policy-oriented;

(f) Engage a wide spectrum of societal interest;

(g) Be carried out at the appropriate level(s) (global, regional, national, local), focusing on the regional level, and with the involvement of appropriate expertise, in line with decision V/20, paragraph 31;

(h) Contribute to capacity-building and enhancement of institutions and promote scientific cooperation, education and public awareness.

² The procedures were developed by a brainstorming meeting on scientific assessments held from 17 to 19 November 1999 in Oslo and contained in annexes IV and VI of the report of that meeting (UNEP/CBD/SBSTTA/6/9/Add.1)

³ The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change took up the request and prepared a technical paper on the interlinkages between biological diversity and climate change, as an input to the Convention's pilot assessment on biological diversity and climate change, which also was subsequently considered by the Subsidiary Body on Scientific and Technological Advice of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change.

⁴ The First Assessment Report was published in 1990, the Second Assessment Report in 1995, the Third Assessment Report in 2001 and the Fourth Assessment Report in 2007. The Fifth Assessment Report is scheduled for 2014.

Change, its Subsidiary Body for Scientific and Technological Advice,⁵ or from other environmental conventions.

8. Finally, in considering this issue, the Conference of Parties may also wish to recall its earlier practice with the decisions on follow-up to the Millennium Ecosystem Assessment (decisions VIII/9 and IX/15) by which it identified some needs and priorities for further work on integrated assessments of biodiversity and ecosystem services, at the global and sub-global, including national, levels, including scenario development, and related capacity building. Further work in this regard has been undertaken in preparation for third edition of Global Biodiversity Outlook, including the report *Biodiversity Scenarios: Projections of 21st Century Change in Biodiversity and Associated Ecosystem Services* (CBD Technical Series No. 50).⁶

Consideration of the implications of the outcome of the Busan meeting

9. In considering the implications of the intergovernmental science-policy platform on biodiversity and ecosystem services for the implementation and organization of work of the Convention, in particular the work of SBSTTA, the Conference of the Parties may wish to focus, in particular, on subparagraphs 6 (a), (c), (d) and (e) of the Busan outcome (see the annex to the present note), taking into account the experience summarized above.

10. With reference to paragraph 6 (a) of the Busan outcome, the Conference of the Parties may wish to consider establishing an effective process through which SBSTTA, under the guidance of the Conference of the Parties, may submit requests related to biodiversity and ecosystem services and which enables the platform to respond within a time-frame that facilitates the provision by SBSTTA of timely advice to the Conference of the Parties.

11. The Conference of the Parties may further wish to consider how the regular and timely assessments of knowledge on biodiversity and ecosystem services and their interlinkages carried out by the new platform and referred to in paragraph 6 (c) of the Busan outcome, as well as the responses of the new platform to requests from Governments and other multilateral environmental agreements, should be considered by SBSTTA.

12. The Conference of the Parties may further wish to consider how the role of the new platform in helping to catalyse support for subregional and national assessments (paragraph 6 (c) of the Busan outcome), in identifying policy-relevant tools and methodologies in support of policy formulation and implementation (paragraph 6 (d) of the Busan outcome), in prioritizing capacity-building needs and providing and catalysing funding to address such needs (paragraph 6 (e) of the Busan outcome) can contribute to the implementation of the Convention and its updated and revised Strategic Plan.

13. The Conference of the Parties may also wish to indicate its willingness to engage with the new platform so that these issues can also be addressed by the platform, once established, at its plenary meeting. At the same time, SBSTTA, the Working Group on Review of Implementation, and the Executive Secretary may be requested to provide further analysis as required. A draft decision to this effect is included in the compilation of draft decisions (UNEP/CBD/COP/10/1/Add.2).

⁵ For example, the Special Report on Land Use, Land-Use Change, and Forestry (SR-LULUCF) has been prepared in response to a request from the Subsidiary Body for Scientific and Technological Advice (SBSTA), which requested at its eighth session a report examining the scientific and technical implications of carbon sequestration strategies related to land use, land-use change, and forestry activities.

⁶ <http://www.cbd.int/doc/publications/cbd-ts-50-en.pdf>

*Annex***BUSAN OUTCOME⁷**

The representatives of Governments at the third ad hoc intergovernmental and multi-stakeholder meeting on an intergovernmental science-policy platform on biodiversity and ecosystem services, convened in Busan, Republic of Korea, from 7 to 11 June 2010:

1. Recall decision SS.XI/4 of 26 February 2010, by which the Governing Council of the United Nations Environment Programme requested the Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme to convene, in June 2010, a third and final ad hoc intergovernmental and multi-stakeholder meeting to negotiate and reach agreement on whether to establish an intergovernmental science-policy platform on biodiversity and ecosystem services and to transmit, on behalf of the Governing Council, the outcomes of and necessary documentation from the third and final meeting to the General Assembly at its sixty-fifth session for consideration during the high-level segment on biological diversity in September 2010 and thereafter;

2. Note the outcomes of the first and second ad hoc intergovernmental and multi-stakeholder meetings on an intergovernmental science-policy platform on biodiversity and ecosystem services, held in Putrajaya, Malaysia, from 10 to 12 November 2008, and in Nairobi from 5 to 9 October 2009, respectively;

3. Acknowledge the importance of terrestrial, marine and coastal, and inland water biodiversity and ecosystem services which, while critically important for sustainable development and current and future human well-being, particularly with regard to poverty eradication, are currently experiencing significant loss; also acknowledge that the science-policy interface on biodiversity and ecosystem services must be strengthened at all levels; and further acknowledge the importance of ensuring that the science made available is of the highest quality and independence, of enhancing cooperation with relevant United Nations bodies and of building capacity to mainstream biodiversity and ecosystem services;

4. Welcome the expressions of interest in supporting the proposed platform by the United Nations Environment Programme, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations and encourage further consideration of their roles by their respective governing bodies;

5. Note the interest of the United Nations Development Programme in the proposed platform and the important role of that organization in capacity-building within the United Nations system;

6. Conclude, having now reached agreement, as requested by the Governing Council of the United Nations Environment Programme through its decision SS.XI/4, that an intergovernmental science-policy platform for biodiversity and ecosystem services should be established to strengthen the science-policy interface for biodiversity and ecosystem services for the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity, long-term human well-being and sustainable development, as follows:

(a) Focusing on government needs and based on priorities established by the plenary, the platform should respond to requests from Governments, including those conveyed to it by multilateral environmental agreements related to biodiversity and ecosystem services as determined by their

⁷ The following text is the annex of the report of the third ad hoc intergovernmental and multi-stakeholder meeting on an intergovernmental science-policy platform on biodiversity and ecosystem services (UNEP/IPBES/3/3).

respective governing bodies. The plenary should welcome inputs and suggestions from, and the participation of, United Nations bodies related to biodiversity and ecosystem services as determined by their respective governing bodies. The plenary should also encourage and take into account, as appropriate, inputs and suggestions made by relevant stakeholders, such as other intergovernmental organizations, international and regional scientific organizations, environment trust funds, non-governmental organizations and the private sector. To facilitate this, and to ensure that the platform's work programme is focused and efficient, a process to receive and prioritize requests should be established by the plenary;

(b) The new platform should identify and prioritize key scientific information needed for policymakers at appropriate scales and catalyse efforts to generate new knowledge by engaging in dialogue with key scientific organizations, policymakers and funding organizations, but should not directly undertake new research;

(c) The new platform should perform regular and timely assessments of knowledge on biodiversity and ecosystem services and their interlinkages, which should include comprehensive global, regional and, as necessary, subregional assessments and thematic issues at appropriate scales and new topics identified by science and as decided upon by the plenary. These assessments must be scientifically credible, independent and peer-reviewed, and must identify uncertainties. There should be a clear and transparent process for sharing and incorporating relevant data. The new platform should maintain a catalogue of relevant assessments, identify the need for regional and subregional assessments and help to catalyse support for subregional and national assessments, as appropriate;

(d) The new platform should support policy formulation and implementation by identifying policy-relevant tools and methodologies, such as those arising from assessments, to enable decision makers to gain access to those tools and methodologies, and, where necessary, to promote and catalyse their further development;

(e) The new platform should prioritize key capacity-building needs to improve the science-policy interface at appropriate levels and then provide and call for financial and other support for the highest-priority needs related directly to its activities, as decided by the plenary, and catalyse financing for such capacity-building activities by providing a forum with conventional and potential sources of funding;

(f) The new platform should be established as an independent intergovernmental body administered by one or more existing United Nations organizations, agencies, funds or programmes;

(g) The plenary, which should be the platform's decision-making body, should be open to participation by all States Members of the United Nations and by regional economic integration organizations. Intergovernmental organizations and other relevant stakeholders should participate in the plenary as observers, in accordance with the rules of procedure established by the plenary. Through its rules of procedure, the plenary should in general take decisions by consensus of government representatives;

(h) One chair and four vice-chairs, taking due account of the principle of geographical balance among the five United Nations regions, should be nominated and selected by Governments which are members of the plenary. The criteria, nomination process and length of service should be decided by the plenary;

(i) A core trust fund to be allocated by the plenary should be established to receive voluntary contributions from Governments, United Nations bodies, the Global Environment Facility, other intergovernmental organizations and other stakeholders, such as the private sector and foundations;

7. Also conclude that in carrying out its work the platform should:
 - (a) Collaborate with existing initiatives on biodiversity and ecosystem services, including multilateral environmental agreements, United Nations bodies and networks of scientists and knowledge holders, to fill gaps and build upon their work, while avoiding duplication;
 - (b) Be scientifically independent and ensure credibility, relevance and legitimacy through the peer review of its work and transparency in its decision-making processes;
 - (c) Use clear, transparent and scientifically credible processes for the exchange, sharing and use of data, information and technologies from all relevant sources, including non-peer-reviewed literature, as appropriate;
 - (d) Recognize and respect the contribution of indigenous and local knowledge to the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity and ecosystems;
 - (e) Provide policy-relevant information, but not policy-prescriptive advice, mindful of the respective mandates of the multilateral environmental agreements;
 - (f) Integrate capacity-building into all relevant aspects of its work according to priorities decided by the plenary;
 - (g) Recognize the unique biodiversity and scientific knowledge thereof within and among regions, and also recognize the need for the full and effective participation of developing countries and for balanced regional representation and participation in its structure and work;
 - (h) Take an interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary approach that incorporates all relevant disciplines, including social and natural sciences;
 - (i) Recognize the need for gender equity in all relevant aspects of its work;
 - (j) Address terrestrial, marine and inland water biodiversity and ecosystem services and their interactions;
 - (k) Ensure the full use of national, subregional and regional assessments and knowledge, as appropriate;
8. Further conclude that the platform's efficiency and effectiveness should be independently reviewed and evaluated on a periodic basis as decided by the plenary, with adjustments to be made as necessary;
9. Recommend that the General Assembly at its sixty-fifth session should be invited to consider the conclusions set out in the present outcome document and take appropriate action to establish the platform;
10. Also recommend that the Governing Council of the United Nations Environment Programme should invite the Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme, in cooperation with the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations and the United Nations Development Programme, to continue to facilitate any ensuing process to implement the platform until such time as a secretariat is established.