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REGIONAL SYNERGY WORKSHOP FOR LATIN
AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN ON THE
BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY OF AGRO-ECOSYSTEMS
WITHIN DRY AND SUB-HUMID LANDS

Bolans Village, Antigua and Barbuda, 20-23 November 2006

**REPORT OF THE REGIONAL SYNERGY WORKSHOP FOR LATIN AMERICA AND
THE CARIBBEAN ON THE BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY OF AGRO-ECOSYSTEMS
WITHIN DRY AND SUB-HUMID LANDS**

INTRODUCTION

1. The conferences of the parties to the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD), the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), as well as the other biodiversity-related conventions (including in particular the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of the World Fauna and Flora (CITES), the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals (CMS), the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands and the World Heritage Convention (WHC)) have called for closer collaboration and increased synergy amongst the goals, objectives and activities of the different conventions.

2. In paragraphs 5 and 6 of its decision VII/2, on the biological diversity of dry and sub-humid lands, the Conference of the Parties (COP) to the Convention on Biological Diversity requested the Executive Secretary, in collaboration with the secretariats of the other Rio conventions and biodiversity-related conventions, to further develop mechanisms for facilitating the synergistic implementation of these conventions, especially at the national level, including through the organization and follow-up of national and regional synergy workshops.

3. In paragraph 11 (e) of decision VIII/2, also on the biological diversity of dry and sub-humid lands, the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity further requested the Executive Secretary, in collaboration with the Secretariats of the Rio conventions and the other biodiversity-related conventions, to identify obstacles to the achievement of the 2010 biodiversity target in dry and sub-humid lands and to propose ways to overcome these obstacles.

4. Following the request of the Conference of Parties, the Executive Secretary of the Convention on Biological Diversity, in close collaboration with the secretariats of the United Nation Convention to Combat Desertification and the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, and in consultation with other biodiversity-related conventions and the secretariat of the Global Environment Facility (GEF), convened a regional workshop for Latin America and the Caribbean. Following the kind offer of the Government of Antigua and Barbuda, the Workshop was convened from 20 to 23 November 2006 in Bolans Village, Antigua. Financial support for the Workshop was provided by the Government of the Netherlands.

5. The programmes of work on dry and sub-humid lands and on agricultural biodiversity under the Convention on Biological Diversity formed the thematic framework of the Workshop.
6. The objectives of the Workshop were to:
 - (a) Exchange knowledge and experience relating to the implementation activities toward the achievement of the 2010 biodiversity target in agro-ecosystems within dry and sub-humid lands;
 - (b) Identify obstacles to the implementation of mutually supportive activities amongst the three Rio Conventions and other biodiversity-related conventions within agro-ecosystems within dry and sub-humid lands and explore means to overcome them; and
 - (c) Build capacity for participants to develop relevant project proposals and activities which achieve the objectives of the multiple conventions, and explore options for the funding of such activities.
7. The Workshop was attended by 23 Government-nominated experts from: Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Bahamas, Brazil, Grenada, Guatemala, Mexico, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Saint Lucia and Saint Kitts and Nevis. A representative of Colombia also contributed to the preparation of the background document to the Workshop. Representatives of the Secretariat of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification also participated in the Workshop. A full list of participants is attached as annex I.
8. The language of the Workshop was English. However, some presentations and working groups were conducted in Spanish with interpretation provided by participants.

ITEM 1. OPENING OF THE MEETING

9. Mr. Conrod Hunte, Deputy Ambassador of Antigua and Barbuda to the United Nations, opened the Workshop on behalf of the Minister of the Environment, on Monday, 20 November 2006. In his statement, Mr. Hunte recognized the potential of the meeting to significantly contribute to regional efforts for the implementation of the three Rio Conventions. Mr. Hunte also highlighted the opportunities for the workshop to contribute to Parties efforts to simultaneously implement the commitments made at the Johannesburg Summit, the Millennium Development Goals and under the texts of the conventions.
10. Ms. Carol-Faye George, Environment Education and Information Officer, Ministry of Works, Transportation and the Environment of Antigua and Barbuda, introduced the speakers for the opening of the Workshop. Ms. Faye-George was joined in her welcoming by Mr. Ato Lewis, Senior Environment Officer, Ministry of Works, Transportation and the Environment, Government of Antigua and Barbuda and Ms. Patricia Black, National Beautification Officer, Ministry of Works, Transportation and the Environment, Government of Antigua and Barbuda.
11. Mr. Jo Mulongoy from Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity, on behalf of the Executive Secretary, also welcomed the participants and thanked the Government of Antigua and Barbuda for their excellent hospitality and the Government of the Netherlands for their financial support.
12. Mr Sergio Zelaya from the Secretariat of the UNCCD also welcomed participants and extended his thanks to the Government of Antigua and Barbuda.
13. Ms. Jaime Webbe from the Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity explained the purpose, objectives and expected outputs of the Workshop. The Convention Secretariat also made a presentation to further describe the concept of synergies, building on discussions from past meetings on the subject.

ITEM 2. ORGANIZATIONAL MATTERS

2.1. Election of officers

14. After a brief self-introduction of the participants, Mr. Ato Lewis of Antigua and Barbuda was elected as Chair of the Workshop.

2.2. Adoption of the agenda

15. Workshop participants adopted the following agenda on the basis of the provisional agenda (UNEP/CBD/WS-Syn.LAC/1/1):

1. Opening of the meeting.
2. Organizational matters
 - 2.1. Election of officers;
 - 2.2. Adoption of agenda;
 - 2.3. Organization of work.
3. Regional exchange of knowledge on the implementation of mutually supportive activities in agro-ecosystems within dry and sub-humid lands: overview of regional experiences towards the achievement of the 2010 biodiversity target in agro-ecosystems within dry and sub-humid lands.
4. Obstacles to the implementation of synergistic activities in agro-ecosystems within dry and sub-humid lands
 - 4.1. Review of lessons learned from synergy initiatives;
 - 4.2. Identification of areas for expanded synergistic activities.
5. Capacity-building for the development of activities and project proposals for the implementation of synergistic activities
 - 5.1. Training workshop on mainstreaming synergistic activities within projects and programmes;
 - 5.2. Discussions and regional planning.
6. Other matters.
7. Adoption of the report.
8. Closure of the meeting.

2.3. Organization of work

16. The Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity informed participants the note on ways and means to prepare national activities or project proposals for the implementation of synergistic activities in agro-ecosystems within dry and sub-humid lands, referred to in the annotations to the provisional agenda as document UNEP/CBD/WS-Syn.LAC/1/4, was not available and references to it should be ignored. Workshop participants endorsed the revised organization of work as proposed in the annotated provisional agenda (UNEP/CBD/WS-Syn.LAC/1/Add.1). Participants also agreed to consider all items first in plenary and to establish working groups as needed to deliberate and draft conclusions

ITEM 3. REGIONAL EXCHANGE OF KNOWLEDGE ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF MUTUALLY SUPPORTIVE ACTIVITIES IN AGRO-ECOSYSTEMS WITHIN DRY AND SUB-HUMID LANDS AND OVERVIEW OF REGIONAL EXPERIENCES TOWARDS THE ACHIEVEMENT OF THE 2010 BIODIVERSITY TARGET IN AGRO-ECOSYSTEMS WITHIN DRY AND SUB-HUMID LANDS

17. The Chair of the Workshop introduced the topic and provided general information on the background document UNEP/CBD/WS-Syn.LAC/1/2 on an overview of regional experiences and good practices examples towards the achievement of the 2010 biodiversity target in agro-ecosystems within dry and sub-humid lands. He said that the document was based on submissions from participants and contains a number of national experiences from the region including: Argentina, Bahamas, Colombia,

Mexico, Peru, and Saint Lucia. Those regional experiences emphasized examples of good practice, as well as the benefits and lessons learned from the implementation of synergistic activities.

18. Mr. Heitor Matallo, a representative of the Secretariat of the UNCCD gave a presentation on regional and international initiatives. The presentation focused on UNCCD initiatives in the region including national synergy workshops held in six countries in the region. Mr. Matallo also identified a number of consequences of desertification which impact other convention objectives including, among others: (i) the spreading of viruses and microscopic fungi and insects through sand storms; (ii) the expansion, as a result of climate change, of dry areas into previously humid areas; and (iii) the degradation of water resources.

19. Representatives from Argentina, Bahamas, Brazil, Guatemala, Peru and Saint Lucia made presentations on national experiences implementing synergistic activities. Peru, Bahamas and Saint Lucia focused on the role of indigenous and local knowledge in the implementation of the Conventions in agro-ecosystems within dry and sub-humid lands. Argentina discussed synergies in the Patagonia grasslands. Brazil's presentation concerned national experience in establishing institutional arrangements for the implementation of synergistic activities. Guatemala reviewed their evaluation of implementation of the three Rio conventions and on opportunities for the synergistic implementation of the agro-biodiversity programme of work.

20. Presentations were also made on behalf of Mexico, Argentina (the second presentation) and Antigua and Barbuda. The presentation from Mexico focused on the mainstreaming of synergies in Mexico including through such initiatives as the protection of soil health in agricultural and grazing lands and forests, for carbon sequestration, to combat desertification and for the benefit of agro-biodiversity. Argentina spoke about successful education and awareness campaigns on the importance of mainstreaming biodiversity within production ecosystems. The presentation from Antigua and Barbuda focused on public awareness that mainstreamed the synergistic implementation of a number of Conventions and highlighted the institutional structure which supported it.

21. Presentations by participants highlighted a number of lessons learned that participants subsequently discussed in working groups for possible consideration in the conclusions of the Workshop including: (i) institutional enabling environment for synergies; (ii) building synergies from the bottom up; and (iii) addressing financial and human capacity constraints. The lessons learned as identified by these working groups are presented in annex II below.

ITEM 4. OBSTACLES TO THE IMPLEMENTATION OF SYNERGISTIC ACTIVITIES IN AGRO-ECOSYSTEMS WITHIN DRY AND SUB-HUMID LANDS

4.1. Review of lessons learned from synergy initiatives

22. The Chair of the Workshop introduced the background document on obstacles to the achievement of the 2010 biodiversity target in agro-ecosystems within dry and sub-humid lands (UNEP/CBD/WS-Syn.LAC/1/3).

23. A representative of the Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity presented an overview of its joint work programme with the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification on the biodiversity of dry and sub-humid lands and the Joint Liaison Group of the Rio conventions.

24. Participants decided to break into three working groups for discussions. The Chair of the Workshop designated groups based on geographic distribution: Caribbean countries, Mesoamerica (Central America and Mexico), and South America. The obstacles identified through these working groups are presented as annex II below.

4.2. Identification of areas for expanded synergistic activities

25. The obstacles listed in annex II were consolidated into six main obstacles for further discussion: (i) weak institutions; (ii) inappropriate or non-existent policies/legal frameworks; (iii) lack of capacity

among focal points and supporting teams; (iv) insufficient and inconsistent monitoring and evaluation; (v) financial constraints; and (vi) limited public awareness. During working group discussions of these obstacles, participants also presented suggestions on ways to overcome them including activities for Parties and for the Secretariats of the Conventions. These proposals were discussed in plenary and are also included in annex II below.

26. Participants proposed that the secretariats of the conventions should encourage Parties that have not yet done so, to undergo a process to develop and implement appropriate strategies for the implementation of synergies, using as a reference, among others, the report of the 2004 Regional Workshop for Africa on Synergy among the Rio Conventions and other biodiversity-related conventions in implementing the programmes of work on dry and sub-humid lands and agricultural biodiversity (UNEP/CBD/WS-Syn.Afr/1/6). The Workshop also issued a request to donors to support such processes designed and developed by individual country Parties for the harmonizing of plans and strategies.

ITEM 5. CAPACITY-BUILDING FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF ACTIVITIES AND PROJECT PROPOSALS FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF SYNERGISTIC ACTIVITIES

5.1. Training workshop on mainstreaming synergistic activities within projects and programmes

27. A representative of the Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity gave an overview of funding opportunities and requirements through the Global Environment Facility (GEF), highlighting a number of considerations for the preparation of project proposals including the Resource Allocation Framework (RAF) adopted for the fourth replenishment of the Facility. The concepts of global environmental benefits and incrementality were highlighted as important requirements for GEF funding.

28. In discussions following the presentation by the Convention Secretariat, participants highlighted the high cost of implementing the conventions and related synergistic activities and expressed the subsequent need for increased financial resources to be made available by relevant institutions, agencies and donor countries to this end.

5.2. Discussions and regional planning

29. Based on the table of priority goals and activities developed under item 4.2 the chair of the Workshop identified three goals that could benefit from a regional approach including: (i) building capacity among national focal points and supporting teams; (ii) improve monitoring and evaluation; and (iii) increase public awareness.

30. Participants broke into working groups to elaborate concept notes for each of the three goals identified by the Chair. The working groups then reported back to the plenary and presented the three concept notes. These concept notes are available in annex II below.

ITEM 6. OTHER MATTERS

31. Participants issued a request to the Secretariats of the CBD and the UNCCD to provide guidance on next steps for the elaboration and implementation of the proposals developed during the Workshop. In response to this request, the CBD and UNCCD Secretariats committed to widely circulating the outcomes of the meeting, including to participants attending the fifth session of the Committee for the Review of Implementation of the Convention to Combat Desertification and the Netherlands, as the funding agency of the meeting. The UNCCD also committed to including the outcomes in upcoming work plans of the Latin America and the Caribbean regional unit of the Convention.

32. Participants suggested the establishment of a core group to follow-up on implementation of the outcomes of the Workshop. Guatemala, Argentina and Saint Lucia volunteered to support the core group.

ITEM 7. ADOPTION OF THE REPORT

33. The present report was adopted by participants at the plenary meeting on 23 November, 2006.

ITEM 8. CLOSURE OF THE MEETING

34. Mr. Conrod Hunte and Ms. Diann Black-Layne attended the closure of the meeting on behalf of the Government of Antigua and Barbuda. They reiterated their thanks to the participants and organizers. Following the customary exchange of further courtesies, the Chair declared the Workshop closed at 1:30 p.m. on Thursday, 23 November 2006.

Annex I

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Annex II

STRATEGIC APPROACH TO PROMOTE SYNERGIES BETWEEN THE THREE RIO CONVENTIONS AND OTHER BIODIVERSITY-RELATED CONVENTIONS IN AGRO-ECOSYSTEMS WITHIN DRY AND SUB-HUMID LANDS ^{1/}

I. JUSTIFICATION

Workshop participants identified a number of obstacles to the implementation of synergistic activities in agro-ecosystems within dry and sub-humid lands. These obstacles were drawn from regional experiences in implementing synergistic activities and were categorized by participants under three headings:

- (a) Establishing an institutional enabling environment for synergies;
- (b) Building synergies from the bottom-up; and
- (c) Addressing financial and human capacity constraints.

The list of obstacles presented below is not an exhaustive list but rather represents common priority obstacles identified for the region.

A. Establishing an institutional enabling environment for synergies

1. Need to cover all institutional levels from top (political decision) to bottom
2. Identify stakeholders and, for each, clear roles and responsibilities towards the achievement of a common goal / objective
3. Establish strategic alliances through: (i) the identification of programmes; and (b) the identification of organizations working on the programmes
4. Develop networks for all stakeholders
5. Adopt appropriate policies (national, sub-regional and regional levels)
6. Need for effective coordination between focal points through:
 - (a) Establishing focal points for each issue within relevant ministry even if convention focal points are not in that ministry;
 - (b) Identifying one focal point for all conventions; or
 - (c) Combining national coordinating mechanisms of the different Conventions into one coordinating body
7. Ensure continuity of representation and maintenance of institutional memory
8. Mainstream to support synergistic activities (increase awareness of the importance of implementation of the Conventions throughout the institution)

B. Building synergies from the bottom up

1. Build stronger linkages amongst institutions at all levels
2. Reduce institutional overlaps
3. Give more attention to the needs of primary producers
4. Mainstream the Conventions at the local level
5. Stronger stakeholder participation in accessing information pertaining to the conventions

^{1/} As defined in the programme of work on the biological diversity of dry and sub-humid lands under the Convention on Biological Diversity.

6. Recognition of 'sustainable development' as one common goal
7. Facilitate access to markets
8. Increased capacity building
9. Identifying common geographic spaces
10. Capitalizing on indigenous efforts
11. Increased scientific research in traditional and local knowledge
12. Economic participation of dry and sub-humid lands
13. The need to level the implementation of the Conventions using the Brazilian solution (i.e. political commitment of the government and common ground of the three Conventions)
14. Capacity to absorb assistance

C. Addressing financial and human capacity constraints

Problems identified

1. Limited resources due to low priority assigned by the government - as a result, there are human capacity and financial constraints.
2. The imbalance between the various conventions was also seen as a major constraint as it places them in competition for resources instead of supporting each other
3. Poor recognition of the issues by financial institutions
4. Rapid turnover of focal points
5. Various focal points (territoriality and duplication)
6. Poor representation at meetings (representatives at regional and national levels do not have the mandate to implement and therefore have limited decision making power)
7. No monitoring and evaluation (and hence revision) of programmes
8. No life after project (limited project sustainability)
9. Public participation is often limited even though it is key to the success of the project

Solutions to the identified problems

1. The enhancement of coordination among governmental institutions.
2. Mainstreaming the conventions in the various governmental sectors. A supportive work programme from the United Nations conventions could assist in with mainstreaming.
3. Developing mechanisms for making environmental management self-sustainable:
 - a. Environmental accounting (giving an economic value to the environment so that policy makers and the general public see their value)
 - b. Soils shall be developed as a commodity through payments for ecosystem services, such as carbon sequestration and maintenance of genetic resources.
 - c. Polluter pays principle (making people pay for their damages to offset costs of managing the environment)
 - d. Incentives for good practices (environmental services for soils, water and forestry).
4. Development of national policies which clearly define the importance of the conventions as they relate to national priorities and the relate institutions.

5. Public awareness and education.

II. ACTIVITIES

Based on the above-identified obstacles, Workshop participants identified a number of activities to be implemented in order to enhance implementation of synergistic activities in agro-ecosystems within dry and sub-humid lands. This work was carried out on both a sub-regional and a regional level with the final, regional list of activities for Parties and the Secretariats presented in table 1 below.

A. *Caribbean subregional priorities*

Obstacles

1. Capacity constraints:
 - Institutional/technical and financial constraints;
 - Focal point duties competing with national duties;
 - Few people doing a great deal of work (small numbers of technicians);
 - Imbalance of support for work on the various conventions.
2. Lack of public awareness:
 - Policy makers do not recognize the importance and advantages of addressing synergy issues;
 - Stakeholders do not recognize how the various issues/conventions impact on their daily lives.
3. Poor policy and legal framework:
 - Limited mandate for collaboration at either the national or international level;
 - No clear mechanism to support collaboration.
4. Lack of science and technology:
 - No baseline data – poor funding or imbalanced funding;
 - Relevant institutions are not able to support/conduct necessary research;
 - Limited indicators specific to island ecosystems (within the UNCCD process a regional workshop was held but the next phases were never completed);
 - There is a need for the UNCCD to develop a similar approach as the CBD in terms of recognizing the specific needs of islands – i.e. an island programme of work.

Strategies to overcome obstacles

1. Develop a harmonized regional policy and strategy on the environment (need for CARICOM to identify its environmental space)
2. Establish a clear mandate that would facilitate coordination of the conventions, for example, through:
 - A stipend to support an agent to promote synergies within countries;
 - Forming an umbrella committee to coordinate work of the Conventions at the national level;
 - Establishing an umbrella agency to take responsibility for the work of the Convention at the national level;

- Reviewing roles and responsibilities of the various institutions to facilitate institutional reform and strengthening;
 - Reviewing legislation to develop harmonized/more appropriate legislation to support sustainable development / environmental management/synergies;
 - Developing sustainable development strategy with an important emphasis on synergies between the Rio conventions and other biodiversity-related conventions.
- 3 Financial and technical support for regional institutions to facilitate research and development that is relevant to the region
- Assessment of national and regional circumstances (the collection of baseline data) to develop guidance for research and technical work;
 - Institutional strengthening of the regional institutions.
- 4 Public awareness and public education:
- Education of policy makers;
 - Support for broad-based (multi-format / multi-sector information);
 - Environmental education curriculum development and development of materials;
 - Coordination of the clearing house mechanisms of the three Rio conventions.

B. Mesoamerican subregional priorities

Obstacles:

Human and financial constraints exist for a few reasons:

1. Limited resources due to low priority assigned by the government and as a result, there are people and not enough financial resources. Additionally, in the Caribbean it was discussed that there were too few resources (human and financial) available in sufficient quantities in the first place;
2. The imbalance between the various conventions was also seen as a major constraint as it placed them in competition for resources instead of supporting each other;
3. Poor recognition of the issues by financial institutions;
4. Rapid changes of focal points
5. Various focal points (territoriality and duplication);
6. Poor representation at meetings (representatives at regional and national levels do not have the mandate to implement);
7. No monitoring and evaluation (and hence revision) of programmes;
8. No life after project. (no finances and capacity after project);
9. Public participation is key to the success of the project.

Strategies to overcome obstacles:

1. Enhancement of coordination among governmental institutions;
2. Mainstreaming the conventions in the various governmental sectors. A supportive work supported by the United Nations conventions;
3. Developing mechanisms for making environmental management self-sustainable:

- (a) Environmental accounting (giving an economic value to the environment so that policy makers and the general public see their value);
 - (b) Soils shall be developed as a commodity through payments for ecosystem services, such as carbon sequestration and maintenance of genetic resources;
 - (c) Polluter pays principle (making people pay for their damages to offset costs of managing the environment);
 - (d) Incentives for good practices (environmental services for soils, water and forestry).
4. Development of national policies which clearly define the importance of the conventions as they relate to national priorities and the relate institutions.
 5. Public awareness and education.

c. South American subregional obstacles and means to overcome them

Institutional obstacles:

Obstacle

Different objectives, policies, programmes and activities of the three conventions.

Means to overcome the obstacle

Establishment of coordinating processes among the Secretariats to identify common objectives, overlapping and conflicts, and to promote harmonization of their objectives, policies, programs and activities, taking into due consideration their own decision-making processes, at the Secretariat level as well as at the country level.

Obstacle

National focal points in different institutions, without coordination.

Means to overcome the obstacle

1. Organization of annual meetings among technical areas responsible for the implementation of the conventions to plan their respective implementation processes in a coordinated manner.
2. Establishment of coordinating mechanisms among focal points for harmonizing policies, programs and projects related to the implementation of the conventions, as well as for responding to the demands of the conventions in a coordinated manner (reports).
3. Establishment of coordinating mechanisms involving focal points and other relevant institutions for harmonizing positions for the conventions negotiations processes, considering the conventions and national, state and local objectives.

Obstacle

Lack of the necessary decision-making level in the countries' representations at the conventions meetings and processes:

Means to overcome the obstacle

1. Secretariats to promote the participation of countries' representatives that have the necessary level, knowledge and skills, making clear the profile needed for accomplishing the expected results;

Informational obstacles:

Obstacle

Insufficient, scattered and unavailable information on the conventions.

Means to overcome the obstacle

Focal points to identify, gather, organize and disseminate as widely as possible (Internet) all available information related to the objectives of the Conventions;

Obstacle

Lack of dissemination of the conventions' deliberations inside the countries.

Means to overcome the obstacle

Countries to establish internal processes to disseminate the results of the meetings to the relevant institutions and technical areas, particularly the commitments undertaken.

Obstacle

Lack of adequate monitoring processes for monitoring the implementation of the conventions.

Means to overcome the obstacle

1. Develop a review process for all established indicators that considers the need for identification of common indicators, common basic data, interactions and standardized protocols;

2. Countries to guarantee the necessary financial, technological and technical resources to gather, organize, analyse, maintain and disseminate the information and indicators, at the long term;

Management Obstacles

Obstacle

Adoption of legal, financial and administrative measures, by governments as well as the private sector, that do not consider adequately the objectives of the three conventions:

Means to overcome the obstacle

1. Private and public financial institutions to establish environmental (biodiversity, desertification, climate change) criteria for approval of investments;

2. Identify hotspots for biodiversity conservation, combating desertification and climate change vulnerability – wetlands in dry and sub-humid lands –, orienting the decision-making process that considers all its potential effects;

3. Development of pilot projects for the joint implementation of the three conventions;

4. Support for productive activities that respect the objectives of the three conventions (criteria) – positive incentives.

Table 1: Goals and Activities

Goal	Output	Suggested activities for parties	Suggested activities for secretariats
1. Strengthen Institutional Arrangements for Implementation	1.1 Processes and/or institutions for collaboration formalized	<p>1.1.1 Establish a national mandate for collaboration, including new political and institutional mechanisms to implement the commitments under the conventions through <i>inter alia</i> enhancing the mainstreaming of the conventions within relevant institutions and implementing bodies such as the departments dealing with food security and social development, seeds, agrochemicals, forestry, agricultural and wildlife management, water and climate, fisheries, and plant and animal health</p> <p>1.1.2 Establish coordinating mechanisms for implementation of the different conventions including, <i>inter alia</i> through stipends for an agent or establishing an umbrella / inter-institutional committee / permanent working groups to promote synergies</p> <p>1.1.3 Review the roles and responsibilities of relevant institutions (such as those mentioned in 1.1.1 above) and define their contributions to implementation of the different conventions</p>	<p>Establish coordinating processes among the Secretariats to identify common objectives, potential overlaps and conflicts, in particular on dry and sub-humid land agro-biodiversity issues</p> <p>Enhance mainstreaming between the conventions so as to effectively promote synergies with annual defined goals</p>
	1.2 Enhanced institutional capacity of regional institutions for implementation of synergistic activities towards the achievements of the goals and objectives of the conventions	1.2.1 Conduct a needs assessment for technical research to be carried out in collaboration with regional and international institutions such as the regional office of the FAO, PROCISUR, CIMMYT, NAFTA - CEC, CATIE, and the CGIAR centers	Explore the opportunities for synergies presented by the UNCCD sub-regional work programmes
	1.3 Enhanced knowledge and expertise within operational supporting teams	1.3.1 Ensure that information on convention processes and outcomes is shared broadly within supporting institutions	Remind the focal points of the terms of reference adopted at COP8 and the

Goal	Output	Suggested activities for parties	Suggested activities for secretariats
2. Ensure an Appropriate Policy / Legislative Framework	2.1 Harmonized sub-regional policies and strategies on the environment in place where not already present, and eco-regional planning enhanced where sub-regional planning already exists	2.1.1 Ensure national support for regional institutions 2.1.2 Promote regional institutions support for national implementation	Develop stronger partnerships with regional institutions through, <i>inter alia</i> , nominating focal points within the Secretariats for collaboration with regional institutions
	2.2 Appropriate sustainable policy frameworks in place that take fully into account the environment and potential conflicts among Convention objectives, and promote synergies	2.2.1 Identify, at the national level, perverse incentives and policies that have unintentional adverse effects on the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity, in particular, agricultural biodiversity and productivity of dry and sub-humid lands, and their capacity to sustain the livelihoods of farmers and indigenous and local communities	
	2.3 National sustainable development policies developed and implemented	2.3.1 Promote the participation of all stakeholders including agricultural and agro-industrial sectors, farmers and local and indigenous communities in the processes of elaborating sustainable development policies so as to avoid conflicting action plans for implementation of the Conventions 2.3.2 Commit adequate resources for the inter-sectoral implementation of policies	Secretariat should provide technical assistance to enhance the extent to which projects include social considerations so as to guarantee that implementation activities aim at sustainable development
	2.4 Strategic Environmental Assessments applied to treaties, policies, programmes and strategies	2.4.1 Develop the institutional mandate for Strategic Environmental Assessments for the sustainable use of agro-ecosystems within dry and sub-humid lands 2.4.2 Build capacity to carry out Strategic Environmental Assessments for the sustainable use of agro-ecosystems within dry and sub-humid lands	Support, as appropriate and in collaboration with FAO, the implementation of COP decision VIII/28 on biodiversity-inclusive strategic environmental assessments including the development of guidance
3. Build Capacity Among National Focal Points and	3.1 Training for National Focal Points provided	3.1.1 Provide training on negotiation skills	Hold training on topics identified by Parties back-to-back with relevant Convention meetings

Goal	Output	Suggested activities for parties	Suggested activities for secretariats
Operational Supporting Teams	3.2 Mechanisms for the maintenance of institutional memory established	3.2.1 Ensure that focal points maintain adequate documentation and pass on knowledge and expertise to new focal points and to institutions and organizations acting as operational supporting teams	Induce national focal points to improve participation of operational focal points and correspondents
	3.3 Coordination among National Focal Points improved	3.3.1 Organize annual meetings amongst different focal points and technical experts 3.3.2 Establish a coordinating mechanism among focal points prior, during and following negotiation processes, with clear goals and expected results	Improve communication of the required decision-making power, knowledge and skills expected at convention meetings
4. Improve Monitoring and Evaluation	4.1 Capacity for monitoring and evaluation increased	4.1.1 Identify hotspots for biodiversity and sustainable land management that could be sensitive to climate change and land degradation as an opportunity for joint implementation, monitoring and evaluation 4.1.2 Provide the necessary financial and technical resources to gather, maintain and disseminate information on indicators including by engaging donors where necessary 4.1.3 Establish common indicators, baseline data and standardized protocols	Support the identification of 'hotspots' where the objectives and goals of different conventions may overlap Support the development of international learning modules on monitoring and evaluation Review existing indicators to identify those indicators which are common to the different conventions
	4.2 Indicators measuring the impacts of implementation being monitored and reported on	4.2.1 Establish mechanisms to develop, where needed, and monitor, impact indicators to assess the effectiveness of implementation of the conventions, including indicators for sustainable use 4.2.2 Make expertise and information available for the development of a regional environmental information system which could include a GIS component	Disseminate, as widely as possible, ongoing indicators work including on the indicators linked to the 2010 Biodiversity Target Support an ad hoc working group to define baseline indicators and collate information so as to develop a comprehensive regional environmental information system

Goal	Output	Suggested activities for parties	Suggested activities for secretariats
5. Increase Financial Contributions to the Implementation of Synergistic Activities	5.1 The economic value of implementation of the conventions demonstrated	5.1.1 Develop pilot projects for the joint implementation of the conventions	Disseminate, as widely as possible, COP requested information on economic incentive measures
		5.1.2 Support activities in agro-ecosystems that respect the objectives of the different conventions	
		5.1.3 Expand knowledge on the economic value of agricultural biodiversity	
	5.2 Sufficient financial resources to convention implementation assigned	5.2.1. Provide estimates of the real costs of national action plans and strategies	Disseminate, as widely as possible, COP requested guidance on innovative financial resources
		5.2.2 Create or strengthen national funding sources	
		5.2.3 Develop clear and strategic proposals in support of implementation of the conventions for submission to donors	
		5.2.4 Engage donor countries to secure needed funds to develop and implement synergistic activities	
6. Increase Public Awareness	6.1 Access to information on the Conventions increased	6.1.1 Mandate and provide capacity for national focal points and operational supporting teams to identify, gather and disseminate information on the objectives of the conventions and the objectives of the programmes of work on dry and sub-humid lands and agro-biodiversity, and related provisions in the other programmes of work	Coordinate the information contained in the clearing house mechanisms of the different conventions (e.g. coordinated search function)
		6.1.2 Develop mechanisms and internal processes to disseminate results of convention meetings and commitments undertaken in a manner that is appealing to the general public, and in particular to agricultural and agro-industrial sectors and farmers, indigenous and local communities	
	6.2 Stakeholder participation in Convention processes increased	6.2.1 Facilitate bottom-up influence for institutional policies	Present COP decisions and other relevant documents in a manner that is appealing to the general public (including by making information available in different languages)

Goal	Output	Suggested activities for parties	Suggested activities for secretariats
	6.3 Awareness, at all levels, of the benefits of implementing the conventions increased	6.3.1 Enhance education of policy makers, including in particular in all relevant sectors for agro-biodiversity in dry and sub-humid lands 6.3.2 Establish broad-based education and information 6.3.3 Develop environmental education curricula and related educational materials	Provide support to Parties as mandated through the communication, education and public awareness (CEPA) programme of work of the CBD

III. PROPOSALS FOR SPECIFIC ACTIONS TO ENHANCE IMPLEMENTATION OF SYNERGISTIC ACTIVITIES IN AGRO-ECOSYSTEMS WITHIN DRY AND SUB-HUMID LANDS

Based on the obstacles and activities identified by participant in the Workshop, three specific areas for action were identified:

- (a) Capacity-building among national focal points and supporting teams;
- (b) Improving monitoring and evaluation of implementation of progress towards the achievement of the 2010 biodiversity target in dry and sub-humid lands; and
- (c) Increasing public awareness of the three Rio conventions in agro-ecosystems within dry and sub-humid lands.

These areas were selected in light of: (i) the need to respond to identified obstacles; and (ii) the identification of areas that would benefit from a regional approach.

A: Capacity building among national focal points and operational supporting teams

In Latin America and the Caribbean there is a distinct lack of transmission of information from national focal points of the three Rio Conventions to the operational institutions and stakeholders. This reflects in a lack of coordination amongst the national focal points, which has led to information gaps, weak institutional interaction and lack of synergy.

Furthermore, most national focal points are in environment ministries that have minimum interaction with agricultural ministries that are ultimately responsible for the regulation of and development of policies applied to agro-ecosystems.

There is also a general lack of recognition, within the region, of the importance of national focal points as intermediaries between the Conventions and the national governments.

Finally there is often a high turnover of focal points with poor institutional memory.

As a result of the above, countries in Latin and America and the Caribbean seldom recognize the full implications and importance of the decisions made in the Conference of the Parties.

This project has been developed in recognition of the importance of the NCSA process for the identification of the main constraints for the implementation of the three Conventions and the institutional needs to overcome these major constraints.

Objectives

The objective of the project is to strengthen the capacity of national focal points and operational supporting teams in order to guarantee continuity and consistency of implementation of the three Rio Conventions.

Specific objective include:

- (a) To enhance the negotiation capacities of the national teams participating in the Conventions;
- (b) To enhance the participation of agro-biodiversity stakeholders including national agricultural institutions and producers in the implementation process;
- (c) To establish coordination mechanisms that will result in synergies amongst conventions.

Expected beneficiaries and stakeholders

Expected beneficiaries and stakeholders include:

- (a) National focal points and their operational supporting teams;
- (b) Production and environmental ministries and / or institutions at the national, provincial and local levels;
- (c) Society at large.

Links with other programmes/initiatives

This project will build on the national capacity self-assessments (NCSA) financed by the Global Environment Facility (GEF) by beginning to address the capacity-building needs identified through the NCSA process.

Activities

1. Based on the conclusions and recommendations of the NCSA process, elaborate a work programme to overcome the main capacity constraints and gaps identified in each country.
2. Provide training on negotiation skills for focal points and their supporting teams.
3. Create or strengthen existing mechanisms to involve local stakeholders (private sector, traditional rural farmers, and community-based organizations, among others) in the decision-making process of the implementation of the three conventions.
4. Ensure that focal points maintain adequate documentation and pass on knowledge and expertise to new focal points and to institutions and organizations acting as “operational focal points”, especially in the agro-production areas of the governments.
5. Organize annual meetings amongst different focal points and technical experts.
6. Establish a coordinating mechanism among focal points prior, during and following negotiation processes.

Indicators

1. Work programme for national capacity-building is implemented.
2. Number of persons in focal points and supporting teams that receive training in each country taking into account gender approach.
3. Inter-institutional synergy commission created or consolidated.
4. Systematized information of all the programs, ongoing activities and decisions is available for all stakeholders.
5. Decisions of annual meetings taken into consideration.

6. Unified position presented in the conferences.

B: Improve monitoring and evaluation of implementation of progress towards the achievement of the 2010 biodiversity target in dry and sub-humid lands

Rationale

The national monitoring and evaluation systems need harmonized standards for evaluation and analysis to allow for comparison and evaluation of trends.

Objective

The objective of the project is to establish and/or improve national monitoring and evaluation systems that consider the linkages among biodiversity, desertification and climate variability and change issues, particularly in agro-ecosystems in arid and sub-humid lands.

Expected beneficiaries and stakeholders

Expected beneficiaries and stakeholders include, but are not necessarily limited to:

- Government agents – Agriculture; Forestry; National Development; Tourism; Environment; Fisheries; Lands; Housing
- Farmers; fishermen
- Environmental non-governmental organizations
- Academia (research institutions)
- Regional organizations (IICA, CARDI, CARIRI, CARICOM, OECS/ESDU, CEDRA, ACTO, MERCOSUR, ECC etc)

Links with other programmes/initiatives

The project will build on ongoing initiatives in Latin America and the Caribbean, particularly initiatives addressing:

- Land use development / land reform policies
- Sustainable development policies
- National reporting (under each convention)
- Planning for disasters recovery / mitigation
- Mainstreaming and adaptation-for-climate-change programmes

Activities

1. Review current baseline data (national level with regional comparisons);
2. Address gaps in current baseline data (national and regional level);
3. Build national and regional capacity to conduct monitoring and evaluation to support the planning process;
4. Establish regular & effective monitoring systems in countries for which such systems either do not exist or are ineffective;
5. Support South-South cooperation in the development & benchmarks and indicators;
6. Develop rapid assessment indicators for post disasters situations (there are some similar indicators already available - ECLAC);
7. Create / improve access for appropriate technologies to support monitoring and evaluation including the establishment of a central repository for environmental data;

/...

8. Review institutional policies and capacities and legal mandates and, when necessary, update / modify policies to support more effective monitoring and evaluation;
9. Develop partnerships with governmental and private institutions that have expertise and/or technological capacity, as well as data, that can complement the monitoring and evaluation system;
10. Develop partnerships with private sector to improve the development and maintenance of standards for monitoring and evaluation

Indicators

Outcome Indicator: Every country has established monitoring and evaluation systems, fully effective, that are functional post-project on an ongoing basis (including an exit strategy).

Output Indicators:

- Access to satellite data that cover the entire area of each country;
- Legislation review completed and legal framework updated;
- Regular and timely status reports submitted;
- Benchmarks established in each sub-region applicable to all the conventions;
- Post-disaster rapid appraisal toolkits developed;
- Vulnerability maps developed for each country;
- Officials fully trained for gathering, organizing, monitoring and evaluating data

C: Increasing public awareness of the three Rio conventions (Convention on Biological Diversity, United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification, United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change) in agro-ecosystems within dry and sub-humid lands

Rationale

Public awareness of the three Rio conventions, and of the linkages between them, is currently extremely limited within Latin America and the Caribbean. As such, there is generally poor understanding, both on-the-ground and at the political level, of the commitments and activities to be implemented under the three Conventions.

This project is, therefore, seeking to overcome the significant public awareness obstacle, which is currently hampering the full implementation of the three conventions.

Objectives

The objective of the project is to increase public awareness of the importance of implementing the Rio Conventions in agro-ecosystems within dry and sub-humid lands (as per the definition adopted under the Convention on Biological Diversity ^{2/}).

The specific objectives of the project are:

- (a) To increase public awareness of the three Rio Conventions through the broad dissemination of relevant information at all levels,
- (b) To encourage stakeholder participation in the implementation of the Conventions,

^{2/} Dry and sub-humid lands are defined as: arid and semi-arid areas, grasslands and savannas and Mediterranean landscapes

(c) To develop and implement management plans and to facilitate the transfer of appropriate new and innovative technologies and processes so as to conserve biodiversity, maintain land productivity and contribute to climate change adaptation and mitigation.

Expected beneficiaries and stakeholders

The expected beneficiaries of the project include:

- (a) Schools and environmental educators - through increased access to user-friendly information,
- (b) Farmers and ranchers - through improved access and support for the adoption of technology and enhanced support for sustainable land management,
- (c) The public sector - through the acquisition of knowledge and improved decision-making;
- (d) The private sector - through the acquisition of knowledge and increased competitiveness;
- (e) Policy makers - through supporting the development of appropriate policies and legislation to support the harmonizing of the Rio conventions;
- (f) Non-governmental and community-based organizations- through the acquisition of knowledge and enhanced involvement in implementation of the conventions.

Links with other programme/initiatives

This project will build on the work of the “Mainstreaming Biodiversity within Production Ecosystems” programme by INTA/UNR in Argentina by sharing lessons learned, enhancing the exchange of information and scaling-up the approaches developed within the project.

The project will also support the CARICOM food security project, conducted with support from the FAO. In particular the project will disseminate the lessons learned and technologies developed through demonstration plots established by the project.

The project will further scale-up the eco-zone project in Antigua and Barbuda through the second season, which will focus on expansion to other countries in the region.

Activities

Objective 1: To increase awareness of the three Rio Conventions through the broad dissemination of relevant information at all levels,

Activity 1: The development and dissemination of a short documentary on the objectives, goals and opportunities of the three Rio conventions. The documentary will be produced in: English, Spanish, Portuguese and French.

Activity 2: The development and dissemination of a multi-media package on the Rio conventions. This package can be adapted to local needs and audiences by project participants.

Activity 3: Hold media training workshops at the subregional level.

Objective 2: To encourage stakeholder participation in the implementation of the Conventions,

Activity 1: Hold “town hall” meetings and consultations to (i) sensitize major stakeholder groups on the Conventions and (ii) share good practice examples.

Activity 2: Develop “popular theatre” productions in collaboration with local communities and non-governmental organizations.

Objective 3: To develop and implement management plans and facilitate the transfer of appropriate new and innovative technologies (and processes for their adoption) so as to conserve biodiversity, maintain land productivity and contribute to climate change adaptation and mitigation,

Activity 1: Compile and disseminate case studies on good practice examples of management plans.

Activity 2: Support sub-regional and regional field tours and farmer-to-farmer exchange of experience in support of South-South cooperation.

Activity 3: The establishment of demonstration farms or pilot sites where good management practices contribute to the implementation of the three Conventions.

Indicators

Outcome indicators

- Change in attitude as measured through an opinion survey
- Number of stakeholders implementing the principles of the Convention as presented in project activities

Output indicators

- Number of media people trained through workshops
- Number of stakeholder attending town hall meetings as recorded in meeting reports
- Number of farmers participating in field tours
- Number of stakeholders adopting new technologies
- Number of demonstration farms established
- Case-studies compiled for: Mesoamerica, South America and the Caribbean
