



Convention on Biological Diversity

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Item 4.2 of the provisional agenda*

INLAND WATER BIODIVERSITY: PROGRESS REPORT ON THE WORK IN ADDRESSING PARAGRAPHS 39 TO 41 OF DECISION X/28 ON REVIEW OF INFORMATION, AND THE PROVISION OF KEY POLICY RELEVANT MESSAGES, ON MAINTAINING THE ABILITY OF BIODIVERSITY TO CONTINUE TO SUPPORT THE WATER CYCLE

Note by the Executive Secretary

I. INTRODUCTION

1. In paragraph 39 of decision X/28, the Conference of the Parties recognized the good synergies between the Convention on Biological Diversity and the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands, and requested the Executive Secretary, and invited the Secretariat and Scientific and Technical Review Panel (STRP) of the Ramsar Convention, and other relevant partners, subject to the availability of financial resources, to establish an expert working group, building upon the relevant core expertise of the STRP of the Ramsar Convention, to review available information, and provide key policy relevant messages, on maintaining the ability of biodiversity to continue to support the water cycle, with the terms of reference annexed to that decision. In paragraph 40 of the same decision, the Conference of the Parties invited Parties, other Governments and relevant organizations to submit to the Executive Secretary science-based and/or local-knowledge-based information and case-studies relevant to the work of the expert group, but to also note that this work should not delay immediate action, where necessary and appropriate, at national level to address the subjects in question. In paragraph 41 of the decision, the Conference of the Parties requested the Executive Secretary to, *inter alia*, report on progress to a meeting of the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice (SBSTTA) prior to its eleventh meeting.

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II. BRIEF PROGRESS REPORT

2. A meeting of eight core Ramsar STRP members was held on 2 and 3 July 2011, back-to-back with a previously scheduled STRP member's workshop held 30 June to 2 July at the Centre for Ecology and Hydrology, in Wallingford, United Kingdom. Members of both the Convention on Biological Diversity and Ramsar secretariats were also present. This initial meeting discussed the topics and sub-topics contained within and relevant to the terms of reference for the expert group, the existing information landscape and a provisional outline of the final products required. In view of the complexity of the subject, and the need for a broader base of expertise, the meeting decided that a Ramsar STRP member would draft a more detailed outline of the specific subjects needing assessment, the existing information sources, necessary gaps in information, as well as a strategy and timeline for completing the required work. The meeting emphasized the need to include additional expertise beyond the STRP and in particular with regards to relevant aspects of terrestrial ecology and in particular for non-wetland forests and soils. It also stressed the importance of capturing geographic perspectives as well as the social, economic and policy dimensions of the work.

3. Co-funding support to enable the work of the expert group to commence has been generously provided by Australia, Canada, Finland, Norway and the Republic of Korea.

4. After further discussion (by electronic means) amongst this initial core group of experts, the Executive Secretary will make the proposed technical outline of the work and strategy for completing it available to SBSTTA (as an information note for the fifteenth meeting of the Subsidiary Body, if time permits) and/or the SBSTTA Bureau. A notification will also be issued to Parties and relevant organizations inviting contributions of science-based and/or local-knowledge-based information and case-studies relevant to the work of the expert group. The Chairs of the STRP and SBSTTA Bureau will have oversight of the process, although each may delegate the more detailed work to other STRP or SBSTTA Bureau members, as appropriate.
