

THE DISSEMINATOR

Newsletter of the *Clearing-House Mechanism* of the Convention on Biological Diversity

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Visit our web site at:

www.biodiv.org/chm



Outcomes of COP4

Productive and positive discussions on the Clearing-House Mechanism (CHM) were held at the fourth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity held in Bratislava, 4-15 May 1998. Decision IV/2 on the CHM focused on key issues for the successful implementation of the objectives of the Convention and its Clearing-House Mechanism. It addresses:

- Funding matters
- The establishment of a National Steering Committee or Working Group
- Parties to use the CHM logo
- The development of the CHM listserv
- The furthering of the role of the IAC beyond the pilot phase
- Encouragement of the co-ordination with biodiversity-related networks
- Advancements towards a common CHM information format
- The independent review of the CHM pilot phase to be conducted after December 1998.

In addition to decision IV/2 (CHM), several other decisions have furthered the work programme of the Secretariat Focal Point, namely, decisions IV/1 (SBSTTA), IV/4 (Inland Waters), IV/5 (Marine and Coastal), IV/7 (Forests), IV/8 (Access and Benefit Sharing), IV/9 (Art. 8j), IV/10 (Implementing CBD), IV/15 (Relationship with Biodiversity-related Conventions), and IV/16 (Modus Operandi).

To get the COP 4 report and its decisions visit:

<http://www.biodiv.org/cop4/FinalRep-/finrep.html>

INAUGURATION OF THE LISTSERV FOR THE NFPs:

Celebrate with us the much awaited listserv launching of July 31. As stipulated by COP 4 in its decision IV/2, the listserv is composed of all officially designated CHM-NFPs to disseminate information on new and recent developments regarding the CHM, at either national, regional or international levels. The closed listserv's address: CHM-NFP-L@listserv.biodiv.org

INFORMAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Three meetings and several informal consultations with the IAC members were held during COP 4. We would like to welcome the new appointed regional members and express our sincere gratitude to the leaving members for their many contributions.

Mark Cantwell (Canada) has left his current duties at the Biodiversity Convention Office of the Canadian Government. We truly appreciate his active role in the IAC. For the time being we will not benefit from his strong support, constructive views and criticisms on the CHM. We will certainly miss him. While saying "hasta la vista" to Mark, we would like to warmly say

"bienvenido" (welcome on board) to another good friend of the CHM, Dr. John Herity as the Canadian IAC member.

More information on the IAC and its work can be found at:

www.biodiv.org/chm/iacchm.html

NEWS from NATIONAL FOCAL POINTS

• CAMEROON

Some 60 eminent scientists, researchers, as well as representatives from governmental and non-governmental organisations and the private sector met in southern Cameroon from June 23 to 26 to lay the groundwork for the establishment of the national CHM. As an example of partnering initiatives, the Ministry for the Environment and Forestry and the German Technical Co-operation organised and funded the event. The participants discussed issues inherent to the functioning of the CHM both at the national and international levels. For further information:

<http://www.dainet.de/cameroon/news.htm>

• GERMANY

"**PLUG AND PLOT Your Experience**" was recently launched in Germany. Take advantage of this exciting initiative envisaged to facilitate the sharing of national experiences, while offering an interactive platform to pursue the needs expressed by the Parties in COP 4. Get all the details at:

<http://www.dainet.de/bmu-cbd/cop4.htm>

- **POLAND**

At a recent videoconference (July 17) organised the Warsaw University Centre for Environmental Studies, the Warsaw University Computer Centre and Indiana University, Mr. Zbyszko Pisarski from the Polish Institute of Environmental Protection made a presentation of the main Polish Internet sites, particularly the Polish CHM site. For further information go to: <http://ciu.warman.net.pl/alf/biodiversity/index0e.htm>

- **UNITED KINGDOM**

Visit the recently established UK Clearing-House Mechanism Home page at: http://www.chm.org.uk/cgi-bin/SaCGL.cgi/chm_pub.exe

For more information on the CHM Focal Points visit: <http://www.biodiv.org/chm/nfpchm.html>

FLORENCE INSPIRES THE CHM EXPERTS

The 2nd expert meeting on "Building the Clearing-House Mechanism of the Convention on Biological Diversity" (20 July 1998) and the Workshop on "International and National Informative Networks: The Clearing-House Mechanism of the Convention on Biological Diversity" (21-23 July 1998) were organised by the Italian Agency for New Technology, Energy and the Environment (ENEA) in Florence, Italy.



CHM Presentation, Marc Auer, SCBD

Following national and international presentations the meeting split into two working groups. While WG 1 focused on strategic elements for the Clearing-House, such as the vision, guiding principles, goals, indicators, guidance and cross-cutting themes, WG 2 discussed governance, conceptual design, infrastructure and tools. The final report of the meeting will be made available by Dr. Francesco Beone at:

<http://www.wamb.casaccia.enea.it/chm-cbd/service/events/intecol98/wg-intecol98eng.htm>.



Chair of WG 2, Dr. Horst Freiberg

The meeting was attended by 30 CHM experts from European countries as well as from experts from Canada, US, Malawi and Brazil.

GEF: CHM ADD-ON MODULES

To date GEF has funded 46 projects for the CHM for an overall amount of US \$ 546,682. Parties to the Convention have been able to access the CHM add-on module of the Enabling Activities of the Global Environment Facility which allows a maximum of US \$ 14,000 to be allocated at the national level to assist the CHM National Focal Points.

The breakdown of the CHM module projects on a regional basis is as follows:

REGION	# PROJECTS	# PARTIES
Africa	20	49
Asia	9	43
CEE	7	23
LAC	10	33
TOTAL	46	148

In addition to the previously mentioned CHM Add-on module, COP 3 and 4 requested the GEF to support capacity building activities and country driven pilot projects at all levels (national, regional and international). An increased support for country-driven projects to establish and

strengthen biodiversity information systems was requested. More info get at: <http://www.biodiv.org/chm/chm-gef.html>

REVAMPING THE CHM WEB SITE

The new and improved CHM home page is available at <http://www.biodiv.org/chm/>. The new changes reflect the outcomes of COP 4 and the recommendations made at the CHM Regional Workshops and the recent CHM Experts' Meeting held in Florence, Italy. Visit us and send us your comments and inputs to chm@biodiv.org.

WIN A PRIZE WITH THE CHM

You could be the winner of a surprise gift! Send us your suggestions for a **NEW** name of the CHM Newsletter by September 14. The best suggestions will be chosen by an especially appointed "experts' panel". The winner will get a special prize, and the new name of the newsletter will reflect his/her special and creative contribution! Don't miss this opportunity and send your brilliant ideas to chm@biodiv.org.

How to contact us:

We look forward to receiving your NEWS, COMMENTS and INPUTS. If you have any questions on the CHM or if you would like to receive a free copy (printed or electronic) of this newsletter, kindly send us a message to :

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This newsletter can also be obtained electronically at:

www.biodiv.org/chm/news2.pdf