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Madrid, 11 January 2010

Subject: Reply to Notification 2009-169 on the revision and updating of the Strategic Plan of the Convention for the post-2010 Period: Possible Outline and Elements of the New Strategic Plan

Dear Dr Djoghlaif,

We write to you on behalf of the European Union and its Member States. First of all we would like to convey to you and your staff our best wishes for this New Year 2010, the International Year for Biodiversity.

The EU highly appreciates the efforts of the CBD Secretariat in promoting consultations in the process of developing the proposal for a Strategic Plan of the Convention for the Post-2010 Period and therefore welcomes this opportunity to provide further views and comments. Due to time limitations, the following views are of a general and indicative nature, and restricted to sections II-IV of the document UNEP/CBD/SP/PREP/2. This submission should therefore be seen as preliminary and should not prejudice further comments by the EU on the above sections or on other sections of the document not addressed in this response.

On 22 December 2009, the Council of the European Union highlighted the importance of reenergising the political momentum to strengthen efforts to protect biodiversity and implement the CBD through, inter alia, the adoption of a revised and ambitious Strategic Plan, and agreed on a number of elements and key strategic principles to be pursued in the coming deliberations. The Strategic Plan should provide an effective framework for implementing the CBD and contribute to a coherent and coordinated approach to the implementation of biodiversity-related frameworks and agreements and at the international, regional and national levels. The conclusions of the Council of the European Union are annexed to this submission.

With regard to Section II of the document UNEP/CBD/SP/PREP/2 (ws4nrsp-cca-01-sp-prep-02-en), the EU would like to highlight the following:

- The long-term global vision for the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity should take account of the links between biodiversity, ecosystem functions and services, climate change, desertification, economic prosperity, food security, health, long-term human well-being and the eradication of poverty. The EU highlights the utility of making reference to the need to preserve and recover natural capital, and enabling humanity to live on its returns through sustained delivery of ecosystem goods

and services. The EU welcomes the TEEB reports in this context. In particular, agrobiodiversity is an important element of biodiversity with significant potential for improving global food security and for climate change mitigation and adaptation.

- The second bullet mentions the need to restore biodiversity, which may go beyond halting biodiversity loss. The EU favours language on conservation and enhancement of biodiversity, including through restoration where this is appropriate. An understanding of biodiversity loss should reflect the three levels of biodiversity defined in the CBD.
- The EU strongly supports the intent of the second and third bullet points, which is linked with the final bullet.
- In order to achieve universal recognition as a common vision for all biodiversity-related processes, the long-term global vision and the short-/medium-term mission for biodiversity should be fully endorsed at the highest political level.
- Our advice is to avoid references to "biodiversity and ecosystems" in this document. The definition of biological diversity provided by the CBD makes it clear that the diversity of ecosystems is a component of biological diversity. We therefore favour language such as "biodiversity, including ecosystems".
- The concept of equitable sharing of benefits from biodiversity and ecosystem services needs to be further developed. The EU supports that the three objectives of the CBD should provide a basis for the Strategic Plan. Commitments with regard to sharing responsibilities and benefits need to be fully in line with the CBD provisions.
- In this context, we would like to stress that we support the intent of the seventh bullet, and we emphasise the need to take measures to reduce countries' ecological footprints, including through effective and integrated policies to conserve, enhance and, where appropriate, restore biodiversity and ecosystem services, in particular where these policies have international consequences for biodiversity. We believe that this notion is very similar to the one on "harmony between humans and the rest of biodiversity" (eighth bullet).
- The EU is fully behind the CBD Strategy for Mobilization of Resources, and encourages Member States and the European Commission to implement it and to take an active part in ongoing processes to enhance innovative financing, such as the Life Web Initiative, and engage in a global discussion on the need and possible modalities for innovative systems for payments of ecosystem services, mobilising private financing, through an appropriate mechanism. ODA also has an important part to play.
- On cooperation (sixth bullet), the EU advocates that the Strategic Plan should facilitate adaptation to local conditions, participatory approaches and effective communication strategies, enable institutional learning evolving from sound management and scientific studies, and allow for future revisions of targets and indicators based on best available scientific knowledge and evidence. The long-term vision and short-/medium-term mission should communicate the urgency and scale of the problem and

necessary responses in a way that is understandable to a wide audience, encourages commitments of civil society at large and fosters collective action.

- On a preliminary basis, the EU is supportive of the elements included in the proposed formulation of the long term vision. We intend to take active part in the further elaboration of the vision, based on the remarks given above and related EU positions.

With regard to Sections III and IV, the EU supports the establishment of a short-medium term mission (e.g. by 2020) that complements the vision, including strategic, measurable, achievable, realistic and time-bound targets based on best-available scientific evidence, building on existing CBD and other relevant biodiversity-related targets. The mission for biodiversity should be fully endorsed at the highest political level, as well as the long term vision.

The EU will take further detailed positions on these sections, in particular at WGRI 3, taking here into account the results of the London expert consultation on the revision and updating of the Strategic Plan of the Convention and the Trondheim Conference on Biodiversity, also the finalised GBO 3 and the deliberations of SBSTTA 14. There is a need to strike a fine tuned balance between having strong ambitions and setting targets that are possible to achieve. At this point, we caution against drawing the conclusion (page 6) that "the Mission and Targets [...] should recognize that while it is not realistic (or even possible) to fully halt biodiversity loss by 2020, or to fully resolve all the anthropogenic causes of biodiversity loss by that date, neither is it conceivable to allow biodiversity loss to continue at the present rate or to continue indefinitely, without undermining human development and survival."

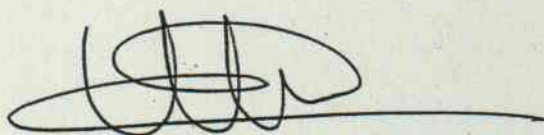
In addition to remarks in the bullet points above, that are valid also for these sections, the EU would like to make the following points:

- The EU agrees with the intent of the third and fourth bullet points of Section III, which are intrinsically linked to the seventh and ninth bullets. We emphasise the importance of maintaining biodiversity and avoiding irreversible damage to ecosystems and their functions, both for ethical reasons, respecting the recognition of the intrinsic value of biodiversity, and to secure social and economic stability, mitigate and adapt to climate change, and reach the Millennium Development Goals. The Strategic Plan should recognise that the capacity of ecosystems to produce goods and services and to maintain biodiversity is limited, and that it is essential to better understand and identify the main drivers of biodiversity loss, ecological tipping points and threshold effects. It should also recognise that conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity is one pre-requisite for mitigation of and adaptation to climate change.
- We understand that the fifth, sixth, eighth and tenth bullets of Section III are intended to provide an operative nature to the mission. The EU has not developed its detailed position on the relationship between the vision, mission, targets and the operational provisions yet. The EU is fundamentally positive to the idea of a logical and coherent relationship between the vision, mission and targets, as well as the idea of milestones in general. We also generally support the suggestion of process-oriented strategic

goals proposed in section IV. We re-emphasise, however, that the existing framework of targets and indicators should be built on.

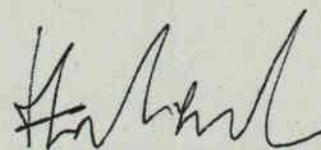
- The long-term vision and the short-/medium-term mission and targets should identify and address indirect and direct drivers of biodiversity loss, reflect the full range of values of biodiversity and ecosystem functions, goods and services, and encourage sustainable use of ecosystem goods and services as well as better integration of the true economic value of biodiversity and ecosystem services into policy frameworks, economic planning and national accounting.
- The long-term vision, and the short-/medium-term mission and targets should provide a comprehensive framework for relevant sectoral and cross-sectoral policies, programmes and strategies as well as in planning processes, and wherever feasible, address drivers, pressures and responses to the loss of biodiversity and ecosystem services as well as incentives for sustainable use.
- The Strategic Plan should facilitate the adoption of appropriate targets for sectors, ecosystems and pressures, complemented by actions designed to achieve substantial, measurable and cost-effective progress at all levels.
- The participation of the UN Environmental Management Group in the development and implementation of the post-2010 biodiversity targets is useful in order to ensure the involvement of relevant international sectoral organizations.
- As stated above, the realisation of the Strategic Plan will hinge on our ability to draw on and developing further synergies between biodiversity-related international frameworks and agreements. In particular, the EU emphasises the need for targeted and strengthened actions to effectively reverse the loss of forest cover and the loss of forest biodiversity through, inter alia, action at global level within the initiative on Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation (REDD), and forest conservation, sustainable management of forests and enhancement of forest carbon stocks (REDD+), based on an active participation by developing countries, keeping in mind the objectives of the EU to reduce gross tropical deforestation by at least 50% by 2020 compared with current levels and halt global forest cover loss by 2030 at the latest.
- The EU wishes to emphasize the increased importance of sustainably using marine resources, reversing the loss of freshwater, marine and coastal biodiversity, and accelerating the implementation of the 2012 target on the establishment of a global and coherent representative network of marine protected areas, including areas beyond national jurisdiction, while fully respecting the relevant international conventions.
- One prerequisite for successful cross-sectoral implementation will be the timely provision of the necessary knowledge. In this context, the EU would like to stress the key importance of targeted research to enhance our understanding of and generate the necessary scientific knowledge base for how biodiversity should be managed to provide goods and services sustainably.

- In this respect, the EU has welcomed the converging views resulting from the Second Intergovernmental and Multi-Stakeholder Meeting on an Intergovernmental Platform for Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services, held in Nairobi 5-9 October 2009, and agreed to actively promote the establishment in 2010 of an efficient and independent mechanism, building on and complementing existing bodies and processes. The EU stresses the importance of UNEP convening a third and final intergovernmental and multi-stakeholder meeting as soon as possible in 2010, to be in line with the international agenda.
- The EU would prefer an outcome-oriented wording for a 2020 Mission. In this regard options 2 and 3 contain useful elements as a basis for further discussions.
- However, we hold the view that when defining sub targets we should consider outcome oriented, process oriented targets and, if appropriate also milestones, in order to guide the process towards the fulfilment of the Mission and the long term vision/target .



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ANNEX: Council Conclusions (Biodiversity) of 22 December 2009