

Biodiversity and Climate Change Action

Activities of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD)

Information Note 2 for UNFCCC COP15

November 2009

The purpose of this note is to highlight the interests and activities of the CBD in relation to biodiversity and climate change, noting that:

Biodiversity and associated ecosystem services are impacted by climate change.

Biodiversity can help people adapt to climate change.

Biodiversity can help people mitigate climate change.

CBD decisions on climate change and biodiversity

The 192 Parties to the CBD have acknowledged both the need to facilitate biodiversity adaptation and the contribution of biodiversity to broader adaptation activities, particularly to the most vulnerable regions and ecosystems. They have also identified ocean acidification as a potentially serious threat to cold-water corals and other marine biodiversity, and have welcomed REDD efforts which potentially can support the implementation of the programme of work on forest biodiversity, provide benefits for forest biodiversity, and, where possible, to indigenous and local communities. These and other relevant CBD decisions (see Table 1) reflect opportunities and challenges for the interaction between the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity, and climate change adaptation and mitigation.

Table 1: Main CBD COP climate change and biodiversity decisions.

Further information is available at <http://www.cbd.int/climate/>

<i>Decision</i>	<i>Focus</i>
COP 5 decision V/3, paragraphs 4, 5, annex paragraph A, C	Risks, in particular, to coral reefs
COP 5 decision V/4, paragraphs 11, 16, 17, 18, and 20	Risks, in particular, to forests
COP 7 d, annex 1 paragraph 7, goal 1.1 Biodiversity of Inland Waters	The programme of work should pay particular attention to the impacts of climate change and the role of inland waters in mitigation of and adaptation to climate change. In this process, the programme of work should consider, support and collaborate with ongoing and/or new initiatives in these areas and in particular those related to the conservation and sustainable use

	of peatlands.
COP 7 decision VII/15	Measures to manage ecosystems so as to maintain their resilience to extreme climate events and to help mitigate and adapt to climate change
COP 8 decision VIII/30	Importance of integrating biodiversity considerations into all relevant national policies, programmes and plans, in response to climate change, and need to identify mutually supportive activities to be conducted by the secretariats of the three Rio Conventions (UNFCCC, UNCCD, and CBD), Parties and relevant organizations
COP 9 decision IX/5 Forest biodiversity	Ensure that possible actions for reducing emissions from deforestation and forest degradation do not run counter to the objectives of the Convention on Biological Diversity and the implementation of the programme of work on forest biodiversity, but support the implementation of the programme of work, and provide benefits for forest biodiversity, and, where possible, to indigenous and local communities, and involve biodiversity experts including holders of traditional forest-related knowledge, and respect the rights of indigenous and local communities in accordance with national laws and applicable international obligations;
COP 9 decision IX/16 Biodiversity and climate change	A. Proposals for the integration of climate-change activities within the programmes of work of the Convention – in conducting future in-depth reviews of the programmes of work of the Convention, climate change considerations should be integrated into each programme of work where relevant and appropriate; B. Options for mutually supportive actions addressing climate change within the three Rio Conventions; C. Ocean fertilization; D. Summary of the findings of the Global Assessment on Peatlands, Biodiversity and Climate Change

CBD programmes of work and climate change

Cross-cutting Issue on climate change and biodiversity

The CBD Secretariat received a broad mandate on biodiversity and climate change (see Table 1) from COP 9, in addition to similar mandates from previous decisions. Since COP 9 (May 2008), the SCBD cross-cutting climate change and biodiversity activities have focused on:

- Identifying: **possible negative impacts of climate change** related activities on biodiversity; the **role of biodiversity in climate change mitigation**; and opportunities for achieving climate change and biodiversity co-benefits
- Reviewing the extent to which Parties have **integrated climate change considerations** in implementation of the various programmes of work and cross-cutting issues. This is part of the in-depth review of programmes to be considered by SBBSTA 14 and COP 10 in 2010.
- **Promoting synergies** between the Secretariats of the CBD and other relevant international processes (including UNFCCC, Ramsar Convention and IPCC; See later section on the Joint Liaison Group).

The **in-depth review of the implementation of the cross-cutting issue on biodiversity and climate change** is scheduled to take place at the tenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties. To assess the extent to which Parties have integrated climate change considerations in implementation of the various programmes of work and cross-cutting issues, the in-depth review on climate change and biodiversity is drawing on fourth national reports¹ submitted by Parties to the CBD and second, third and fourth national communications under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. Preliminary findings from the in-depth review include:

- More than 90% of Parties are reporting on some activities relevant to biodiversity and climate change;
- The most common activities include: assessments of the impacts of climate change on biodiversity, awareness-raising on the links between biodiversity and climate change, and the development of

¹ Based on a subset of 83 fourth national reports received as of 13 November 2009, see <http://www.cbd.int/reports/>

ongoing monitoring and evaluation programmes to assess the degree of threat to biodiversity from climate change;

- The most commonly studied ecosystems with regards to biodiversity – climate change interactions include forests, marine and coastal ecosystems, and wetlands.
- In relation to the CBD programmes of work, they generally contain elements related to climate change; however, the extent of implementation of such elements has been limited. Reasons for the lack of implementation include:
 - lack of data / information on impacts and vulnerability, including on costs, benefits and possible trade-offs of adaptation
 - poor integration of biodiversity considerations within national and sectoral climate change response plans and
 - lack of financial resources.
- Additional needs identified by Parties include: technical capacity-building (including the development of baseline assessments), enhanced regional cooperation (especially with regards to protected areas, migratory species and water) and enhanced funding for biodiversity-based adaptation to climate change;
- Relatively more action has been taken on the links between biodiversity and climate change adaptation than on biodiversity and climate change mitigation.

Furthermore, decision IX/16 on biodiversity and climate change requested the Executive Secretary to include in the in-depth review a compilation of case-studies, good-practice examples and lessons learned on activities, tools and methods to promote synergies between activities addressing biodiversity, desertification/land degradation and climate change at the national and, where appropriate, the local level. Key activities relating to this element include the preparation of the AHTEG report and the in-depth review of the extent to which Parties and the SCBD have integrated climate change considerations in implementation and the development of an adaptation database.

Programme of work on biodiversity of inland waters

Many of the major impacts of climate change on ecosystems and people are occurring through changes in the water cycle. The IPCC Technical Paper on Climate Change and Water² concludes that: the relationship between climate change and freshwater resources is of primary concern and interest; so far, water resource issues have not been adequately addressed in climate change analyses and climate policy formulations; and, according to many experts, water and its availability and quality will be the main pressures, and issues, on societies and the environment under climate change.

Regarding adaptation to climate change, the most pressing needs are water related. **Restoring and rehabilitating the water-related services** provided by ecosystems (not only wetlands, but also terrestrial ecosystems) is the primary response measure necessary. The CBD Secretariat, in collaboration with the Ramsar Secretariat, has compiled a list of good practice examples of how, for example, the restoration of wetland services can cost-effectively provide sustainable adaptation responses to reduce increasing water-related risks and insecurity³. This subject is central to ecosystem-based adaptation.

Programme of work on protected areas

Protected areas can serve as important elements of climate change adaptation in several ways: 1) provide unbroken blocks of intact habitat; 2) provide places for species and ecosystems to shift their ranges; 3) increase ecosystem resilience and recovery by providing intact structures and natural processes; 4) provide protection against

² Bates et al. 2008 *Technical Paper on Climate Change and Water* IPCC Secretariat, Geneva.

³ Further information is available in document UNEP/CBD/SBSTTA/14/INF/3 (in-depth review of the programme of work on the biological diversity of inland water ecosystems). See also CBD 2009 (in prep), Technical Series on "Water, Wetlands and Forests: A review of ecological, economic, and policy linkages". Available shortly at www.cbd.int/ts.

the physical impacts of climate change such as rising sea levels, rising temperatures, and extreme weather events⁴; (5) sustain water supplies and increase water security under changing hydrological conditions. In addition, corridors between protected areas will become increasingly important to climate change adaptation. **Better managed, better connected, better governed and better financed protected areas are recognized as key to both mitigation and adaptation responses to climate change.**

Ecosystems and carbon storage: Of the terrestrial global carbon stock, more than 15% is contained within the current terrestrial protected area network, with more likely in the future as governments continue to designate new protected areas in the last remnants of intact, high-carbon areas (e.g., in the Arctic, tropical rainforests, Taiga forests). In some tropical regions, such as Central and South America, this proportion is even higher than 25%. Protected areas are critical in preventing further carbon emissions from degradation and development, and provide an important contribution to an overall strategy for climate change mitigation. For example, a total of 312 Gt of terrestrial carbon is currently stored in the protected area network, which would be equivalent to 1,142 Gt CO₂ if lost to the atmosphere —or more than 43 times the total annual global emissions from fossil fuel (26.4Gt)⁵. Furthermore, protected areas often act as important barriers for land conversion and help in containing greenhouse gas emissions from altered land use of forest and other ecosystems.

Successful implementation of plans for REDD requires the reduction of deforestation rates on a national scale. The designation of new protected areas and the strengthening of current protected area networks could form one strategy for achieving these goals. In current REDD discussions, protected areas are not considered mainly because there is the impression that carbon in protected areas is safe, and protected areas would not offer additional carbon sequestration. Yet protected areas remain vulnerable to degradation, with a significant number of the world's protected areas being poorly or inadequately managed⁶. REDD depends on effectively designated, managed and governed protected areas that would continue to protect carbon into the foreseeable future.

The consolidation and expansion of protected areas through regional landscapes offers one of the most cogent responses to large-scale implementation of REDD and particularly climate change adaptation. Implementing REDD activities in areas of high carbon stocks and high biodiversity values can promote co-benefits for climate change mitigation, biodiversity conservation and sustainable use. Several tools and methodologies to support biodiversity benefits are available or under development. The national gap analyses carried out by governments under the CBD programme of work on protected areas can be a valuable tool for identifying areas for the implementation of REDD schemes, in particular regarding the identification of priority forest areas for REDD activities at the national level⁷.

An estimated 50% of the carbon in the atmosphere that becomes bound in natural systems is cycled into the seas and oceans. The most crucial climate change-combating coastal ecosystems are disappearing at an alarming rate. This includes mangroves, salt marshes and seagrasses, responsible for capturing and storing up to 70% of the carbon stored permanently in the marine realm⁸. Ocean acidification, and its impacts on marine biodiversity and habitats,

⁴ Mulongoy, K.J. and S.B. Gidda (2008). *The Value of Nature: Ecological, Economic, Cultural and Social Benefits of Protected Areas*. Available at www.cbd.int/doc/publications/cbd-value-nature-en.pdf

⁵ IPCC 2007 as quoted by Campbell et al. 2008. *Carbon Storage in Protected Areas – Technical Report*. UNEP-WCMC. <http://www.unep-wcmc.org/climate/pdf/Carbon%20storage%20in%20protected%20areas%20technical%20report.pdf>

⁶ Leverington et al., 2008, Management Effectiveness Evaluation in Protected Areas. The University of Queensland, Gatton, IUCN WCPA, TNC, WWFAustralia

⁷ More information is available in *The CBD PoWPA Gap Analysis: a tool to identify potential sites for action under REDD* at <http://www.cbd.int/forest/doc/pa-redd-2008-12-01-en.pdf>

⁸ UNEP/GRID-Arendal. Blue Carbon – the role of healthy oceans in binding carbon.

has been identified as a potentially serious threat to cold-water corals and other marine biodiversity. In the absence of strong mitigation action, the risk to marine ecosystem resilience from climate change is high⁹.

The consolidation and expansion of marine protected areas through regional seascapes also offers important mechanisms for enhancing the resilience of marine and coastal biodiversity and the long-term safeguarding of key ecosystem services that underpin livelihoods and food security. For example, the Coral Triangle Initiative (Box 1) is a partnership of six countries which provides a unique platform for accelerated and collaborative actions to address issues such as climate change adaptation, marine conservation, food security and coastal poverty reduction.

Box 1: Coral Triangle Initiative – to achieve tangible and measurable improvements in the health of the region’s marine and coastal ecosystems, the status of fisheries, food security and the well-being of the communities which depend on the region’s marine and coastal resources/ecosystems.

The Coral Triangle region sustains the world’s greatest diversity of marine life. The region’s biological resources provide livelihood, income and food security for the 240 million coastal inhabitants of the six countries. Consequently, the marine and coastal ecosystems and resources are already under significant pressure from overfishing, destructive fishing practices and pollution, which increase the region’s vulnerability to the threats of climate change. Climate change impacts threatening the Coral Triangle include ocean acidification, coral bleaching, and damage from increasing occurrence of extreme weather events, such as storm surges.

The Coral Triangle Initiative (CTI) is a partnership established in 2008 which provides a unique platform for accelerated and collaborative actions to address issues such as climate change adaptation, marine conservation, food security and coastal poverty reduction. Underpinning the CTI collaboration is a firm conviction on the need to move beyond *incremental* actions, and to agree on and implement *transformational* actions that will be needed over the long-term to ensure the sustainable flow of benefits from marine and coastal resources for this and future generations. It fosters stewardship, builds capacity and flow-on benefits associated with skill transfer, develops measures to control and mitigate existing and emerging pressures on marine biodiversity, resources and vulnerable marine systems, and promotes a better understanding of oceans and ocean processes.

The CTI Regional Plan of Action and National Plans call for an early response to the threats of climate change on oceans, including a “region-wide Early Action Plan for Climate Change Adaptation for the near-shore marine and coastal environment and small island ecosystems”. This Plan will serve as a major step toward implementing the climate change adaptation obligations of the Coral Triangle governments under the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change. The Plan will include regional collaborative actions, general actions to be taken in each country, and more specific actions covering a range of management scales and frameworks (e.g., trans-boundary seascape management plans; integrated coastal zone management plans; MPA network plans). Regional actions will include identifying the most important and immediate adaptation measures that should be taken across all Coral Triangle countries (based primarily on analyses using existing models); conducting capacity needs assessments and developing capacity-building programmes on climate change adaptation measures. Implementation of the CTI by the six Coral Triangle countries is supported by invited partners: the Australian Government, the US Government, Global Environment Facility, Asian Development Bank, The Nature Conservancy, Conservation International the WWF and others. Further information is available at www.cti-secretariat.net

Protected areas and ecosystem-based adaptation: The UNFCCC already recognizes the value of ecosystem resilience in Article 2 of its Convention. Furthermore, UNFCCC COP 14 introduced the term “ecosystem-based adaptation”. However, the contribution of protected areas to ecosystem resilience and ecosystem-based adaptation are not yet explicitly recognized by UNFCCC. Climate adaptation “on the ground” cannot and should not be addressed exclusively by human-made infrastructure. Climate-resilient development should also include, where appropriate, ecosystem-based adaptation. Given the important role of protected areas in biodiversity conservation and thereby increasing

⁹ *Scientific Synthesis on the Impacts of Ocean Acidification on Marine Biodiversity* CBD Technical Series No. 46. In prep.

ecosystem resilience, protected areas should be an explicitly recognized component of an ecosystem-based adaptation strategy.

*LifeWeb*¹⁰

As a flagship component of CBD activities on protected areas, the LifeWeb initiative is now fully operational, with a coordination office inside the CBD Secretariat and a growing team of partners. LifeWeb is a **partnership platform to strengthen financing for healthy ecosystems and protected areas**, as powerful tools to address climate change and provide sustainable livelihoods. This initiative aims to unleash the potential of protected areas as powerful tools to address climate change and sustain livelihoods. Invited by the CBD 9th Conference of the Parties, a growing set of committed donors is supporting Recipient Expressions of Interest, based on highest national and local priorities, and in support of a diversity of protected area governance types, including indigenous territories and community conserved areas. LifeWeb serves as a **clearing-house and “match-maker”** of project needs and donor opportunities, as a mechanism to advance implementation of the Convention on Biological Diversity programme of work on protected areas. Countries profile their priorities for protected area funding through the LifeWeb platform. The SCBD actively encourages and recognizes donors’ leadership in support of these priorities. LifeWeb serves as a facilitator and catalyst. Funding flows directly from donor to recipient without need for additional overhead or other management expenses.

As current COP President, the government of Germany has supported projects worth more **than 70 million Euro**. Germany has committed to increase this pace of support associated with LifeWeb in the coming years, up to a total **500 million Euro by 2012**. The governments of Spain and Finland are also committed donors to the LifeWeb. Spain has committed a total of 5 million Euro to be managed by UNEP in support of LifeWeb projects that advance implementation of the CBD programme of work on protected areas. A number of other public and private donors are also increasingly considering supporting Expressions of Interest profiled on the LifeWeb clearing-house of project needs.

Programme of work on forest biodiversity

There are numerous links between the conservation and sustainable use of forest biodiversity, and climate change. The CBD programme of work on forest biodiversity was adopted in 2002 and reviewed by COP 9 in 2008. The **new priorities of the programme** (decision IX/5) include: *unregulated and unsustainable use of forest products and resources, climate change, desertification and desert creep, illegal land conversion, habitat fragmentation, environmental degradation, forest fires, and invasive alien species*. The 130 activities of the programme of work (decision VI/22) are to a large degree focused on reducing forest degradation and deforestation. The potential for synergies between the CBD programme of work on forest biodiversity and activities under the UNFCCC are mostly centered on the issue of REDD-plus¹¹. More information on linkages between the CBD and UNFCCC in the context of REDD are provided in a separate note¹². However, **forest-based adaptation and mitigation measures must proceed concurrently**: this is one of six key messages of the Strategic Framework for Forests and Climate Change¹³, which UNEP, the CBD Secretariat and the other members of the Collaborative Partnership on Forests (CPF), under the coordination of FAO, developed in 2008. The framework provides important messages on linkages between the conservation and sustainable use of forest biodiversity (through sustainable forest management – SFM) and climate change. Another important area of collaboration with other programmes and activities is the Global Forest Expert

¹⁰ More information is available at <http://www.cbd.int/lifeweb>

¹¹ Actions under paragraph 1 (b) (iii) of the Bali Action Plan of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (Issues related to policy approaches and positive incentives on issues relating to reducing emissions from deforestation and forest degradation in developing countries; and the role of conservation, sustainable management of forests and enhancement of forest carbon stocks in developing countries) are here referred to collectively as “REDD-plus”, in line with AWG-LCA Non-Paper #39.

¹² Recent CBD scientific findings on biodiversity and climate change: Information Note 1 for UNFCCC COP15.

¹³ See <http://www.fao.org/forestry/cpf/climatechange/en/>

Panels, a CPF initiative to provide comprehensive scientific assessments on pertinent issues. The Secretariat was involved in developing the 2009 global assessment report *Adaptation of Forests and People to Climate Change*¹⁴.

Programme of work on marine and coastal biodiversity

The IPCC 4th Assessment Report (AR4) highlighted that the most vulnerable marine ecosystems include warm-water coral reefs, cold-water corals, the Southern Ocean and sea-ice ecosystems. It also noted that climate change will have major impacts on coastal ecosystems, including coastal marshes and mangroves. Coastal and near-shore ecosystems are already under multiple stresses. Climate change and ocean acidification will exacerbate these stresses. The predicted consequences from ocean acidification for marine plants and animals, food security and human health are profound, including disruption to fundamental biogeochemical processes, regulatory ocean cycles, marine food chains and production, and ecosystem structure and function.

The resilience of many marine and coastal ecosystems is likely to be exceeded by an unprecedented combination of climate change and other global change drivers. Climate change, pollution, fragmentation and loss of habitat (e.g., destructive fishing activities, coastal zone development), invasive species infestations and over-harvesting from fisheries may individually or together result in severe impacts on the production of the world's marine and coastal ecosystems and the services they provide.

The impacts on marine and coastal life from a range of stressors may be exacerbated by climatic changes, and the ability of ecosystems to cope (resilience) or recover will be impaired. Therefore, the combined effects of these may steadily and, in some cases, possibly sharply increase the vulnerability of the world's marine and coastal ecosystems, with important ecological, economic and social implications. In this respect, there is an increased need for effective biodiversity and conservation efforts to ensure the long-term provision of wider coastal and marine ecosystem services. Key adaptation options to enhance the resilience of marine and coastal biodiversity include:

- The further development of integrated approaches to coastal and marine zone management;
- Implementing ecosystem-based approaches to the conservation and long-term sustainable use of marine and coastal living resources in a manner that respects both societal interests and the integrity of ecosystems;
- Enhancing efforts to expand networks of marine protected areas to conserve biological diversity and associated ecosystems through, for example, protecting critical spawning and nursery habitats to help them recover from stresses with spillover benefits to adjacent areas, (e.g., for supporting fish stocks in areas beyond marine protected area boundaries; see also Box 1); and
- Reducing the spread of invasive alien species.

Ocean Acidification

In its decision IX/20 (marine and coastal biodiversity), the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity requested the Executive Secretary, in collaboration with Parties, other Governments, and relevant organizations, to compile and synthesize available scientific information on **ocean acidification and its impacts on marine biodiversity and habitats**, which is identified as a potentially serious threat to cold-water corals and other marine biodiversity, and to make such information available for consideration at a future meeting of the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice (SBSTTA) prior to the tenth meeting of the Conference of Parties. Pursuant to this request, the CBD Secretariat prepared, in collaboration with UNEP-WCMC, a report on the scientific synthesis on the impacts of ocean fertilization on marine biodiversity¹⁵.

¹⁴ See <http://www.fao.org/forestry/cpf/climatechange/en/> and <http://www.iufro.org/science/gfep/>

¹⁵ *Scientific Synthesis on the Impacts of Ocean Fertilization on Marine Biodiversity* CBD Technical Series No. 45. In prep.

Promoting synergies between the Secretariats of the CBD and other relevant international processes

The cross-cutting issue on biodiversity and climate change emphasizes the need to strengthen synergies between the CBD and other relevant processes including the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands, and the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC). Accordingly, the SCBD has undertaken a number of activities, including through the Joint Liaison Group of the Rio Conventions (JLG; see Box 2) and the Joint Work Plan with the Ramsar Convention. The Executive Secretary has also provided submissions, as requested to the UNFCCC process, and has convened joint workshops with Ramsar to address the links between climate change, biodiversity, water and wetlands.

The JLG identified a number of activities with low resource requirements (UNEP/CBD/SBSTTA/13/7), and four were selected for priority implementation (decision IX/16): (i) a newsletter on synergies between the Rio conventions; (ii) tools to inform Parties about relevant activities on biodiversity and climate change; (iii) the development of educational materials; and (iv) joint web-based communication tools. The SCBD has made progress in these areas of activity (see Table 2). To further strengthen synergies on biodiversity, desertification and climate change, and support Parties in the implementation of the three Conventions, a new joint work programme might be envisaged to address key gaps and barriers to climate change adaptation, including enhancing ecosystem resilience.

Box 2 : Rio Conventions Joint Liaison Group.

In August 2001, a Joint Liaison Group (JLG) between the three Rio Conventions was established as an informal forum for exchanging information, exploring opportunities for synergistic activities and increasing coordination. The JLG comprises the officers of the Conventions' scientific subsidiary bodies, the Executive Secretaries, and members of the secretariats. The Conference of the Parties of each of the three conventions has encouraged the JLG to facilitate cooperation at the national and international levels, to identify possible areas of joint activities, and to enhance coordination (CBD decision VI/20, CCD decision 12/COP 6, FCCC decision 13/CP.8). At its fifth meeting in Bonn, Germany (January 2004), the JLG identified three issues as priorities for joint collaboration: adaptation, capacity-building and technology transfer. In line with the guidance provided by the bodies of the Rio Conventions, the JLG is developing a number of cooperative activities. Options for enhanced cooperation have already been identified by the three convention secretariats and include:

- Promotion of complementarity among the national biodiversity strategies and action plans (NBSAPs) under the CBD, the national action programmes (NAPs) of the UNCCD, and the national adaptation programmes of action (NAPAs) for least developed countries of the UNFCCC
- Collaboration among national focal points
- Collaboration among the scientific subsidiary bodies to the conventions, the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice (SBSTTA) to the CBD, the Committee for Science and Technology (CST) to the UNCCD, and the SBSTA to the UNFCCC
- Development of joint work programmes or plans, joint workshops (at the international level) and joint capacity-building activities (including training, and local, national and regional workshops to promote synergy in implementation)
- Case studies on interlinkages
- Facilitation of exchange of information and experience, including improving inter-accessibility of available web-based data
- Cooperation in communication, education and public awareness programmes and in the development of advice, methodologies and tools

Parties have asked that the SCBD:

- Keep staff in other secretariats informed of discussions and decisions on relevant synergistic activities or programmes.
- Continue sharing of experiences by secretariat staff in forums such as the Convention on Biological Diversity Ad Hoc Technical Expert Group on Technology Transfer and the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change Expert Group on Technology Transfer or its successor.
- Continue the provision by the secretariats of inputs and views on forest issues and adaptation as requested by the subsidiary

bodies of the conventions.

- Share experiences reported by Parties on communication, education and public awareness events.

Parties have also outlined an indicative list of activities by Parties to promote synergies among Rio Conventions (annex II of decision IX/16) which includes:

- Collaboration amongst national focal points
- Collaboration at the level of convention bodies and secretariats
- Climate-change adaptation
- Capacity-building
- Research and monitoring/systematic observation
- Information exchange and outreach
- Harmonized reporting

Table 2 – SCBD activities addressing biodiversity and climate change within the three Rio Conventions.

<i>Activities selected for priority implementation - Status</i>
<p><i>A newsletter on synergies between the Rio conventions</i></p> <p>The CBD uploaded the REDD & Biodiversity E-Newsletters (published bi-monthly, see www.cbd.int/forest/redd/newsletters/) and the findings of the AHTEG on biodiversity and climate change on the UNFCCC REDD web platform, as well as on the UN REDD web portal.</p>
<p><i>Tools to inform Parties about relevant activities on biodiversity and climate change</i></p> <p>Explored how to make the best use of web services and exchange basic public data on national focal points and events. The project resulted in technical specifications being drafted and reviewed. Test tools were created, including a test page and test application, and an end-user interface was developed which displayed information on national focal points and events and made use of the three web services. However, it has not been easy to define or adapt to a common format due to different existing database structures. Further difficulties arose as a result of differences in the SOAP (Simple Object Access Protocol) implementation and resource constrains.</p>
<p><i>Development of educational materials</i></p> <p>Joint Secretariats Workshop – February 2008: A workshop was held in Bonn on 31 January and 1 February 2008 on increased synergy between the secretariats on education, communication and web tools to discuss common information products and communication strategies. The workshop determined that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - More work is needed on joint messaging; - The conventions would continue to produce the Rio Conventions calendar; - The conventions would collaborate on educational activities; - More products would be planned jointly. <p>Furthermore, during the February 2008 workshop it was agreed that educational material should focus on: a) the goals of the Rio Conventions and sustainable development, b) understanding climate change, c) biodiversity and desertification in ecosystems around the world and d) simulation of MEA negotiations. Medium- and long-term plans were proposed, however, no action has yet been taken to implement these plans.</p> <p><i>UNESCO Decade of Education for Sustainable Development (DESD) Conference</i></p> <p>At the UNESCO Decade of Education for Sustainable Development (DESD) Conference, the UNFCCC and CBD held workshops, and both climate change and biodiversity were integrated into the Bonn declaration for the DESD, including a call for all governments to integrate both of these into sustainable development.</p> <p><i>Expert meeting on Water, Wetlands, Biodiversity and Climate Change, 23 – 24 March, 2007, Gland, Switzerland.</i></p> <p>This workshop identified key messages and responses regarding climate change as a basis for enhanced CEPA activities. It also identified some key opportunities for enhanced synergies between the relevant MEAs.</p>
<p><i>Develop web-based communication tools</i></p> <p>The CBD is updating its website on ecosystem-based adaptation. It is being re-designed to include a number of new features, including an expert database and country fiches on climate change impacts and biodiversity-related response activities. The website will be available early in 2010 at: http://adaptation.cbd.int.</p>

The Convention on Biological Diversity

The objectives of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) include the conservation of biological diversity, the sustainable use of its components and the fair and equitable sharing of the benefits arising out of the utilization of genetic resources. The Convention recognizes that biological diversity is about more than plants, animals and micro organisms and their ecosystems – it is about people and our need for food security, medicines, fresh air and water, shelter, and a clean and healthy environment in which to live.

Parties to the CBD have acknowledged both the need to facilitate biodiversity adaptation; and the contribution of biodiversity to broader adaptation activities, particularly for the most vulnerable regions and ecosystems. They have identified ocean acidification as a potentially serious threat to cold-water corals and other marine biodiversity. On actions for reducing emissions from deforestation and forest degradation, Parties are interested in ensuring they do not run counter to the objectives of the CBD, support the implementation of the programme of work, provide benefits for forest biodiversity and to indigenous and local communities, involve biodiversity experts including holders of traditional forest-related knowledge, and respect the rights of indigenous and local communities.

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