



## Convention on Biological Diversity

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CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES TO THE  
CONVENTION ON BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY

Fifth meeting  
Nairobi, 15–26 May 2000  
Agenda item 18.2

**DECISION ADOPTED BY THE CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES TO THE CONVENTION  
ON BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY AT ITS FIFTH MEETING**

***V/14. Scientific and technical cooperation and the clearing-house mechanism***

*The Conference of the Parties,*

*Reaffirming* its previous requests to the Global Environment Facility, contained in decisions I/2, II/3, II/6, III/4, III/5, IV/2 and IV/13, to provide support for scientific and technical cooperation and capacity-building in relation to the clearing-house mechanism,

*Recalling* decision III/4, in which the Conference of the Parties established an informal advisory committee to be constituted and coordinated by the Executive Secretary in a transparent manner, to assist the clearing-house mechanism, and decision IV/2, in which the Conference of the Parties requested that the clearing-house mechanism be continuously assisted in its functioning by the informal advisory committee during and after the pilot phase,

1. *Notes* the report of the independent review of the pilot phase of the clearing-house mechanism (UNEP/CBD/COP/5/INF/2);
2. *Supports* the implementation of the strategic plan for the clearing-house mechanism (UNEP/CBD/COP/5/INF/3);
3. *Requests* the Executive Secretary, in consultation with the informal advisory committee, to monitor and review the operation of the clearing-house mechanism and report to the Conference of the Parties at its sixth meeting on any recommended adjustments to the operation of the clearing-house mechanism or to the strategic plan;
4. *Decides* that the strategic plan for the clearing-house mechanism shall become a component of the Strategic Plan of the Convention on Biological Diversity;
5. *Endorses* the longer-term programme of work for the clearing-house mechanism (UNEP/CBD/COP/5/INF/4), recognizing the important role that country partnerships can play in implementing this programme of work;

6. *Recommends* that Parties and Governments, subject to availability of resources and relevance, undertake as priorities for the biennium 2001-2002 the measures identified in annex I to the present decision;

7. *Decides* that the informal advisory committee referred to in decision III/4 shall have the following objectives:

(a) Provide advice on matters relating to the clearing-house mechanism and, in particular, on how to improve the effectiveness of the clearing-house mechanism as a mechanism to promote scientific and technical cooperation;

(b) Facilitate the implementation of guidance from the Conference of the Parties concerning the clearing-house mechanism;

(c) Facilitate greater input of Parties into the development of the clearing-house mechanism;

(d) Advise on ways and means to facilitate the development of the clearing-house mechanism network;

(e) Facilitate and encourage cooperation with other relevant international and regional information networks and initiatives;

8. *Decides* that the continuation and mandate of the informal advisory committee shall be reviewed at the seventh meeting of the Conference of the Parties;

9. *Calls upon* the Executive Secretary, in consultation with the informal advisory committee, to develop operational procedures for the informal advisory committee, for review at the seventh meeting of the Conference of the Parties, and to make these procedures, as well as the membership, available through the clearing-house mechanism;

10. *Requests* the Executive Secretary, in consultation with the informal advisory committee and other relevant bodies, and subject to available resources, to undertake the activities identified in annex II to the present decision.

#### *Annex I*

### **MEASURES TO BE UNDERTAKEN BY PARTIES AND GOVERNMENTS IN THE BIENNIUM 2001-2002, SUBJECT TO AVAILABILITY OF RESOURCES AND RELEVANCE**

(a) Establish national directories of scientific institutions and experts working on specific thematic areas of the Convention on Biological Diversity and make these available through the clearing-house mechanism.

(b) Conduct surveys to establish a national baseline of existing scientific and technical cooperation initiatives relevant to the implementation of the provisions of the Convention on Biological Diversity.

(c) Establish or strengthen clearing-house mechanism national focal points.

(d) Establish, through the national clearing-house mechanism focal points, links to non-governmental organizations and other institutions holding important relevant databases or undertaking significant work on biological diversity.

(e) Establish regional or subregional clearing-house mechanism focal points.

(f) Establish national, regional and subregional clearing-house mechanism thematic focal points.

(g) Further develop the clearing-house mechanism to assist developing country Parties and Parties with economies in transition to gain access to information in the field of scientific and technical cooperation, in particular on:

- (i) Funding opportunities;
- (ii) Access to and transfer of technologies;
- (iii) Research cooperation facilities;
- (iv) Repatriation of information;
- (v) Training opportunities; and
- (vi) Promoting and facilitating contact with relevant institutions, organizations, and the private sector, providing such services.

(h) Consider information providers as primary partners as a way of ensuring that a critical mass of scientific and technical information is made available.

(i) Consider the general public, the private sector, non-government organizations and all levels of government as important target audiences for the clearing-house mechanism.

(j) Develop initiatives to make information available through the clearing-house mechanism more useful for researchers and decision makers.

(k) Develop, provide and share services and tools for the purposes of enhancing and facilitating the implementation of the clearing-house mechanism and further improving synergies among the biodiversity-related and the Rio conventions.

(l) Undertake an analysis of the cost-effectiveness of the implementation of the clearing-house mechanism, taking into account investments in institutional, human, financial, technological and informational resources.

## *Annex II*

### **ACTIVITIES TO BE UNDERTAKEN BY THE EXECUTIVE SECRETARY, IN CONSULTATION WITH THE INFORMAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE AND OTHER RELEVANT BODIES, SUBJECT TO AVAILABLE RESOURCES**

(a) Develop ways and means to ensure a broader understanding of the role of, and the value added by, the clearing-house mechanism.

(b) Further develop non-Internet-based tools and training packages to assist Parties in their national implementation efforts.

(c) Identify and establish cooperative arrangements with those international thematic focal points that can provide relevant and appropriate thematic information, using the following criteria:

- (i) Expertise on themes directly relevant to the Convention on Biological Diversity;
- (ii) Experience and expertise at the international level;
- (iii) Endorsement of the proposed cooperative arrangements by at least three national focal points;
- (iv) Designation of a specific theme and a defined period of time;
- (v) Selection of one or more thematic focal points for each theme;
- (vi) Ability to leverage infrastructure;

- (vii) Provision of relevant content;
  - (viii) Experience with specific issues;
  - (ix) Ability to advance the objectives of the clearing-house mechanism;
  - (x) Ability to advance the objectives of other partners;
  - (xi) Provision of open access to information;
  - (xii) Allowance for the custodianship to remain with the provider of information, as well as the provision of metadata in the public domain.
- (d) Convene regional workshops to support capacity-building for clearing-house mechanism activities, training and awareness, with a focus on cooperation in biodiversity information for the implementation and management of the clearing-house mechanism at the national, subregional, biogeographic and regional levels, as appropriate.
- (e) Develop a pilot initiative to assist work on the thematic issues within the work programme of the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice, including:
- (i) Identification by national focal points of national institutions and experts working on the specific theme, including through interlinkages with the rosters of experts in the relevant fields of the Convention on Biological Diversity;
  - (ii) Provision of relevant information to the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice by national focal points;
  - (iii) Use of the clearing-house mechanism to gather input to relevant assessments being undertaken by the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice;
  - (iv) Identification of scientific and technical cooperation needs at the national level for the implementation of pilot initiatives.
- (f) Propose options for improving ways and means by which the clearing-house mechanism can facilitate access to and transfer of technology.
- (g) Develop a list of best practices and identify potential functions to be recommended for implementation by clearing-house mechanism national focal points.
- (h) Identify possible formats, protocols and standards for the improved exchange of biodiversity-related data, information and knowledge, including national reports, biodiversity assessments and Global Biodiversity Outlook reports, and convene an informal meeting on this issue.
- (i) Identify options and explore cooperative arrangements to overcome language barriers affecting the use of the clearing-house mechanism, including the development or consolidation of tools and services.
- (j) Develop a publicly accessible global electronic platform for scientific and technical cooperation in biodiversity on the Internet matching the demands and needs of Parties in accordance with Article 18 of the Convention.
- (k) Encourage the establishment and maintenance of mirror sites of the Convention's website, within the other United Nations regions, as appropriate, in order to improve access to Internet-based information.