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CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES TO THE CONVENTION ON BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY

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

IX/5. Forest biodiversity

The Conference of the Parties,

Welcoming the work of the Ad Hoc Technical Expert Group on the In-depth Review of Implementation of the Programme of Work on Forest Biodiversity in preparation of the review, and bearing in mind its findings,

Also welcoming the accomplishments of the International Arrangement on Forests since its inception by Economic and Social Council resolution 2000/35 of 18 October 2000, and its strengthening by Economic and Social Council resolution 2006/49 of 28 July 2006,

Recalling General Assembly resolution 62/98 of 17 December 2007 in which the Assembly adopted the non-legally binding instrument on all types of forests,

Taking note of activities under the International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture, and *welcoming* the plan of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) to develop the Report on the State of the World's Forest Genetic Resources,

Alarmed by the loss of forest biodiversity and its impacts, including negative impacts, on sustainable development and human well-being,

Recognizing the urgent need to strengthen implementation of the programme of work on forest biodiversity to reach the 2010 biodiversity target and the 2010 target of the World Summit on Sustainable Development, through sustainable forest management and the ecosystem approach as well as other tools, and noting the opportunities of the International Year of Biodiversity in 2010 and the International Year of Forests in 2011 to promote the conservation and sustainable use of forest biodiversity, and the fair and equitable sharing of the benefits arising out of the use of genetic resources and associated traditional knowledge,

Recognizing also the need to promote full and effective participation of indigenous and local communities in the implementation of the expanded programme of work on forest biodiversity at all levels; *also noting* the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples,

Reiterating the need for increased support towards developing countries, in particular the least developed countries and small island developing States, as well as countries with economies in transition, in the implementation of the programme of work, through the provision of new and additional financial resources, in accordance with Article 20 of the Convention, and in line with the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness as appropriate in an adequate, predictable and timely as possible manner, and exchange of information, access to and transfer of technology, and capacity-building,

1. *Urges* Parties to:

(a) Strengthen the implementation of the expanded programme of work on forest biodiversity, including through capacity-building, as necessary, and address the obstacles identified in the report of the review and reports associated with the programme of work on forest biodiversity, including lack of monitoring systems, as well as the lack of timely responses to extreme weather conditions;

(b) Address as a matter of priority major human-induced threats to forest biodiversity, including unregulated and unsustainable use of forest products and resources (including unsustainable hunting and trade of bushmeat, and their impacts on non-target species), climate change, desertification and desert creep, illegal land conversion, habitat fragmentation, environmental degradation, forest fires, and invasive alien species;

(c) Take into account the goals and objectives of the programme of work in addressing these threats and obstacles in national ^{1/} biodiversity strategies and action plans (NBSAPs), national forest programmes (NFPs) and other forest-related programmes and strategies;

(d) Promote and build capacity for the sustainable management of forests, including the management of non-timber forest products and resources, taking into account indigenous and local communities' traditional knowledge, with their approval and involvement;

(e) Promote and build capacity for the management and valuation of forest ecosystem services as an element of sustainable forest management;

(f) Address obstacles to sustainable forest management, such as the lack of market access for value-added forest products originating from sustainably managed forests, and seek to resolve land-tenure and resource rights and responsibilities, where they have been shown to be barriers to achieve sustainable forest management;

(g) Improve forest-biodiversity monitoring, inventorying and reporting, at all appropriate levels;

(h) Strengthen efforts to establish, maintain and develop national or regional forest protected-area networks and ecological connectivity, where appropriate, and identify areas of particular importance to forest biodiversity, taking into account the target of having at least 10 per cent of each of the world's forest types effectively conserved, as contained in decision VIII/15, as a contribution to the programme of work on protected areas, and further strengthen efforts to provide for sustainable financing of forest protected areas, from all available sources, including innovative financial mechanisms for the establishment and effective management of forest protected areas;

(i) Increase cross-sectoral cooperation and initiatives at all levels, to help carry out a coordinated implementation of both the programme of work on forest biodiversity under the Convention on Biological Diversity, and the decisions set by the United Nations Forum on Forests (UNFF), including

^{1/} The context national includes subnational.

the non-legally binding instrument on all types of forests, for the achievement of the 2010 target and the four Global Objectives on Forests, with the involvement of indigenous and local communities and other relevant stakeholders, including the private sector;

(j) Promote multidisciplinary scientific research to better understand the impacts of climate change, including mitigation and adaptation activities, and environmental degradation on ecosystem resilience, conservation and sustainable use of forest biodiversity and impacts on the livelihoods of indigenous and local communities, with a view to maximizing positive impacts and avoiding negative impacts of climate change, including mitigation and adaptation activities, on forest biodiversity; in particular those forests most vulnerable to climate change, and in this context support the International Union of Forest Research Organizations (IUFRO)-led initiative of the Collaborative Partnership on Forests on science and technology, and encourage their work on climate change research;

(k) Promote and implement sustainable forest management and the ecosystem approach to maintain forest biodiversity and ecosystem functions, in all types of forests, promote forest restoration and minimise deforestation and forest degradation so as to achieve the goals and objectives of the programme of work including addressing climate change;

(l) Strengthen forest law enforcement and governance at all levels, take effective legislative and non-legislative measures to prevent harvesting of forest products and resources in violation of national legislation, including timber and non-timber forest products, bushmeat, wildlife, and forest biological resources, and related trade, and contribute to bilateral, regional and international efforts to that end, and taking into account Articles 8(j) and 10(c) of the Convention;

(m) Fully involve indigenous and local communities and, where appropriate, partner with the private sector and other relevant stakeholders in the implementation of the programme of work, and encourage them to undertake efforts that reduce deforestation and forest degradation, including efforts to increase afforestation and reforestation preferably with indigenous species, taking into account the objectives of the programme of work on forest biodiversity, and encourage voluntary commitments and cooperation between private sector and non-governmental organizations;

(n) Promote national and international research on agroforestry and use the results to identify and disseminate good practices that promote the conservation and sustainable use of both forest and agricultural biodiversity;

(o) Recognize the potential role of consistent and appropriate voluntary market-based certification schemes, and tracking and chain-of-custody systems, and public and private procurement policies, that promote the use of timber and non-timber forest products originating from sustainably managed forests and that are produced in accordance with relevant national legislation and applicable standards, consistent and in harmony with the Convention and other relevant international obligations;

(p) Encourage, as appropriate, the development, adoption and promotion of schemes and policies referred to in subparagraph (o) above acknowledging their potential role in promoting the conservation and sustainable use of forest biodiversity;

(q) Increase awareness among consumers in developed and developing countries, and take measures to address the impacts of their unsustainable consumption patterns on forest biodiversity;

(r) Reaffirm the need to take a precautionary approach when addressing the issue of genetically modified trees;

(s) Authorize the release of genetically modified trees only after completion of studies in containment, including in greenhouse and confined field trials, in accordance with national legislation where existent, addressing long-term effects as well as thorough, comprehensive, science-based and transparent risk assessments to avoid possible negative environmental impacts on forest biological diversity; 2/

(t) Also consider the potential socio-economic impacts of genetically modified trees as well as their potential impact on the livelihoods of indigenous and local communities;

(u) Acknowledge the entitlement of Parties, in accordance with their domestic legislation, to suspend the release of genetically modified trees, in particular where risk assessment so advises or where adequate capacities to undertake such assessment is not available;

(v) Further engage to develop risk-assessment criteria specifically for genetically modified trees;

(w) Note the results of the Norway – Canada Workshops on Risk Assessment for emerging applications for Living Modified Organisms (UNEP/CBD/BS/COP-MOP/4/INF/13);

(x) Welcome the decision of the fourth meeting of the Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Cartagena Protocol to establish an Ad Hoc Technical Expert Group on Risk Assessment and Risk Management that is also mandated to address the issue of genetically modified trees;

(y) Collaborate with relevant organizations on guidance for risk assessment of genetically modified trees and guidance addressing potential negative and positive environmental and socio-economic impacts on the conservation and sustainable use of forest biodiversity associated with the use of genetically modified trees;

(z) Provide the available information and the scientific evidence regarding the overall effects of genetically modified trees on the conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity to the Executive Secretary for dissemination through the clearing-house mechanism;

2. *Invites* Parties, other Governments, and relevant international and other organizations to:

(a) 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;

(b) Address both, direct and indirect, positive and negative impacts that the production and use of biomass for energy, in particular large-scale and/or industrial production and use, might have on forest biodiversity and on indigenous and local communities, also taking into account the components of the decision IX/2 on biofuels and biodiversity relevant to forest biodiversity, reflecting varying conditions of countries and regions;

2/ Where applicable, risks such as cross-pollination and spreading of seeds should be specifically addressed.

(c) Recognize and increase understanding of the potential of forest genetic diversity to address climate change, maintain forest ecosystems resilience and lead to the discovery of new timber and non-timber forest resources;

(d) Recognize the role of non-timber forest products for sustainable forest management and poverty eradication, and highlight their importance in poverty reduction strategies;

(e) Further develop knowledge on forest ecosystem services, and implement, as appropriate, innovative tools for securing such services, such as Payments for Ecosystem Services (PES), consistent and in harmony with the Convention and other relevant international obligations;

(f) Exchange information on the impact of pollution such as acidification and eutrophication related to deforestation and forest degradation on forest biodiversity and increase efforts to reduce their negative impacts;

(g) Promote forest restoration, including reforestation and afforestation, in line with sustainable forest management through, *inter alia*, the Global Partnership on Forest Landscape Restoration and other regional cooperation mechanisms, paying particular attention to genetic diversity;

(h) Ensure that programmes and measures taken for the conservation and sustainable use of forest biodiversity support efforts to eradicate poverty and improve livelihoods;

(i) Strengthen cross-sectoral efforts for integrated approaches in order to increase consistency among the various levels of policies that affect forest biodiversity, taking into account the tool-kit developed by the Secretariat;

3. *Requests* the Executive Secretary to:

(a) Facilitate, as requested, in close cooperation with existing international, regional and subregional processes, initiatives and organizations, such as the Secretariat of the United Nations Forum on Forests, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, the International Tropical Timber Organization, and other members of the Collaborative Partnership on Forests, regional, subregional and/or thematic workshops to support Parties in implementing the programme of work on forest biodiversity;

(b) Collaborate with the other members of the Collaborative Partnership on Forests, in particular the Secretariat of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and the World Bank, in order to support Parties efforts to address reducing emissions from deforestation and forest degradation in developing countries in the framework of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change;

(c) Enhance dissemination and exchange of information, and collaboration between the Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity, the Secretariat of the United Nations Forum on Forests and other members of the Collaborative Partnership on Forests and other relevant organizations and processes;

(d) Explore, together with the Director of the Secretariat of the United Nations Forum on Forests, possibilities for developing a work plan with targeted joint activities between the secretariats of the Convention on Biological Diversity and the United Nations Forum on Forests by identifying commonalities and complementarities of the respective work programmes and submit the results for the consideration of the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice;

(e) Solicit advice from the Scientific and Technical Review Panel of the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands on the relevance of the joint work programme between the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands and the Convention on Biological diversity and the relevance of the suite of guidelines adopted by the Ramsar Convention, to the implementation of the programme of work on forest biodiversity under the Convention on Biological Diversity, and the role Ramsar Parties can play in contributing to the implementation of this programme, and make this information available to Parties, recognizing that a significant proportion of forests are wetlands;

(f) Collect, compile and disseminate information on the relation between forest ecosystem resistance and resilience, forest biodiversity, and climate change, through the clearing-house mechanism and other relevant means;

(g) Continue the cooperation with the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations and other relevant organizations on the monitoring of forest biodiversity, and on clarifying the definitions of forest and forest types that reflect forest biodiversity at the level appropriate for reporting and monitoring the status of forest biodiversity, building on the existing concepts and definitions provided by Parties and members of the Collaborative Partnership on Forests and other relevant organizations and regional criteria and indicator processes and report to the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice prior to the tenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties;

(h) Make available the outcome of work of the Ad Hoc Technical Expert Group on Risk Assessment and Risk Management, established by the meeting of the Parties serving as the Conference of the Parties to the Protocol at its fourth meeting for the consideration of the Conference of the Parties at its tenth meeting.
