

# How to use this Handbook

## Purpose

This Handbook is intended as a reference guide to decisions adopted by the Conference of the Parties (COP) to the Convention on Biological Diversity and the Conference of the Parties to the Convention serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety (COP-MOP) as well as a guide to ongoing activities in relation to particular Articles and/or cross-cutting issues of the Convention. The structure of the Handbook has been conceived with a view to allowing frequent updates, so as to take into account new decisions of the Conference of the Parties.

## Structure

- INTRODUCTION:** Describes the background to the Convention and its institutional arrangements.
- SECTION I:** Sets out the full text of the Convention signed by the Contracting Parties in June 1992.
- SECTION II:** Sets out the text of the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety adopted by the COP in January 2000.
- SECTION III:** Contains the rules of procedure adopted by the COP and subsidiary bodies.
- SECTION IV:** Contains the *modus operandi* of the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice (SBSTTA).
- SECTION V:** Contains the financial rules for the Convention.
- SECTION VI:** Provides detailed information on substantive decisions adopted by the COP to date on particular issues (see “The ‘guide’ to COP decisions” on the following page).
- SECTION VII:** Lists the signature and/or ratification dates of the Parties to the Convention and the Parties to the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety.
- SECTION VIII:** Contains declarations made by the Parties upon adoption of the Agreed Text of the Convention on Biological Diversity, as well as those declarations made upon ratification, accession, acceptance or approval of the Convention.

- SECTION IX: Sets out the text of the Nairobi Final Act adopted in May 1992 by the Conference for the Adoption of the Agreed Text of the Convention on Biological Diversity.
- SECTION X: Sets out the full text of the decisions of the COP, of the COP-MOP, and recommendations of the SBSTTA that have been specifically endorsed in COP decisions.
- SECTION XI: Sets out the text of The Hague Ministerial Declaration of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity and the Youth Declaration and President's summary of the Multi-stakeholder Dialogue annexed therein.
- INDEXES: Allow users to search both for key terms and for particular Articles of the Convention and the Cartagena Protocol, COP and COP-MOP decisions and SBSTTA recommendations.

## The 'guide' to COP decisions

Section VI presents an overview of COP decisions to date related to specific Articles of the Convention or the thematic work programmes. It provides a brief narrative on how the COP has addressed each Article, or cross-cutting issue to date. This narrative summary is not intended in any way to replace the text of decisions adopted by the Conference of the Parties, which are reproduced in full in Section X of this Handbook and to which readers should refer. It is intended solely to provide a guide and references to relevant COP decisions so as to enable a user to: (i) obtain a brief overview of the COP's consideration of a particular issue; and (ii) find all relevant COP decisions relating to a particular issue. Section VI also provides a listing of specific references to paragraphs of COP decisions which address the Article or cross-cutting issue in question, as well as relevant documents officially submitted to meetings of the Convention.

As far as possible, each Article of the Convention, thematic area, and cross-cutting issue has been addressed according to a common format.

## Articles or provisions addressed by the COP to date

For the Articles of the Convention addressed by the COP, the format includes the following. Where an Article of the Convention addresses a number of specific issues, these have been addressed separately for ease of reference.

### 1. TEXT OF ARTICLES

### 2. NOTES

- (i) *Terms defined in Article 2*  
A list of any relevant definitions found in Article 2 of the Convention.
- (ii) *Consideration of the Article by the COP*
  - (a) *Background and status*

A brief summary as to when and how the COP has addressed the Article in question including: decisions adopted; intersessional activities; and current and forthcoming activities.

(b) *COP guidance*

Briefly highlights relevant guidance in COP decisions to the Parties as well as guidance to the financial mechanisms.

### 3. REFERENCES

A list of COP decisions or parts thereof of relevance to the Convention provision in question. This list has been divided as follows:

(i) *Decisions on the Articles*

Decisions of the COP specifically addressing the Article in question.

(ii) *Guidance to Parties*

Guidance from the COP and requests to the Parties contained in relevant COP decisions, including guidance and requests relating to:

(a) *National action*

(b) *Information and case studies*

Information and case studies to be submitted to the Secretariat or clearing-house mechanism.

(iii) *Financial mechanism and resources*

Decisions of the COP which provide guidance as to the provision of the financial resources from the financial mechanism or other sources to support implementation of the Article in question or related activities. In particular, looking at:

(a) *Guidance to the financial mechanism*

(b) *Other (additional) financial resources.*

(iv) *Guidance to the Secretariat*

Indicates activities which the Secretariat has been instructed to undertake in relation to the Article in question.

(v) *Guidance to the SBSTTA*

Indicates requests and guidance to the SBSTTA regarding advice to the COP and the SBSTTA's work programmes.

(vi) *Cooperation with other conventions and organizations*

Indicates relevant cooperative and collaborative activities mandated by the COP in relation to the issue in question, as well as requests and statements to other conventions, organisations and processes.

(vii) *Relevant aspects of thematic work programmes*

Indicates aspects of the thematic work programmes and related decisions of relevance to the Article in question.

(viii) *Other relevant decisions*

This is intended to pick up relevant cross-references in other COP decisions.

#### 4. DECLARATIONS

A list of declarations that were made upon adoption, signature and/or ratification.

#### 5. DOCUMENTS

A list of relevant background and information documents officially submitted to meetings of the COP or its subsidiary bodies.

### **Articles or provisions not yet addressed by the COP**

Some Articles of the Convention have not been addressed by the COP in any detail to date. For these Articles, a simplified format is used, which includes the following:

#### 1. TEXT OF THE ARTICLE

#### 2. NOTES

(i) *Terms defined in Article 2*

A list of any relevant definitions found in Article 2 of the Convention.

(ii) *Consideration of the Article by the COP*

A brief note on any relevant discussions by the COP and relevant cross-references.

#### 3. REFERENCES

A list of relevant references in COP decisions to date, sub divided as follows:

(i) *Relevant aspects of the thematic work programmes*

(ii) *Other relevant decisions*

Since these Articles have not yet been explicitly addressed by the COP, the references provided represent an attempt to highlight those decisions that have a bearing on the provisions of the Article.

### **Thematic work programmes**

The thematic areas are based, as far as possible, on a common format as follows:

#### 1. NOTES

(i) *Consideration of the thematic area by the COP*

Describes the development of the thematic work programme by the COP.

(ii) *Elements of the thematic work programme*

Highlights the principal elements, objectives and activities of the thematic work programme as set out in the relevant COP decision.

(iii) *Implementation of the work programme.*

#### 2. LIST OF COP DECISIONS ADOPTED ON THE THEMATIC AREA IN QUESTION

#### 3. LIST OF REFERENCES TO THAT THEMATIC AREA IN OTHER DECISIONS OF THE COP