



CONVENTION ON BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY

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CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES TO THE CONVENTION ON BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY

Seventh meeting

Kuala Lumpur, 9-20 and 27 February 2004

Item 20.4 of the provisional agenda*

MECHANISMS FOR IMPLEMENTATION: NATIONAL REPORTING

Note by the Executive Secretary

I. INTRODUCTION

1. This note is prepared by the Executive Secretary to provide an overview of the implementation of decision VI/25 (national reports) and the elements of other decisions of the sixth meeting of the Conference of the Parties related to national reporting under the Convention.
2. The Conference of the Parties, in decision VI/25, requested the Executive Secretary to:
 - (a) Draw appropriate conclusions from the analysis of the second national reports and of the experiences of Parties in preparing national reports that can serve to facilitate the implementation of the Convention by Parties;
 - (b) Continue to identify, and analyse the reasons for Parties not being able to complete their national reports, with a view to facilitating the preparation of the third national reports;
 - (c) Prepare for the consideration of the Conference of the Parties at its seventh meeting a draft format for the third national reports.
3. The Conference of the Parties, in decision VI/25, also urged Parties that have not submitted a second national report to do so without delay. In addition, at its sixth meeting, the Conference of the Parties invited Parties to submit thematic reports on mountain ecosystems, protected areas, transfer of technology and technology cooperation.
4. In both paragraph 9 of decision VI/25 and paragraph 6 of decision VI/16, the secretariats of the Convention and the Global Environment Facility were requested to explore funding modalities for facilitating the preparation of future national and thematic reports from Parties.
5. In paragraph 27 of decision VI/22, the Conference of the Parties agreed that a voluntary thematic report would be called for in relation to implementation of the expanded programme of work on forest biological diversity by Parties. In the same paragraph, the Executive Secretary was requested to prepare a format for that thematic national report for approval by the Bureau of the Conference of the Parties, after

* UNEP/CBD/COP/7/1 and Corr.1.

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consultation with the national focal points and the Bureau of the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice. In paragraphs 21 and 22 of the same decision, the Conference of the Parties requested Parties to report on progress in implementing relevant objectives and related activities of the expanded programme of work on forest biological diversity through their national reports, and requested the Executive Secretary, in collaboration with the Collaborative Partnership on Forests members, to develop a format for the section on implementation of the expanded programme of work on forest biological diversity in the third and future national reports.

6. In paragraph 4 of decision VI/5, the Conference of the Parties invited Parties and Governments to provide thematic reports on the implementation of the programme of work on agricultural biodiversity, as part of the third national reports. In paragraph 5 of the same decision, the Executive Secretary was requested to prepare a draft format for the thematic report on agricultural biodiversity for consideration by the Conference of the Parties at its seventh meeting.

7. Section II of this note contains a brief analysis of the reasons for late or non-submission of the second national reports, including the status of the second national reports and a summary of lessons learned in the process of the second round of national reporting under the Convention. Section III presents conclusions drawn from the analysis of information contained in the second national reports that (UNEP/CBD/COP/7/INF/2). Section IV briefly describes the status of thematic reports received and relevant work undertaken by the Executive Secretary to support the eighth and ninth meetings of the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice (SBSTTA). This section also introduces the work undertaken by the Executive Secretary to fulfil the requests arising from the elements of other COP 6 decisions related to national reporting. Finally, section V presents draft recommendations for consideration by the Conference of the Parties at its seventh meeting. The annex contains a complete list of Parties that have submitted their second national reports by the end of October 2003.

8. It should be noted that the draft format for the third national reports had been prepared by the Executive Secretary and is presented for consideration by the Conference of the Parties at its seventh meeting (UNEP/CBD/COP/7/17/Add.2).

9. It should be also noted that following requests contained in both paragraph 9 of decision VI/25 and paragraph 6 of decision VI/17, the Secretariats of the Global Environment Facility and the Convention on Biological Diversity had undertaken some coordination during the intersessional period for the purpose of facilitating the preparation of future national and thematic reports from Parties. The detailed information concerning the coordination between the two Secretariats is contained in the report provided by the Global Environment Facility and the document UNEP/CBD/COP/7/17.

II. ANALYSIS OF REASONS FOR LATE OR NO SUBMISSION OF THE SECOND NATIONAL REPORTS

A. *Status of the second national reports*

10. At its fifth meeting, in decision V/19, the Conference of the Parties adopted the guidelines for national reports. Through the same decision, the Executive Secretary was requested to distribute the guidelines after having incorporated the views expressed by the Parties and the decisions adopted at that meeting. As required, the finalized guidelines and format for the second national reports were distributed to the Parties on 30 September 2000.

11. Also in decision V/19, the Parties were invited to submit their second national reports by 15 May 2001. By that date, 15 reports were submitted to the Secretariat.

12. As of 30 October, 2001, 55 reports had been received. A preliminary synthesis of information contained in these reports was presented for consideration at the Inter-Sessional Meeting on the Strategic Plan, National Reports and the Implementation (MSP), which was held in Montreal from 19 to 21 November 2001.

13. By the end of January 2002, 65 reports had been received. Following a request made by the Inter-Sessional Meeting, the Executive Secretary made an assessment of information contained in these

reports and presented it to the sixth meeting of the Conference of the Parties (UNEP/CBD/COP/6/5/Add.3 and UNEP/CBD/COP/6/INF/10 and 11).

14. As of the *end of October 2003*, a total of 104 reports had been received by the Secretariat. Following a request in paragraph 3 (a) of decision VI/25, the Executive Secretary has prepared an analysis of information contained in the second national reports. As indicated above, the conclusions drawn from this analysis are presented in the section III below.

15. For the purposes of the following analysis of information contained in the second national reports, it should be noted that by the *end of October 2003*, 26 reports had been received from Asia and the Pacific, 25 reports from Africa, 17 reports from Latin America and the Caribbean, 13 reports from Central and Eastern Europe and 23 reports from Western European and other countries.

B. Reasons for late or non-submission of the second national reports

16. Following requests made at the Inter-Sessional Meeting on the Strategic Plan, National Reports and the Implementation and the sixth meeting of the Conference of the Parties, a number of notifications and reminders were sent to those Parties that had not submitted their second national report to solicit the reasons for late or no submission. As of the end of October 2003, the Secretariat had received only 14 responses to the above notifications and reminders. From the responses received, the reasons for non- or late submission can be summarized as

- (a) Lack of financial assistance to prepare the national reports;
- (b) Delay caused by lack of or poor coordination with relevant implementing agencies to apply for the funds from the Global Environment Facility;
- (c) Delay caused by lack of or poor coordination at the national level and the limited participatory approach;
- (d) Delay caused by change of personnel responsible for biodiversity and national reporting at the national focal point;
- (e) Lack of technical capacity and resources to prepare the report.

C. Some lessons learned in the process of the second round of national reporting

17. At a number of meetings held prior to and after the sixth meeting of the Conference of the Parties, views and comments were provided on how to improve the national reporting process under the Convention, particularly on how to improve the guidelines for national reports. The Inter-Sessional Meeting on the Strategic Plan, National Reports and Implementation of the Convention held in Montreal from 19 to 21 November 2001 provided the first opportunity for Parties to provide views and comments on how to improve the guidelines for national reports. The report of the meeting and relevant recommendations were presented to the sixth meeting of the Conference of the Parties (UNEP/CBD/COP/6/5).

18. The Conference of the Parties considered these recommendations at its sixth meeting and provided specific guidance on the preparation of the format for the third national reports, in paragraph 3 (d) of decision VI/25.

19. The Inter-Sessional Meeting on the Multi-Year Programme of Work of the Convention, held in Montreal from 17 to 20 March 2003, considered the information for future evaluation of progress in the implementation of the Convention and the Strategic Plan, which was prepared by the Executive Secretary following the requests contained in both paragraph 4 of decision VI/26 and paragraph 13 of decision VI/27. On the basis of discussion, the Meeting provided some recommendations on how to improve the reporting process under the Convention as well as further recommendations on how to improve the guidelines for the third national reports. The report of the meeting and relevant recommendations are being presented to the Conference of the Parties at its seventh meeting (UNEP/CBD/COP/7/5).

20. In addition to the above, there are other lessons learned in this process that may merit adequate attention and possible actions by the Conference of the Parties. First, there has been a concern about the submission rate of national reports. Obviously, without an adequate number of reports, it is very difficult for the Conference of the Parties to assess the effectiveness of the measures taken by Parties for the implementation of the Convention. To address this concern, it may be useful to briefly look at some relevant data of the receipt of national reports. By 30 October 2003, 133 first national reports and 104 second national reports had been received. It should be noted that only 10 first national reports were received by 1 January 1998 (the original deadline) and only 15 second national reports were received by 15 May 2001. Clearly, the submission rate of the two reports is relatively low in relation to the total number of the Parties that should submit their national reports (a total of 188 Parties as of 30 October, 2003). This is particularly the case for the submission of the two reports by the respective deadlines adopted at meetings of the Conference of the Parties.

21. A preliminary analysis of the reasons provided in the paragraph 16 above, as well as the relevant comments made at the inter-sessional meetings and the sixth meeting of the Conference of the Parties and those provided in writing, indicates that the lack of technical and financial resources was considered as main constraints for many Parties, particularly developing country Parties to prepare their national reports in time. Therefore, there is a need to strengthen the technical capacity of Parties, particularly developing country Parties, to prepare their national reports considering this process requires the collection and processing of a large amount of data and information. More importantly, there is a need to strengthen the capacities of developing country Parties of monitoring, information and data collection, processing and management, which provide a fundamental basis for preparing their national reports. There is also a need to facilitate the timely access by eligible countries to financial resources provided by the Global Environment Facility, including by exploring innovative funding modalities to facilitate the preparation of future national reports by Parties.

22. There is a related concern about the adequacy of information from national reports to assess the implementation of the Convention. In the second national reports, in addition to responses to the questions, in some cases, Parties were requested to provide further comments to elaborate the optional answers they had selected. Additional spaces were also provided at the end of each section of questions to allow Parties to provide any additional information they deem necessary to reflect the implementation of the Convention at national level. A review of the information provided by some Parties indicates that some Parties did provide some “additional” information as requested. However, some countries provided little or no “additional” information even though they were so requested. This was partly due to the approach adopted by the second national reports, which gave Parties the flexibility to provide additional information as they deemed necessary. However, in the absence of additional information, it is very difficult to make an effective assessment of the implementation of the Convention by solely relying on the responses to some questions, which were mostly qualitative. To improve this situation, questions and optional answers should be better designed to allow Parties to provide more adequate information. On the other hand, Parties are expected to provide as much information and data as available.

23. Another lesson learned from this process lies in the use of the format for national reports. A few countries submitted their reports using the incorrect or incomplete format or a format of their own design, which caused delays in posting these reports on the website of the Convention and incorporating relevant information into the analytical tool developed by the Secretariat, as well as in relevant assessment or analysis prepared by relevant meetings under the Convention.

III. ANALYSIS OF INFORMATION CONTAINED IN THE SECOND NATIONAL REPORTS

A. Introduction

24. The following analysis is based on 94 out of a total of 104 second national reports that had been received by the Secretariat by the end of October 2003. This is because only 94 reports have been incorporated in the second national reports analyser, an analytic tool developed by the Secretariat to facilitate statistical analysis of the second national reports. Ten reports could not be included in this

analysis because they were incomplete or the presentation of the content did not conform to the format adopted for the second national reports.

25. The present analysis intends to build on the earlier assessments (UNEP/CBD/COP/6/INF/10 and 11). One obvious difference between this analysis and the earlier assessments is that instead of presenting factually all the data contained in the second national reports, this analysis attempts to capture meaningful developments and trends (progress and achievements) at the national level as well as major obstacles experienced by some, if not all Parties, in the implementation of the Convention.

26. Considering that this analysis is intended to assist with the elaboration of relevant agenda items at the seventh meeting of the Conference of the Parties, the analysis is structured by the thematic programmes of work, cross-cutting issues and other issues covered in the second national reports. In addition, the following structure is employed for each section, taking into consideration the above purpose and the potential contribution of this analysis to the second edition of the Global Biodiversity Outlook, which will be prepared in accordance with paragraphs 6 and 7 of decision VI/25:

- (a) Context;
- (b) Status and trends;
- (c) Impacts of implementation (progress, successes and achievements);
- (d) Impediments to implementation;
- (e) Conclusion.

27. It should be also noted that for the purpose above and considering the value of relevant information contained in the second national reports, some articles are not included in the following analysis although they were covered in the second national reports. For example, Articles 12, 17, 23, 24 and 25 are not analysed here either because they were not addressed by the Conference of the Parties as a separate issue or because relevant information provided by Parties were found of limited value for an assessment of the implementation of the Convention at the national level.

28. As indicated above, this analysis is undertaken on the basis of 94 second national reports received by the end of October 2003. First, it should be noted that this number of reports makes up only a half of the total number of Parties (188 Parties by the end of October 2003). Secondly, these reports vary in the quality and quantity of information provided. Partly due to the design of the questionnaire in the second national reports, the information available from the responses to the questions therein was mostly qualitative and general in some cases, which posed great difficulty for analysing the status and trends and the impacts of the implementation of the thematic programme areas, cross-cutting issues and other issues covered in the second national reports. In addition, a considerable number of reports provided little additional information concerning the implementation of some Articles and programmes of work. In the absence of adequate additional information, it is difficult to undertake an effective assessment of the implementation of some thematic programmes of work and cross-cutting issues by relying solely on the responses to questions.

B. A summary of conclusions drawn from analysis of the second national reports

29. The main findings and conclusions presented below are derived from the detailed analysis (UNEP/CBD/COP/7/INF/2) prepared for the seventh meeting of the Conference of the Parties. The structure of the presentation here is the same as is in the analysis itself. It should be noted that the following conclusions or findings should be considered as preliminary and limited considering the fact that they are drawn from a limited number of reports submitted to the Secretariat and in many cases, the varying responses provided by different Parties and the inadequacy of relevant information make it difficult to generalize the trends or meaningful developments in the implementation of various programmes of work, cross-cutting and other issues. It should be also pointed out that the stand-alone conclusions presented below should be read in conjunction with the detailed analysis.

1. *Analysis of progress on the thematic programmes of work under the Convention*

Forest biological diversity

30. In general, a considerable number of countries are taking some measures to implement the programme of work and associated decisions of the Conference of the Parties. Actions include undertaking research and assessment, formulating and implementing forest policies or programmes, establishing protected areas networks, promoting sustainable forest management practices and multi-stakeholder participation, and strengthening capacities for the implementation of the programme of work. The ecosystem approach is being promoted by a considerable number of countries for conservation and sustainable use of forest biological diversity, though the application of the ecosystem approach is still in the early stage in many countries. Most of the countries are working to build up synergies between the Convention on Biological Diversity programme of work and the proposed actions under the United Nations Forum on Forests (UNFF). As to impediments to implementation, a few countries cited lack of adequate technical, human and financial resources.

Agricultural biodiversity

31. It would appear that some substantial progress has been made in the implementation of some elements of the programme of work on agricultural biodiversity. Some Parties had taken some actions in this field long before the entry into force of the Convention. The additional information provided indicates that a considerable number of reporting countries are promoting the conservation and sustainable use of agricultural biodiversity as a part of their efforts to promote agricultural or rural development.

Marine and coastal biological diversity

32. The implementation of the programme of work on marine and coastal biodiversity is in the early stage in most of the reporting countries. However, a considerable number of reporting countries attach high priority to this programme of work and their NBSAPs promote to varying extents the conservation and sustainable use of marine and coastal biological diversity. A number of countries are taking measures to address some issues they face, such as coral bleaching.

Inland water biological diversity

33. The implementation of the programme of work on inland water biodiversity is still at an early stage in many countries, considering the fact that these countries are reviewing or are yet to review it, identify national priorities and means of implementation. However, it should be noted that a number of reporting countries have developed relevant strategies, plans, programmes, projects and initiatives for conservation and sustainable use of inland water biological diversity, though some of them addressed these issues in a broader scope, such as those for river basins, watersheds or catchments. A majority of reporting countries have incorporated into their national biodiversity strategies and action plans the conservation and sustainable use of inland water biodiversity and of migratory species and their habitats. It should be also noted that some countries are promoting synergies between the Convention on Biological Diversity and the Ramsar Convention, including through integrated wetland, catchments and watershed management.

Dry and sub-humid lands biological diversity

34. Given that it is a relatively new programme of work under the Convention, most of the reporting Parties are reviewing it or are yet to review and identify appropriate means to implement it. The limited information available does not allow for an assessment of the implementation of the programme of work at this stage. However it should be noted that a number of countries are providing scientific, technical and financial support to the activities identified in the programme of work and fostering cooperation at the regional or sub-regional levels among the countries sharing similar biomes.

2. *Analysis of progress on the cross-cutting issues under the Convention*

Access to genetic resources and benefit-sharing

35. Since issues related to access to genetic resources and benefit-sharing are relatively new to many countries, national actions in this field are still limited, due to constraints in human, financial, technical and technological resources. Another possible reason may relate to the lack of awareness of relevant issues and priority-setting for addressing issues related to access and benefit-sharing. However, a number of countries have developed and are implementing policies, measures, regulations or guidelines on access and benefit-sharing. Meanwhile, a considerable number of reporting countries indicated needs for capacity-building and development of appropriate mechanisms for implementation of access and benefit-sharing at the national level.

Ecosystem approach

36. The implementation of the ecosystem approach is in a very early stage, although many countries are trying to apply some principles embodied in the approach through various means, including regional cooperation. Further efforts are needed for capacity building in this regard, particularly for developing countries. Given the complex nature of the approach, more international cooperation is needed to implement the ecosystem approach, particularly with regard to further exploring the theories related to the ecosystem approach and the ways of applying the ecosystem approaches in various circumstances.

Public education and awareness

37. The implementation of Article 13 is being promoted in a considerable number of countries. Various forms of educational programmes and activities are being or have been developed and implemented for various target audiences in a considerable number of countries for the purpose of achieving the objectives of the Convention. It should be also noted that a number of countries have not developed any programmes or initiatives to enhance public education and awareness for achieving the objectives of the Convention. Some countries are experiencing a number of constraints, although they have made some efforts in this field.

Global taxonomy initiative

38. The implementation of the Global Taxonomy Initiative is at an early stage in many countries, primarily due to a number of constraints. However, it should be recognized that a number of countries have made considerable efforts in this field, such as establishment of a variety of taxonomic collections, relevant databases or information exchange systems, publishing taxonomic research results and surveys, and providing training on taxonomy. Meanwhile, a considerable number of countries, particularly developing countries, have indicated needs for capacity building and adequate resources to implement the programme of work on the Global Taxonomy Initiative.

Invasive alien species

39. It should be said that a number of reporting countries, particularly those with good expertise and resources to address this issue, have made some progress in implementing Article 8(h) and associated decisions. Some countries have developed some effective policies, regulations or programmes to address the issue of alien species. However, a considerable number of countries are taking very limited or no action to address this issue due to a wide range of constraints they face. It should be also noted that the application of the interim guiding principles adopted at the fifth meeting of the Conference of the Parties is still in the very stage in many countries. A considerable number of countries have indicated needs for capacity building and adequate resources to address the issue of alien species, including development of trade and technical measures to prevent, mitigate and eradicate alien species, and strengthening cross-sectoral coordination to address the issue of alien species. Some countries also underlined the importance of subregional, regional and global cooperation to address this issue.

Traditional knowledge, innovations and practices

40. The implementation of Article 8(j) and related provisions is in the early stage in many countries. It should be recognized that a number of countries, particularly those countries with indigenous populations and a long history of agricultural activities, attach a high priority to the protection and preservation of traditional knowledge and are making various efforts to this end, including through development of some specialized regulations, policies and programmes in this field. It should be also mentioned that some countries without indigenous communities in their own jurisdictions are taking some measures to protect the traditional knowledge and practices of their local communities to facilitate the implementation of Article 8(j) and related provisions.

Incentive measures

41. The implementation of Article 11 is in the early stage for many countries due to a number of constraints. On the other hand, a number of countries have developed and are implementing a variety of incentive measures for the conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity, although some of these measures appear to have been designed and implemented for environmental protection and conservation of biological resources in general. A considerable number of countries have expressed needs for building various capacities for the development and implementation of incentive measures, particularly the developing countries with very limited resources and expertise to develop and implement incentive measures and to undertake some fundamental work for this purpose, such as assessing the threats and underlying causes of biodiversity loss.

Sustainable use of biological diversity

42. It should be recognized that most of the reporting countries are taking some actions or measures to implement relevant provisions of Article 10 and associated decisions. A number of reporting countries have recognized the importance of sustainable use and incorporated the concept and related principles into their relevant regulations, strategies, plans and programmes. However, many Parties indicate that more efforts are needed at various levels to explore ways for sustainable use of biodiversity, including exploration of some guidelines and principles for sustainable use.

Biological diversity and tourism

43. Due to the fact that the issue of biodiversity and tourism was addressed only at fifth meeting of the Conference of the Parties, the implementation of relevant provisions and decisions relating to this issue is in the early stage for many countries. However, a considerable number of reporting countries have recognized the importance of promoting sustainable tourism for conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity and are trying to take measures to address possible negative impacts of tourism on biological diversity while making efforts to promote sustainable tourism or eco-tourism, including formulating relevant policies, programmes and activities.

Impact assessment and indicators

44. Some countries have registered noteworthy progress in implementing Article 14. Indicative of this progress is the adoption of relevant legislative, administrative and policy measures in many reporting countries. It is also encouraging to note that a considerable number of countries are using the strategic environment assessment to address not only the impacts of individual projects, but also their cumulative impacts, and to make sure that the results of the assessments will be applied in the decision-making, planning and legislative processes. It should be noted that many developing countries are still faced with various difficulties in putting in place relevant legislation and undertaking some environmental impacts assessments or strategic environment assessments although they have adopted some laws and procedures for this purpose. Meanwhile, a considerable number of countries, particularly developing countries, have indicated needs for capacity building in this field, including technical and financial support to undertake environmental impact assessment or strategic impact assessment and develop and apply relevant indicators at national and local level.

Protected areas

45. Some progress is being made in some countries in the establishment and management of protected areas, particularly in terms of developing relevant legislation, policies, plans and programmes as well as in establishing protected areas of various categories. However, various impediments, particularly lack of adequate human and financial resources, are constraining many countries from achieving more progress in this field.

3. Analysis of other issues covered in the second national reports

Scientific and technical cooperation

46. It would appear from this review that more efforts are needed to promote scientific and technical cooperation for achieving the objectives of the Convention. Although some progress is being made in establishing clearing-house mechanism at the national level, more efforts are clearly needed to enhance the development and operation of the clearing-house mechanism, considering the limited number of clearing-house mechanisms established and operationalized. A considerable number of countries, particularly developing countries and least developed countries, feel there is a strong need to promote scientific and technical cooperation at various levels to promote the implementation of the Convention, particularly in those areas where capacity building and technical resources are needed.

Access to and transfer of technology

47. From the analysis of information contained in the second national reports, it is clear that much needs to be done to facilitate access to and transfer of technology for the purpose of achieving the objectives of the Convention. Even though some countries have taken some measures for this purpose, such as facilitating information exchange and encouraging the private sector to facilitate transfer of relevant technologies, however, clearly these measures are limited, in particular those measures to facilitate access to and benefit-sharing of genetic resources and the private sector involvement in technology development and transfer. Some countries, particularly developing countries, underline the need for transfer of expertise and know-how while calling for measures taken to facilitate access to and transfer of relevant technologies.

General measures for conservation and sustainable use

48. Many reporting countries have developed or are in the process of developing their national biodiversity strategies and action plans. However, the implementation of the strategies and action plans continues to be a challenge to the majority of countries. As recognized by some reporting countries, there is lack of progress in the implementation of national biodiversity strategies and action plans as a result of to the lack of technical and financial resources for implementing some priority actions identified. In addition, some countries underlined the need for revising and updating their strategies and/or action plans in light of the latest developments in this field at national and international level so that they can focus on priority issues they are facing.

Cooperation

49. Many countries have recognized the importance of cooperation and have undertaken or are undertaking various forms of cooperation. From the existing information, it is very difficult to assess to what extent these cooperative activities have impacted the implementation of the Convention, but it is clear that cooperation of various forms have proven helpful to some countries, particularly those lacking adequate human, technical and financial resources. Therefore, a considerable number of countries indicate that there is a strong need to strengthen cooperation of various forms at various levels for the purpose of the implementation of the Convention.

Financial resources and mechanism

50. It should be said that at the national level, many reporting countries are providing financial support to the national activities intended to implement the Convention. However, most of them, particularly developing countries and some countries with economies in transition, find the financial

resources allocated to the activities in this field limited or very limited. At the international level, some developed countries indicated that they had provided or were providing some funds to developing countries and countries with economies in transition, through various sources of funding. However, some countries were of the view that some developed countries did not provide new, additional financial resources to developing countries and countries with economies in transition to support the implementation of the Convention. In addition, due to lack of adequate information, it is very difficult to assess whether the financial mechanism of the Convention has provided adequate funds to meet the needs of those countries eligible for such funding.

IV. THEMATIC REPORTING

51. The Conference of the Parties, in decision VI/25, invited Parties to submit thematic reports on mountain ecosystems, protected areas, transfer of technology and technology cooperation respectively by October 30, 2002, March 30, 2003 and March 30, 2003. By the end of October 2003, the Secretariat had received a total of 40 thematic reports on mountain ecosystems, 51 thematic reports on protected areas and 24 thematic reports on transfer of technology and technology cooperation.

52. To support the work of the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice (SBSTTA) and facilitate discussion on relevant issues, the Executive Secretary had prepared syntheses of these thematic reports respectively for the eighth and ninth meetings of SBSTTA. A synthesis of information contained in the thematic reports on mountain ecosystems (UNEP/CBD/SBSTTA/8/INF/9) and a synthesis of information contained in the thematic reports on protected areas (UNEP/CBD/SBSTTA/9/INF/2) are available as information documents.

53. Following a request made at the Inter-Sessional Meeting on the Multi-Year Programme of Work, the Executive Secretary has prepared a synthesis of information contained in the thematic reports on transfer of technology and technology cooperation, which is available as an information document (UNEP/CBD/COP/7/INF/9).

54. As requested by paragraph 27 of decision VI/22, the Executive Secretary prepared a format for a voluntary thematic national report on the implementation of the expanded programme of work on forest biodiversity. As required, the format was approved by the Bureau of the Conference of the Parties following consultation with national focal points and the SBSTTA Bureau. Parties were invited to submit their voluntary reports by 30 September 2003. By that date, only two reports had been received. A reminder was sent to Parties to facilitate submission since these voluntary reports should be due for consideration by the Conference of the Parties at its seventh meeting. By the end of October 2003, a total of 12 voluntary reports had been received by the Secretariat. A synthesis of these reports is also available as an information document (UNEP/CBD/COP/7/INF/7).

55. As requested by paragraph 22 of decision VI/22, the Executive Secretary also developed a format for a section in the third national reports on the implementation of the expanded programme of work. In this process, the Executive Secretary has coordinated with the Collaborative Partnership on Forests, the United Nations Forum on Forests and other related forums and organizations for the purpose of harmonizing forest-related reporting. The Secretariat of the Convention has been actively participating in the activities of the task force established by CPF on streamlining and harmonizing forest-related reporting. In the meantime, two different sets of questionnaire were designed for a voluntary thematic report and a section in the third national reports on the same subject so as to avoid overlaps and duplications considering there is a short interval in the submission of these two reports.

56. As requested by paragraph 5 of decision VI/5, the Executive Secretary had prepared a draft format for thematic reports on agricultural biodiversity, as part of the third national reports. In this process, consultation was undertaken with national focal points and the Bureau of SBSTTA. A side-event was also organized at the margin of the eighth meeting of SBSTTA to solicit views and comments on the draft format. The draft format for thematic reports on agricultural biodiversity is included in the draft formats for the third national reports UNEP/CBD/COP/7/17/Add.2.

V. RECOMMENDATIONS

57. The Conference of the Parties may wish to consider adopting a decision along the following lines:

The Conference of the Parties

1. *Takes note* of the analysis of the information contained in the second national reports as contained in this note (UNEP/CBD/COP/7/17/Add.3 and UNEP/CBD/COP/7/INF/2);
2. *Expresses concern* over the delay in the submission of national reports by some Parties, and takes note of the difficulty that this delay may pose to the assessment of the implementation of the Convention in the absence of an adequate number of national reports;
3. *Requests* Parties to facilitate the preparation of the third and future national reports and endeavor to submit national reports in time;
4. *Encourages* Parties, Governments, relevant bilateral, regional and multilateral organizations, and the implementing agencies of the Global Environment Facility to collaborate to strengthen the various capacities of Parties, particularly developing country Parties and countries with economies in transition, to prepare their future national and thematic reports;
5. *Requests* the Global Environment Facility to work together with the Executive Secretary to explore ways to expedite and simplify its procedures for allocating funds to the eligible countries to prepare their national reports to fulfill their reporting obligations under the Convention;
6. *Requests* Parties to submit as much information and data as available to improve the adequacy of information for the evaluation of the implementation of the Convention and the Strategic Plan of the Convention, particularly focusing on:
 - (a) Status and trends of biodiversity and its various components;
 - (b) Impacts of national actions on the achievement of the objectives of the Convention, the goals and objectives identified in the Strategic Plan of the Convention and the 2010 target; and
 - (c) Constraints or impediments encountered in the implementation of the Convention;
7. *Requests* the Subsidiary Body for Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice and other bodies established under the Convention to take into account, where appropriate, the conclusions drawn from the analysis of the second national reports when addressing relevant programmes of work, cross-cutting and other issues under the Convention.

Annex

LIST OF SECOND NATIONAL REPORTS RECEIVED (AS OF 30 OCTOBER 2003)

(Parties listed alphabetically with the regions to which they belong in brackets.)

1. Argentina (GRULAC)
2. Armenia (Central and Eastern Europe)
3. Australia (WEOG)
4. Austria (WEOG)
5. Bahamas (GRULAC)
6. Bangladesh (Asia and the Pacific)
7. Barbados (GRULAC)
8. Belarus (Central and Eastern Europe)
9. Belgium (WEOG)
10. Benin (Africa)
11. Botswana (Africa)
12. Brazil (GRULAC)
13. Bulgaria (Central and Eastern Europe)
14. Burkina Faso (Africa)
15. Burundi (Africa)
16. Cameroon (Africa)
17. Canada (WEOG)
18. Central African Republic (Africa)
19. China (Asia and the Pacific)
20. Comoros (Africa)
21. Congo (Africa)
22. Costa Rica (GRULAC)
23. Cuba (GRULAC)
24. Democratic Republic of the Congo (Africa)
25. Denmark (WEOG)
26. Djibouti (Africa)
27. Dominican Republic (GRULAC)
28. El Salvador (GRULAC)
29. Eritrea (Africa)
30. Estonia (Central and Eastern Europe)
31. Ethiopia (Africa)
32. European Community (WEOG)
33. Fiji (Asia and the Pacific)
34. Finland (WEOG)
35. France (WEOG)
36. Gambia (Africa)
37. Germany (WEOG)
38. Greece (WEOG)
39. Grenada (GRULAC)
40. Guatemala (GRULAC)
41. Guinea Bissau (Africa)
42. Hungary (Central and Eastern Europe)
43. Iceland (WEOG)
44. India (Asia and the Pacific)
45. Indonesia (Asia and the Pacific)
46. Iran (Islamic Republic of) (Asia and the Pacific)
47. Ireland (WEOG)
48. Israel (WEOG)
49. Italy (WEOG)
50. Japan (WEOG)
51. Kazakhstan (Asia and the Pacific)
52. Kiribati (Asia and the Pacific)
53. Latvia (Central and Eastern Europe)
54. Lebanon (Asia and the Pacific)
55. Lithuania (Central and Eastern Europe)
56. Madagascar (Africa)
57. Malawi (Africa)
58. Mali (Africa)
59. Marshall Islands (Asia and the Pacific)
60. Mauritius (Africa)
61. Mexico (GRULAC)
62. Micronesia (Federated States of) (Asia and the Pacific)
63. Monaco (WEOG)
64. Mongolia (Asia and the Pacific)
65. Morocco (Africa)
66. Namibia (Africa)
67. Nepal (Asia and the Pacific)
68. New Zealand (WEOG)
69. Nicaragua (GRULAC)
70. Niger (Africa)
71. Niue (Asia and the Pacific)
72. Norway (WEOG)
73. Oman (Asia and the Pacific)
74. Pakistan (Asia and the Pacific)

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75. Panama (GRULAC)
76. Paraguay (GRULAC)
77. Peru (GRULAC)
78. Philippines (Asia and the Pacific)
79. Poland (Central and Eastern Europe)
80. Portugal (WEOG)
81. Republic of Korea (Asia and the Pacific)
82. Republic of Moldova (Central and Eastern Europe)
83. Romania (Central and Eastern Europe)
84. Russian Federation (Central and Eastern Europe)
85. Saint Lucia (GRULAC)
86. Samoa (Asia and the Pacific)
87. Senegal (Africa)
88. Singapore (Asia and the Pacific)
89. Slovak Republic (Central and Eastern Europe)
90. Slovenia (Central and Eastern Europe)
91. Solomon Islands (Asia and the Pacific)
92. Spain (WEOG)
93. Sri Lanka (Asia and the Pacific)
94. Syrian Arab Republic (Asia and the Pacific)
95. Sweden (WEOG)
96. Thailand (Asia and the Pacific)
97. The Netherlands (WEOG)
98. Tunisia (Africa)
99. Uganda (Africa)
100. United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland (WEOG)
101. Uruguay (GRULAC)
102. Vanuatu (Asia and the Pacific)
103. Viet Nam (Asia and the Pacific)
104. Zimbabwe (Africa)
