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**USING EXISTING PROCESSES AS BUILDING BLOCKS IN REPORTING ON THE 2010
TARGET**

Note by the Executive Secretary

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* UNEP/CBD/SBSTTA/9/1.

I. INTRODUCTION

1. In 2002 the sixth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity adopted the Strategic Plan for the Convention (decision VI/26), which commits Parties to “achieve by 2010 a significant reduction of the current rate of biodiversity loss at the global, regional and national level as a contribution to poverty alleviation and to the benefit of all life on earth”. This target was endorsed by the World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD), which took place in Johannesburg, from 26 August to 4 September 2002, which also reconfirmed the role of the Convention as the key instrument for conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity and the fair and equitable sharing of benefits arising from its use (WSSD Plan of Implementation, para.44).

2. The WSSD also recognized the critical role played by biodiversity in sustainable development and poverty eradication. The United Nations Secretary-General’s “WEHAB” initiative, identified biodiversity as one of five key areas, together with water, energy, health and agriculture where concrete results could and must be obtained to ensure a sustainable future. Subsequent to this, there has been increasing recognition of the importance of biodiversity in achieving all of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), as evidenced by the results of the London meeting, held from 2 to 4 March 2003, on “Biodiversity after Johannesburg: The critical role of biodiversity and ecosystem services in achieving the United Nations Millennium Development Goals” and the deliberations of the United Nations Millennium Project task force on environmental sustainability.

3. In addition to the 2010 target and the MDGs and associated targets (A/56/326), a range of other international targets has been adopted by the international community, including, for example the further biodiversity-related targets in the WSSD Plan of Implementation. The Conference of Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity has also encouraged the development of measurable targets at the national level in implementing national strategies and action plans (decision III/9), and has established 16 action-oriented targets for the Global Strategy for Plant Conservation (decision VI/9).

4. The setting of targets is an important step in achieving the objectives of the Convention. It allows the Convention to focus on key priorities and provides a reference point for assessing progress towards them. However, it is also necessary to ensure that means are in place to assess progress towards these targets. In particular, there is a need to assess the availability of suitable data to measure progress. This information is a prerequisite for reporting on progress, for adaptive management and policy-setting responses, and for communication.

5. During the Open-ended Inter-Sessional Meeting on the Multi-year Programme of Work (MYPOW) of the Conference of the Parties up to 2010, held from 17 to 20 March 2003, Parties discussed means of assessing progress in implementing the Strategic Plan (UNEP/CBD/COP/7/5). The Inter-Sessional Meeting welcomed the initiative of the Executive Secretary, working with UNDP and the UNEP World Conservation Monitoring Centre, in organizing a meeting to address, *inter alia*, means for assessing and reporting on progress in achieving the 2010 target, and suggested that the report on the outcome of the meeting to SBSTTA.

6. The meeting, “2010 - The Global Biodiversity Challenge”, took place in London from 21 to 23 May 2003, and brought together over 150 participants including experts nominated by Parties and representatives of biodiversity-related conventions, United Nations agencies, academic and research institutions, industry/business sector, local and indigenous communities, international and other relevant governmental and non-governmental organizations. The report of the meeting (UNEP/CBD/SBSTTA/9/INF/9) concluded, *inter alia*, that:

(a) A wide range of existing assessment and monitoring programmes was already under way which could be oriented to deliver information relevant to assessment of progress in achieving the 2010 target.

(b) There was a need for a comprehensive review of existing datasets, monitoring and assessment and related information management approaches and initiatives, to provide a basis for more informed decisions on indicators and reporting.

(c) This review process, if carried out in collaboration with the involved organizations, would be significant in communicating the 2010 and other biodiversity-related targets to a wide range of potential contributors.

7. The Inter-Sessional Meeting recommended that the Conference of the Parties request the Executive Secretary to develop and facilitate a global partnership on biodiversity with the aim of enhancing synergies, avoiding duplication and improving implementation of biodiversity-related agreements (recommendation 1 A, para. 2).

8. The present information note has been prepared by the Executive Secretary and the UNEP World Conservation Monitoring Centre (UNEP-WCMC) to provide a preliminary review of the range of existing initiatives that might be used as building blocks in reporting on the 2010 target.

9. The note complements the note by the Executive Secretary on the integration of outcome-oriented targets into the programmes of work of the Convention, taking into account the 2010 biodiversity target, the Global Strategy for Plant Conservation, and relevant targets set by the World Summit on Sustainable Development” (UNEP/CBD/SBSTTA/9/14).

10. In reporting on achievement of the 2010 target, it is crucial to monitor the status of the components of biological diversity. However, it is important to also address threats to biodiversity, and changes in the degree of threat over time, as well as actions that are being taken to ensure conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity. This note is intended to address each of these aspects. The next section provides a general introduction to the types of initiatives and what they might be able to contribute and some specific examples of the key initiatives. For the purpose of this document, the initiatives are listed under various headings. However, it should be noted that some of the initiatives may be relevant to more than one heading.

II. POTENTIAL ROLE OF EXISTING INTERNATIONAL INITIATIVES

A. *Global multilateral environment agreements concerned with the conservation of biological diversity*

11. Implementation of each of the global biodiversity-relevant treaties clearly addresses the 2010 target either directly or indirectly, and therefore both current and future reporting is relevant to assessment of progress in achieving the 2010 target. Most of these processes expect or require Parties to make periodic reports on implementation. Some of these reports may contain information that directly concerns components of biodiversity (e.g. the annual reports under the Convention on Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES), which contain information on trade in those species listed in the CITES appendices and the reports under the Convention for the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals (CMS), which are now agreed to include information on actions undertaken to improve the conservation status of species included in Appendix I of that Convention). It is important for each initiative to consider ways in which this body of information and these processes can be used to report on the ways in which these conventions and processes are supporting achievement of the target, and the results of these activities.

Relevant initiatives include:

Convention on Wetlands (Ramsar Convention)

Convention on Migratory Species (and its related agreements)

Convention on Trade in Endangered Species

World Heritage Convention

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12. *Example:* The Convention on Migratory Species has already discussed the 2010 target during its Standing Committee meeting in July 2003, and is actively pursuing the development of indicators as a contribution towards assessment for the 2010 target. One promising approach is the development of species population trend indices for migratory species with emphasis on those included in Appendix I of the Convention and other “Concerted Action Species”. Mechanisms for obtaining and managing the information necessary to produce these indicators, including through national reporting to the Convention and the related agreements, are currently being reviewed. Preliminary analysis indicates that this will require effort over and above that currently entailed in national reporting.

13. *Example:* The Ramsar Convention Scientific and Technical Review Panel has established two working groups to identify ways to monitor and assess not only the state of wetland and freshwater ecosystems in the context of the Convention, but also the specific contribution made by implementation of the Convention itself. This will be closely linked to review of the Convention’s Strategic Plan (which already, incidentally, calls on Parties to use Ramsar sites as baseline and reference areas for national, supranational/regional and international environmental monitoring to detect trends in the loss of biological diversity, climate change, and the processes of desertification). The working groups will report to the Standing Committee in early 2004.

14. To build on this, it is important for the scientific advisory bodies for each of the Conventions to be aware of the 2010 target and its relevance to their activities. Each of these Conventions already has reporting processes in place that may provide information relevant to assessment of progress in achieving the 2010 target (including, for example, conservation action being taken), and has the potential to develop further information over the coming years (as evidenced by the actions being taken by CMS Standing Committee and the Ramsar STRP). Once the advisory bodies have identified the contribution that can be made by the information they hold and the activities that they are undertaking, they can inform their own governing bodies and the Convention on Biological Diversity.

B. Regional biodiversity-related multilateral environment agreements and programmes

15. Implementation of a number of international multilateral environment agreements is facilitated at the regional level by regional agreements which address biodiversity conservation issues. Again, each of these agreements addresses the 2010 target either directly or indirectly, and therefore both current and future reporting is relevant to assessment of progress in achieving the target. Many of these processes already require Parties to make periodic reports which contain information relevant to assessing achievement of the 2010 target. It is important for each of these initiatives to consider ways in which this body of information and these processes can be used to report on achievement of the target.

Relevant initiatives include:

Regional seas conventions, programmes and action plans
Conservation of Arctic Flora and Fauna
African Convention
Western Hemisphere Convention
Antarctic Treaty and Protocols
Convention on the Conservation of Antarctic Marine Living Resources
International Convention for the Regulation of Whaling
Bern Convention
EU Directives and Regulations
Alpine Convention
SADC Protocol on Wildlife Conservation

16. *Example:* The Conservation of Arctic Flora and Fauna (CAFF) programme is one of four environmental regional programmes under the umbrella of the Arctic Council. The Council has been established as a high-level intergovernmental forum to address concerns and challenges faced by the

Arctic countries. CAFF covers all issues related to biodiversity in the region, and has developed a circumpolar biodiversity monitoring programme in response to global changes, in particular climate change. Implementation of the programme has been hampered by lack of funding and administrative restrictions, however recent approaches to jointly enhance the monitoring initiatives with the Arctic Monitoring and Assessment Programme are promising.

17. *Example:* The Cartagena Convention and the associated SPAW Protocol (Specially Protected Areas and Wildlife) are concerned with protection of marine and coastal habitats in the wider Caribbean region. There is already a Memorandum of Understanding in place with the Convention on Biological Diversity, and a review of areas of cooperation has been undertaken. The SPAW Protocol in particular is leading to the development of a significant body of information on conservation of biological diversity in the region, working in collaboration with a number of other programmes. Reporting procedures and content are being considered, with account being taken of the need to harmonize with other initiatives.

18. Again, to build on this it is important for the scientific advisory bodies for each of the conventions and programmes to be aware of the 2010 target and its relevance to their activities. Some of these conventions already have reporting processes in place that may provide information relevant to assessment of progress in achieving the 2010 target (including, for example, conservation action being taken), and have the potential to develop further information over the coming years. Once the advisory bodies have identified the contribution that can be made by the information they hold and the activities that they are undertaking, they can inform their own governing bodies and the Convention on Biological Diversity. In the case of the regional seas conventions and programmes, there is a coordinating meeting annually, and this may be an opportunity to discuss the issue with all of the programmes at one time.

C. *Other biodiversity-related multilateral environment agreements and similar initiatives*

19. There is a significant number of other initiatives which, while not being set up for conservation of biodiversity *per se*, are directly relevant either because the measures they promote are concerned with sustainable resource use, or the initiative is concerned with control of potential threats. In either case the measures being taken are relevant to the achievement of the 2010 target directly or indirectly, and each initiative may have access to information that may be of value in assessing progress in achieving the 2010 target.

Relevant initiatives include:

Convention to Combat Desertification

United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change

International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture

Agreement for the Implementation of the Provisions of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea relating to the Conservation and Management of Straddling Fish Stocks and Highly Migratory Fish Stocks

Global Programme of Action for the Protection of the Marine Environment from Land-based Activities

International Tropical Timber Agreement and the proposed successor agreement

20. *Example:* Since the first meeting, the Conference of Parties to the Convention to Combat Desertification has been considering benchmarks and indicators for desertification. At the Conference of Parties in August 2003, the Committee on Science and Technology discussed a note by the secretariat that incorporated advice from the Observatoire du Sahara et du Sahel (OSS) and eight Parties. Decision (ICCD/COP(6)/L.12) of the Conference of the Parties encourages Parties and other interested organizations to continue developing benchmarks and indicators, and encourages Parties to develop, test and use appropriate benchmarks and indicators, especially those targeting the local level and civil society involvement.

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21. *Example:* The International Tropical Timber Organization (ITTO) was created by treaty in 1983, primarily to provide a framework for consultation among producer and consumer member countries on the world timber economy. Objectives include promoting sustainable forest management, and compilation, and dissemination of trade related data (including data related to species being traded) with the aim of ensuring greater transparency in the international timber market.

22. For some of these initiatives, the relevance of the 2010 target to their actions may be less obvious, so the secretariats, advisory bodies and governance bodies are likely to be less aware of the target. However, most already have reporting processes of some kind in place that may provide information relevant to assessment of progress in achieving the 2010 target, and have the potential to develop further information over the coming years. It would therefore be of value for the secretariats and advisory bodies to consider their activities and information processes in order to identify the contribution that can be made by the information they hold and the activities that they are undertaking. They may require assistance in doing this.

D. Reporting processes on sustainable development

23. The Commission on Sustainable Development was established by the 1992 Earth Summit *inter alia* to review implementation of Agenda 21. Following the World Summit on Sustainable Development, the CSD will also review implementation of the WSSD Plan of Implementation. While these reporting processes are wide –ranging, and therefore quite general, they do include reporting on issues closely related to the 2010 biodiversity target. The United Nations Forum on Forests, established by the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC), reviews progress in the Intergovernmental Panel on Forests and the International Forum on Forests (IPF/IFF) Proposals for Action, some of which are consistent with some activities and objectives with the programme of work of the Convention on forest biological diversity. Additionally, the General Assembly receives reports from the Secretary-General on the implementation of the Millennium Development Goals.

Relevant initiatives include:

Millennium Development Goals:

-- *UN General Assembly*

-- *Secretary General's Millennium Project*

Agenda 21

World Summit on Sustainable Development Plan of Implementation:

-- *Commission on Sustainable Development*

IPF/IFF Priorities for action on the management of all types of forests

-- *United Nations Forum on Forests*

-- *Collaborative Partnership on Forests*

24. *Example:* A number of Proposals for Action on the management and conservation of all types of forests have been identified by the Intergovernmental Panel on Forests and the Intergovernmental Forum on Forests. In order to enable better implementation of common objectives, the Conference of the Parties of the Convention on Biological Diversity has requested that, in collaboration with the United Nations Forum on Forests Secretariat, a comparison be carried out of the IPF/IFF Proposals for Action and the activities within the Convention's Expanded Programme of Work on Forest Biological Diversity. The Secretariat is a member of the Collaborative Partnership on Forests (CPF) Task Force on Streamlining Forest-related reporting which is examining ways and means of harmonizing and streamlining international reporting processes on forests.

25. *Example:* A number of biodiversity related targets and actions were agreed in the WSSD Plan of Implementation. These include: targets to create a representative network of marine protected areas by 2012 (Article 32, to apply by 2010 the ecosystem approach to restore fish stocks, where possible no later than 2015). These may be seen as complementary to the 2010 target, and indeed, it is proposed that some

of these targets be integrated into the relevant programmes of work of the Convention (see, for example, UNEP/CBD/SBSTTA/9/14/ADD.3). The requirement to report to the CSD on these matters will encourage and promote the provision of information by countries on such targets relevant to the Convention.

26. The over-arching goals of the world community are embodied in the Millennium Development Goals, adopted at the Millennium Session of the General Assembly. These include a goal of ensuring environmental sustainability. Additionally, as noted above, the WSSD Plan of Implementation acknowledges the essential role of biological diversity in achieving sustainable development. There are opportunities for joint reporting on overlapping issues. More specific goals and targets are included in Agenda 21, the WSSD Plan of Implementation, and the Intergovernmental Panel on Forests/Intergovernmental Forum on Forests (IPF/IFF) Proposals for Action. There are a number of opportunities for synergies between these processes and monitoring progress towards the 2010 biodiversity target. They provide a mechanism for collecting, from a wide range of international agencies as well as countries, information that may include relevant data for monitoring progress towards the 2010 biodiversity target. As well, they provide an opportunity to highlight the importance of biodiversity in sustainable development and poverty alleviation.

E. International assessments

27. SBSTTA has previously discussed ongoing assessment processes (UNEP/CBD/SBSTTA/7/3 and UNEP/CBD/SBSTTA/7/INF/8), and has welcomed the contribution that these assessments make to the work of the Convention (recommendation VII/2). Although these assessments vary in extent to which they incorporate biodiversity within their work, and also in the extent to which they compile new data, they are all drawing together and analysing information that is of potential use in assessing progress in achieving the 2010 target. Indeed particularly valuable is the fact that several of these assessments are focussed on the status of particular ecosystems.

Relevant initiatives include:

Millennium Ecosystem Assessment
Global International Waters Assessment
FAO/UNECE Forest Resources Assessment
Land Degradation Assessment in Drylands
FAO State of the World's Plant and Animal Resources
World Water Assessment Programme
UNEP Global Environmental Outlook
CBD Global Biodiversity Outlook
IUCN Red List of Threatened Species
World Database on Protected Areas

28. *Example:* The Global Environment Outlook is a broadly based assessment effort led by UNEP. Involving a large number of organisational and individual participants it essentially attempts a periodic global state of the environment report. It is not in itself a harmonization initiative, but an effort to use, integrate where possible, and interpret available data sources. The third assessment, GEO-3, was published in 2002. Only a small portion of GEO is related to biodiversity, and the report comments on the lack of monitoring programmes capable of providing consistent time-series in this field, however the process does draw together a valuable body of environmental information.

29. *Example:* The Forest Resources Assessment uses a questionnaire approach to periodically collect and compile information on the status and change in forest cover world-wide, on forest management and on additional forest-related variables. Twenty-five years ago the review was very much oriented to forests as sources of timber, but in more recent surveys greater emphasis has been put on conservation

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and sustainable management. The results of the assessment, including country profiles, synthesis reports and maps of global forest cover are widely available.

30. Steps need to be taken to review each of these assessment processes to identify what information that is already being collected is of value in addressing achievement of the 2010 target. In addition, there may be additional action that can be taken by some of the assessments in more effectively incorporating biodiversity considerations into the processes that they are carrying out. The Global Biodiversity Outlook is a potential vehicle for presenting an overall assessment of the state of progress towards the 2010 Biodiversity Target.

F. Information compiled by intergovernmental agencies

31. A number of intergovernmental agencies and organizations compile statistics and carry out assessments (some of which have been noted earlier). Between them they hold a substantial body of information, most of which is derived from official government sources. In some cases datasets go back a significant number of years. This also includes a number of regional organizations.

Relevant agencies and organizations include:

UN agencies (FAO, UNSTAT, UNDP, UNEP, UNESCO, etc)

European Environment Agency

EUROSTAT

Association of South East Asian Nations

CCAD (Central American Commission for Environment and Development

OECD

32. *Example:* The Food and Agriculture Organization's major relevant data holdings and assessments can be grouped in four major areas: forestry, and in particular the FAOSTAT forestry database and the ten-yearly Forest Resource Assessment; fisheries, and in particular the FISHSTAT database on fisheries statistics and the biennial State of the World's Fisheries and Aquaculture report; agriculture, and in particular the FAOSTAT agricultural database; and land cover mapping.

33. *Example:* The European Environment Agency aims to support sustainable development and to help achieve significant and measurable improvement in Europe's environment through the provision of timely, targeted, relevant and reliable information to policy making agents and the public. Products of the agency include a series of assessments, indicators, reports, maps, and information services, including EUNIS, the European Nature Information System which draws on information from European member states.

34. Each of these organizations needs to be encouraged to review the information that it holds, with a view to use of the information in assessing progress in achieving the 2010 target. It is also likely that some of the information will be of value in addressing other biodiversity related targets, such as that on sustainable fisheries. Given that the primary role of many of these organizations is not biodiversity, they may require some assistance in reviewing and assessing their potential contribution.

G. Initiatives of international non-governmental and specialist networks

35. Several non-governmental organizations and specialist networks gather and analyse information of many aspects of biological diversity of direct relevant to the 2010 biodiversity target.

Relevant initiatives include:

IUCN Commission's and Specialist Groups

World Wildlife Fund

Wetlands International

International Coral Reefs Initiative, in particular the International Coral reefs Monitoring Network

BirdLife International
PlantLife International
People and Plants International
Botanic Gardens Conservation International

36. *Example:* A number of NGOs and specialist groups – through the global partnership for plant conservation – are cooperating in promoting the implementation of, and monitoring of progress towards, the 16 targets of the Global Strategy for Plant Conservation. Botanic Gardens Conservation International, for example, together with the International Plant Genetic Resources Institute, is developing an information portal for ex-situ plant conservation; Plant Life international is developing a database of Important Plant Areas, and IUCN, together with UNEP-WCMC and others, is providing information on protected areas. The targets of the Strategy can be regarded as sub-targets of the overall 2010 Biodiversity Target. The partnership of organizations is thus already contributing directly to both the implementation and the monitoring of the 2010 biodiversity target.

37. *Example:* The World Wide Fund for Nature, together with UNEP-WCMC, has developed the “Living Planet Index” -- an indicator of the state of the world 's natural ecosystems. It is calculated as the average of three separate indices which relate to the trends in populations of some 200 or so vertebrate species for each of forest, freshwater, and marine ecosystems. The index shows an overall decline of about 37 per cent between 1970 and 2000. The indicator may be directly useful for assessing an important dimension of biodiversity loss.

38. These examples show that there are a number of data sets and indicators already in use by NGOs and specialist groups that could be directly applicable in assessing progress towards the 2010 biodiversity target. These groups would be very important actors in any coordinated effort to measure progress.

H. International research and monitoring networks

39. There are a number of international research and monitoring networks that can contribute to monitoring and/or assessing achievement of the 2010 target, noting that some of the ecosystem monitoring programmes have quite long histories. These programmes are often also active in the application of standards and data sharing arrangements, and in the application of remote sensing.

Relevant initiatives include:

UNESCO Man and Biosphere programme
CGIAR System (CIFOR, ICARDA, IPGRI, World Fish Centre, etc)
Global Invasive Species Database
G3OS (GTOS, GOOS and GCOS)
International Geosphere-Biosphere Programme
Organization of Biological Field Stations
Sahara and Sahel Observatory
International Tundra Experiment
NatureServe (and the network of data centres with which it is associated)
International Long Term Ecological Research Network
Space agencies (NASA, ESA, etc)

40. *Example:* The Global Terrestrial Observatory System (GTOS) is now under the aegis of FAO with a very broad mandate – to provide the scientific and policy-making community with access to the data necessary to manage the change in the capacity of terrestrial ecosystems to support sustainable development. One specific GTOS product is the Terrestrial Ecosystem Monitoring Site (TEMS) database. Building from initial work in GEMS, this is now a web-accessible system containing information

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(primarily metadata) on over 800 sites that carry out long-term monitoring activities. The website allows users to query and browse through a variety of access paths and allows site managers to update their information directly. In partnership with other on-going programmes, GTOS has also established two regional programmes (South Africa and Eastern Europe) and two thematic initiatives (estimation of Net Primary Productivity and Terrestrial Carbon Observations). GTOS is also developing biodiversity, coastal, forest and hydrology modules.

41. There are three linked environmental monitoring systems that grew out of the Global Environment Monitoring System established by UNEP in the 1970s: Global Ocean Observing System (GOOS), Global Climate Observing System (GCOS) and the Global Terrestrial Observing System (GTOS). The first two of these have clear focus – GOOS under IOC, and GCOS under WMO linking to Climate Change Convention activities. The three observing systems have collaborated (through the Joint Data and Information Panel) to establish an Information Centre, GOSIC, hosted in the University of Delaware, with the intention of making “G3OS” datasets available easily.

42. *Example:* Wetlands International have organized and managed international waterbird counts since 1967, initially only for Europe and the Middle East, but later extended to a global coverage with most of Africa, Asia-Pacific in the 80s and 90s and very recently adopted by the Americas. Specialist groups maintain databases of varying detail and quality. Regular updates on a global level are produced on a 3-year cycle. Wetlands International also works on management of information on Ramsar sites.

43. Each of these organizations and programmes needs to be encouraged to review the information that it holds, with a view to use of the information in assessing progress in achieving the 2010 target. In some cases this may involve identification of additional monitoring objectives for existing research networks, with the potential for reinvigorating the networks through the provision of these additional objectives. It may also give additional impetus to the development and application of standards for data exchange and information dissemination.

I. Other international initiatives

44. There is a range of other international initiatives which, while not delivering reports and assessments per se, support their preparation by others. This includes capacity-development initiatives, programmes developing and promoting international standards and tools for information management, and information networks that promote the sharing of information.

Relevant initiatives include:

Global Biodiversity Information Facility

Global Taxonomy Initiative

Inter-American Biodiversity Information Network

North American Biodiversity Information Network

CBD Clearing-House Mechanism

Biosafety Clearing House

International Portal on Food Safety, Animal and Plant Health

45. *Example:* The Inter-American Biodiversity Information Network is being developed both as an Internet-based information resource with common infrastructure and content, interoperable through the use of common standards, and as a forum for institutions and individuals to discuss the issues related to sharing and exchange of biodiversity information. It will thus facilitate the sharing of information between countries in the Americas, and the development of collaborative projects building on both existing and new data.

46. *Example:* The aim of the Global Biodiversity Information Facility is to encourage, coordinate and support the development of worldwide capacity to access the vast amount of biodiversity data held in

museum collections, libraries and databases. This is being approached through both the development of standards and tools, and working with other initiatives to build national capacity.

47. While these initiatives do not themselves address the 2010 target, they support many other organizations that do, and are potentially in a position to help focus attention on the target and the ways in which national agencies can contribute to international assessment of progress in achieving the target.

J. Bilateral and multilateral development assistance agencies

48. Assessing achievement of the 2010 target will require information on measures taken, as well as on the status of biodiversity. Identifying the application of development assistance to biodiversity-related activities is one possible means of assessing action being taken. Decision VI/16 of the Conference of Parties in fact already identifies the need for better information on aid flows oriented to biodiversity, and the OECD Development Assistance Committee has begun work to “flag” assistance that is oriented to each of the Rio agreements. Apart from reporting to the Development Assistance Committee (DAC), very few agencies have to date reviewed systematically the assistance specifically targeted at biodiversity. However, reviews of a number of other sectors, such as for the forestry sector, are relevant to biodiversity investment. With the implementation of DAC biodiversity flag, the opportunities for biodiversity assistance reviews are increasing.

Relevant initiatives include:

Global Environment Facility

World Bank

OECD Development Assistance Committee

European Union mechanisms

Regional development banks (such as IDB, ADB etc)

Bilateral assistance agencies (such as DfID, GTZ, CIDA, NORAD, etc)

49. *Example:* The Global Environment Facilities (GEF) already provides to the Conference of Parties information on resources being channelled towards biodiversity-related activities through GEF. In addition, the GEF Secretariat has been actively investigating means for assessing the effectiveness of its projects and programmes in achieving their objectives.

50. All development assistance programmes aim to address, in one way or another, supporting countries in achieving the Millennium Development Goals. Elucidation of the relationship between biodiversity targets and MDGs, and the importance of biodiversity in achieving all MDGs should both increase support to biodiversity-related activities and potentially lead to the availability of more information on how development assistance is supporting biodiversity. In addition to this, a more coordinated approach will need to be taken to making this information available, drawing on the many development assistance agencies.

K. Other national and bilateral initiatives

51. Inevitably there is a substantial number of national and bilateral initiatives that can contribute to assessing achievement of the 2010 target, and it is impossible to list them all here. Therefore only two specific examples are given.

52. *Example:* The Marsh Monitoring Programme (MMP) in the Great Lakes basin in North America is based on a partnership between United States and Canadian agencies and NGOs. It provides updated information about numerous avian and amphibian species-specific population indices and trends within marsh habitat and how patterns of index changes relate to those of annual Great Lakes water level, at both lake-specific and basin-wide scales.

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53. *Example:* The Mexican Comisión Nacional para el Conocimiento y Uso de la Biodiversidad (CONABIO) has a programme on the monitoring of ecosystems using remote sensing techniques. The aim of the programme is to identify and analyse changes in vegetation distribution over time both in terms of quality and quantity.

54. *Example:* In the United Kingdom, the Common Birds Census (CBC) has been used to monitor populations of breeding birds since 1962. CBC is a mapping census which takes place every year during the breeding season. Fieldwork is carried out by volunteer birdwatchers, who visit a plot of farmland or woodland typical of their area eight or more times in a season and note all contacts with birds on a map of the plot. In this way the numbers of birds holding territory on each plot can be assessed from year to year.

55. Means need to be found to draw on these many nationally-oriented programmes in addressing progress in achieving the 2010 target, without putting undue pressure on national agencies. This would include the further promotion of networking approaches such as IABIN, and the promotion of new networks of collaborating centres. In this way internationally adopted targets can be used as a vehicle to strengthen national monitoring and assessment activities in a strategic manner.

III. USING THESE INITIATIVES TO UNDERSTAND PROGRESS

56. It is clear from the previous paragraphs that there are already many existing initiatives that may be of value in assessing progress towards achievement of the 2010 target. In some cases information managed through these initiatives is already appropriately organized and consideration has been given to its relevance by those responsible for its management. In other cases those managing the information may well be completely unaware of its potential relevance, or indeed the relevance of their own activities to the 2010 target and its achievement.

57. A consistent and coherent approach to monitoring and reporting on progress towards achieving the 2010 target could be built upon these individual responses, through activities such as the following:

(a) *Communication and awareness raising* A targeted communications strategy could ensure that all relevant conventions, programmes and processes are aware of the 2010 target and its relevance to their activities.

(b) *Promoting involvement and contribution:* The 2010 target is not just a target for the Secretariat, but an internationally adopted target on conservation of biological diversity. Steps could be taken by many international conventions, programmes and processes to review their activities in the context of the target, and to identify (a) what they are doing to support its achievement by themselves and with others, and (b) how their actions and the results of these actions can and should be reported on.

(c) *Coordinating access to relevant individual reports:* Many conventions, programmes and processes may wish to deliver their own reports on progress in achieving the 2010 target, based on their own activities or those of others and this should be encouraged and welcomed. However, means could be found to ensure that these reports are made widely available in a consistent manner, perhaps through a "2010 website".

(d) *Development of an integrated report:* Some sort of integrated report could be developed that draws on all of the available data and information and presents it in a meaningful way. This might be one report, or a series of reports targeted at different stakeholder groups, and the form and context would need careful consideration. The outcome would likely include the use of indicators as both a reporting and a communications tool.

58. Developing a programme for such an integrated report, would require a far better understanding of what information is available and what adjustments might be desirable in current reporting processes to ensure consistency in reporting approach and timetables.

59. Consistent with various decisions of the Conference of the Parties, the Convention has the mandate from WSSD to take a leadership role in drawing appropriate information together, and to collaborate with other organizations in doing so. Coupled with this, UNEP has a mandate to analyse the

state of the environment and assess global and regional trends (Nairobi Declaration, 1997), and specifically the UNEP World Conservation Monitoring Centre has a mandate from the UNEP Governing Council (decision 22/1/III) to work in cooperation with the Convention in monitoring progress towards meeting the biodiversity-related targets set by the WSSD Plan of Implementation.

60. It is therefore suggested that further work be undertaken by the Executive Secretary in collaboration with UNEP-WCMC, and other relevant organizations, in order to prepare further background documentation to assist the Conference of the Parties when it considers the recommendations of SBSTTA and the Inter-Sessional Meeting on this topic. This documentation could, *inter alia*:

(a) Provide a more substantial identification of initiatives that are, or could be, contributing to reporting on the achievement of the 2010 target and other biodiversity targets, and how they relate one to another, building on the current paper.

(b) Identify the reports that are expected to be prepared by these initiatives over the next five years, and the extent to which they are likely to address the 2010 target, also suggesting possible means for ensuring consistent reference to the 2010 target in these reports.

(c) Propose mechanisms for using the available building blocks to develop an integrated report on achievement of the 2010 target.

(d) Identify further how the available information could be used in the identification and development of indicators, including identification of possible ways in which information from the various monitoring schemes could be integrated.

(e) Identify the potential roles and contributions of National Reporting to the Secretariat, the Clearing-House Mechanism and the Global Biodiversity Outlook in this process, and the ways in which these might be developed.

(f) Propose development of a webpage on 2010 reporting based on the information described in this paper and encouraging further input from other initiatives.
