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THIRD SESSION OF THE CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES TO THE CONVENTION ON BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY: 4-15 NOVEMBER 1996

The third session of the Conference of Parties (COP-3) to the Convention on Biological Diversity met in Buenos Aires, Argentina from 4-15 November 1996. If COP-1 established the basic machinery of the Convention and COP-2 adopted decisions for programming, COP-3 sought to address implementation in the context of these decisions. In the process, the COP began to come into its own, as it attempted to assert its authority over the GEF and its autonomy vis-à-vis UNEP, focus its work programme and future agenda, define its relationship with other international regimes, and develop guidelines for action on a number of substantive issues. To this end, the COP took several key decisions, including: elaborating a realistic work programme on agricultural biodiversity and a more limited one on forest biodiversity; a long negotiated Memorandum of Understanding with the GEF; an agreement to hold an intersessional workshop on Article 8(j) (traditional knowledge, innovations and practices of indigenous and local communities); application by the Executive Secretary for observer status to the WTO Committee on Trade and the Environment; and a prosaic statement from the CBD to the Special Session of the UN General Assembly to review implementation of Agenda 21.

A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE CONVENTION

The Convention on Biological Diversity, negotiated under the auspices of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), was opened for signature on 5 June 1992, and entered into force on 29 December 1993. To date, 161 countries have become Parties. The three goals of the Convention are to promote "the conservation of biodiversity, the sustainable use of its components, and the fair and equitable sharing of benefits arising out of the utilization of genetic resources."

COP-1

The first meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention (COP-1) took place in Nassau, the Bahamas, from 28 November - 9 December 1994. Some of the key decisions taken by COP-1 included: adoption of the medium-term work programme; designation of the Permanent Secretariat; establishment of the clearing-house mechanism and the Subsidiary Body for Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice; and designation of the Global Environment Facility (GEF) as the interim institutional structure for the financial mechanism.

SBSTTA-1

Article 25 of the CBD establishes a Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice (SBSTTA) to provide the COP with "timely advice" relating to implementation of the Convention. The first session of the SBSTTA took place from 4-8 September 1995 in Paris, France. Delegates considered operational matters, as well as substantive issues, particularly with

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regard to coastal and marine biodiversity. Recommendations on the *modus operandi* of the SBSTTA affirmed its subsidiary role to the COP and requested flexibility to create: two open-ended working groups to meet simultaneously during future SBSTTA meetings; *Ad Hoc* Technical Panels of Experts as needed; and a roster of experts.

Substantive recommendations of SBSTTA-1 included: alternative ways and means for the COP to consider components of biodiversity under threat; ways and means to promote access to and transfer of technology; scientific and technical information to be contained in national reports; preparation of an annual Global Biodiversity Outlook by the Secretariat; contributions to Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) meetings on plant genetic resources for food and agriculture (PGRFA); and technical aspects concerning the conservation and sustainable use of coastal and marine biological diversity. On this last issue, SBSTTA-1 identified three priorities: sustainable use of living coastal and marine resources; mariculture; and control of alien organisms. Time constraints prevented consideration of education, training and public awareness as key delivery mechanisms for coastal and marine biodiversity conservation and bio-prospecting of the deep sea bed. While the recommendation on coastal and marine biodiversity received a great deal of attention at SBSTTA-1, some States noted that land-based sources of marine pollution had not been sufficiently emphasized.

COP-2

The second session of the COP (COP-2) met in Jakarta, Indonesia, from 6-17 November 1995. Some key decisions taken by COP-2 included: designation of the permanent location of the Secretariat in Montreal, Canada; agreement to develop a protocol on biosafety; operation of the clearing-house mechanism (CHM); adoption of a programme of work funded by a larger budget; designation of the GEF as the continuing interim institutional structure for the financial mechanism; consideration of its first substantive issue, marine and coastal biodiversity; and agreement to address forests and biodiversity, including the development of a statement from the CBD to the Intergovernmental Panel on Forests (IPF) of the Commission on Sustainable Development.

COP-2 approved SBSTTA's medium-term programme of work for 1996-97 and also addressed the issue of Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture (PGRFA), adopting a statement for input to the FAO's Fourth International Technical Conference on PGRFA (ITCPGR-4). The statement noted the importance of other conventions to the CBD's three objectives, urged other international fora to help achieve these objectives through the CBD's overarching framework, and invited the FAO to present the outcome of ITCPGR-4 to COP-3.

1996 INTERSESSIONAL ACTIVITIES

PLANT GENETIC RESOURCES FOR FOOD AND

AGRICULTURE: In 1983 the FAO established an intergovernmental Commission on Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture, and adopted a non-binding International Undertaking on Plant Genetic Resources, which is intended to promote harmonized international efforts to create incentives to conserve and sustainably use PGRFA. Since the inception of the CBD, the FAO has begun to revise the International Undertaking. Subsequent revisions have emphasized national sovereignty over PGRFA, in line with Article 15 (sovereignty over genetic resources) of the CBD.

The Fourth International Technical Conference on PGRFA met in Leipzig, Germany from 17-23 June 1996. Representatives of 148 States adopted the Leipzig Declaration, the Conference's key political statement, and a Global Plan of Action (GPA), an international programme for the conservation and utilization of PGRFA. Contentious issues included financing and implementing

the GPA, technology transfer, Farmers' Rights and access and benefit-sharing. Delegates were also presented with the first comprehensive Report on the State of the World's Plant Genetic Resources.

BIOSAFETY: Article 19.4 of the CBD provides for Parties to consider the need for and modalities of a protocol on biosafety. At COP-2, delegates established an Open-ended *Ad Hoc* Working Group on Biosafety (BSWG), which held its first meeting in Aarhus, Denmark, from 22-26 July 1996. It was attended by more than 90 delegations, including scientific and technical experts representing both Parties and non-Parties to the CBD, inter-governmental organizations, NGOs and industry representatives.

BSWG-1 marked the first formal meeting to develop a protocol under the CBD and to operationalize one of its key and most contentious components. Governments listed elements for a future protocol, agreed to hold two meetings in 1997 and outlined the information required to guide their future work.

SBSTTA-2: The second session of the SBSTTA took place from 2-6 September 1996 in Montreal, Canada. The crowded agenda included complex technical issues such as the monitoring and assessment of biodiversity, practical approaches to taxonomy, economic valuation of biodiversity, access to genetic resources, agricultural biodiversity, terrestrial biodiversity, marine and coastal biodiversity, biosafety and the CHM. Many Parties sent scientific and technical experts to the meeting, which was also attended by observers from non-Parties, NGOs, indigenous peoples' organizations, industry groups and scientific organizations.

Chair Peter Johan Schei cautioned delegates against turning the SBSTTA into a "mini-COP," but the issue of the identity and role of the SBSTTA in managing the scientific content continued to occupy many participants at the conclusion of the meeting. Some issues, including economic valuation and taxonomy, were covered in technical detail. The primary outcome of SBSTTA, however, seemed to be a desire to reform the process. Delegates' suggestions included setting limits to the agenda and increasing the involvement of scientific organizations. Some privately called for more focused background documents presenting specific options or proposals, presentations of case studies, and delegations with greater technical expertise.

REGIONAL MEETINGS: In preparation for COP-3, four regional preparatory meetings were held in September and October 1996. The Central and Eastern European (CEE) Regional Preparatory Meeting was held in Bratislava, Slovakia. The African Regional Preparatory Meeting was held in Victoria, Mahe (Seychelles). The Latin American and Caribbean Regional Preparatory Meeting was held in Castries, Saint Lucia. The Asian Regional Preparatory Meeting was held in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. Each of these meetings helped delegates to prepare for the COP and enabled them to draft recommendations to put forward at COP-3.

REPORT OF COP-3

The President of COP-2, Indonesia's Minister of Environment Sarwono Kusumaatmadja, opened the third session of the Conference of Parties to the CBD on Monday, 4 November 1996, and urged delegates to consider the Convention in the broader context of international action. Maria Julia Alsogaray, Argentina's Secretary for Environment and Natural Resources, was then elected to serve as President of COP-3. She called for effective measures to implement the Convention and highlighted important issues, including: resource availability; the financial mechanism; the establishment of norms to guide sustainable agricultural practices; and access to genetic resources.

In the opening statements that followed, Mohamed El-Ashry, CEO of the Global Environment Facility (GEF), noted that relations have been strengthened between the GEF and the

Convention Secretariat and underscored the importance of partnership-building in the search for sustainable development.

Reuben Olembo, Deputy Executive Director of UNEP, acknowledged progress made by the CBD to date, but cautioned that the COP can no longer theorize but must act now. He expressed hope that COP-3 would: initiate implementation of the CBD; adopt additional practical resolutions; resolve outstanding issues; improve intergovernmental interaction; and devise a mechanism for the Council of the GEF to solve the urgent needs of the CBD.

CBD Executive Secretary Calestous Juma noted distinctive phases of the CBD: COP-1 established the organs necessary for internal function; COP-2 adopted decisions needed to make the transition toward implementation; and COP-3 should attempt to implement the CBD in the context of decisions made at COP-2, with few changes. He called for implementation of the clearing-house mechanism and enhanced collaboration among related institutions.

Deputy Assistant Administrator of UNDP Thelma Awori emphasized the centrality of the CBD's goals to the organization's programmes and affirmed UNDP's commitment to working in supportive partnership with UNEP, the CBD Secretariat and other institutions to implement the Convention.

Costa Rica, on behalf of the G-77/China, emphasized both the need to prioritize the steps necessary to implement the Convention and the importance of promoting the third objective of the Convention – the fair and equitable sharing of benefits arising out of the use of genetic resources.

The COP then elected the following bureau members, in addition to COP-3 President Maria Julia Alsogaray: Suzana Guziova (Slovakia) and Igor Glukhovtsev (Kazakhstan); Manfred Schneider (Austria) and Louis Currat (Switzerland); François Ndeckere-Ziangba (Central African Republic) and Terry Jones (Seychelles); Mohammad Reza Salamat (Iran) and Raéd Bani Hani (Jordan); and John Ashe (Antigua and Barbuda).

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE, WORKING GROUPS AND INFORMAL CONSULTATIONS

The Committee of the Whole (COW), chaired by Louis Currat (Switzerland), met throughout the first week and into the second to discuss each agenda item. Due to the large agenda and number of participants wishing to make interventions, statements were limited at times to 1-2 minutes and delegates were asked to submit their proposals in writing.

Two working groups were formed during the first week, neither of which was to meet at the same time. The Open-ended Working Group on Agricultural Biodiversity was chaired by Manfred Schneider (Austria). Bráulio de Souza Dias (Brazil) chaired a drafting group for this Working Group. The Working Group on Financial Issues was chaired by Mohammad Reza Salamat (Iran). Pierre Roch (Switzerland) served as interim chair for several meetings of this Group. Additional groups formed during the first week included one that addressed pending issues, chaired by Suzana Guziova (Slovakia), and the medium-term programme of work and budget, chaired by John Ashe (Antigua and Barbuda). The Secretariat conducted informal consultations over the weekend (9-10 November) to draft decisions on the basis of interventions in the COW and written submissions. The various working groups continued to meet during the second week, with a number of informal consultations evolving into working and drafting groups on 11 and 12 November. The groups on financial issues and the budget met until 8:30 pm on Thursday, 14 November, at which time delegates had reached provisional agreement on all issues before COP-3.

The Committee of the Whole met on 12 and 13 November to adopt the draft decisions that had been forwarded by the working and consultation groups. They adopted all decisions except for three on financial issues. The COW agreed to forward the final texts on these three decisions directly to the Plenary, which met on 15 November and adopted all draft decisions. The budget decision was also adopted by the Plenary.

The following section, which is organized by agenda item, describes the debates and final decisions taken by COP-3.

RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE SECOND MEETING OF SBSTTA (SBSTTA RECOMMENDATION II/11) (AGENDA ITEM 4)

At its second meeting held in September 1996, SBSTTA adopted a *modus operandi* for the purpose of effectively managing its workload. The *modus operandi* is contained in Annex 2 to SBSTTA Recommendation II/11 and was introduced in the SBSTTA's report to the COP (UNEP/CBD/COP/3/3) on Thursday, 7 November. The *modus operandi* recommends that the SBSTTA prioritize its issues in line with those of the COP and provide interpretation in additional languages. It also sets terms of office for SBSTTA Bureau members and recommends the use of liaison and expert groups and a roster of experts.

The EU endorsed the recommendations and, with INDIA, highlighted the need for prioritization. The US, supported by ETHIOPIA, BRAZIL, PORTUGAL, NEW ZEALAND, CHINA and INDIA, said that the SBSTTA provides the only opportunity for scientific and technical recommendations to the COP and should not recommend policy. NORWAY supported intersessional work by the SBSTTA, while INDIA opposed it. AUSTRALIA sought to limit *ad hoc* expert groups to three per year.

HUNGARY, on behalf of Central and Eastern European Countries, urged full participation of Parties at SBSTTA meetings and rotating chairs regionally. SPAIN, CHINA and PERU supported the recommendation regarding interpretation in additional languages, while the NETHERLANDS and JAPAN questioned the financial implications of providing translation in additional languages and its resultant impact on the body's overall work programme.

The draft decision on the SBSTTA *modus operandi* (UNEP/CBD/COP/3/L.17), noting SBSTTA recommendation II/11 and deciding to consider the *modus operandi* as part of the programme of work at COP-4, was adopted in Plenary on Friday, 15 November, with the understanding that future meetings of SBSTTA would be serviced in the six official languages of the UN (UNEP/CBD/COP/3/L.27).

ASSESSMENT AND REVIEW OF THE OPERATION OF THE CLEARING-HOUSE MECHANISM (AGENDA ITEM 5)

The Secretariat introduced the document on the clearing-house mechanism (CHM) (UNEP/CBD/COP/3/4) on Wednesday, 6 November. The CHM is designed to promote and facilitate technical and scientific cooperation, in accordance with Article 18 of the CBD. Delegates debated the composition and potential roles of the mechanism, its implementation and its financing. The EU and TANZANIA said the CHM should be needs-driven and decentralized. The EU called for involvement of relevant UN bodies and international institutions, and GERMANY sought participation from universities and the private sector. ETHIOPIA said that the CHM should exclude information on traditional knowledge until access and benefit-sharing policies are in place.

MALAYSIA and CAMEROON advocated the use of the CHM as a means of providing access to and transfer of technology to developing countries. Several delegations, including the EU and COLOMBIA, voiced support for regional workshops on the CHM.

Many delegations, including AUSTRALIA and GREECE, supported the publication of a CHM newsletter. The US called for use of a peer review process to assure technical quality and credibility. CHINA and INDONESIA sought capacity building and human resource training to allow developing countries to use the CHM. TANZANIA emphasized that the participation of Parties who do not currently have Internet access must be assured. BRAZIL urged the establishment of guidelines for setting up national focal points. CANADA and the PHILIPPINES called for GEF support for the pilot phase and long-term implementation of the CHM.

The draft decision on the CHM (UNEP/CBD/COP/3/L.3) was adopted in Plenary on Friday, 15 November, and called for: extension of the pilot phase through 1998; GEF support for capacity building and country-driven pilot projects; dissemination of information on policy and management as well as science and technology; provision of information linkages to national focal points; focus at the international level on thematic focal points; endorsement of a CHM newsletter; and close cooperation with other relevant conventions.

FINANCIAL RESOURCES AND MECHANISM (AGENDA ITEM 6)

Delegates were invited to address all matters related to financial resources and the financial mechanism in the Committee of the Whole on 5 and 6 November. Peter Schei (Norway), Chair of SBSTTA-2, presented recommendations formulated at SBSTTA-2 related to activities the Global Environment Facility (GEF) should support, including the CHM and capacity building in taxonomy and biosafety (UNEP/CBD/COP/3/3). Executive Secretary Juma presented the other documents that addressed this agenda item (UNEP/CBD/COP/3/5-10 and 37), including the report of the GEF, review of the effectiveness of the financial mechanism, and designation of the institutional structure to operate the financial mechanism.

In addition to addressing the issues on which decisions were taken (see below), delegates considered whether to designate a permanent financial mechanism. The G-77/CHINA, supported by several delegates, said that it is premature to designate the final institutional structure. Others, including the EU, CANADA, AUSTRALIA, TUNISIA, SYRIA and SLOVAKIA, on behalf of Central and Eastern European Countries (CEE), supported designation of the mechanism at COP-3. A decision was not taken up on this issue. The Memorandum of Understanding between the COP and the GEF that was adopted (see below) notes that the GEF will continue to operate the financial mechanism on an interim basis.

ADDITIONAL FINANCIAL RESOURCES: The decision on additional financial resources considers how to strengthen existing financial institutions to provide financial resources for the conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity. During discussion in the COW, the EU stated that the documentation for this issue, regarding suggestions for funding institutions and the availability of additional financial resources (UNEP/CBD/COP/3/7 and 37), did not provide a sufficient basis for discussion and, together with AUSTRALIA and the US, noted inaccuracies in the latter. The G-77/CHINA said developed countries are not fulfilling their commitments under Article 20.2 (new and additional financial resources). MALAYSIA called for new and additional resources, including from the private sector. INDONESIA and AUSTRALIA proposed efforts related to identifying the role that the private sector can play in CBD funding.

During the Working Group's consideration of the G-77/CHINA's draft proposal, several delegates recalled their statements to the COW regarding the accuracy of the documents related to the issue and did not support the proposal to take note of the information and recommendations contained in

UNEP/CBD/COP/3/7 and 37. The final decision (UNEP/CBD/COP/3/L.20): takes note of elements in those documents; urges all funding institutions to make their activities more supportive of the Convention; requests the Executive Secretary to explore collaboration with funding institutions and the involvement of the private sector; urges developed country Parties to cooperate in the development of standardized information on their financial support; and invites other funding institutions to provide information on their financial support for the Convention.

MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING (MOU) BETWEEN THE COP AND THE COUNCIL OF THE GEF:

The Memorandum of Understanding between the COP and the Council of the GEF had been discussed at COP-1 and COP-2 but no agreement had been reached. The revised version presented to COP-3 (UNEP/CBD/COP/3/10) was based on those deliberations as well as intersessional consultations.

Several countries, including MAURITIUS, POLAND and INDONESIA, stated during the COW that they wanted COP-3 to take a decision on the MOU. MEXICO, NORWAY, CHINA and SLOVAKIA, on behalf of the CEE countries, stated that the MOU was acceptable. Some delegates, including the PHILIPPINES, CANADA and MALAWI, supporting using CBD language to improve the draft. MALAYSIA and COLOMBIA said the MOU should contain explicit reference to the interim nature of the financial mechanism.

The G-77/CHINA distributed amendments to the Working Group on financial issues and OECD countries offered oral amendments. Delegates deleted text noting that: the GEF would operate the financial mechanism until 1999, at which time it would be reviewed; if the COP considers that a specific project decision does not comply with its guidance it may "ask for a reconsideration of that decision;" the GEF would indicate the amount of new and additional funding to be contributed to the GEF Trust Fund in the next replenishment cycle and (a G-77/CHINA proposal) the GEF would clearly indicate the reasons for which this funding is considered new and additional; and the COP will review the amount of funding "available" for CBD on the occasion of each replenishment.

Text was added noting that: the financial mechanism shall function under the authority and guidance of and be accountable to the COP; the GEF will operate the financial mechanism on an interim basis; and the withdrawal of the MOU by either Party shall not affect any projects considered and/or approved prior to the withdrawal.

Additional text in the decision adopted by COP-3 (UNEP/CBD/COP/3/L.21) notes that: the COP will determine the policy, priorities and criteria for access to financial resources; the GEF Council will submit to each COP a report on GEF activities in the biodiversity focal area; the COP may raise any matter arising from the reports; the COP should analyze the observations presented by any Party that considers that a decision of the Council regarding a specific project was not made in compliance with COP guidance; prior to the replenishment, the COP will assess the amount of funds necessary to assist developing countries; and either participant may withdraw the MOU at any time.

ADDITIONAL GUIDANCE TO THE FINANCIAL MECHANISM: The decision on additional guidance to the financial mechanism combines the instructions to the GEF from other COP-3 decisions into a single text. During the COW discussion, the EU noted that guidance to the GEF from COP-2 was not clear, making it difficult to develop an operational programme for the GEF Council. The UK added that to ensure that matters such as biosafety and agro-biodiversity are appropriately addressed by the GEF, COP-3 should prepare additional guidance to the GEF, which should be encompassed in a single decision. MALAYSIA identified a need to develop the COP's own implementing strategy and to make it clear to the GEF. The

PHILIPPINES, among others, noted the need for focused guidance, especially in relation to the implementation of all three of the CBD's objectives, not only conservation.

The G-77/CHINA and the OECD countries distributed drafts on this issue to the Working Group on financial issues. During the initial review of the G-77/CHINA draft, several developed countries indicated they would consider additional guidance based on SBSTTA-2 recommendations and matters on COP-3's agenda, but did not want to reconsider the GEF guidelines before the 1997 review. The Working Group combined elements from the preambles of both drafts. The operative section consists of edited and/or redrafted versions of operative paragraphs contained in other COP-3 decisions that are directed at the GEF. One issue that involved significant discussion was inclusion of COP-3's endorsement of SBSTTA recommendation II/2 regarding capacity building for taxonomy, as contained in the decision on Article 7 (UNEP/CBD/COP/3/L.6). Delegates added a note following its guidance regarding capacity building related to Article 7 stating that the COP endorsed the recommendation.

COP-3 decision UNEP/CBD/COP/3/L.22 amalgamates guidance to the GEF that is contained in other COP-3 decisions on the following issues: capacity building related to biosafety, the CHM and access to genetic resources; conservation and sustainable use related to agriculture; the examination of support for capacity building related to the preservation of indigenous knowledge and practices; targeted research that contributes to conservation and sustainable use; promotion of the understanding of conservation and sustainable use; and preparation by the Secretariat and the GEF of a proposal on the means to address the fair and equitable sharing of the benefits arising out of the utilization of genetic resources.

GUIDELINES FOR THE REVIEW OF THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE FINANCIAL MECHANISM: The decision on the guidelines for the review of the GEF outlines the objectives, methodology, criteria and procedures for the first review of the effectiveness of the financial mechanism, which is to be conducted at COP-4. NEW ZEALAND suggested during the COW that guidelines for the review of the GEF be transparent and that the COP should re-determine the GEF's status every 2-3 years. CANADA cautioned against reviewing the effectiveness of the financial mechanism in areas in which it has not yet received guidance.

The G-77/CHINA distributed a draft text on the review to the Working Group. A small consultative group drafted the text on the objectives, methodology and criteria of the review. Text was later added regarding the application of the criteria of agreed full incremental costs, keeping in mind the provision of new and additional resources by developed country Parties. The remaining focus of the Working Group was on the procedure through which the review would take place. Initial proposals focused on whether an independent consultant should conduct the review or whether information should be gathered and reviewed by delegates at COP-4. Delegates forwarded a text to the COW noting that the Secretariat is to prepare background documentation and shall, if necessary, appoint a consultant. Two options regarding who would provide monitoring and guidance of the review were bracketed: [the Bureau plus regional representatives] and [a steering panel composed of two representatives from each regional group]. During discussion of the bracketed text in the COW, the G-77/CHINA, SWITZERLAND and AUSTRALIA supported the option for a steering panel. The EU, supported by RUSSIA, proposed deleting both options. The bracketed text was referred back to the Working Group.

The agreed procedure to review the effectiveness of the financial mechanism, as contained in UNEP/CBD/COP/3/L.25, calls on the Secretariat to: gather information; prepare a synthesis; send it for appraisal to five regional representatives; take account of the comments; distribute copies to all Parties and relevant bodies for

comments; based on these, prepare a draft report to be presented to the regional representatives and made available to the GEF and implementing agencies; and submit the synthesis with supporting documents to Parties not later than three months prior to COP-4. Supporting documents will include comments and other information identified by source.

GENERAL MEASURES FOR CONSERVATION AND SUSTAINABLE USE (AGENDA ITEM 7)

Initial discussions on the implementation of Articles 6 and 8 in the COW, which took place on Wednesday, 6 November, were based on document UNEP/CBD/COP/3/11. Article 6 calls on Parties to develop national strategies, plans or programmes for the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity and to integrate them into relevant sectoral policies, and Article 8 calls for a variety of measures to promote *in-situ* conservation. During discussion in the COW, several delegations emphasized the centrality of Articles 6 and 8 to the successful implementation of the Convention. The EU emphasized both *in-situ* and *ex-situ* conservation, integration of biodiversity into relevant sectoral policies, and benefit-sharing. SWITZERLAND called for regional coordination to accomplish conservation goals. CHINA called for GEF support and advice from SBSTTA. INDONESIA highlighted protected areas management and rehabilitation of degraded areas, and urged implementation of IUCN Guidelines on monitoring and conflict management in protected areas. INDIA said implementation requires action primarily at the national level. MALAYSIA called for full funding, without conditionality, for activities involving implementation of these articles. MADAGASCAR proposed an economic study of the value of biodiversity.

During consideration of the final draft decision on Implementation of Articles 6 and 8 (UNEP/CBD/COP/3/L.5), several countries, including CANADA, the EU and the G-77/CHINA, highlighted the UN-Norway Conference on Alien Species and recommended that Parties use its results in their implementation of Article 8(h) (alien species). CANADA amended a recommendation to set measurable targets for biodiversity conservation and sustainable use objectives by not limiting these to national plans and strategies. HUNGARY added a reference to "legislation" in addition to national plans and strategies. The final decision also highlights that a central role of the CHM should be the sharing of experiences and dissemination of information relevant to Articles 6 and 8, and emphasizes that the first national reports, to focus on measures taken to implement Article 6, should be submitted no later than 1 January 1998.

IDENTIFICATION, MONITORING AND ASSESSMENT (AGENDA ITEM 8)

In initial consideration of this item on Wednesday, 6 November, delegates considered Options for Implementing Article 7 of the Convention (UNEP/CBD/COP/3/12) and the SBSTTA recommendations on implementation of Article 25.2(a) (UNEP/CBD/COP/3/13). Article 7 calls on Parties to identify and monitor components of biodiversity, and processes and activities that may have adverse impacts on its conservation or sustainable use. Article 25.2(a) calls on the SBSTTA to prepare scientific and technical assessments of the effects of measures taken in accordance with the Convention's provisions.

Numerous delegations endorsed SBSTTA recommendations II/1 (on assessments and assessment methodologies, identification and monitoring, and indicators) and II/2 (on capacity building for taxonomy). The EU said the development of indicators should be given a high priority. SWEDEN stressed a bottom-up approach to developing indicators. GERMANY stressed the importance of identifying and agreeing internationally on suitable indicators. SOUTH AFRICA and AUSTRALIA supported a two-track approach to assessment and indicator development. INDIA called

on regional bodies, in connection with the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS), to conduct assessments in marine areas. ETHIOPIA emphasized the need for flexibility in methodologies. NORWAY called for the use of remote sensing. ARGENTINA called on UNEP to provide necessary funds for training in taxonomy. BRAZIL proposed the creation of taxonomic centres of excellence. JAPAN called for attention to regional differences in establishing a framework for identifying activities that have adverse effects on biodiversity.

During consideration of the draft decision on Identification, Monitoring and Assessment (UNEP/CBD/COP/3/L.6), MALAWI, on behalf of the African Group, proposed a paragraph endorsing SBSTTA recommendation II/2 on capacity building for taxonomy, which was adopted. The EU and the G-77/CHINA proposed alternative formulations for a paragraph calling on the GEF to address the need for capacity building in taxonomy. The EU's proposal emphasized capacity building in taxonomy "relevant to field activities." The G-77/CHINA formulation requested the GEF to provide financial resources to developing countries to address the need for capacity building, including taxonomy, to enable them to develop and carry out initial assessment for designing, implementing and monitoring programmes in accordance with Article 7. The G-77/CHINA formulation was accepted and the decision was adopted, as amended.

AGRICULTURAL BIODIVERSITY (AGENDA ITEM 9)

When introducing the item, the Executive Secretary expressed regret that there had been insufficient time since SBSTTA-2 to incorporate its recommendations into the document that served as the main basis for COP consideration of this issue, Consideration of Agricultural Biological Diversity under the CBD (UNEP/CBD/COP/3/14).

As the main sectoral issue of COP-3, representatives of over 50 governments, regional groups, IGOs and NGOs addressed agricultural biodiversity on Tuesday, 7 November. These formal interventions focused on: the FAO Global System, the Global Plan of Action (GPA) adopted at the Fourth International Technical Conference on Plant Genetic Resources, and the World Food Summit. Delegates raised a number of specific concerns, including: gap analysis; the impact of pesticides and chemical agents; the impact of subsidies on sustainable agriculture and international trade; *ex-situ* collections acquired prior to the CBD's entry into force; financing agro-biodiversity; IPR on life forms and social knowledge; Farmers' Rights; bioprospecting; benefit-sharing; and a protocol on PGRFA under the CBD.

An Open-Ended Working Group on Agricultural Biodiversity was set up under the chairmanship of Manfred Schneider (Austria). Delegates first deliberated whether they should base their negotiations on the SBSTTA recommendations or a Chair's summary of the statements made in the COW.

During the second meeting, draft texts were tabled by the EU and the G-77/China. The EU stated that it could not accept the G-77 text as a basis for negotiation since it ignored the useful work of the SBSTTA. CANADA, MAURITIUS, the EU, NORWAY, the UK and AUSTRALIA stated that the SBSTTA recommendations would serve as a sound scientific basis for negotiation. BRAZIL, COLOMBIA and ARGENTINA preferred that the G-77 text serve as the basis, noting that SBSTTA recommendations could be brought in as "enrichments" to the final document once the political stage had been set by COP.

A small drafting group, composed of a core of regional representatives and chaired by Bráulio de Souza Dias (Brazil), consolidated both draft proposals and the SBSTTA recommendations. The result, a text comprised of a three-page preamble and a 46-paragraph operative section, served as the basis for negotiation.

The Working Group then conducted a paragraph-by-paragraph review of the text, beginning with the operative section. Several delegations submitted additional text in conference room papers. For example, the US tabled text regarding agro-chemicals in response to a joint proposal by CANADA, AUSTRALIA and BRAZIL. SWITZERLAND submitted wording on integrated pest management strategies. MALAYSIA, NORWAY, CANADA and the EU each tabled text regarding the implementation of the GPA. While MALAYSIA reaffirmed commitments on new and additional resources within the context of UNCED, the other countries emphasized financing of the GPA within the context of the FAO Global System.

Delegates generally agreed on the importance of the role of farmers, traditional knowledge and public awareness. The most contentious issues, such as gap analysis, trade impacts, market forces and the relationship between the FAO and the CBD, were referred to informal consultations. Additionally, two contact groups, each of which included Brazil, Canada, Ethiopia, the EU, Malaysia, New Zealand and Poland, were established to address the work programme and funding issues.

On the basis of this work, the Working Group finalized their draft decision and addressed unresolved issues. The reference to the World Food Summit's wording regarding the role of the WTO Committee on Trade and Environment (CTE) on the relationship between trade and agricultural biodiversity was resolved through informal consultations. Several delegations expressed substantive difficulties with the paragraph pertaining to the interim financial mechanism and argued that the matter should be resolved on the basis of the decision from the Working Group on financial issues. However, BRAZIL noted that this paragraph was part of a "package deal" along with the text put forward by AUSTRALIA regarding the legal status of a revised International Undertaking on PGRFA and the Global Plan of Action. The paragraph was retained on the condition that the decision reflected similar language from the COP-2 decision on Marine and Coastal Biodiversity.

On the basis of a proposal by Canada, several paragraphs were re-ordered so as to clearly distinguish between action required by Parties and by the Secretariat.

The Working Group completed its work on Tuesday, 13 November, one week after its constitution, with two issues still outstanding: the status of *ex-situ* collections acquired prior to the entry into force of the CBD; and the relationship between IPR legislation and sovereignty over PGRFA as well as Farmers' Rights. Once these issues were relegated to the relevant drafting groups on Access to Genetic Resources and IPR, respectively, the draft decision was adopted in the COW.

The COP decision on agricultural biodiversity (UNEP/CBD/COP/3/L.12) is comprised of 15 preambular paragraphs, 24 operative paragraphs and three annexes. Annex I establishes a basis for action as it provides an overview of the impact of biodiversity on agriculture. Annex II presents an indicative list of thematic areas, including: land resources; water resources; plant, animal and microbial genetic resources; wildlife; air and climate; farm inputs; wild sources of food; traditional knowledge; marketing conditions for agricultural products; land-use pressures; and agro-forestry. Annex III highlights initial issues for conducting case studies. Notably, the decision: provides for the Executive Secretary, in collaboration with the FAO, to set work programme priorities on the basis of SBSTTA recommendations and the themes outlined in Annex 2; establishes a multi-year programme of activities; focuses on the interface between sustainable agriculture and environmental issues; and encourages Parties to develop national strategies, programmes and policies according to 14 action-oriented goals.

Also, according to the decision, the COP: welcomes the contribution of the GPA to the implementation of the CBD; calls for the effective and speedy revision of the International

Undertaking in harmony with the CBD; affirms its willingness to consider a decision by the FAO Commission on Genetic Resources "that the International Undertaking should take the form of a protocol" to the CBD, once revised.

The decision further calls for the strengthening of the FAO Global System and, within this context, recognizes issues that "require further work", such as: financing; the realization of Farmers' Rights; terms of technology transfer; and access and benefit-sharing arrangements. Finally, the decision draws the attention of international funding mechanisms to the urgent need to support agricultural biodiversity, and, citing the World Food Summit Plan of Action, encourages the WTO CTE to consider developing a better appreciation of the relationship between trade and agricultural biodiversity.

FUTURE PROGRAMME OF WORK FOR TERRESTRIAL BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY (AGENDA ITEM 10)

INPUT TO THE INTERGOVERNMENTAL PANEL ON FORESTS: The Secretariat introduced the document addressing matters related to forests and biological diversity (UNEP/CBD/COP/3/16) and, the Secretariat of the Commission on Sustainable Development's Intergovernmental Panel on Forests (IPF) presented the Panel's progress report to the CBD (UNEP/CBD/COP/3/17) on Thursday, 7 November. Delegates discussed: the relationship between the CBD and the IPF; the establishment of a programme of work for the conservation of forest biodiversity; and the CBD's role in conserving forest biodiversity. Many delegations endorsed continued cooperation between the CBD and the IPF. ARGENTINA warned that the CBD should not be negligent in its work on forests by relying on the IPF. MALAYSIA urged that an international instrument on forests be addressed through the IPF to ensure that the multiple functions of forests are recognized. SWITZERLAND called on the CBD to use existing instruments to conserve forest biodiversity, and, with BRAZIL, stressed the need to avoid duplication of work.

Numerous delegations supported the formulation of a medium-term programme of work to develop and implement methods for sustainable forest management. AUSTRIA and SWITZERLAND emphasized the need for analysis of the underlying causes of biodiversity loss. RUSSIA and CUBA stressed analysis and mitigation of human impacts on forest biodiversity. CUBA also sought economic valuation of biodiversity components. THAILAND, FINLAND and others called for the development and use of criteria and indicators.

INDONESIA urged the COP to fill in gaps in forest biodiversity knowledge. The LATIN AMERICAN FOREST NETWORK called for recognition of the CBD as the only international legal instrument to address forest biodiversity loss. SRI LANKA recommended that the COP develop a mandate on forests similar to the Jakarta Mandate on Marine and Coastal Biodiversity.

Delegates met in an informal contact group to consider the Chair's draft decision on the relationship between the CBD and the IPF on matters related to forest biodiversity on Monday, 11 November. Controversial issues included the need to distinguish the roles of plantation and natural forests in the conservation of biodiversity and establishing the SBSTTA's initial programme of work. In the interest of efficiency, the SBSTTA's initial work programme was limited to devising methodologies for the implementation of criteria and indicators for biodiversity conservation and analyzing the impact of human activities on biodiversity loss. Delegates recommended, however, that the SBSTTA consider addressing underlying causes of deforestation, alien species introductions and ecological landscape models in the future. Delegates also urged the development of common priorities and a focused work programme for the CBD and the IPF.

The final text (UNEP/CBD/COP/3/L.8) affirms that "some forests" can play a crucial role in conserving biodiversity and that the CBD will work in a complementary way with the IPF and other forest-related fora. It endorses SBSTTA recommendation II/8, which limits SBSTTA's initial work programme to devising methodologies for the development of criteria and indicators sustainable forest management and analyzing the impact of human activity on the loss of forest biological diversity. An annex transmits these decisions to the fourth session of the IPF.

FUTURE PROGRAMME OF WORK FOR TERRESTRIAL BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY IN LIGHT OF CSD DELIBERATIONS:

The Secretariat introduced the document addressing the biodiversity of terrestrial ecosystems (UNEP/CBD/COP/3/18) on Thursday, 7 November. The report recognized the need for an integrated approach to the planning and management of land resources and reaffirmed the importance of biological diversity in terrestrial ecosystems. The GAMBIA urged assistance to national governments in developing and managing sustainable land-use practices. CANADA highlighted the work of the Global Biodiversity Forum and the World Resources Institute in advancing the concept of bioregional planning. CHINA called on the GEF to identify and finance terrestrial biodiversity projects. SOUTH AFRICA emphasized grassland ecosystems as an issue for consideration by both the IPF and the SBSTTA. TUNISIA called for recognition of biodiversity in arid and semi-arid ecosystems.

Issues related to terrestrial biodiversity were dealt with peripherally in the informal contact group on forests. The decision (UNEP/CBD/COP/3/L.4) promotes complementarity with related activities under the CBD and calls on the SBSTTA to: cooperate with the Convention to Combat Desertification in matters related to biological diversity and drylands; examine forms of cooperation on matters related to biological diversity and mountains; and provide a report to COP-4 on the status and trends of biodiversity in inland water ecosystems.

KNOWLEDGE, INNOVATION AND PRACTICES OF INDIGENOUS AND LOCAL COMMUNITIES (AGENDA ITEM 11)

The Secretariat introduced background documentation on the implementation of Article 8(j) on the role of knowledge, innovations and practices of indigenous and local communities ("traditional knowledge"), as contained in documents UNEP/CBD/COP/3/19, UNEP/CBD/COP/3/Inf.33, UNEP/CBD/COP/3/Inf.44.

During discussion of this issue in the COW, indigenous peoples' groups, supported by several developing countries, presented a proposal for an Open-ended Working Group on Article 8(j) to advise the SBSTTA and report to the COP. CANADA, supported by SWEDEN (on behalf of the Nordic countries), the NETHERLANDS and ITALY, suggested an intersessional meeting involving governments and indigenous peoples' groups to create the basis for further discussion at COP-4.

SWITZERLAND stated that the protection of rights will require a combination of mechanisms and supported an examination of best practices. COLOMBIA proposed establishing a subsidiary body under the COP on innovative practices of indigenous peoples and called for the suspension of access to genetic resources until there is a guarantee of protection.

The EU recognized that traditional knowledge should be respected in accord with national legislation and underlined consistency with international agreements. JAPAN highlighted uncertainty over the relationship between Article 8(j) and Farmers' Rights. INDIA stated that a policy mechanism should require: information regarding source of origin; respect of relevant laws and practices in the country of origin; and prior informed consent. INDONESIA requested elaboration on benefit sharing mechanisms.

The decision (UNEP/CBD/COP/3/L.13) adopted by the COP requests Parties to develop national legislation to implement Article 8(j) in consultation with indigenous and local communities, and to include information on this in national reports. It also requests the Executive Secretary to hold a five-day intersessional workshop, involving governments and indigenous and local communities, on such issues as the interaction between traditional and other forms of knowledge relating to biodiversity, the influence of current laws and policies on traditional knowledge, and incentive measures. The decision requests the interim financial mechanism to examine support, with participation and prior informed consent, for capacity building for preservation of traditional knowledge related to conservation and sustainable use.

The decision also requests that the Executive Secretary prepare background documentation containing the following: consideration of linkages between Article 8(j) and such issues as technology transfer, access, ownership of genetic resources, IPR, alternative systems of knowledge protection and incentives; elaboration of key terms of Article 8(j); and a survey of activities undertaken by relevant organizations and their possible contributions to Article 8(j). The decision recommends that the indigenous knowledge post in the Secretariat be filled as soon as possible, and that the Executive Secretary remain informed on relevant international processes including the Commission on Human Rights, the Commission on Sustainable Development, Convention 169 of the International Labor Organization, the World Bank, the FAO, UNESCO and the WTO.

ACCESS TO GENETIC RESOURCES (AGENDA ITEM 12)

Agenda Item 12 included topics under Article 15 such as national sovereignty, prior informed consent (PIC), mutually agreed terms, and facilitating access for uses that do not run counter to the objectives of the CBD. Delegates discussed this on Thursday, 7 November, in the COW using document UNEP/CBD/COP/3/20 as a basis for discussion.

During the debate on this issue in the COW, the EU and SPAIN said the FAO is the most appropriate body to develop a multilateral framework for access to *ex-situ* agricultural genetic resources. SWITZERLAND supported a differentiated approach according to the results of studies of contractual arrangements before the development of any new instrument. ETHIOPIA and INDIA said access considerations should include *ex-situ* collections made before the CBD came into force.

The PHILIPPINES said a protocol on access would be desirable, while GHANA (on behalf of African countries) called for a global PIC arrangement.

AUSTRALIA encouraged Parties to take into account the effects on indigenous and local communities. GUATEMALA, speaking also on behalf of HONDURAS and EL SALVADOR, said the role of communities must be recognized in the control of genetic resources. The BIOTECHNOLOGY INDUSTRY ORGANIZATION noted improvement to genetic resources possible through private sector innovations. Several countries called for capacity building. URUGUAY offered to host a workshop on access to genetic resources in the context of Mercosur.

A drafting group on access to genetic resources, facilitated by the Secretariat, then met to negotiate a draft decision. Disagreement focused on a preambular paragraph recognizing that classes of genetic resources may require "distinctive solutions," and an operative paragraph urging that Article 15 is "duly reflected" in implementation of relevant articles of the Trade-Related aspects of Intellectual Property sub-agreement to the GATT (TRIPs agreement).

The decision (UNEP/CBD/COP/3/L.7): recognizes that there are a variety of approaches to managing access to genetic resources

based on their diversity and other considerations; urges governments and other relevant organizations to send information on measures on access and benefit-sharing to the Secretariat prior to COP-4; requests a Secretariat's note based on this and dissemination of it through the CHM; urges capacity building for policy and guidelines on access and benefit-sharing and urges governments to implement these in a participatory manner; urges rapid revision of the International Undertaking, in particular regarding access to *ex-situ* collections acquired prior to the CBD's entry into force; and requests the Executive Secretary to cooperate closely with the WTO through the CTE to explore linkages between Article 15 and relevant articles of the TRIPs agreement.

ISSUES RELATED TO TECHNOLOGY TRANSFER (AGENDA ITEM 13)

Agenda Item 13 focused on mechanisms to facilitate technology transfer, including the transfer of biotechnology, to achieve the objectives of the CBD. The Secretariat introduced background documentation (UNEP/CBD/COP/3/21) on this issue to the COW on Friday, 8 November.

During the COW's discussion, the G-77/CHINA and SOUTH AFRICA sought an inventory of transferable technology. Many stressed the need for capacity building. The EU called for the establishment of an international framework to facilitate cooperation in technology transfer. MALAYSIA and the PHILIPPINES called for further development of the CHM and better definition of the GEF's role and, with the REPUBLIC of KOREA, stressed increased private sector involvement. SWEDEN emphasized capacity building, incentives and enhancement of the CHM. CANADA supported networks to promote technology transfer, and the LATIN AMERICAN PLANT SCIENCES NETWORK highlighted training programmes in botany and biotechnology. The draft decision (UNEP/CBD/COP/3/L.16): takes note of decision II/4 of COP-2 on ways and means to promote access to and transfer of technology; notes that the issue will be dealt with at COP-4 regarding benefit-sharing from biotechnology; endorses recommendation II/3 of SBSTTA-2 calling for an integrated and sectoral approach to technology transfer; and emphasizes the importance of technology transfer in achieving the three CBD objectives.

INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY RIGHTS (AGENDA ITEM 14)

Agenda Item 14 was treated as a cross-cutting issue, focusing on knowledge, innovations and practices of indigenous and local communities, as well as issues relevant to technology transfer. The Secretariat introduced background documentation (UNEP/CBD/COP/3/22 and 23) on intellectual property rights (IPR) in the COW on Friday, 8 November.

During discussion of this issue, the EU linked well-functioning IPR systems to CBD implementation. CÔTE D'IVOIRE, on behalf of the African Group, called for IPR for traditional knowledge and a legal mechanism on access. Echoing this, INDIA, BRAZIL, TANZANIA and MALAYSIA supported the recommendation for study on disclosure of origin in patent application policies. The US supported voluntary disclosure.

Several interventions highlighted the engagement of the CBD with other IPR processes. The G-77/CHINA and FRANCE called for collaboration with the World Intellectual Property Organisation (WIPO). MEXICO expressed concern over a WIPO proposal for copyrighting databases and urged an impact analysis.

NORWAY, NEW ZEALAND, AUSTRALIA and the G-77/CHINA agreed that the CBD should participate in the deliberations of the CTE. SWITZERLAND, FRANCE, the EU and the US advocated that the CBD apply for CTE observer status. BRAZIL suggested that the COP make proposals to the WTO to review TRIPs in 1999.

A drafting group on IPR, chaired by Diego Malpede (Argentina), considered such issues as: a reference to a WIPO proposal on copyright protection for databases; the relationship between the COP and the TRIPs; and the impact of IPR to genetically modified organisms (GMOs) on the CBD. The latter was deleted entirely.

The final decision (UNEP/CBD/COP/3/L.18) encourages communication on case studies on the impact of IPR on CBD objectives for dissemination through the CHM. These case studies could consider existing IPR systems in achieving CBD objectives, including technology transfer and benefit-sharing with indigenous and local communities, and consider the development of IPR, such as *sui generis* systems or alternative forms of protection, that are consistent with Parties' international obligations.

The decision also notes that the possible establishment of a new IPR regime for databases could have implications for scientific and technical cooperation and calls for a transparent evaluation of this possibility; requests the Executive Secretary to contact WIPO on capacity building for implementing CBD objectives; requests the Executive Secretary to transmit COP-3 decisions to the WTO and to undertake further cooperation and consultation, as appropriate; and requests that the Secretariat apply for observer status at the CTE. The decision notes mutual benefits of exchanging information on Article 16 of the CBD (technology transfer) with the TRIPs Council on Trade-Related IPR and recognizes the need to develop a common appreciation of the relationship between IPR, TRIPs and the CBD.

INCENTIVE MEASURES (AGENDA ITEM 15)

During initial interventions in the COW on Friday, 8 November, delegates discussed the compilation of information and experiences shared on the implementation of Article 11 (incentive measures). The discussion was based on UNEP/CBD/COP/3/24, Inf.36 and SBSTTA Recommendation II/9. The EU, UGANDA, on behalf of the African Group, INDONESIA, SWITZERLAND, NORWAY and the NETHERLANDS COMMITTEE FOR THE IUCN called for the removal of perverse incentives. The AFRICAN GROUP supported local incentive measures and a review of existing macroeconomic policies to ensure incorporation of biodiversity concerns. MALAWI, SENEGAL, CAPE VERDE and NEPAL called for private sector involvement. SOUTH AFRICA, CAPE VERDE and CANADA stressed involvement of local communities in the design and implementation of incentives. INDONESIA, SENEGAL and the AFRICAN GROUP highlighted capacity building. AUSTRALIA called for incentives including education and property rights.

The US, CANADA and PERU called for further sharing of information and case studies on incentive measures. INDONESIA called on SBSTTA-3 to provide technical advice to Parties in designing incentives, and recommended that the GEF make incentive measures a priority. MALAWI and SWITZERLAND recommended that incentives be a standing agenda item, whereas NORWAY called for its integration into thematic and sectoral issues.

Delegates convened informal consultations on this issue. The group agreed that incentive measures would be included "as appropriate" on the COP agenda and integrated into sectoral and thematic items. Delegates added language stressing the importance of taking appropriate action on incentives that threaten biodiversity and promoting positive incentives. A preambular paragraph was added recalling that economic and social development and poverty eradication are overriding priorities of developing countries. The group agreed on language requesting the Executive Secretary to prepare a background document for COP-4 on design and implementation of incentive measures. Delegates bracketed a paragraph recognizing national and international responsibility for

developing and implementing incentive measures, but it was deleted in later COW negotiations.

Language was inserted in brackets requesting the GEF to include incentive measures among its priority activities and to support projects aimed at providing socio-economic incentives at the local, national and international levels. As a result, some delegates bracketed a related preambular paragraph recalling Decision I/2 (incentive measures as a programme priority for access to financial resources), because they did not want financing for incentives mentioned twice. During the final discussion in the COW, the preambular paragraph was deleted. The G-77/CHINA proposed that the brackets be removed from the paragraph requesting GEF action, but the paragraph was referred to the group discussing guidance for the GEF and does not appear in the final decision. In the decision (UNEP/CBD/COP/3/L.11), the COP also recognizes that incentive measures are country-specific; encourages incorporation of market and non-market values of biodiversity into plans and policies; and requests SBSTTA to provide advice on the implementation of Article 11 in relevant thematic areas.

SPECIAL SESSION OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY TO REVIEW IMPLEMENTATION OF AGENDA 21 (AGENDA ITEM 16)

Initial discussion on Agenda Item 16 was conducted in the COW on Friday, 8 November, and focused on documents UNEP/CBD/COP/3/25, Inf. 6 and Inf. 42. Delegates considered the provision of a report from the perspective of the Convention's three objectives to the Special Session of the UN General Assembly in June 1997.

Numerous delegations supported an EU proposal recommending that the report be succinct, include a summary of the Convention's work and lessons learned thus far on each of three objectives, and express a willingness to continue to work closely with other international fora. NEW ZEALAND and INDONESIA underscored the need to avoid duplication of work. CANADA said the COP should use the opportunity to exhort the major financial institutions to factor the Convention's objectives into their deliberations. CUBA, COLOMBIA and HUNGARY highlighted the relations established with other Conventions. The NETHERLANDS emphasized the cross-sectoral nature of biodiversity and the need to integrate it into the relevant CSD agenda items. NORWAY and ZIMBABWE underscored the importance of integrating biodiversity concerns into other processes and sectors.

A Working Group, chaired by Terry Jones (the Seychelles), convened over the weekend to discuss the draft statement to the Special Session. Delegates made amendments on the need for "new and" additional financial resources and added language on terrestrial biodiversity, collaboration with other relevant conventions, and public awareness and education programmes.

The final decision (UNEP/CBD/COP/3/L.10) describes the relevance of the CBD to several chapters of Agenda 21 and outlines substantive issues discussed at COP-3 and those on the medium-term programme of work. The decision also calls for special attention to future challenges, including: development and implementation of national plans; consideration of access and benefit-sharing arrangements; development of means to respect, preserve and maintain traditional knowledge; technology transfer; and provision of new and additional resources.

BIOSAFETY (AGENDA ITEM 17)

As a basis for their deliberations in the COW on Friday, 8 November, delegates considered the Report of the First Meeting of the Open-Ended *Ad Hoc* Working Group on Biosafety (BSWG) (UNEP/CBD/COP/3/26) and the Progress Report on the Elaboration of a Protocol on Biosafety (UNEP/CBD/COP/3/27). The Chair of the BSWG, Veit Koester (Denmark) presented the

meeting's procedural recommendations to the COP: to devise a ten-member Bureau; to maintain the Bureau throughout the process; and to convene two meetings in 1997. Most delegations expressed support for the establishment of a ten-member Bureau, but were divided on the issue of its permanence.

BOLIVIA, VENEZUELA, EQUATORIAL GUINEA and TUNISIA stated that socio-economic considerations and liability should be addressed in future protocol negotiations.

CAMEROON, TANZANIA, the UK, RUSSIA, MEXICO, ZIMBABWE, NEW ZEALAND and TUNISIA underscored the need for capacity building in biosafety. MOROCCO called for national legislation and funding for biosafety in developing countries. SWITZERLAND, as well as GUATEMALA (on behalf of EL SALVADOR and HONDURAS), noted the need to establish regional structures on risk assessment, Article 8(j) and capacity building. TUNISIA stated that a protocol should address prior informed agreement.

MALAYSIA, SWITZERLAND and ITALY endorsed the UNEP International Technical Guidelines for Safety in Biotechnology. ITALY stated that the Guidelines should be periodically updated to keep track of scientific progress in biotechnology and biosafety. BRAZIL expressed support for the Guidelines as an interim mechanism until a protocol is finalized. NORWAY noted that the Guidelines should not prejudice or exclude any relevant elements from a future biosafety protocol.

While the draft decision on biosafety was tabled on Monday, 11 November, it was not adopted until Wednesday, 13 November, after further informal and regional consultations at the request of the G-77/China. In the final decision (UNEP/CBD/COP/3/L.15) the COP: recalls that the BSWG shall complete its work on developing a protocol in 1998 as a matter of urgency; supports a two-track process through which the UNEP Guidelines can contribute to a biosafety protocol without prejudicing its development and conclusion; and endorses the importance of capacity building in biosafety and the request to provide financial resources to developing countries for this purpose. Also according to this decision, before the next meeting of the BSWG in 1997, each region will nominate two representatives to the Bureau, which shall remain in office under the chairmanship of Veit Koester (Denmark) until COP-4.

During the closing plenary, the Western Europe and Others Group (WEOG) confirmed Denmark as the Chair and nominated New Zealand to the Bureau. The African Group nominated Mauritius and Ethiopia.

RELATIONSHIP OF THE CBD WITH OTHER RELATED INTERNATIONAL AGREEMENTS, INSTITUTIONS AND PROCESSES (AGENDA ITEM 18)

The Secretariat introduced documents addressing cooperation between the CBD and other biodiversity-related conventions, such as the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands, the Bonn Convention on Migratory Species (CMS) and CITES, and related processes such as the CSD (UNEP/CBD/COP/3/29, 30, 35, Inf. 21, 22, 38-41, 52 and 55) on Monday, 11 November. The reports acknowledge the need to facilitate an exchange of information and experience among related conventions, harmonize reporting requirements and coordinate programmes of work. While Memoranda of Cooperation have been formed between the CBD and Ramsar, CITES and CMS, the reports encourage cooperation with other biodiversity-related agreements. KENYA urged that implementation of all biodiversity-related conventions be mutually supportive. FRANCE said synergy with other biodiversity-related instruments will prevent fragmentation of financial resources. POLAND, NORWAY and CUBA called for more emphasis on regional cooperation and conventions. AUSTRALIA, MOROCCO, MALAWI and others stressed the need to avoid duplication with other related agreements.

CAPE VERDE, TANZANIA and TUNISIA called for cooperation with the climate change and desertification conventions, and with JAMAICA, enhanced cooperation with UNCLOS. AUSTRIA recommended cooperation with the Intergovernmental Panel on Sustainable Mountain Development.

Delegates reviewed the draft decision on the issue in the COW on Tuesday, 12 November. The EU, working in collaboration with the G-77/CHINA, proposed a set of amendments calling for: consultations with the GEF to facilitate funding for projects involving the conservation and sustainable use of wetlands and migratory species, and enhanced cooperation with the Scientific Council of the CMS. These recommendations were incorporated in the final draft.

The decision (UNEP/CBD/COP/3/L.9): welcomes progress made in the development of cooperative arrangements with relevant conventions; calls for the Ramsar Convention to act as a lead partner in the implementation of activities under the CBD related to wetlands; urges national biodiversity plans and strategies to incorporate the conservation and sustainable use of wetlands and migratory species and their habitats; and encourages cooperation with the conventions on climate change and desertification.

MEDIUM-TERM PROGRAMME OF WORK OF THE COP FOR 1996-1997 (AGENDA ITEM 19)

Delegates discussed Agenda Item 19 in the COW on Monday, 11 November, with document UNEP/CBD/COP/3/31 as the basis for discussion. Many delegations called for priority-setting of the work programmes of the COP and SBSTTA. AUSTRALIA said the COP should set a well-focused medium-term work programme that takes into account its financial implications. JAMAICA called for streamlining activities to enable developing countries to participate more fully. The EU called for a distinction between items that only require additional information and those for which clear recommendations are needed.

The decision on the medium-term programme of work (UNEP/CBD/COP/3/L.19) takes note of the provisional agenda for COP-4 and SBSTTA-3 and establishes a review process of COP operations. During consideration of the draft decision in the COW, the EU proposal for a new paragraph requesting the SBSTTA Bureau to focus the agenda of SBSTTA-3 and to submit it to the Parties sufficiently in advance of the meeting was accepted. The decision invites views on the operations of the COP, the review of the programme of work for 1995-1997 and a longer-term programme of work, a synthesis of which will be considered at COP-4. The draft submitted to the COW invited views from Parties, States not Parties and other relevant institutions. The G-77/CHINA, supported by the EU, proposed deleting the reference to States not Parties. The US said the widest possible range of views should be solicited. Delegates agreed to AUSTRALIA's suggestion to replace this term with "participants."

ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS (AGENDA ITEM 20)

Introducing the item in Plenary, the Executive Secretary presented the Report of the Administration of the Convention (UNEP/CBD/COP/3/32). Describing the past year as "formative and transitional," he noted that the Secretariat was acquiring the in-house capacity to carry out its functions and that the host country agreement with Canada had recently been signed by the Executive Director of UNEP. Administrative matters were considered by a Working Group on the medium-term programme of work and budget under the chairmanship of John Ashe (Antigua and Barbuda).

The group closely monitored draft agreements emerging from the other consultative and working groups in order to consider their budgetary implications and sought to respond to the COP's instructions for budgetary requirements. The group drafted two decisions on administrative matters.

INSTITUTIONAL ARRANGEMENTS: According to the decision on Institutional Arrangements (UNEP/CBD/COP/3/L.23), the COP invites the Executive Director of UNEP and the Executive Secretary of the CBD to develop procedures regarding the functioning of the Permanent Secretariat and to clarify and make more effective their respective roles and responsibilities, making an effort to conclude by 27 January 1997. The decision further states that these procedures should provide for the managerial autonomy, efficiency and administrative accountability of the Secretariat, and should, "as far as possible and where appropriate," follow the Personnel, Financial and Common Services arrangements agreed between the UN and the Framework Convention on Climate Change (FCCC).

BUDGET OF THE TRUST FUND FOR THE CBD: The proposed budget of the Trust Fund for the Convention was presented to the opening Plenary in document UNEP/CBD/COP/3/33. The Working Group separated the budget into three parts: (A) the biennium Budget of the Trust Fund; (B) a special trust fund for additional voluntary contributions to the core budget for approved activities; and (C) a special trust fund for facilitating participation of Parties from developing countries, in particular LDCs and small island developing States (SIDS). The Executive Director of UNEP is requested to establish the special trust funds, for which the Financial Rules for the Administration of the Trust Fund for the CBD and other arrangements for that Fund shall apply *mutatis mutandis*. The Executive Secretary may make transfers from one budget line to another in accordance with the Rules and Regulations of the UN. Part A incorporates funding from savings from previous years, and includes funding for: servicing of workshops on Article 8(j) and the CHM; a meeting of marine and coastal experts; the review of the financial mechanism; and SBSTTA and biosafety meetings. Part B identifies voluntary contributions already received as well as activities approved but not yet funded. The final decision is contained in UNEP/CBD/COP/L.24 and Corr.1.

MINISTERIAL SEGMENT

During the Ministerial Segment, which was held on 13-14 November, delegates heard over 80 statements from governments, IGOs and NGOs, 30 of which were delivered by ministers. COP-3 President Maria Julia Alsogaray, UNEP Executive Director Elizabeth Dowdeswell and Argentine President Carlos Menem also spoke.

A number of developing country ministers reiterated the need to provide financial resources in a timely and predictable manner and characterized the lack of compliance by developed countries with Article 20 on financial resources as the primary hindrance to implementation. Some developing countries said the short-term needs of human existence often take precedence over long-term sustainability, and many emphasized that new and additional financial resources are needed. Several developing countries also stressed that little has been done to transfer technology, while some said the CHM could facilitate transfers. Some developed countries, including JAPAN and FRANCE, also noted the duty of developed countries to assist developing countries.

Many delegations commented on the GEF and other multilateral agencies. URUGUAY, WESTERN SAMOA, TOGO, ALGERIA, BRAZIL, CHAD, CHINA and CUBA called for simplified procedures for funding from the GEF. Developing countries also called for: a review of multilateral agencies to improve the quality of investments; making more resources available for African projects; and expanding GEF funding beyond enabling activities. Capacity building was highlighted by a number of countries, such as LESOTHO, who noted that it should involve not just technology transfer, but also information sharing, awareness building and improvement of indigenous capacity.

Many countries commented on the implementation of Article 8(j), with some recognizing that information could soon be lost forever as cultures are degraded. The GROUP OF INDIGENOUS PEOPLES called for an immediate moratorium on bioprospecting and said that indigenous peoples were not satisfied with the decision taken by COP-3 on Article 8(j). IPR was addressed by the EUROPEAN COMMUNITY, who called for exploring the possibility of developing IPR systems and contractual mechanisms to better value indigenous knowledge. Developing countries, such as NICARAGUA, said that providing access to biotechnology and establishing IPR will allow for the development of a new international framework. The US and POLAND noted that broad and free access to genetic resources was fundamental to food supplies.

Some delegations commented on the efforts toward a biosafety protocol and expressed confidence that an agreement will be reached soon despite the diversity of views on structure and content. The EUROPEAN COMMUNITY said delegates must negotiate diligently to complete a protocol on biosafety by the end of 1998 with "adequate information sharing" and advance informed agreement. A number of States also stressed the importance of marine and coastal issues, calling for: seriously addressing the concerns of SIDS, with appropriate financial mechanisms; integrated management of coastal zones and other marine environment management; and the sustainable use of coral reefs and reef ecosystems.

Delegations expressed a range of views on the relationship of CBD to other conventions and agreements. Delegates noted the link between the CBD and the IPF, and SBSTTA's vital role in implementation of the SIDS Programme of Action. ITALY highlighted ill-defined relations with other conventions and called for immediate clarification and reorientation between the CBD and existing agreements in the areas of conservation, agriculture and the seas. DENMARK noted that the CBD's broad objectives require close cooperation. Delegates also urged sending a strong message to the UN General Assembly to take biodiversity considerations seriously. CANADA challenged other developed countries to contribute to a roster of volunteers to be put at the disposal of developing countries to provide additional assistance in preparation for the next COP.

HUNGARY stressed the importance of national legislation for implementation. Many others highlighted their specific national strategies, plans and programmes. They described the development of new environmental laws, as well as sustainable policies on forests, fisheries and the use of biodiversity. Some countries are implementing legislation on access to genetic resources, as well as national policies on biodiversity, IPR regimes and the rights of indigenous and local communities. Other speakers highlighted the initiation of data collection programmes to assess domestic biological resources, bio-monitoring programmes in protected areas and development of national biodiversity data management systems. Some delegates noted the preparation of national strategies, the establishment of national ecological reserves, and the initiation of decentralized environmental management strategies.

Intergovernmental organizations, such as UNESCO, UNCTAD and FAO, described programmes undertaken to assist the implementation of the CBD. NGO statements were given by IUCN, the LATIN AMERICAN NGO FORUM and the COOPERATIVA TECNICO SCIENTIFICA DI BASE.

CLOSING PLENARY

COP-3 President Maria Julia Alsogaray (Argentina) opened the closing Plenary and introduced consideration of Agenda Item 21, Report of the Credentials Committee. Delegates adopted the report, which included a number of recommendations, including the suggestion that the Executive Secretary distribute a sample

credential letter prior to COP-4. Delegates approved the proposal that Slovakia host COP-4 from 4-15 May 1998.

COW Chair Louis Currat (Switzerland) introduced Agenda Item 24, Adoption of the Report of COP-3. He first introduced the draft decisions that were approved in the COW, as contained in UNEP/CBD/COP/3/L.3-13 and L.15-20. The texts were adopted.

Mohammad Reza Salamat (Iran), Chair of the Working Group on financial issues, introduced the three remaining draft decisions from his group: Memorandum of Understanding (L.21); Additional Guidance to the Financial Mechanism (L.22); and Guidelines for the Review of the Effectiveness of the Financial Mechanism (L.25). A number of typographical errors were corrected and the texts were adopted.

Rapporteur Raed Bani Hani (Jordan) introduced the Report of COP-3 (UNEP/CBD/COP/3/L.1, Add.1, and L.2), which was adopted. The following documents were adopted next by the Plenary: Pending Issues from COP-2 (UNEP/CBD/COP/3/L.14); Administrative Matters (L.23); Budget of the Trust Fund for the CBD (L.24 and Corr.1); Use of Languages in SBSTTA Meetings (L.27); and Convening of Regional and Subregional Meetings (L.28).

The Tribute to the Government and People of Argentina (UNEP/CBD/COP/3/L.26) was adopted by acclamation.

The CHAIR announced that the Chair of SBSTTA-3 will be A.H. Zakri (Indonesia). The current SBSTTA Chair, Peter Johan Schei (Norway), who will hold his position until the SBSTTA-3 meeting in September 1997, stated that he felt assured that the good cooperation that he has developed with SBSTTA will continue until the next COP.

In its closing statement, the G-77/CHINA stated that although in some areas COP-3 had not made as much progress as some had wished for, in general the COP had made great progress toward CBD implementation. He noted that all of the paper that had been consumed during the meeting would be recycled. The EU noted that it is now up to Parties to fulfill the tasks that had been decided upon, and stated that EU member States have pledged to accomplish this. CANADA was pleased that COP-3 had accepted the decision to hold an intersessional meeting on the concerns of indigenous and local communities, and stated that his Government would give every possible assistance to the Secretariat in facilitating intersessional activities.

A BRIEF ANALYSIS OF COP-3

As the Convention on Biological Diversity's Conference of the Parties (COP) moved into its third year, it further refined its internal mechanisms as well as its role vis-à-vis other relevant international instruments and processes. In terms of internal COP mechanisms and processes, delegates discussed the need to focus the work programme, and took some action to exert its authority over the interim financial mechanism and the administration of the Permanent Secretariat. Delegates at COP-3 also addressed the question of how to interface with a variety of other international fora, including those related to IPR, forests and Agenda 21. These two themes were played out in a number of issue areas, as outlined in the following brief analysis of COP-3.

INTERNAL MECHANISMS: Procedural issues, including the number of working groups and informal consultations as well as the ambitious agenda, were the focus of many discussions both inside and outside the Parque Norte conference rooms. In its resolve to avoid the COP-2 experience of a proliferation of working groups, COP-3 originally established only two. The number of issues on the agenda, however, required additional deliberations outside the COW discussions. There was widespread concern about the process used to redress this situation: informal consultations conducted at the initiative of the Secretariat. Delegates found that it was difficult to fully participate given the lack of transparency in

this consultation process. They further raised the concern that the process of consolidating positions is fundamentally political rather than administrative and, therefore, should fall within the purview of governments. Nonetheless, given the scope of the agenda, delegates admitted they would have found it difficult to contribute to negotiations on all issues, even through working groups that were open and pre-scheduled. In response to the problem of agenda overload, and possibly leading to a response to the problem of working group overload, the COP set in place a procedure to gather views regarding COP operations and participants' views on the programme of work, and prepare the way for a COP-4 review of these issues.

The decisions taken regarding the financial mechanism and the UNEP-CBD Permanent Secretariat relationship also illustrate how the COP grappled with the need to manage its internal procedures. Although some believed the MOU was not necessary because the GEF is already operating according to COP guidelines, many delegates were pleased that the relationship between the two organizations was formalized. COP-3's intentional examination of its decisions to identify additional guidance for the financial mechanism was another way in which the meeting defined its expectations for GEF performance. Last year the GEF was simply presented with all COP-2 decisions, a procedure some noted did not provide adequate guidance to the financial mechanism. The number of priority issues for the GEF increased as a result of COP-3's decision and some noted that while the process was useful, GEF guidance remains broad. In response to this situation, delegates turned their attention to the COP-4 review of the financial mechanism. Many delegates did not want to change existing guidance until after GEF performance based on current guidance is comprehensively evaluated. The review process that COP-4 will undertake, based on the procedure established at COP-3, may conclude with action to improve the effectiveness of the financial mechanism. Some hope the review would feed back into further discussions on the MOU and further assertion of COP authority over its financial mechanism.

Difficulties that emerged during the last year in the relationship between the Permanent Secretariat and its UN institutional home, UNEP, including hiring decisions and document support, led to a COP-3 decision that provides for the two entities to develop procedures to clarify and enhance their respective roles by 27 January 1997. The decision states that procedures should provide for the managerial autonomy and efficiency of the Permanent Secretariat and ensure the administrative accountability of the Executive Secretary to the COP. The parallel relationship between the UN and the Framework Convention on Climate Change (FCCC) on matters such as personnel and financing is noted as an example to be followed, one that some have suggested affords the Executive Secretary more flexibility and autonomy than do the existing CBD arrangements.

EXTERNAL AFFAIRS: COP-3's consideration of several substantive issues, notably IPR and Article 8(j), agricultural and forest biodiversity, is indicative of the Convention's aspiring role as a focal point among international treaties. The overarching theme during deliberations on many issues was engagement with other processes.

For example, many observers have speculated that the focus on IPR in the context of the CBD reflects a dissatisfaction among some delegations and NGOs with its treatment under the Trade-Related aspects of Intellectual Property (TRIPs) sub-agreement to the GATT. Areas of concern include the absence of an IPR regime that recognizes traditional knowledge, certain patent regimes regarding biotechnology-derived products, and whether the WTO will consider the effect of global intellectual property regulations on the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity. According to some delegations, there is an emerging consensus that, while the CBD will not be able to change the basic rules on IPR set down in the TRIPs agreement, it is appropriate for

the CBD to have an opinion on environmental and socio-cultural aspects of IPR and to communicate this opinion to relevant fora.

While the COP has yet to articulate agreed areas of concern under the WTO, this year's meeting produced a watershed decision in its communication to World Intellectual Property Organisation (WIPO) as it engages for the first time another forum on a specific IPR issue. The COP decision on IPR contains language "noting" the possibility that WIPO may recommend international copyright protection for scientific databases. While the choice of language is weakened from the original proposal calling on the Executive Secretary to raise this issue with WIPO, the decision calls for "open and transparent evaluation" of the implications of the copyright proposal, which some developing country delegations fear could interfere with scientific and technical cooperation, create difficulties in repatriating data, and complicate the exercise of the CBD's third objective of equitable benefit-sharing. The CBD, with the weight of an internationally-ratified treaty, may yet emerge as a significant influence on the activities of both WIPO and the WTO.

Delegates also sent a message to the upcoming session of the FAO Commission on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture as it negotiates the revision of the International Undertaking on Plant Genetic Resources in harmony with the CBD. Without expressing a preference for the legal status of a revised International Undertaking, the decision does highlight the COP's willingness to consider one of three options in particular: a protocol on PGRFA under the CBD. Such a realization would not only reinforce the COP's position vis-à-vis the FAO, it would resolve the outstanding status of *ex-situ* collections acquired prior to the CBD's entry into force.

The COP sent a message to yet another intergovernmental process, this time regarding forest biodiversity. During discussion of the CBD's relationship to the Intergovernmental Panel on Forests (IPF), opinions differed on whether the draft decision on forest biological diversity represents progress on forest biodiversity or a missed opportunity. The decision's instructions on common priorities and advice to the IPF do little to elucidate the respective roles of the CBD and the IPF in forest biodiversity, or clarify the working relationship between them. To date, the CBD has been deferential in expressing the priority that forest biodiversity should be given in the IPF. Some participants argue that rather than reacting to the IPF agenda, the COP should be more assertive in providing guidance to the IPF, particularly as the last of the scheduled IPF sessions draws near. Strengthening the CBD's relationship to the IPF could have an impact on any decisions regarding extension of the IPF or the establishment of a similar forum for international debate on forest issues, as was alluded to at IPF-3 in September.

LOOKING FORWARD: As the COP continues to mature, a number of ideas have been put forward in an effort to improve its future operation. Some delegates suggested that one way to better manage implementation of the CBD might be to address cross-sectoral issues in the context of sectoral or thematic ones. For instance, technology transfer, finance and incentives could be examined in relation to inland water ecosystems. An example of the COP's honing of its work programme is apparent in the decision on the meeting's main thematic issue. Indeed, many delegates stated that the decision on agricultural biodiversity is both more focused and realistic than the Jakarta Mandate on Marine and Coastal Biodiversity. Its work programme clearly delineates action required of Parties and tasks to be carried out by the Secretariat. The decision places the responsibility for implementation squarely with governments — a distinction that has been blurred in the past — and, in so doing, may the serve as a model for future decisions on sectoral issues addressed by the COP.

Another possible solution is to refer issues to subsidiary bodies. This approach has already proven fruitful in the case of biosafety. Based on terms of reference established at COP-2, the Biosafety

Working Group has already made progress on the development of a biosafety protocol, and what was among the most contentious substantive issues at COP-2 was transformed into a primarily procedural matter at COP-3.

With the Special Session of the UN General Assembly to review progress made in implementing Agenda 21 scheduled for June 1997, it is appropriate and timely for the CBD to also engage in an exercise of self-assessment and re-orientation. As the final decision on the COP's input into the Special Session notes, biodiversity is a cross-cutting issue that interfaces with several different facets of Agenda 21, and therefore a substantive review of progress made thus far under the CBD would certainly be integral to the objectives of the Special Session. However, due to the timing of the Special Session and COP-4, this could be a missed opportunity. COP-4 has been scheduled for May 1998, six months later than previously anticipated, and thus the deadline for submission of the first national reports no longer coincides with the Special Session. Because the implementation of the CBD's objectives will primarily occur at the national level, a more substantive review of the progress of CBD implementation would be possible if Parties have undertaken the exercise of assessing their own achievements at home. Therefore, the postponement of COP-4 will likely mean that CBD's contribution to the Special Session will be less meaningful than it could have otherwise been.

However, COP-4 will provide an opportunity for further review, as it will be the first time that national-level implementation of the Convention will be formally considered. At its next session, the COP will also conduct an internal review of its work programme and of the effectiveness of the financial mechanism. These dual processes will enable the COP to further organize and prioritize its agenda as well as clarify and reinforce the CBD's position vis-à-vis relevant international regimes.

THINGS TO LOOK FOR

CONVENTION ON BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY

FOURTH CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES TO THE CBD: COP-4 is scheduled for 4-15 May 1998 in Bratislava, Slovakia. SBSTTA-3 is scheduled for September 1997. The venue is to be determined. For more information contact the CBD Secretariat, World Trade Centre, 413 St. Jacques Street, Office 630, Montreal, Quebec, Canada H2Y 1N9; tel: +1 (514) 288-2220; fax: +1 (514) 288-6588; e-mail: biodiv@mtl.net.

FIRST MEETING OF EXPERTS ON MARINE AND COASTAL BIODIVERSITY: Indonesia has offered to host the first Meeting of Experts, which is expected to meet in March 1997. The exact date and location is to be determined. For more information, contact Ina Pranoto at the CBD Secretariat.

AD HOC EXPERT GROUP ON BIOSAFETY: The *Ad Hoc* Expert Group on Biosafety is scheduled to meet from 12-16 May and from 13-17 October 1997. The venue will most likely be Montreal. For more information, contact the CBD Secretariat.

CBD-RELATED EXPERT GROUP MEETINGS AND WORKSHOPS: The Netherlands is planning to organize a workshop on the cooperation between the FAO and the Secretariat on agro-biodiversity during the first half of 1997. The Netherlands also plans to host a meeting for representatives of the Secretariat, the RAMSAR Bureau and Wetlands International in order to identify inputs to the Secretariat's preparations for SBSTTA-3 and COP-4. Uruguay is planning meeting on access to genetic resources in the context of Mercosur. The Secretariat is also planning workshops on the clearing-house mechanism and on Article 8(j). For more information, contact the CBD Secretariat.

FOOD AND AGRICULTURE ORGANIZATION

THIRD EXTRAORDINARY SESSION OF THE FAO COMMISSION ON GENETIC RESOURCES: The FAO Commission on Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture will meet in Rome for its Third Extraordinary Session from 9-12 December 1996 to further negotiations on the revision of the International Undertaking in line with the CBD. The session will be preceded by a two-day meeting of the working group. For more information, see the FAO Home Page at <http://www.fao.org>.

SEVENTH SESSION OF THE FAO COMMISSION ON GENETIC RESOURCES FOR FOOD AND AGRICULTURE: This meeting is tentatively scheduled for May 1997 at FAO Headquarters in Rome. For information see the FAO Home Page at <http://www.fao.org>. Also see <http://web.icppgr.fao.org>.

COMMISSION ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

CSD: The Intersessional meeting for the CSD, which will address preparations for the Special Session of the UN General Assembly, is scheduled for 24 February - 7 March 1997. The fifth session of CSD is scheduled for 7-25 April 1997. The Special Session of the UN General Assembly to review implementation of Agenda 21 is currently scheduled for 23-27 June 1997. For information on the CSD contact: Andrey Vasilyev, UN Division for Sustainable Development; tel: +1 (212) 963-5949; fax: +1 (212) 963-4260; e-mail: vasilyev@un.org. Also see <http://www.un.org/DPCSD>.

FOURTH SESSION OF THE INTERGOVERNMENTAL PANEL ON FORESTS: IPF-4 will be held in New York in February 1997. For more information contact: Elizabeth Barsk-Rundquist; tel: +1 (212) 963-3263; fax: +1 (212) 963-1795; e-mail: barsk-rundquist@un.org. Also see <http://www.un.org/DPCSD>.

GLOBAL ENVIRONMENT FACILITY

GEF COUNCIL: The proposed schedule of GEF Council Meetings for 1997 includes: 18-19 May, NGO Consultation; 20-22 May, GEF Council Meeting; and 2-3 November, NGO Consultation; 4-6 November, GEF Council Meeting. For more information contact the GEF Secretariat, 1818 H Street, NW, Washington, DC 20433, USA; tel: +1 (202) 473-5787; fax: +1(202) 522-2632. Also see <http://www.worldbank.org>.

OTHER RELATED MEETINGS

INTERNATIONAL WORKSHOP ON INTEGRATED APPLICATION OF SUSTAINABLE FOREST MANAGEMENT PRACTICES: Canada, Japan, Mexico, Malaysia, FAO and the ITTO will jointly host this workshop from 22-25 November 1996 in Kochi, Japan. For information contact: Takeshi Goto, Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries, 1-2-1 Kasumigaseki, Chiyoda-Ku Tokyo 100, Japan; tel: +81-3-3502-8111 (6212) or +81-3-3591-8449; fax: +81-3-3593-9565; or David Drake, Natural Resources Canada, 351 St. Joseph Blvd., Hull, Quebec, K1A 1G5, Canada, tel: +1 (819) 997-1107, ext. 1947; fax: +1 (819) 994-3461; e-mail: d Drake@am.ncr.forestry.ca.

WORLD COMMISSION ON FORESTS AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT: The independent WCFSD will convene its third regional public hearing, for the Latin American and Caribbean Region, from 1-6 December 1996 in San Jose, Costa Rica. For more information contact: WCFSD Secretariat, Geneva Executive Center, C.P. 51, 1219 Chatelaine, Geneva, Switzerland; tel: +(41 22) 979-9165/69; fax: +(41 22)

979-9060; e-mail: dameena@iprolink.ch. Also see <http://iisd1.iisd.ca/wcfsd>.

SUMMIT OF THE AMERICAS ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT: The Summit of the Americas on Sustainable Development will be held in Santa Cruz, Bolivia on 7-8 December 1996. For information contact Fernando Romero, Special Ambassador of the Government of Bolivia, tel: +591-2-430-626; fax: +591-2-431-006. Also contact Secretariado de la Cumbre, e-mail: cumbre@eos.pnud.bo. Also see <http://www.cumbre-summit.org/cumbre/eng>. From South America, see <http://eos.pnud.bo/cumbre/esp>.

INTERNATIONAL MEETING ON INDIGENOUS COMMUNITIES AND FOREST DWELLER COMMUNITIES AND SUSTAINABLE MANAGEMENT OF FORESTS: This initiative, led by Consejo Indigena de la Cuenca Amazonica (COICA) and sponsored by Denmark and Colombia, will be held in Leticia, Colombia, from 9-13 December 1996. The workshop will address concerns raised under IPF programme element I.3, traditional forest-related knowledge. Contact Gloria Migueles, International Alliance of the Indigenous-Tribal Peoples of the Tropical Forests, International Technical Secretariat, 14 Rudolf Place, Miles Street, London SW8 1RP, UK; tel: +44-171-587-373; fax: +44-171-793-8686.

INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON DIVERSITY AS A RESOURCE: The conference, "Diversity as a Resource: Relations between Cultural Diversity and Environment-Oriented Society," is scheduled for 6-10 April 1997 in Rome and will be supported by UNESCO, the Presidency of the Council of Ministers and others. The conference will strive to draft an innovative research strategy by defining the interdisciplinary parameters of relevance to the relation between cultural and environmental diversity. For information contact Cooperative Tecnico Scientifica De Base a R.L. (COBASE), Via Vitorchiano 23, 000189 Rome, Italy; tel: +39 6 333-0078 or +39 6 333-8552; fax: +39 6 333-0081.

ELEVENTH WORLD FORESTRY CONGRESS: The Congress, with the theme "Forestry for Sustainable Development: Towards the 21st Century," is scheduled for 13-22 October 1997 in Antalya, Turkey. The Congress will consider: position papers prepared by specialists; special papers that correspond to each one of the topics of the Congress and voluntary papers. For more information contact: Luis Santiago Botero, FAO, Forestry Department, Via delle Terme de Caracalla, 00100 Rome, Italy; tel: +39 6/5225 5088; fax: +39 6/5225 5137; e-mail: luis.botero@fao.org. Also see <http://www.fao.org/waicent/faoinfo/forestry/wforcong/>.

OTHER CONVENTIONS

CONVENTION TO COMBAT DESERTIFICATION: The next session of the INCD (INCD-10) is scheduled to take place from 6-16 January 1997 at UN Headquarters in New York. INCD-11 is scheduled from 18-22 August 1997 in New York. COP-1 is currently scheduled for 29 September -1 October 1997 in Rome. For more information, contact the CCD Interim Secretariat; e-mail: Secretariat.incd@unep.ch. Also see the INCD World Wide Web site at <http://www.unep.ch/incd.html>.

CITES: Zimbabwe will host the CITES Conference of the Parties from 9-20 June 1997 in Harare. For more information contact: the CITES Secretariat, Geneva Executive Centre, 15 Chemin de Anémones, CP 456, CH-1219 Châteline-Geneva, Switzerland; tel: +(41 22) 979-9139/40; fax: +(41 22) 797-3417; e-mail: cites@unep.ch. Also see <http://www.unep.ch/cites.html> or <http://www.wcmc.org.uk/convent/cites>.