



**CONVENTION ON
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**FUTURE PROGRAMME OF WORK FOR TERRESTRIAL BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY:
RELEVANT SECTIONS OF THE REPORT OF THE THIRD SESSION OF
THE COMMISSION ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT**

The present note contains, in its Annex, the report of the third session of the Commission on Sustainable Development, held in New York from 11 to 28 April 1995, on the review of sectoral cluster: Land, desertification, forests and biodiversity (chapters 10-15 of Agenda 21).

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[...]

**Chapter I. MATTERS CALLING FOR ACTION BY THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL
COUNCIL OR BROUGHT TO ITS ATTENTION**

[...]

D. Review of sectoral cluster: Land, desertification, forests and biodiversity

1. Overall considerations

158. The Commission on Sustainable Development notes that chapter 10 of Agenda 21, on an integrated approach to the planning and management of land resources, provides an overall framework for the implementation of the entire cluster. While all the chapters are related to land, those on forests and sustainable agriculture are concerned with the sustainable management and use of physical and biological resources, while those on desertification and sustainable mountain development reflect the particular problems of fragile environments; the issue of the conservation of biodiversity and the sustainable use of its components is of a cross-cutting nature, and includes those concerned with freshwater as well as coastal and marine ecosystems. Farmers - men and women - indigenous people, other rural communities and the private sector, as the major stakeholders in the use of land and its related resources, must be the focal points in all the areas of the cluster.

159. Respect for national sovereignty, as well as the need for a comprehensive approach to implementing the recommendations and commitments contained in Agenda 21, the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development, and the Non-legally Binding Authoritative Statement of Principles for a Global Consensus on the Management, Conservation and Sustainable Development of All Types of Forests, are fundamental for achieving sustainable development.

160. National efforts in developing countries to mobilise financial resources for the full and effective implementation of Agenda 21, including its land-related chapters under review, have to be supported by the international community. It is imperative that all financial recommendations and commitments of Agenda 21 be implemented, in particular those contained in paragraphs 13 and 14 of chapter 33 of Agenda 21. The need for partnership for sustainable development among all countries and better co-operation and co-ordination among national institutions, international organisations, including international financial institutions, the private sector and non-governmental organisations, including farmers' and rural people's organisations, was underscored.

161. The sharing of scientific knowledge and the transfer of environmentally sound technology, including on concessional and preferential terms as mutually agreed, in accordance with the provisions of chapter 34, are crucial instruments for achieving the objectives of Agenda 21.

162. The Commission on Sustainable Development recommends that high priority be given to the facilitation of practical action for the transfer, sharing, adaptation and development of technology for sustainable resource management in all sectors, at the national and international levels, including under the auspices of the United Nations system, in particular UNEP, UNIDO and UNESCO, and of international conventions, as appropriate. Such action should include support for a wide range of initiatives, including (a) capacity- and institution-building; (b) exchange of information, making use, inter alia, of inventories on eco-technologies in those sectors; and (c) education and training - through the establishment of mechanisms such as environmental technology centres.

163. The Commission on Sustainable Development urges States to sign, ratify, accede to and implement the Convention on Biological Diversity, the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, particularly in Africa, making these Conventions the principal instruments for advancing international co-operation and practical action in their respective fields. The Commission stresses the need for the formulation of co-ordinated

approaches towards the implementation of these instruments at the national and international levels, with a view to making efficient use of resources. The Commission further agrees to look into the relationship between work under these Conventions and ongoing work on sustainable development in other related processes in the follow-up to the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development.

164. In accordance with General Assembly resolution 49/111 on the report of the Commission on Sustainable Development on its second session, the Commission encourages Governments to continue to share their experiences in the implementation of Agenda 21, taking into account recent efforts and initiatives to promote sustainable development at the national, subregional, regional and interregional levels. It welcomes the readiness of some countries to accomplish specific sustainable development goals by means of closer regional co-operation to facilitate the implementation of Agenda 21, and recognises the importance of regional approaches for the effective implementation of the Conference agreements to support global and national efforts. The Commission calls upon the regional commissions to increase their efforts in support of recent national, subregional, regional and interregional initiatives for promoting sustainable development. It also recognises the need to strengthen its ties with regional institutions and in particular with the regional commissions. The Commission will continue to review and monitor these regional initiatives aimed at making the transition to sustainable development more effective in all countries and which support appropriate global and national efforts.

2. Integrated approach to the planning and management of land resources

165. The Commission notes with great concern that an estimated one sixth of the total arable land surface of the globe has been damaged by human-induced soil degradation. A global partnership is required to protect and restore the health of the Earth's terrestrial ecosystems.

166. The Commission notes with concern the convergence of poverty, hunger and the degradation of terrestrial resources in environmentally more fragile marginal lands, where the large majority of poor smallholder farmers are increasingly located. The Commission calls upon Governments, bilateral donors, multilateral financial institutions, technical specialised agencies, and non-governmental organisations to give a high priority to rural development in such lower-potential areas, particularly by enhancing the productivity of farmers on a sustainable basis.

167. The Commission stresses that an integrated approach to the planning and management of land and water resources is central to the implementation of Agenda 21 recommendations concerning land, desertification, mountains, forests and biodiversity. Land needs to be considered as a finite resource relative to many and varied needs; its allocation must aim to satisfy these needs in the most equitable and sustainable way.

168. An integrated and multidisciplinary approach to the planning, development and management of land resources is a process that methodically identifies human and environmental needs; identifies the potential and options for change and improvement; identifies and evaluates all relevant physical, social, economic and policy factors; and develops a series of actions necessary to permit and facilitate change. The process needs to address an array of cross-sectoral issues, such as the creation of productive employment; the eradication of poverty; responses to pressures on the land caused by poverty; unsustainable consumption and production; population growth; and changing demographic patterns. The clarification and security of land rights, possibly involving land-tenure and ownership reforms, are central to the solution of such problems. A holistic approach to the management of land resources requires the integration of land and water-resource issues as they relate to land use. The

mismanagement of land and water often leads to land degradation in the form of erosion, flooding, waterlogging and salinity, and the depletion of groundwater resources. The demands of rural and urban communities for land and its associated water resources will often conflict with each other if they are not properly managed.

169. The Commission notes that soil and water degradation due to contamination by agricultural, urban and industrial effluents is of increasing importance in both developed and developing countries; the Commission invites Governments, international organisations and groups to increase their efforts in this field.

170. A people-oriented approach that is adapted to suit local circumstances is central to the sustainable development of land resources. All stakeholders, especially women, farmers, indigenous peoples, landless labourers and other major groups, should participate in the planning and management of land resources, in identifying problems and in proposing solutions and should also participate in the consensus-building process. For that process, the intermediate level is important: Governments should encourage the participation of all stakeholders at that level. The empowerment of people and communities, the creation of social equity and an enabling environment, and the strengthening of capacities and the building of awareness at all levels are all important elements in this multi-stakeholder approach. Security of tenure and the existence of equitable and efficient legal and fiscal systems are important management tools for ensuring increased productivity and securing conservation efforts.

171. The Commission notes with appreciation the outcome of the international workshop on Agenda 21, chapter 10, entitled "Integrated approach to the planning and management of land resources", which was organised by the Government of the Netherlands and FAO and hosted by the Government of the Netherlands (Wageningen, 20-22 February 1995). The Commission invites the Government of the Netherlands and FAO to disseminate the report and recommendations of the workshop (E/CN.17/1995/33, Annex) as widely as possible.

172. The Commission stresses the importance of the collecting, processing and disseminating of timely and reliable information, as well as the importance of utilising modern land-assessment and evaluation technologies, together with technologies for resource characterisation, all of which are essential for the planning and management of land resources. The development and use of appropriate indicators, including performance indicators, on the basis of sound scientific knowledge that is tailored to meet local requirements and circumstances, are essential for formulating and implementing policies and monitoring results. There is a need to ensure that technical information is fully linked with social and economic aspects at the local, regional and national levels. The Commission also takes note with appreciation of the report of the Panel on Science and Technology for Integrated Land Management of the Commission on Science and Technology for Development; the report adds an important dimension in furthering the implementation of chapter 10 of Agenda 21.

173. The Commission notes with concern the uneven pace of progress achieved in implementing the objectives and recommendations contained in chapter 10 of Agenda 21, especially with regard to existing institutional structures, which are largely sector-oriented, thus leading to an overlapping of governmental responsibilities; the Commission also notes the need for community-driven approaches.

174. The Commission urges Governments to take all necessary steps to achieve the objectives set out in chapter 10 within the agreed time-frame. At the international level, priority should be given to the development of a holistic and integrated framework for establishing social and economic conditions that will facilitate sustainable production and the conservation of biodiversity. Technical

and infrastructural support, which can be applied in any country with appropriate modifications to take account of local needs and conditions, will be desirable in many cases.

175. The Commission urges Governments, in keeping with their respective needs and priorities, to develop national and/or local land-use planning systems that contain a statement of objectives and a detailed timetable for implementation spread over a period of years. Such systems should aim to remove constraints and provide incentives, thus enhancing the involvement and empowerment of peoples; should develop information and management systems; and should modify institutions, establishing suitable linkages among them. The Commission also urges Governments to exchange views on their programmes for integrated land management, involving all sectors of the community and all stakeholder groups, developed and implemented at the appropriate level.

176. The Commission requests the Secretary-General to strengthen co-ordination and co-operation among the organisations and bodies of the United Nations system by developing and implementing joint approaches and collaborative programmes. FAO, in partnership with UNEP, UNDP, other international bodies and Governments, and with the appropriate contributions of non-governmental organisations, should develop tools and recommend actions for integrated land management. Such action should involve the Commission in its capacity as a forum for the exchange of knowledge and experience in an open and transparent manner, with the full and effective participation of developing countries in a way that reflects their specific conditions and needs.

177. The Commission urges Governments, with the co-operation and support of the organisations and bodies of the United Nations system, as appropriate, to pay particular attention to:

- (a) Establishing stable land-use systems in areas where important ecosystems or ecoregions are being endangered by human activities;
- (b) Applying integrated planning and development approaches in regions that are becoming open to intensified settlement and agricultural production;
- (c) Bringing about integrated approaches to capacity-building.

178. The Commission reaffirms the commitments contained in chapters 33 and 34 of Agenda 21 for the effective implementation of chapter 10 of Agenda 21.

3. Managing fragile ecosystems: combating desertification and drought

179. The Commission notes that some 1 billion people live in the rural areas of the world's drylands, which constitute one third of the land on Earth. They are at risk, and more than 100 million are already significantly affected and face having to abandon their lands and migrate. The Commission is concerned that, according to the report of the Secretary-General on managing fragile ecosystems: combating desertification and drought (E/CN.17/1995/4), the economic loss caused by desertification world wide, in terms of average income forgone, was estimated in 1991 to be more than US \$42 billion per year, most of it in Asia (US \$20.9 billion per year) and Africa (US \$9.3 billion per year). These figures are all the more alarming in Africa, where the affected countries rank among the poorest and least developed in the world.

180. Desertification and drought are closely interlinked with other issues such as loss of biodiversity, food security, population growth, poverty, climate change, water resources, deforestation, resource consumption patterns, deterioration of terms of trade, economics and, especially, social and cultural issues. Desertification is a social and economic as well as an environmental problem. Drought

and land degradation can occur in most climatic zones, affecting a large number of people. The Commission emphasises the need to take action on the effects of drought and to recognise that land degradation also occurs in sub-humid and humid regions. Within the context of food security, combating desertification and mitigating the effects of drought take on particular significance.

181. The Commission welcomes the timely conclusion of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, particularly in Africa, and urges all Governments to recognise the urgent need for its early signature, ratification and entry into force, and to support the resolution on urgent action for Africa, adopted by the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee for the Elaboration of an International Convention to Combat Desertification in those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, particularly in Africa, at its fifth session, as well as to promote actions in other regions. Implementation of the programme areas of Agenda 21 should be carried out within the context of the Convention, including its regional implementation annexes. The Commission urges Governments and intergovernmental organisations to give strong political support to the first session of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention, to be held once the Convention has been ratified by at least 50 countries, and to support fully the work of the interim secretariat in preparing for the first meeting of the Conference of Parties.

182. The Commission underlines the importance of the following features of the Convention:

- (a) The open, participatory approach, based on active work at the local level and the particularly important contribution of women;
- (b) The need for improved donor co-ordination and the establishment of partnerships between Governments in donor and affected countries, and the active involvement of non-governmental organisations;
- (c) The integrated, that is, global and multidisciplinary, approach, emphasising the importance of the links between land and water management; and the role of energy, in particular new and renewable sources of energy, as well as the role of socio-economic factors and the need to combat poverty;
- (d) The need for an active role of science in improving the situation in the drylands, and in humid and sub-humid areas.

183. The Commission urges Governments to take an integrated approach to combating desertification, taking into account the link between desertification and poverty and the need for appropriate low-cost environmentally sound technologies for sustainable development. Sectoral strategic framework plans need to be consolidated within overall national planning and budgeting frameworks. The Commission draws the attention of Governments to the potential for the Convention to provide an in-country co-ordinating mechanism for integrated land management in arid, semi-arid and sub-humid lands.

184. In order to be fully effective, the Convention needs to be better known. The Commission therefore emphasises that, despite the increased understanding of desertification and drought issues, there is a continuing need to raise public awareness of the issues. The Commission urges Governments to enhance awareness among policy makers and the public at large through national institutions in the framework of the Convention, and of the International Decade for Natural Disaster Reduction, and through the observance of World Day to Combat Desertification and Drought, on 17 June of every year.

185. The Commission stresses the need for the mobilisation of financial resources, inter alia, as called for by the relevant provisions of the Convention (articles 6, 20 and 21) and needed for its implementation, particularly in Africa. The Commission recommends that appropriate organisations of the United Nations system take steps to facilitate the financing of programmes and projects in dry and sub-humid areas. The Commission urges developed countries to agree on coherent policies and adequate resource allocations for fulfilling their commitments towards the implementation of the Convention.

186. The Commission notes that the wealth of information, knowledge and experience concerning the causes and effects of desertification and drought that are already available allow for action to be stepped up immediately. Measures that assist information-sharing (for example, workshops) should be encouraged. The Commission also considers that the need for substantial improvement and better use of existing scientific knowledge of the problem is fundamental to further improving understanding of the significance of desertification and drought. Meeting this need would involve improved monitoring to provide data collection for desertification assessment and early warning of drought, as well as the improvement of capacities to facilitate access to and application of this information by land users. A more precise understanding of the desertification issue would involve concerted activities, including consultations with major groups, at the national level in affected countries, and the recognition by Governments of its importance, that is, a cross-sectoral effort involving physical, social, humanitarian and economic factors.

187. The Commission recognises that the strengthening of national capacities is central to combating desertification and drought. The Commission urges affected countries, regional and subregional organisations:

- (a) To take effective action to set up institutional arrangements and policy frameworks for developing, managing and implementing national strategies and action programmes, incorporating provision for active public participation, especially among those most affected;
- (b) To encourage Governments to improve national co-ordination among agencies in order to implement measures for combating desertification and managing drought more effectively and for the sustainable use of natural resources, given the cross-cutting nature of these issues;
- (c) To establish, as a matter of highest priority, co-ordinating arrangements and to create partnerships with donors and national stakeholders, within the context of the Convention.

188. The Commission recognises the importance of preserving the knowledge of farmers and indigenous and local people concerning dryland management and survival strategies. Their full involvement in the sustainable development of these drylands - their homelands - needs to be ensured. In this regard, the Commission notes with satisfaction that the principle of allowing more effective participation of local people, especially farmers, through their representative organisations in the planning and development of their natural resources is being more willingly accepted in many affected countries. It also notes the fact that many organisations, especially non-governmental organisations, have stepped up their participatory approaches with the inclusion of marginalized and disadvantaged groups, especially women, in the dryland development process.

189. The Commission takes note of the statement in the report of the Secretary-General (E/CN.17/1995/4) to the effect that United Nations organisations have already taken steps to align their drought and desertification activities in accordance with Agenda 21. Further agreements on the

system-wide division of labour and proposals on further partnership arrangements between agencies (and corresponding targeted work plans) are needed. The Commission recommends that these organisations further define their roles, comparative advantages, co-operative mechanisms, level of intervention and corresponding resource allocations in the implementation of the Convention.

4. Sustainable mountain development

190. The Commission recognises that mountain ecosystems and environments are of crucial importance as rich and unique centres of biological and cultural diversity, water stores and sources of minerals. Mountains cover at least one fifth of the Earth's landscape and are home to at least 10 per cent of the world's population, predominantly economically poor people. Mountain ecosystems are complex, fragile, unique in geomorphology, and react sensitively to global climate change. There is a corresponding need for a comprehensive interdisciplinary approach to sustainable mountain development as well as for the effective participation and empowerment of mountain people in the use and conservation of mountain resources.

191. The Commission recognises that with increased accessibility into mountain areas, resource degradation and, in some cases, economic and political marginalization of mountain communities has taken place. In order to reverse this trend and to combat the poverty of mountain people, strategies for mountain development must empower mountain communities to exercise larger control over local resource management and conservation and generate income in sustainable and equitable ways. In this context, the Commission recognises the central role of women in the sustainable use and management of resources; therefore, the specific needs and constraints of women must be acknowledged and addressed. Furthermore, support is needed to recover and foster the cultural expressions of mountain populations because mountain cultural diversity is a strong and valid basis for the sustainable use and conservation of mountain resources; in this context, the protection of indigenous people's interests, including the recognition of their knowledge, should be an integral part of sustainable development.

192. The Commission stresses that the fragility of mountain ecosystems and the adverse impact of the degradation of those systems on highland and lowland populations have not been fully appreciated. The Commission recognises the importance of mountains as the predominant and most dependable source of freshwater currently used by humanity, and therefore stresses the importance of providing adequate protection for both quality and quantity of water resources from mountainous regions. The Commission recognises the vital protective function of a stable forest cover for the safeguarding of mountainous settlements and infrastructure. It also urges expanding the network of protected mountain areas to cover all types of mountain ecosystems, strengthening existing management capabilities for conserving mountain ecosystems, species and genetic diversity and promoting local and non-governmental organisations' participation in the management of these areas.

193. In order to ensure an integrated approach to the complexity of mountain ecosystems and the socio-economic issues at stake, the Commission recognises the need for strengthening the existing institutional mechanisms as well as the knowledge base about mountain ecosystems through research, database development, pilot projects and information exchange, along with support for training in-country of scientific and technical experts and local natural resource managers.

194. The Commission urges interested Governments, with the support of the international community, to prepare and implement comprehensive national and/or local mountain development programmes in relevant countries as outlined in chapter 13 of Agenda 21: the "mountain agenda". These include strengthening national capacity for sustainable mountain development and the preparation of long-term mountain action plans. Action-oriented projects and programmes should

emphasise the long-term monitoring of their environmental, economic and social impacts. Initiatives to implement the mountain agenda should incorporate development strategies that address the impacts on mountain communities and ecosystems of, inter alia, production and land-use systems, tourism, transportation policies and energy production and use. These initiatives must incorporate a participatory approach involving all stakeholders, including farmers, women, and local and indigenous communities, as well as non-governmental organisations.

195. The Commission also recognises that there is a need to take a new look at the overall flow and full-cost pricing of resources and services to and from mountain areas, including water, wood and non-wood as well as range products, energy, mineral resources, tourism and human and government services. The Commission further recognises the need for a fair share of the benefits derived from the use of mountain resources to remain with the local people and their communities.

196. The Commission notes that there is a need to examine the relationship of chapter 13 with other chapters of Agenda 21 and with the global conventions and to analyse the extent to which the concerns of mountain areas can be better integrated into their follow-up.

197. The Commission welcomes and supports ongoing efforts in preparing and negotiating subregional and interregional agreements on mountains and, in this context, notes the entry into force of the Alpine Convention as one example, in line with paragraph 13.8 (c) of Agenda 21, of co-operation between countries for the protection of mountain ecosystems.

198. The Commission calls upon Governments and the international community to take action at all levels with the objective of combating poverty in mountain areas, diversifying mountain economies, protecting the environment and food security of local communities, strengthening global information networks and databases, addressing environmental problems, and creating new livelihood opportunities, within the context of appropriate institutional frameworks.

199. The Commission urges interested Governments and organisations, including the private sector, to promote initiatives aimed at raising awareness, including the convening of regional intergovernmental consultations. A wider international meeting involving relevant United Nations bodies could facilitate the exchange of objectives, results and experiences of sustainable development in different mountain regions.

5. Combating deforestation and the Non-legally Binding Authoritative Statement of Principles for a Global Consensus on the Management, Conservation and Sustainable Development of All Types of Forests

200. The Commission notes that forests and forestry must be managed in order to continue to meet the growing needs of humankind for forest products, environmental services, and social and cultural benefits, as well as for livelihoods that are based on them. Although some corrective actions have been attempted to alleviate pressures exerted on forest resources, rapidly growing populations, poverty, unsuitable land use, adverse incentives, and production and consumption patterns, as well as various other external threats, including pollution, have continued to damage forests. The need to sustain forests and to manage them for future generations, because of the growing demand on their multiple functions and services, remains a major challenge. Particular attention should be focused on the integrated and balanced approach towards environmental and developmental functions of forests, sustainable forest management, conservation of biological diversity, air quality, conservation of soil and water resources, restoration of damaged forests; and on shortages of forest products and services,

including those that are vital for rural communities, such as fuelwood and forest-based medicines; and on participation of major groups, particularly indigenous people and local communities.

201. The Commission welcomes progress that has been made with regard to the level of awareness, adaptation of policies, preparation or adaptation of strategies and action plans on forests. The Commission notes with appreciation the results of several country-led forums that have contributed significantly to international dialogue on forests, national reporting and better understanding of sustainable forest management. These forums include approaches towards national reporting, co-sponsored by India and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland; criteria and indicators for sustainable forest management through the Helsinki, Montreal, Amazon and International Tropical Timber Organisation (ITTO) processes; the Intergovernmental Working Group on Forests, co-sponsored by Malaysia and Canada, to examine opportunities and options for action on forests; and the Global Forest Policy Dialogue co-sponsored by Indonesia and the Centre for International Forestry Research (CIFOR). However, the Commission calls for further attention to the cross-sectoral factors that are the underlying causes of deforestation and degradation of forests such as production and consumption patterns, poverty, population growth, insufficient environmental education and knowledge, terms of trade, discriminatory trade practices and unsustainable policies and practices related to such sectors as agriculture, energy and trade as well as forestry. In this regard, it stresses the need for addressing policy issues including the conservation, valuation and sustainable use of forests in an integrated and holistic manner. The Commission also considers that the potential role of voluntary certification schemes with regard to sustainable forest management, trade in forest products, and consumer education should be further studied, ensuring full transparency and participation of all interested parties.

202. The Commission considers that further actions are required to improve the conservation and sustainable management of existing forests, to restore degraded forests and, where possible, to create new forests, including plantations, in order to reduce pressure on natural forests, to increase wood supplies as well as to fulfil other production, protection and social functions of forests, through an integrated and multidisciplinary, people-oriented approach. In this regard, the Commission welcomes the Rome Statement on Forestry as adopted by the Meeting of Ministers Responsible for Forests, the first under the framework of FAO (Rome, 16 and 17 March 1995). The Commission notes that the Ministers fully assumed their sectoral responsibility for the forest-related provisions of Agenda 21 and expressed their political support for further enhancement of national capabilities and international co-operation and co-ordination, as well as for the formulation and implementation of appropriate policies required to meet the challenges in the field of forests.

203. The Commission urges Governments and interested organisations and groups to mobilise financial resources, including the provision of new and additional resources, and the transfer of environmentally sound technology on favourable terms as mutually agreed for full and effective implementation of the Non-legally Binding Authoritative Statement of Principles for a Global Consensus on the Management, Conservation and Development of All Types of Forests (Forest Principles) and chapter 11 of Agenda 21.

204. The Commission considers further concrete actions, on the management, conservation and sustainable development of forests, particularly by Governments, to be an urgent priority. It stresses the need to further assess actions already undertaken to combat deforestation and forest degradation and to promote management, conservation and sustainable development of all types of forests, including environmental and socio-economic impacts; and against that background, to propose options for further action. In order to pursue consensus and formulation of co-ordinated proposals for such action, the Commission decides to establish an open-ended ad hoc Intergovernmental Panel on

Forests, under its aegis, to work in an open, transparent and participatory manner. The mandate, modalities for the establishment, and terms of reference for the proposed Panel are given in Annex I below.

Annex I

COMMISSION ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT OPEN-ENDED INTERGOVERNMENTAL PANEL ON FORESTS

I. OBJECTIVE

1. The Ad Hoc Inter-sessional Working Group on Sectoral Issues met in New York from 27 February to 3 March 1995, and recommended that at its third session in April 1995, the Commission on Sustainable Development establish, under its aegis, an open-ended ad hoc Intergovernmental Panel on Forests (to be referred to hereinafter as the "Panel"). The recent Rome Meeting of Ministers Responsible for Forests welcomed such a proposal.
2. The Commission considers further concrete actions on the management, conservation, and sustainable development of forests, particularly by Governments, to be an urgent priority. It stresses the need to further assess action already undertaken to combat deforestation and forest degradation and to promote management, conservation and sustainable development of all types of forests, including environmental and socio-economic impacts; and against that background to propose options for further actions. In order to pursue consensus and formulation of co-ordinated proposals for action, the Commission decides to establish an open-ended ad hoc Intergovernmental Panel on Forests, under its aegis, to work in an open, transparent and participatory manner.
3. The Panel should promote multidisciplinary action at the international level consistent with the Non-legally Binding Authoritative Statement of Principles for a Global Consensus on the Management, Conservation and Sustainable Development of All Types of Forests (Forest Principles), adopted by the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development. The Commission recognises the sovereignty of countries over their natural resources, as set forth in principle 1 (a) of the Forest Principles. The Commission also recognises that the right to development must be fulfilled so as to equitably meet the developmental and environmental needs of present and future generations.

II. ISSUES FOR PRIORITY ACTION

1. The issues for priority action should include the following elements, which are derived from the Forest Principles and chapter 11 of Agenda 21, and which take into account subsequent international initiatives related to forests, including the report of the ad hoc Inter-sessional Working Group on Sectoral Issues of the Commission on Sustainable Development and the Rome Statement on Forestry, 16 and 17 March 1995. In pursuing consensus and formulation of co-ordinated proposals for action, the Panel should consider the following main interrelated categories of issues:

- (a) Implementation of United Nations Conference on Environment and Development decisions related to forests at the national and international level including an examination of sectoral and cross-sectoral linkages;
- (b) International co-operation in financial assistance and technology transfer;
- (c) Scientific research, forest assessment and development of criteria and indicators for sustainable forest management;

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- (d) Trade and environment relating to forest products and services;
- (e) International organisations and multilateral institutions and instruments including appropriate legal mechanisms.

III. PROGRAMME OF WORK

I

1. Consider actions to promote progress through national forests and land- use plans and programmes in implementing the Forest Principles and chapter 11 and other chapters related to forests in Agenda 21, through an open, transparent and participatory process involving Governments and all interested parties, including major groups, particularly indigenous people and local communities.
2. Identify and consider ways to address the underlying causes of deforestation, forest degradation and the difficulties in implementing sustainable forest management, with particular attention to cross-sectoral factors, including the impact on and from forests, at the national and international levels, such as consumption and production patterns, poverty, population growth, pollution, terms of trade, discriminatory trade practices and unsustainable policies related to sectors such as agriculture, energy and trade.
3. Consistent with the terms of the Convention on Biological Diversity, encourage countries to consider ways and means for the effective protection and use of traditional forest-related knowledge, innovations and practices of forest dwellers, indigenous people and other local communities, as well as fair and equitable sharing of benefits arising from such knowledge, innovations and practices.
4. Monitor actions to support afforestation, reforestation and the restoration of forest systems, where appropriate, particularly in countries with fragile ecosystems and affected by desertification and/or drought, particularly in Africa. Within this context, also consider specific actions in countries whose forests are affected by pollution, particularly those with economies in transition in central and eastern Europe.
5. Propose measures to address the needs and requirements of developing countries and other countries with low forest cover in order to promote the activities aimed at conserving the existing coverage, with particular attention to the unique types of forests.

II

1. Explore ways of improving the efficiency and co-ordination of bilateral and multilateral assistance; and consider ways to address the critical areas relating to the transfer and development of environmentally sound technology on favourable terms as mutually agreed and the mobilisation of financial resources, including the provision of new and additional resources with a view to assisting developing countries to pursue policies and comprehensive strategies for achieving sustainable forest management, recalling principles 10 and 11 of the Non-legally Binding Authoritative Statement of Principles for a Global Consensus on the Management, Conservation and Sustainable Development of All Types of Forests, and the Rome Statement on Forestry, agreed by Ministers Responsible for Forests in March 1995.

III

1. Review existing periodic assessment of forests, including relevant socio-economic and environmental factors, at the global level; identify shortfalls in present assessments relative to policy considerations; and recommend practical ways of improving such assessments. Examine ways to broaden the scientific knowledge and the statistical database available in order to better understand the ecological, economic, cultural and social functions performed by all types of forests. Promote the further development of methodologies for properly valuing the multiple benefits derived from forests in the form of goods and services, and subsequently to consider their inclusion within the systems of national accounting, drawing upon work that has been already undertaken by the United Nations and other relevant organisations.

2. Encourage national implementation of criteria and indicators for sustainable forest management and study the feasibility of further developing internationally agreed upon criteria and indicators against which progress towards sustainable forest management of all types of forests could be measured, taking into account the specific regional and subregional conditions of forests and the diversity of economic, social and cultural environments. Within this context, facilitate the engagement of regions and countries not yet involved in developing criteria and indicators of sustainable forest management; share experiences in testing and implementing them; and examine the need to promote comparability and the appropriateness of convergence among international initiatives in this regard.

IV

1. Examine relevant factors affecting trade in forest products and other forest-and-trade issues in an integrated and holistic approach that promotes a supportive relationship between trade and environment. In this connection, identify opportunities and recommend measures for improving market access for forest products on a non-discriminatory basis and consider factors that may distort trade in forest products and affect their value, including pricing, import/export controls, subsidies and the need to remove unilateral bans and boycotts inconsistent with the rules of the international trade system. Promote the development of methodologies to advance the full valuation, including replacement and environmental costs, of forest goods and services, with a view to promoting full cost internalization. Taking account of the interests of all sectors and particularities of different countries and ensuring full transparency and participation of all interested parties, examine the issue of voluntary certification and labelling of forest products so as to contribute to a better understanding of the role of voluntary certification with regard to the sustainable management of forests, including the impact of certification on developing countries.

V

1. Develop a clearer view of the work being carried out by international organisations and multilateral institutions and under existing instruments as appropriate, including the Convention on Biological Diversity, the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, particularly in Africa, the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) and the International Tropical Timber Agreement (ITTA) in forest-related issues, including United Nations Conference on Environment and Development decisions related to forests, and the institutional linkages emanating therefrom, in order to identify any gaps, and areas requiring enhancement, as well as any areas of duplication.

2. In the light of issues I-V.1 above, based on consensus-building in a step-by-step process, consider and advise on the need, or otherwise, for other instruments or arrangements in further implementation of the Forest Principles, including appropriate legal arrangements and mechanisms covering all types of forests.

IV. PANEL COMPOSITION, ORGANISATION AND CONDUCT OF WORK

1. The Commission on Sustainable Development recommends that the Panel should be an open-ended intergovernmental body. The Panel shall be composed of representatives from Governments. The European Community shall be entitled to participate in the same manner as under the Economic and Social Council decision as to its status in the Commission on Sustainable Development. Intergovernmental organisations and the full range of non-governmental organisations and other groups would participate as observers in the Panel, on an open-ended and fully participatory basis.
2. The Panel should draw particularly on the resources and technical expertise of relevant organisations, including FAO, UNEP, UNDP, the World Bank, ITTO and other relevant organisations within and outside the United Nations system as well as secretariats of relevant conventions, with appropriate contributions of non-governmental organisations.
3. The Panel will submit a progress report to the fourth session of the Commission on Sustainable Development in 1996 and its final conclusions, recommendations and proposals for action to the Commission on Sustainable Development's fifth session in 1997. At its first session, which should be held as soon as practicable in 1995, the Panel will consider the need for dividing its tasks among appropriate subgroups, as decided. At this session, the Panel will also resolve pending issues on the modalities of work, including election and designation of office-holders. The Panel should seek inputs of major groups in all activities in its programme of work.

V. SECRETARIAT AND FINANCIAL SUPPORT TO THE PANEL

1. The ultimate responsibility for the process and product of the Panel will reside with the Panel itself. Secretariat support should be provided by a small team under the Department for Policy Co-ordination and Sustainable Development of the United Nations Secretariat, possibly co-ordinated by a temporary direct hire, assuming the availability of funds and with the secondment of relevant personnel from the United Nations system and other organisations, where relevant, particularly FAO as task manager for chapter 11 of Agenda 21 in the United Nations system, UNEP, UNDP and ITTO. The secretariat would relay tasks from the Panel to appropriate organisations, develop and maintain an effective communication system between the Panel and organisations, and undertake logistic meeting preparations and document dissemination. Under the direction of the Panel, the secretariat would also facilitate co-ordination of work undertaken.
2. Operation of the panel will require funding to support meetings and participation by developing country representatives and major groups from developing countries. In addition to drawing on existing resources where efficient, the following sources of funding should be considered:
 - (a) Voluntary extrabudgetary contributions from Governments and international organisations to support the work of the Panel;
 - (b) Secondments from international organisations;
 - (c) In-kind contributions from countries and international organisations, including hosting meetings.
3. To ensure quick start-up of the Panel, interested Governments and organisations are encouraged to make early voluntary contributions. As far as possible, support from the United Nations

system should be derived from the reallocation of resources within existing budgets of United Nations bodies in order to respond to high-priority activities.

Annex II

PROGRAMME BUDGET IMPLICATIONS OF RECOMMENDATIONS CONTAINED IN THE DRAFT REPORT OF THE COMMISSION AT ITS THIRD SESSION

1. Under the terms of paragraph 204 of chapter I of the report of the Commission on its third session, the Commission decides to establish an open-ended ad hoc Intergovernmental Panel on Forests, under its aegis, to work in an open, transparent and participatory manner.

2. Following the review of the mandate, modalities and terms of reference of the Panel as outlined in Annex I to section D.5 above and relating consultations, it is assumed that the Panel would have one session in 1995, two sessions in 1996 and one session in 1997 of one week duration each. The substantive support to the Panel would be provided by the Department for Policy Co-ordination and Sustainable Development of the United Nations Secretariat and would be equivalent to 24 Professional and 24 General Service work-months per year (12 Professional and 12 General Service work-months in 1995), to be financed from extrabudgetary resources. The conference-servicing would be provided in all official languages of the United Nations.

3. On the basis of the above assumptions, the costs of the activities would be as follows:

	1995 \$	1996-1997 \$
Travel of members of the Commission to the Panel	132 500	636 000
Substantive support	314 900	682 800
Conference-servicing requirements	320 600	998 700

4. Should the Economic and Social Council adopt the recommendation of the Commission, the costs relating to attendance of the Commission's members at the Panel's session in 1995 (\$132,500) would be financed from the 1994-1995 appropriation approved for the Commission's activities. The relating costs for 1996-1997 (\$636,000) represent additional requirements under section 7A of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1996-1997. This requirement would be dealt with in accordance with the procedure for use and operation of the contingency fund established by General Assembly resolution 42/211.

5. The conference-servicing requirements for the meetings (\$320,600 for 1995 and \$998,700 for 1996-1997) will be dealt with within the overall provisions for conference-servicing of United Nations meetings and conferences, reserved in the programme budget for those periods respectively. The actual conference-servicing costs of the meetings will be reported to the General Assembly within the context of the budget performance reports.

6. Extrabudgetary funds will be sought to meet the requirements for substantive support and servicing of the Panel by the Department for Policy Co-ordination and Sustainable Development of the United Nations Secretariat (\$314,900 in 1995 and \$682,800 in 1996-1997).

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6. Promoting sustainable agriculture and rural development

205. The Commission notes with concern that, even though some progress has been reported, disappointment is widely expressed at the slow progress in moving towards sustainable agriculture and rural development (SARD) in many countries.

206. The Commission recognises the need for further practical action to promote and enhance sustainable agriculture and rural development. Such action should aim at balancing the immediate need to increase food production and food security and to combat poverty, and the need to protect physical and biological resources. While the Commission recognises the potential of sustainable use of lands to enhance food production for local food security, it notes that the approach must also focus on the small farmers in marginal lands. This approach must lead to a productive sustainable agriculture which contributes to the social and economic vitality of rural areas and ensures balanced rural/urban development. In addition, traditional agriculture, which produces a substantial proportion of the world's food supply and which at the same time contributes to the protection of biodiversity, must be maintained and developed in a sustainable way.

207. There is a need for a deeper and wider understanding of various relations between the farmer and his and her environment at the household and community levels and of the biophysical processes that underlie the interactions between farming activities and the ecologies in which they take place. SARD objectives need to be pursued with the full and vigorous participation of rural people and their communities. The capacity of local Governments, with regard to decision-making and the implementation of economically viable, environmentally sound and socially equitable agricultural and rural development programmes and the participation of private sector, non-governmental organisations and farmers' organisations therein, needs to be enhanced.

208. The Commission recommends that FAO, the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM) and UNDP, together with national and local government agencies, and in co-operation with non-governmental and people's representative organisations, promote an exchange of experiences with participatory mechanisms, with a view to enhancing their effectiveness.

209. Sustainable agriculture and rural development must take place within the framework of an undistorted sectoral and economy-wide policy framework that fully integrates environmental considerations. In this context, the full implementation of the Final Act Embodying the Results of the Uruguay Round of Multilateral Trade Negotiations is an important step contributing to liberalising international trade in agriculture. In particular, the reforms to achieve substantial and progressive reduction in the support and protection of agriculture, in accordance with the Uruguay Round agreement covering internal regimes, market access and export subsidies, are ongoing. With a view to promoting sustainable development, non-trade concerns such as economic, social, food security and environmental impact of trade policies, including trade liberalisation, should be monitored and evaluated, especially taking into account their impact on developing countries, in particular the least developed countries and the net food-importing developing countries. Such monitoring and evaluation should be done in consultation with major groups.

210. The Commission requests FAO, within existing resources, in collaboration with UNCTAD, the World Trade Organisation, UNDP, UNEP and other relevant organisations, to analyse the implications for SARD of the Final Act Embodying the Results of the Uruguay Round of Multilateral Trade Negotiations at national, regional and international levels.

211. In this context, the Commission notes, taking into account the impact on and the socio-economic conditions in developing countries, in particular least developed countries and net food-importing developing countries, the importance of a comprehensive examination of the environmental consequences of the use of agricultural practices and policies, including agricultural subsidies, in all countries and their impact on sustainable agricultural and rural development.

212. The Commission notes that the absence of sufficiently comprehensive indicators hampers the effective monitoring of progress. In this regard, the Commission stresses the importance of developing appropriate internationally agreed agri-environmental criteria and indicators applicable to developed and developing country situations in order to monitor the status of and progress towards SARD, with the full and effective participation of developing countries, reflecting their specific conditions and priority needs. Such indicators should cover environmental, economic, social and cultural dimensions. In developing such criteria and indicators, account should be taken of ongoing work at the national level.

213. The achievement of the multiple objectives related to sustainable agriculture and rural development requires a whole-system approach that recognises that it is not possible to focus on agricultural activities alone. There is a need to incorporate other aspects such as land-use planning and community development. In this regard, consideration should be given to increasing farmers' capacity to assume activities such as marketing and processing. This could involve more efficient allocation and use of resources; a move from policy-induced surpluses in developed countries; an international economic environment more supportive of the implementation of policies aimed at the achievement of sustainable agricultural and rural development; more predictable market access and export earnings; making credit available for enhancing production; provision of technical and financial assistance to support developing countries, in particular least developed countries and net food-importing developing countries so as to improve their agricultural productivity and infrastructure; and taking advantage of the trading environment emerging from the Uruguay Round. Such microeconomic development would ensure the revitalisation of rural economies and the strengthening of rural communities. There is also a need to change attitudes and take concrete steps towards adopting sustainable agricultural policies and practices in order to enhance that process. The Commission urges Governments, with the support of the international community and non-governmental organisations, to work out their own comprehensive agricultural policies and programmes that take full account of environmental concerns and capacity-building, including strengthening farmers' organisations.

214. The Commission notes the need to promote in all countries sustainable agriculture and ecological farming practices and supportive strategic, problem-solving agricultural research, including the acquisition of technological information. The Commission urges support for research and technology development through strengthening institutional arrangements, such as national research institutions and extension and education systems, developing regional co-operative networks, including those of farmers and other rural producers where locally appropriate, and enhancing support of and from the Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research (CGIAR) system. This support should encourage and reward the active involvement of farmers and fieldworkers and their innovations so as to recognise their role as developers of technology through informal research. Research priorities should be established in consultation with farmers and their representative organisations, to ensure that the issues related to resources-poor farmers, living in arid and dry sub-humid areas and amid degraded soils, and to women are integrated.

215. Agricultural research programmes should focus on developing location-specific technologies for farming systems so as to encompass not only the whole range of annual crops, including horticulture, but also livestock management and household production and processing systems,

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appropriate low- cost soil and water conservation practices, and yield optimisation strategies combining appropriate low-cost inputs with time-tested local and high-yielding new varieties having biotic and abiotic resistance, as well as on the use of organic and ecological farming methods, and integrated pest management (IPM).

216. The Commission encourages Governments to integrate action on energy into their efforts for sustainable agriculture and rural development, paying particular attention to the use of energy for electrification, heating and other purposes, by means of renewable and other forms of energy.

217. The Commission urges Governments to support and facilitate efforts of interested developing countries in their transition towards the sustainable use of an appropriate mix of fossil and renewable sources of energy for rural communities, taking note of the recommendations made by the Committee on New and Renewable Sources of Energy and on Energy for Development, at its special session in February 1995.

218. The Commission notes with concern that attention to and progress in the area of animal genetic resources have not been commensurate with those related to plant genetic resources. The Commission urges that national and international action be strengthened with the objective of bringing international co-operation and support for the conservation and sustainable use of animal genetic resources to a level similar to that of ongoing initiatives concerning plant genetic resources.

219. The Commission notes with appreciation the efforts of the organisations within and outside the United Nations system in terms of co-ordination and co-operation concerning activities related to sustainable agriculture and rural development. The Commission urges that such efforts be further strengthened. FAO's Integrated Co-operative Programme Framework for Sustainable Agriculture and Rural Development (ICPF/SARD) and its component Special Action Programmes provide a useful vehicle for bringing together the initiatives of different development partners.

220. The Commission notes the progress that has been made by both developing and developed countries that have adopted policies of pesticide use reduction as a means of moving towards sustainable agriculture. The Commission recommends that all countries take steps to reduce the environmental impact of pesticide use by promoting IPM as an alternative to exclusive reliance on chemical pesticides. The Commission further invites FAO, in collaboration with UNEP, UNDP, the World Bank, the CGIAR centres and other interested organisations, to strengthen and extend to a wider number of countries its ongoing programmes and projects for sustainable land and water management in agriculture, integrated pest management and integrated plant nutrition management, with participation of major groups.

221. The Commission recommends that, under the auspices of FAO as task manager and building on a partnership between Governments, intergovernmental agencies and agricultural research institutions, and non-governmental and farmers organisations, drawing on successful examples of SARD, there should be a synthesis and exchange of information and practical experience with a view to identifying models that could be applied in other situations. Such an exchange could be through the holding of sub-regional or regional workshops, the results of which would be widely disseminated.

7. Conservation of biological diversity

222. The Commission reaffirms the importance of the conservation of biological diversity and the sustainable use of its components, including marine and coastal ecosystems. It recognises that the Convention on Biological Diversity provides the principal mechanism for advancing these objectives

and notes with appreciation the statement presented by the President of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention.

223. The Commission notes the successful outcome of the first session of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity, in Nassau, the Bahamas, in 1994. It welcomes the adoption by the Conference of the Parties of a medium-term programme of work that reflects a balance among the Convention's three objectives: conservation of biological diversity, sustainable use of its components, and fair and equitable sharing of the benefits arising out of the utilisation of genetic resources. The Commission also welcomes the prompt establishment under the Conference of the Parties of the Subsidiary Body for Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice and the rapid action towards the development of a clearing-house to promote and facilitate technical and scientific co-operation.

224. Furthermore, the Commission welcomes the invitation by the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity to participate in a dialogue on biodiversity and forests and recognises the crucial role of conservation and sustainable management of all types of forests for maintaining the biological diversity of the whole planet, as well as the role of biological diversity for the integrity and functioning of forest ecosystems. The Commission emphasises that biological diversity is of essential importance for the ecosystem functions of forests and further recognises the role of conservation, management and sustainable use of forests for achieving the objectives of the Convention and welcomes future contributions of the Conference of the Parties to this end.

225. The Commission welcomes the activities to date undertaken within the United Nations system as well as the active participation of non-governmental organisations in the post-United Nations Conference on Environment and Development process.

226. The Commission stresses that the conservation of biological diversity and the sustainable use of its components cut across a wide spectrum of sectoral and cross-sectoral issues addressed in Agenda 21. The underlying motivation for conserving biological diversity and using its components sustainably is based on its significance for the integrity and functioning of the life-supporting ecosystems, and this is deeply rooted in concerns for the well-being and sustainable development of humankind, embracing such issues as ecosystem services, food security, poverty and the traditional knowledge, innovations and practices of indigenous people and local communities.

227. The Commission recognises that, as provided for in Article 20.4 of the Convention, the extent to which developing-country parties will effectively implement their commitments under the Convention will depend on the effective implementation by developed-country parties of their commitments under the Convention related to financial resources and transfer of technology.

228. The Commission notes the decision of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity to include in its medium-term Programme, inter alia, consideration of the knowledge, innovations and practices of indigenous and local communities.

229. The Commission notes that the restructured and replenished Global Environment Facility (GEF) will continue on an interim basis as the entity entrusted with the operation of the financial mechanisms of the Convention on Biological Diversity and the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. The Commission emphasises the importance of a speedy implementation of these commitments and the other responsibilities of GEF and recalls its 1994 decision in which it stated that the first replenishment of the restructured GEF was a first step at a minimum level and that there would be a need for further replenishment of its funds as the

implementation of commitments under the various agreements and objectives envisaged for the Facility proceeded.

230. The Commission, stressing that these activities have to be implemented through the Convention:

- (a) Urges the Governments that have not yet done so to ratify, accede to and begin implementing the Convention on Biological Diversity;
- (b) Urges the international community to support efforts aimed at capacity-building as well as human resource development, and at the transfer of technology to developing countries for the conservation of biodiversity, including through in situ and ex situ conservation, and the sustainable use of its components, and also urges each country to take legislative, administrative or policy measures, as appropriate, with the aim of having the private sector facilitate access to joint development of technology, in accordance with Article 16.4 of the Convention;
- (c) Encourages the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity, in collaboration with relevant organisations, to explore means for co-ordinating relevant global and regional agreements related to the Convention on Biological Diversity and establishing effective co-operation mechanisms;
- (d) Urges Governments to integrate actions geared to conserving biodiversity and the sustainable utilisation of its components and to promote sustainable development, inter alia, through integrated action plans and sectoral strategies, particularly in forests, agriculture, living marine resources, rural development and land use, and to monitor the implementation and reporting of progress made;
- (e) Also urges Governments to promote the fair and equitable sharing of the benefits accruing from the utilisation of biological resources, in accordance with the provisions of the Convention on Biological Diversity;
- (f) Calls upon multilateral organisations, other intergovernmental organisations and non-governmental organisations to cooperate with the Convention on Biological Diversity and Governments in developing co-ordinating mechanisms based on national plans and programmes in accordance with the provisions of the Convention so as to ensure the effective implementation of the Convention and other related agreements;
- (g) Welcomes the decision of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention to establish the clearing-house mechanism of the Convention, and urges Governments and intergovernmental, as well as non-governmental organisations, to collect, analyse and disseminate more reliable and adequate data for measuring achievements at the national, regional and global levels;
- (h) Calls upon Governments, and multilateral and other intergovernmental organisations to make full use of existing knowledge and to further improve understanding of biodiversity in sustainable development;
- (i) Calls upon the international community to make efforts to develop economic mechanisms for determining the costs and benefits of the conservation of biological diversity and sustainable use of its components, and upon Governments in accordance with their national plans, policies and programmes to consider and undertake policies aimed at the effective implementation of the objectives of chapter 15 of Agenda 21;

(j) Welcomes the decision of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity to include in its medium-term programme, inter alia, consideration of the knowledge, innovations and practices of indigenous and local communities; takes note of the statement of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention (E/CN.17/1995/27, Annex) and notes that it would also be desirable that future work on the protection of traditional knowledge and practices of indigenous and local communities relevant to conservation and sustainable use be co-ordinated with the relevant bodies; and welcomes the progress made in revising the International Undertaking on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture which relates to outstanding matters concerning plant genetic resources, including access to ex situ collections and the question of farmers' rights.