



SUMMARY OF THE FIFTH SESSION OF THE SUBSIDIARY BODY FOR SCIENTIFIC, TECHNICAL AND TECHNOLOGICAL ADVICE OF THE CONVENTION ON BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY:

31 JANUARY - 4 FEBRUARY 2000

The fifth session of the Subsidiary Body for Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice (SBSTTA-5) of the Convention on Biological Diversity met in Montreal, Canada, from 31 January - 4 February 2000. Over 430 participants, representing 130 governments, NGOs, the scientific community and indigenous peoples' organizations, attended the meeting.

SBSTTA-5 delegates met in two Working Groups. Working Group I considered: alien species; marine and coastal biological diversity, including coral bleaching; the programme of work for drylands, Mediterranean, arid, semi-arid, grassland and savannah biological diversity; and agricultural biological diversity. Working Group II discussed the ecosystem approach, development of biodiversity indicators, and sustainable use of the components of biological diversity. The Plenary reviewed cooperation with other bodies, the Global Taxonomy Initiative, the pilot phase of the Clearing-House Mechanism, guidelines for the second national reports, work programmes on inland waters and forest biological diversity, and rosters and terms of reference for *ad hoc* technical expert groups. The recommendations from SBSTTA-5 will be forwarded to the fifth Conference of the Parties (COP-5) to be held in Nairobi, Kenya, from 15-26 May 2000.

Despite the heavy agenda, most delegates were generally satisfied with the progress and efficiency of work during the week. Nevertheless, some expressed hope that future agendas would be more focused and allow discussion of key issues in greater depth. With work programmes under way or in formation for all of the CBD's ecosystem themes (forests, inland water, marine and coastal, agricultural and drylands biodiversity) as well as the proposed formation of expert groups, many thought that the Convention was finally reaching a more mature implementation stage. The challenge ahead is to maintain momentum on such a wide-ranging and ambitious agenda.

A BRIEF HISTORY OF SBSTTA AND THE CBD

The Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), negotiated under the auspices of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), entered into force on 29 December 1993. To date, 176 countries have become Parties to the Convention. 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. SBSTTA has convened four times, during which it has developed 35 recommendations for COP consideration.

COP-1: The first meeting of the Conference of the Parties 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 (CHM) and SBSTTA; and designation of the Global Environment Facility (GEF) as the interim institutional structure for the financial mechanism.

SBSTTA-1: SBSTTA-1 met from 4-8 September 1995 in Paris. Recommendations on the *modus operandi* of 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 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; contributions to the UN Food and Agriculture Orga-

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nization (FAO) meetings on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture; and technical aspects of the conservation and sustainable use of coastal and marine biodiversity.

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

SBSTTA-2: SBSTTA-2 met in Montreal, Canada, from 2-6 September 1996. Agenda items included: monitoring and assessment of biodiversity; approaches to taxonomy; economic valuation of biodiversity; access to genetic resources; agricultural biodiversity; terrestrial biodiversity; marine and coastal biodiversity; biosafety; and the CHM.

COP-3: COP-3 met in Buenos Aires, Argentina, from 4-15 November 1996. Delegates adopted: work programmes on agricultural and forest biodiversity; a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the GEF; an agreement to hold an intersessional workshop on traditional knowledge (Article 8(j)); a decision instructing the Executive Secretary to apply for observer status in the WTO Committee on Trade and Environment; and a statement from the CBD to the UN General Assembly's Special Session (UNGASS) to review implementation of Agenda 21.

SBSTTA-3: At its third meeting, held in Montreal from 1-5 September 1997, SBSTTA delegates considered the implementation of the pilot phase of the CHM and a progress report on the work of SBSTTA and the effectiveness of its advice. Additional decisions were adopted on: biodiversity in inland waters; marine and coastal biodiversity; agricultural biodiversity; forest biodiversity; and biodiversity indicators. SBSTTA-3 also adopted a recommendation on participation in SBSTTA by developing countries.

COP-4: The fourth COP met in Bratislava, Slovakia, from 4-15 May 1998. Delegates discussed agenda items on: inland water, marine and coastal, agricultural and forest biodiversity; the CHM; biosafety; implementation of Article 8(j); access to genetic resources and benefit-sharing; a review of the operations of the Convention; national reports; administrative and budgetary matters; and a review of the financial mechanism. A Ministerial Roundtable discussed integrating biodiversity concerns into sectoral activities, specifically tourism.

SBSTTA-4: During its fourth meeting in Montreal from 21-25 June 1999, SBSTTA-4 made recommendations on: the SBSTTA programme of work; the Global Taxonomy Initiative (GTI); principles to prevent the impact of alien species; control of plant gene expression; options for sustainable use of terrestrial biodiversity; incorporation of biodiversity into environmental impact assessments; and approaches and practices for the sustainable use of resources, including tourism. SBSTTA-4 reviewed the terms of reference of *ad hoc* technical expert groups, but deferred concluding a recommendation to SBSTTA-5.

ISOC-1: The first Intersessional Meeting on the Operations of the Convention (ISOC-1) took place in Montreal from 28-30 June 1999. It was convened on the basis of COP-4 Decision IV/16, which called for an open-ended meeting to consider possible arrangements to improve preparations for and conduct of COP meetings. ISOC also held preparatory discussions on: access to genetic resources and benefit-sharing, focusing on the Experts' Panel on Access and Benefit-Sharing, which met in October 1999; *ex situ* collections that were acquired prior to the

Convention's entry into force; and the relationship between intellectual property rights and the relevant provisions of the GATT Agreement on Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights and the CBD.

CARTAGENA PROTOCOL: The resumed session of the Extraordinary Meeting of the Conference of the Parties (ExCOP) for the Adoption of the Protocol on Biosafety to the Convention on Biological Diversity was held from 24-28 January 2000, in Montreal. Following four days of informal consultations and five days of formal negotiations, including late evening and early morning sessions, delegates adopted the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety. The Protocol addresses the safe transfer, handling and use of living modified organisms (LMOs) that may have an adverse effect on biodiversity with a specific focus on transboundary movements. It establishes an advance informed agreement procedure for imports of LMOs, incorporates the precautionary principle and details information and documentation requirements. The Protocol also contains provisions regarding documentation, confidential information and information-sharing, as well as for capacity-building and financial resources with special attention to the situation of developing countries and those without domestic regulatory systems.

SBSTTA-5 REPORT

SBSTTA-5 Chair Cristián Samper (Colombia) opened SBSTTA-5 on Monday morning, 31 January 2000, underlining the recently adopted Biosafety Protocol's importance. He noted that the next step for the CBD is to bridge the gap between science and politics, and outlined the major agenda items for the meeting. Delegates then heard opening statements, adopted the agenda and agreed on the organization of work.

Paul Chabeda, on behalf of UNEP Executive Director Klaus Töpfer, highlighted specific concerns, including: biodiversity loss and genetic erosion; conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity, especially regarding economic globalization; equitable benefit-sharing with attention to indigenous and local communities; and regional, national and local capacity-building. CBD Executive Secretary Hamdallah Zedan noted SBSTTA's responsibility to develop recommendations on the ecosystem approach, and highlighted the Norway/UN Conference on the Ecosystem Approach. He noted collaboration with the Convention to Combat Desertification (CCD) on preparing the background documents for drylands as an example for making use of potential synergies between environmental conventions.

Delegates adopted the provisional agenda (UNEP/CBD/SBSTTA/5/1) and annotated provisional agenda (UNEP/CBD/SBSTTA/5/1/Add.1), which contained the organization of work. Delegates agreed to establish two working groups, the first chaired by Mary Fosi (Cameroon) and the second by David Brackett (Canada), who was later replaced by John Herity (Canada). Jan Plesnick (Czech Republic) served as the SBSTTA-5 rapporteur.

Delegates discussed cooperation with other bodies, the GTI, inland water biodiversity, forest biodiversity, the CHM and guidelines for the second national reports in Plenary on Monday, Thursday and Friday.

On Tuesday, delegates also met in Plenary to hear presentations on sustainable use and the ecosystem approach. Karimou Ambouta (University of Niger) identified three conditions necessary to implement the concept of sustainable use: knowledge of existing potential; economic evaluation of biological resources; and capacity-building. He reported on the traditional use of the tree *Acacia albida* (*Faidhebia albida*) in the sahelian agro-ecosystems in Nigeria and Senegal. Daniel Janzen (University of Pennsylvania) spoke on the ecosystem approach and introduced the concept of the "gardenification of nature." He stressed the need to combine the traditional park conservation



approach (“save it”), the scientific approach (“know it”) and the commercial approach (“use it”). He advocated a place-based, adaptive management strategy, incorporating decentralization, local education and empowerment, and emphasized that ecosystem and biodiversity services be considered products with commercial value.

In Plenary on Wednesday, regional groups presented their nominations for the SBSTTA Bureau. Delegates elected Raed Bani Hani (Jordan), Omar Ramirez Tejada (Dominican Republic), Anastasios Legakis (Greece) and Koffi Edinam Dantsey (Togo), and re-elected Jan Plesnick (Czech Republic). David Brackett (Canada), Mary Fosi (Cameroon), Dimitri Pavlov (Russian Federation), Cristián Samper (Colombia) and Uilou Samate (Tonga) will remain in office as Bureau members.

In Thursday’s Plenary, delegates adopted final recommendations on cooperation with other bodies and the CHM.

The Working Groups met from Tuesday to Thursday. Working Group I considered: the programme of work for drylands, Mediterranean, arid, semi-arid, grassland and savannah biodiversity; agricultural biodiversity; alien species; and marine and coastal biodiversity, including coral bleaching. Working Group II discussed: the ecosystem approach; development of biodiversity indicators; and sustainable use of the components of biodiversity. Delegates adopted recommendations, with some directed to the Executive Secretary and the others to be considered at COP-5. The following report summarizes discussions on each issue on the SBSTTA agenda and the recommendations that were adopted.

PLENARY

COOPERATION WITH OTHER BODIES: During Monday’s Plenary session, the Secretariat introduced the background note on cooperation with other bodies (UNEP/CBD/SBSTTA/5/2). The FAO summarized its relevant programmes and stressed cooperation with the CBD in areas of agriculture. UNESCO stressed the links between cultural and biological diversity, and noted ongoing work related to the SBSTTA-5 agenda. The CONVENTION TO COMBAT DESERTIFICATION (CCD) noted a memorandum of understanding with the CBD Secretariat and highlighted relations between desertification, biodiversity and climate change. The RAMSAR CONVENTION highlighted the second version of the joint work plan on inland water ecosystems developed with the CBD Secretariat, noting that such collaboration could be a model. DIVERSITAS stressed the importance of investigating the interrelationship between the ecosystem functions of inland waters and biodiversity. The NETHERLANDS noted the need for cooperation with the IUCN Commission on Education and Communication, and the Oslo and Paris Conventions on marine and coastal biodiversity. Regarding the Global Biodiversity Information Facility (GBIF), some countries expressed concern about ensuring participation of developing countries and stressed the need for wider transparency and availability of information. NORWAY, supported by BRAZIL, MEXICO and PERU, suggested increased cooperation with the Millennium Assessment of Global Ecosystems.

In Plenary on Wednesday, Chair Samper invited delegates to consider a Chair’s draft recommendation. NORWAY suggested exploring ways of collaboration with the Millennium Assessment, and proposed reference to the International Biodiversity Observation Year (IBOY). SWITZERLAND proposed mentioning the Global Biodiversity Assessment, and the UNFCCC and Kyoto Protocol within the context of forest biodiversity. The SEYCHELLES then asked for specific reference to coral reefs. SLOVENIA suggested reference to the joint work plan with the Ramsar Convention. Chair Samper called interested Parties to consult on a draft recommendation.

Recommendation: In Thursday’s Plenary, Chair Samper introduced the final recommendation (UNEP/CBD/SBSTTA/5/L.2), which was adopted. The recommendation contains provisions requesting the Executive Secretary to liaise with the Interim Steering Committees of the Millennium Assessment and GBIF. It recommends that the COP invite the Executive Secretary to strengthen cooperation with the UNFCCC regarding forest biodiversity and coral reefs. It also recommends that the COP should decide on action regarding the Millennium Assessment and request the Executive Secretary to find ways of collaborating with UNESCO on the issue of science and public awareness. It further recommends that the COP note the IBOY and endorse the joint work plan with the Ramsar Convention.

GLOBAL TAXONOMY INITIATIVE: On Monday, delegates considered the background document (UNEP/CBD/SBSTTA/5/4) on the Global Taxonomy Initiative. On the coordination structure, SWEDEN supported efficient use of existing structures, such as the CHM, and stressed that new administration should be minimized. BRAZIL noted the need for further clarification of the GTI’s coordination structure. ZIMBABWE requested the involvement of sustainable use and conservation groups. INDIA suggested establishing ways and means to support national initiatives. NORWAY said methods must be established to sustain funding for taxonomic projects run by local institutions. ARGENTINA requested greater clarity on national strategies. GHANA said taxonomic initiatives could attract students and create jobs. The NETHERLANDS noted that the strategic plan should not promote a stand-alone approach. BRAZIL said that GTI implementation should be oriented to capacity-building, access to information and information repatriation.

On Thursday, Chair Samper introduced a draft recommendation. The UK requested reference to assessing national and regional taxonomic needs, as well as submission of projects and initiatives for consideration as pilot projects, to the Executive Secretary and the GTI coordination mechanism. SWEDEN requested the Executive Secretary to facilitate the formulation of projects to meet identified needs. Regarding capacity-building in developing countries, MALAWI suggested including cooperation with national, regional and global taxonomic centers. NORWAY requested that the GTI coordination mechanism work closely with the CHM, and that national taxonomic focal points and national focal points be linked. SWEDEN offered support for two regional meetings in Africa and Central America. NEW ZEALAND requested that the Executive Secretary develop terms of reference for the GTI coordination mechanism for COP-5 consideration. The changes were accepted.

Recommendation: During the closing Plenary, delegates adopted the recommendation on the review of the GTI (UNEP/CBD/SBSTTA/5/L.7), which establishes a GTI coordination mechanism to facilitate international cooperation under the GTI. The recommendation urges Parties to: identify national and regional priorities; assess and build national taxonomic capacity; establish regional centers; and designate a GTI focal point. The recommendation also requests the Executive Secretary to: draft a GTI work plan; initiate short term activities; synthesize findings from previous meetings; and develop terms of reference for the GTI coordination mechanism for COP-5 consideration.

INLAND WATER BIODIVERSITY: On Monday, the Secretariat introduced the background document on inland water biodiversity (UNEP/CBD/SBSTTA/5/6), which notes intersessional activities and work with the Ramsar Convention. Most countries supported the proposed “Joint Work Plan 2000 – 2001 of the CBD and the Convention on Wetlands (Ramsar)” (UNEP/CBD/SBSTTA/5/INF/12). The NETHERLANDS said the work plan was a role model for other themes and, supported by several other countries, stressed the need to



cooperate with relevant international bodies on inland water biodiversity. SLOVENIA stressed the linkage with the Jakarta Mandate. IRAN highlighted Ramsar activity on a strategic framework and guidelines for a list of wetlands of international importance. ECUADOR expressed concern that public awareness was not considered in the proposed work plan. The US called for collaboration with NGOs and academic institutions and, based on its own experience, strongly recommended incorporating inland water biodiversity in development programmes and water projects. The GLOBAL ENVIRONMENT CENTRE said that the ecosystem approach and biodiversity should be integrated into river basin management.

In Thursday's discussions of the draft recommendation, delegates focused on the endorsement of the joint work plan with the Ramsar Convention. ZIMBABWE and the SEYCHELLES objected to a reference to Ramsar-defined sites for implementing work programmes on inland water and marine and coastal biodiversity, as it prejudices those States that are not a Party to the Ramsar Convention. The text was deleted, but the work plan endorsed.

Recommendation: Friday's Plenary adopted the recommendation (UNEP/CBD/SBSTTA/5/L.8), which endorses the joint work plan between the CBD and the Ramsar Convention. It also requests the COP to: encourage Parties to address lack of information on the status of inland water biodiversity; request the Executive Secretary to systematically compile information on the implementation of the programme of work and to report at SBSTTA-8; and invite other organizations to contribute to the assessment of inland water biodiversity.

FOREST BIODIVERSITY: In Monday's Plenary, the Secretariat introduced the background document on forest biodiversity (UNEP/CBD/SBSTTA/5/8). A number of countries expressed concern over the lack of progress, especially in the area of joint activities. Others supported formation of an *ad hoc* expert group on forest biodiversity. NORWAY recommended that Parties, international forest organizations and other bodies present case studies and use national reports to inform the work programme. JAPAN and BURKINA FASO stressed avoiding duplication of work, and NEW ZEALAND suggested conducting a gap analysis of ongoing work. Several countries, including NEW ZEALAND, BRAZIL, BANGLADESH and MALI, addressed the issue of plantations. MALI and HAITI requested an examination of the root causes of forest biodiversity loss. TURKEY and SWITZERLAND called for attention to forest management outside of protected areas. INDIA stressed that indicators should be used as national benchmark tools and suggested documenting case studies of local government and grassroots forest management. FINLAND recognized the need to assist SBSTTA and the Secretariat to complete work on status, trends and options, and called for better use of national reporting. The US noted that preliminary work on status and trends provides a useful framework for a more detailed assessment. ARGENTINA noted ongoing work under the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) and recommended future collaboration. SWITZERLAND stressed the need to look at biodiversity criteria for carbon sequestration projects. Chair Samper then developed a draft recommendation based on the discussions.

During Friday's Plenary, Chair Samper called for comments on the draft recommendation (UNEP/CBD/SBSTTA/5/CRP.5). With regard to implementing the work programme, FINLAND requested noting all types of forests. BRAZIL requested reference to considering the outcomes of the fourth session of the Intergovernmental Forum on Forests (IFF) when reconsidering the CBD's forest work programme. Regarding cooperation with other international bodies, namely the UNFCCC and the IPCC, AUSTRALIA requested adding reference to the Ramsar Convention. GERMANY requested that an assessment of

status and trends include gaps and priority actions to address threats to forest biodiversity. At Chair Samper's suggestion, the Plenary then adopted the recommendation with those amendments.

Recommendation: The final recommendation (UNEP/CBD/SBSTTA/5/CRP.5) contains elements urging Parties to advance implementation of the work programme and to consider expanding its focus beyond research to practical action, while taking into consideration the results of the IFF's fourth session. It recommends that the COP establish an *ad hoc* technical expert group on forest biodiversity with a mandate extending to SBSTTA-7. It requests Parties and other relevant organizations to provide information, including case studies, relevant to the work programme's implementation. Finally, it requests the Executive Secretary to liaise with the FAO and other bodies on the issue of status and trends, including gaps and priority action, as well as with the UNFCCC and the IPCC on integrating forest biodiversity concerns into future UNFCCC activities on forests and carbon sequestration.

PILOT PHASE OF THE CLEARING-HOUSE MECHANISM: On Monday, the Secretariat introduced the CHM background document (UNEP/CBD/SBSTTA/5/3) and additional information documents on: the review of the pilot-phase (UNEP/CBD/SBSTTA/5/INF/1), the CHM's strategic plan (UNEP/CBD/SBSTTA/5/INF/2), the CHM's longer-term programme of work (UNEP/CBD/SBSTTA/5/INF/3) and a list of national focal points of the CHM (UNEP/CBD/SBSTTA/5/INF/4). Delegates considered guidance for the CHM's development provided by the relevant COP decisions, the Informal Advisory Committee (IAC), and regional workshops, as well as expert meetings held to define national and regional information needs and priorities. Delegates also addressed synergies with related initiatives, such as the information management mechanisms of other biodiversity-related conventions, the GBIF of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), and BICS, a consortium of international NGOs and regional and thematic initiatives. The discussions also reflected on possibilities for joint and integrated approaches to information management with the UNFCCC, CCD and other biodiversity-related conventions.

Guy Rochon (Canada), Chair of the IAC, offered possible additions to the recommendations on, *inter alia*: standardization issues; criteria definition; strategic priorities; linkages with existing information networks; and identification of funding for capacity-building. These suggestions were generally supported by BRAZIL, COLOMBIA, COSTA RICA and the US. Many delegations, including NORWAY and ZIMBABWE, stressed the need for adequate financial support from the financial mechanism for the implementation of the CHM's longer-term programme of work, and called for language addressing Parties' obligations to provide technical assistance for developing countries. Some noted that the CHM has paid little attention to the specific needs of developing countries to date, and that resources should be devoted to technical assistance tailored for their specific needs. NEW ZEALAND requested an increased focus on partnering with Parties to develop better information management approaches. ITALY and SWITZERLAND underlined that the CHM should include all stakeholders in its scope. SWITZERLAND said that the scope of information should also cover the national decision-making process and problems encountered in implementation. The EC stressed links with NGOs holding databases and the role of the general public. The Chair established an informal working group to develop draft text for a recommendation.

On Wednesday, delegates considered the Chair's draft recommendation, resulting from discussions of the informal working group. NEW ZEALAND stated that the IAC should not be open-ended and that its terms of reference and duration should be clarified by COP-5.



Responding to the NETHERLANDS' requested deletion of a reference to repatriation of information through the CHM, NORWAY stated that the intent was to facilitate access to information and not necessarily to components of biodiversity. Chair Samper consulted with a small group to clarify existing language.

Recommendation: The final draft recommendation (UNEP/CBD/SBSTTA/5/L.3), submitted to Plenary on Thursday, was adopted without major changes. It acknowledges the contributions provided by the IAC and the progress made in developing the CHM in its pilot phase, and recommends that the COP endorse the strategic plan as a part of the CBD's overall strategic planning and the longer-term programme of work. It further recommends that Parties take several priority actions for 2001-2002, including, *inter alia*, to:

- establish a national directory of scientific institutions and actions;
- conduct a survey of existing scientific and technical cooperation activities;
- designate national, regional and sub-regional thematic focal points;
- develop links between national focal points and NGOs and other institutions holding relevant information; and
- strengthen the CHM's role in capacity-building in developing countries.

The Executive Secretary, in consultation with the IAC, is requested to:

- develop ways and means to ensure a broader understanding of the CHM's role and value;
- develop non-Internet-based tools to assist Parties in national implementation efforts;
- establish cooperation with international thematic focal points;
- convene regional workshops;
- support thematic issues directly linked to SBSTTA's work programme; and
- develop options and formats for the CHM's implementation and application.

GUIDELINES FOR THE SECOND NATIONAL REPORTS:

On Monday, the Secretariat introduced the background document on guidelines for the second national reports (UNEP/CBD/SBSTTA/5/14). Several countries supported submitting national reports every four years, while COLOMBIA and BURKINA FASO suggested every two years. Several countries also supported reporting on thematic items.

The UK and PORTUGAL stressed the need to ensure that developing countries can implement COP-5 decisions on national reports. The UK, SLOVENIA and PORTUGAL stressed streamlining reporting on biodiversity-related conventions. FRANCE supported joint reporting, and BIRDLIFE INTERNATIONAL proposed a modular approach for joint reporting. UGANDA and KENYA emphasized the need for national capacity-building. MOROCCO, CHINA and CAMEROON suggested a recommendation to the COP on financial assistance from the GEF to developing countries. HAITI and SWITZERLAND suggested including elements on national strategies and action plans.

On Thursday, delegates considered a Chair's draft recommendation. IRELAND requested including the need for information on the status of biodiversity. The SEYCHELLES said that assessments should be made in the context of Parties' priorities and capacities. The EC proposed new language on preparation of thematic reports for consideration by the COP. MEXICO suggested making the reports and their compilation available to national focal points and the CHM.

Recommendation: During Friday's Plenary, delegates adopted the recommendation (UNEP/CBD/SBSTTA/5/L.9), without amendments. The recommendation includes a preambular reference to activities prepared by the GEF and requests the Executive Secretary to propose a

format for thematic reports and to revise the matrix contained in Annex I of the background document on guidelines for national reports. It also includes recommendations to the COP on:

- the establishment of guidelines for future national reports;
- the preparation of thematic reports;
- the preparation of compilations of national reports;
- invitations to UNEP and UNDP to provide support to Parties in biodiversity planning, and provide the Secretariat with relevant information; and
- consideration of the need for available financial resources.

AD HOC TECHNICAL EXPERT GROUPS AND ROSTERS OF EXPERTS:

The Secretariat introduced the background document on technical expert groups and rosters (UNEP/CBD/SBSTTA/5/15), containing, *inter alia*, a uniform methodology for the use of the rosters, and terms of reference (TOR) and duration of work for the technical expert groups on marine and coastal protected areas, mariculture, inland water and/or forest biodiversity. Discussions focused on the TOR for expert groups, the generation of experts and groups to be established. NEW ZEALAND, supported by NORWAY, the NETHERLANDS and the US, requested standard guidelines to accompany TOR, including: appointment of members; assessment of scientific credibility; expected outcome; interaction with other bodies; and pre-conditions for the use of an expert group. GERMANY proposed that SBSTTA should be able to decide on the establishment and the TOR of expert groups and, supported by several countries, stressed the need for gender balance. Regarding the rosters, GERMANY and NORWAY requested flexibility and continuous updating and, with CHINA and CANADA, suggested using the national focal point.

Given the joint work plan with the Ramsar Convention, most countries considered an expert group on inland water biodiversity unnecessary. Several countries supported establishment of an expert group on forest biodiversity. NEW ZEALAND and AUSTRALIA said that such a group should perform a gap analysis of coverage by other relevant international bodies. NORWAY stressed the need for a process to start assessing the status and trends of forest biodiversity. SWITZERLAND proposed language on collaboration with the UNFCCC to include biodiversity considerations in forest carbon sequestration projects. BIONET, on behalf of three NGOs, urged moving beyond assessments to action. Expert groups on sustainable use and drylands were also proposed.

During Friday's Plenary, some discussion focused on whether the Executive Secretary should prepare a document for COP-5 regarding necessary amendments to the *modus operandi* of the SBSTTA, which had been adopted with Decision IV/16. The NETHERLANDS urged endorsing the roster methodology so that the Secretariat could start using it. At the Chair's suggestion, delegates agreed to delete the proposal to prepare such a document, acknowledging that changes could be introduced at COP-5. Language was inserted defining the range of relevant experts to include biological, legal, social and economic sciences, and traditional knowledge. Regarding financial support for expert groups, the UK was concerned that SBSTTA was overstepping its mandate. A recommendation, proposed by NEW ZEALAND, was inserted, which requests the COP to address budgetary matters, noting that cost concerns may affect the ability of experts to participate. Concerning the TOR for a group on forest biodiversity, NEW ZEALAND, supported by the US, expressed dissatisfaction since they did not have adequate time for proper assessment.

Recommendation: The draft recommendation (UNEP/CBD/SBSTTA/5/CRP.7/Rev.1) was adopted, as amended. It requests the Executive Secretary to further develop the methodology for rosters and expert groups, and proposes that the COP establish *ad hoc* tech-



nical expert groups on marine and coastal protected areas, mariculture, and forest biodiversity. It also includes annexes on the uniform methodology and TOR for the proposed expert groups.

WORKING GROUP I

BIODIVERSITY OF DRY AND SUB-HUMID LANDS

(FORMERLY DRYLANDS): On Tuesday, the Secretariat introduced the background document (UNEP/CBD/SBSTTA/5/9), which includes sections on: scope, importance and main threats; ongoing activities of international programmes; possible synergies; a draft programme of work based on assessments and targeted actions; and proposed recommendations. Referring to suggested recommendations and scope of drylands biodiversity, GERMANY asked for better reflection of scientific knowledge and stressed the relationship between gender and biodiversity. The EC and SWITZERLAND asked for clarification of definitions. The WORLD METEOROLOGICAL ORGANIZATION (WMO) drew attention to the impact of climate variability on drylands. Referring to assessments for a draft programme of work, BRAZIL suggested explicit reference to dissemination of best practices. GREECE said that assessments could be conducted in separate fora for each of the ecosystems in the programme. ARGENTINA stressed the importance of information exchange at the national and international levels. TANZANIA and the RUSSIAN FEDERATION suggested including an inventory of dryland ecosystem biodiversity. COLOMBIA and KENYA stressed case studies for drylands management.

On targeted actions, a number of countries highlighted capacity-building, development programmes focusing on local capacities, new technologies to enhance productivity, and education and awareness-raising programmes. The UK, CANADA, GERMANY, ETHIOPIA and NORWAY stressed involvement of indigenous and local communities in drylands management. The NETHERLANDS, PORTUGAL and the WMO noted the need for reference to *in situ* conservation. CANADA emphasized integrating resource management approaches based on the ecosystem approach. On synergies, several countries proposed further collaboration with the CCD, which welcomed cooperation and highlighted relevant CCD experience and activities at the grassroots, national and sub-regional levels. SWITZERLAND suggested undertaking a concrete collaboration process with the CCD, for the establishment of strategies and action plans for arid lands. CANADA and JAPAN stressed the need to avoid duplication of work. On the alternatives for an abbreviated title, most delegations expressed preference for "biodiversity of dry and sub-humid lands," instead of "drylands biodiversity."

On Thursday, delegates discussed a Chair's draft recommendation developed through informal consultations. The NETHERLANDS suggested text to reflect the relationship between poverty and biodiversity loss. ARGENTINA requested reference to including a meta-database on relevant dryland information in the CHM.

Recommendation: During Friday's Plenary, delegates adopted the recommendation (UNEP/CBD/SBSTTA/5/L.4), without amendments. It includes recommendations on:

- establishment of a programme of work for dry and sub-humid lands;
- consideration of the need for necessary financial support;
- periodic assessment and review by SBSTTA of the status and trends of biodiversity of dry and sub-humid lands;
- collaboration between the Executive Secretary and the CCD through a joint work programme, and with other relevant bodies;
- establishment of a roster of experts; and
- availability of relevant information through various means, including the CHM.

The draft programme of work on dry and sub-humid lands contained in an annex includes: an introduction noting general objectives; the proposed work programme; and a reporting framework. The work programme includes sections on assessments and targeted actions. The assessments focus on gathering, analysis and dissemination of knowledge and best practices through a number of proposed activities and methods to implement these activities. Targeted actions focus on the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity, equitable benefit-sharing and combating biodiversity loss and its socio-economic implications.

AGRICULTURAL BIODIVERSITY: On Tuesday, delegates considered the background document on agricultural biodiversity (UNEP/CBD/SBSTTA/5/10). The Secretariat stressed that the recommendations aim to facilitate, while not duplicating, Decision III/11 on agricultural biodiversity. BRAZIL outlined the findings of the São Paulo workshop on pollinators, which resulted in a declaration for possible endorsement at COP-5. BANGLADESH suggested GEF financing for regional projects and highlighted the need to support the role of women in agriculture. The EC said the fact that agricultural biodiversity encompasses biodiversity components beyond relevance to food and agriculture should be reflected in the document. On this point, the NETHERLANDS and FRANCE noted the need to include social and biological services provided by agro-biodiversity. GERMANY, the EC, the NETHERLANDS, SWEDEN, FINLAND and FRANCE stated that agro-biodiversity should be dealt with in an interdisciplinary manner. SWITZERLAND called for regionalization in implementing the work programme and the need to address the underlying socio-economic factors influencing agro-biodiversity.

SWEDEN called for greater emphasis on the root causes of agro-biodiversity degradation and, with FRANCE, requested reference to the multi-functional approach, which was rejected by ARGENTINA, AUSTRALIA, CANADA, NEW ZEALAND and the US. AUSTRALIA further stressed that previous international discussions addressing multi-functionality had not reached agreement on the concept. AUSTRALIA, CANADA, the US and the UK stated that recommendations were ambitious and might benefit from prioritization. COLOMBIA highlighted that the impact of industrialized agriculture on agro-biodiversity must not be forgotten. PAPUA NEW GUINEA stated that the issues of benefit-sharing and intellectual property rights of commercialized natural resources had not been sufficiently covered. MALI drew attention to the lack of public awareness and stressed the need to integrate technology with traditional and local knowledge.

On Thursday, the Chair introduced a draft recommendation, noting ten hours of informal deliberations to produce the text. MALI, supported by ETHIOPIA and KENYA, requested inclusion of references to "participatory breeding and selection processes" under capacity-building to accommodate concerns about genetic engineering. On the overall objectives, ETHIOPIA raised concern about reference to the ecosystem approach, which listed some, but not all, elements of this approach. EL SALVADOR requested clarification on a formulation under adaptive management, referring to interactions between different genetic resources.

Recommendation: The draft recommendation on agro-biodiversity (UNEP/CBD/SBSTTA/5/L.12) was adopted without revision during the closing Plenary. The document encourages Parties to promote and carry out the draft work programme on agro-biodiversity and requests the Executive Secretary to work with other bodies to implement it. The draft programme of work contains four major elements: assessments, adaptive management, capacity-building and mainstreaming, each with sub-headings on operational objectives, rationale, and activities. The assessment objective is to provide anal-



ysis of status and trends of the world's agro-biodiversity and their underlying causes, including goods and services provided, while incorporating local knowledge management. The adaptive management objective is to identify management practices, technologies and policies that promote the positive, while mitigating the negative impacts on agricultural biodiversity. The capacity-building objective is to strengthen farmers, their communities and other stakeholders to increase the benefits derived from agro-biodiversity. The mainstreaming objective is to support development of national plans for agro-biodiversity and promote their mainstreaming in sectoral and cross-sectoral programmes.

ALIEN SPECIES: On Wednesday, the Secretariat introduced the background document on alien species (UNEP/CBD/SBSTTA/5/5). Several countries supported cooperation with other bodies, including the International Plant Protection Convention (IPPC), the International Maritime Organization, CITES and the Ramsar Convention. The FAO highlighted the IPPC's relevance regarding definitions and plant and pest control. GERMANY, the REPUBLIC OF KOREA and the US supported the development of alien species lists or databases. ZIMBABWE, SENEGAL and the BARCELONA CONVENTION called for increased regional cooperation. SWITZERLAND stressed that recommendations be immediately enforceable and capable of integrating the results of the Global Invasive Species Programme. NORWAY and FINLAND called for a global thematic assessment. COLOMBIA and MEXICO called for more language on quarantine measures. BRAZIL stressed issues of containment and problem management. The INTERNATIONAL CENTRE OF INSECT PHYSIOLOGY AND ECOLOGY stressed clarification of responsible national agencies and their roles. KENYA stressed consideration of LMOs as alien species and of the Biosafety Protocol in SBSTTA's work programme. PORTUGAL supported inclusion of biogeographic and multi-disciplinary approaches. CHAD and MALAWI stressed consideration of transboundary ecosystems. The EC and BRAZIL requested language on sub-species and varieties.

On Thursday, delegates considered a draft recommendation and agreed not to address the guiding principles contained in the annex, since they had not been revised to reflect previous deliberations. Delegations agreed to submit written comments on the principles to the Secretariat, which, along with comments made during SBSTTA-5, would be incorporated and available for consideration at SBSTTA-6. The COOK ISLANDS proposed language urging Parties to implement alien invasive strategies as soon as they are developed, in order not to delay action until SBSTTA-6 or 7.

During the closing Plenary discussion on the alien species recommendation, the EC, supported by BRAZIL, requested reflection of its comments on sub-species and varieties. CANADA did not support this request in order to avoid the notion that crop varieties might be considered alien species. Chair Samper suggested reflecting the concerns expressed by the EC and others in the meeting's report. BRAZIL agreed, but requested inclusion of language acknowledging that the definition of alien species had not yet been agreed. The recommendation was adopted with this revision.

Recommendation: The recommendation (UNEP/CBD/SBSTTA/5/L.6) invites Parties to: take the interim guiding principles into account and submit comments on them; submit case studies on thematic assessments; and implement alien species strategies as soon as they are developed. The Executive Secretary is invited to: develop standardized terminology on alien species; cooperate with other relevant international bodies to coordinate work and report on potential joint programmes; and produce a paper for SBSTTA-6 setting out future work options.

MARINE AND COASTAL BIODIVERSITY, INCLUDING CORAL BLEACHING: On Wednesday, the Secretariat introduced the background document on marine and coastal biodiversity (UNEP/CBD/SBSTTA/5/7). Regarding implementation tools for marine and coastal biodiversity, SENEGAL stressed the relationship between tourism and marine and coastal biodiversity, and suggested collaboration with the International Tourism Organization. The NETHERLANDS called for cooperation with the Oslo and Paris Conventions. CANADA noted that the programme of work should be cost effective and not duplicated. The GAMBIA called for involvement of local communities, capacity-building for implementation at the local level and establishment of coastal protected areas. BANGLADESH stressed the need for capacity-building given many countries' limited financial capacities, expertise and access to electronic means. NEW ZEALAND and AUSTRALIA suggested an analysis of progress made with these proposed tools.

Discussion on coral bleaching focused on the role of climate change, synergies and socio-economic impacts. The SEYCHELLES, followed by several countries, welcomed reference to climate change, but expressed disappointment on the requirement for more research, given the need for immediate action. He stressed that the recommendations need to emphasize the primary role of climate change and transmit this view to the UNFCCC. GERMANY called for implementation of the Kyoto Protocol, identifying coral bleaching as an early warning sign of global warming. Several countries stressed cooperation with the UNFCCC and the Ramsar Convention, and coordination with the International Coral Reef Initiative and the Global Coral Reef Monitoring Network. SLOVENIA asked for reference to the joint work plan with the Ramsar Convention. The RAMSAR CONVENTION said coral bleaching is of common interest to the CBD, UNFCCC and Ramsar, and that there will be funds available for addressing site management issues for coral reefs. JAMAICA, supported by others, proposed a research programme on socio-economic impacts on small island developing States (SIDS), and, with NORWAY, stressed the need for the UNFCCC subsidiary bodies to address coral bleaching. Several countries stressed capacity-building for SIDS, with special reference to human resources development.

Following discussion in the working group, a small informal group chaired by Gambia was established to draft recommendations. GAMBIA highlighted new elements in the draft recommendation, including: emphasis on collaboration with relevant international bodies; deletion of reference to the GEF regarding resources for implementation; and other minor textual changes. The UK proposed a new formulation regarding resources, to avoid giving financial guidance to the COP. With some editorial comments, the group came to an agreement.

During Friday's Plenary, SWEDEN requested reference to the Global International Waters Assessment, which was reflected in the report. The GEF asked for deletion of the reference to financing, and the document was adopted with this amendment.

Recommendation: The final document (UNEP/CBD/SBSTTA/5/L.13) includes recommendations on, *inter alia*:

- reporting by the Secretariat on the application of the implementation tools;
- endorsement of the results of the Expert Consultation on Coral Bleaching;
- cooperation with relevant international bodies;
- full integration of coral bleaching into the programme of work on marine and coastal biodiversity;
- identification of the primary role of climate change in coral bleaching and transmission of this view to UNFCCC;
- implementation of response measures to coral bleaching, such as



capacity-building measures, research and monitoring, community participation and public education programmes;

- submission of case studies on coral bleaching for dissemination through the CHM; and
- consideration of the need for resources allocation.

It also includes an annex on priority areas for action, including information gathering, capacity-building, policy development and implementation, and financing.

WORKING GROUP II

ECOSYSTEM APPROACH: On Tuesday, the Secretariat introduced the background document on the ecosystem approach (UNEP/CBD/SBSTTA/5/11), which builds upon the 12 Malawi principles, developed at a Workshop held in Lilongwe in January 1998. Several countries supported the Malawi principles and the operational guidelines. The UK stressed equal importance of all principles and said they should not be prioritized. POLAND, CANADA and the RUSSIAN FEDERATION stated that a common understanding of the ecosystem approach is still needed and supported the operational guidelines as key components. FINLAND and the US said that the ecosystem approach should be used in thematic and cross-cutting issues. NEW ZEALAND, CANADA, the US and COSTA RICA expressed different concerns about language on decentralization. ZAMBIA, GHANA and the COMMONWEALTH SECRETARIAT stressed the need for capacity-building. BOLIVIA and ECUADOR emphasized the importance of equitable benefit-sharing at the local level. The SEYCHELLES expressed concern that the ecosystem approach might undermine funding for the conservation of individual species. ECUADOR cautioned against viewing the ecosystem approach as solely focusing on ecosystem functioning. Several countries supported case studies and pilot projects.

On Wednesday, delegates considered a Chair's draft recommendation developed through informal consultations. Discussion focused on the annex containing a description of the approach, its management principles and operational guidance. Regarding the definition, some delegates, including ROMANIA and ECUADOR, stressed the interrelationship between natural capital and socio-economic systems. The NETHERLANDS, GERMANY, RWANDA, COLOMBIA and GHANA expressed concern about changing the agreed common understanding. The UK suggested changing a reference to "sharing of benefits" to "distribution of services," arguing that benefit-sharing under the Convention specifically addresses genetic resources, not ecosystem services. In the afternoon, delegates agreed to change "sharing of the benefits" to "access to the benefits" of ecosystem services. Although COLOMBIA, the RUSSIAN FEDERATION and NORWAY raised concern about opening discussion on the principles, ZIMBABWE's proposal to delete reference to "management" in the headings of the principles was accepted. Regarding the first principle, stating that management objectives are a matter of societal choice, the EC asked for deletion of language on ecosystem management for human benefit, citing a contradiction with the CBD's explicit reference to the intrinsic value of biodiversity. ECUADOR, COSTA RICA, PERU, ZIMBABWE, HAITI and BRAZIL opposed this but later agreed on a modification, reflecting the EC's concerns.

The draft recommendation was submitted to the Plenary on Friday. Delegates spent considerable time reconsidering the first principle, which contained a reference to ecosystem management for the benefit of humans. A contact group was formed and Plenary reconvened in the afternoon to adopt compromise text, which notes the intrinsic value of biodiversity in ecosystems as well as the benefits ecosystems provide for humans.

Recommendation: The final document (UNEP/CBD/SBSTTA/5/L.11) recommends that the COP endorse the principles; invites Parties to identify case studies, implement pilot projects and organize regional, national and local workshops; requests the Executive Secretary to prepare a synthesis of case studies and lessons learned; and requests SBSTTA to prepare guidelines for the implementation of the ecosystem approach. It also recommends that the COP support capacity-building. The recommendations are supplemented by a description of the ecosystem approach, its basic agreed 12 principles, as well as operational guidance for implementation.

INDICATORS OF BIODIVERSITY: On Tuesday, the Secretariat introduced the background document on indicators of biodiversity (UNEP/CBD/SBSTTA/5/12). The document, which proposes a core set of generic state and pressure indicators to assist countries to design, initiate and/or improve national monitoring programmes, was criticized by a number of countries, including NEW ZEALAND, ZIMBABWE, SWITZERLAND, SWEDEN, AUSTRALIA, the US, NORWAY, and the SEYCHELLES. Concerns were raised regarding the proposed recommendations and the format of national reports. NEW ZEALAND noted that the document does not fully respond to the work plan endorsed by the COP. CANADA, CUBA, HAITI and COSTA RICA stated that they were willing to proceed with work on the basis of the document and to refine the approach, especially regarding the appropriate level of indicator development and priorities. The UK, GERMANY, the NETHERLANDS and FINLAND stressed rapid progress in developing indicators as tools for assessment and development, and further refinement of the generic indicators framework. Many delegations stressed the need for financial support and capacity-building for indicator development and monitoring. ECUADOR suggested better incorporation of socio-economic aspects. MEXICO called for a biogeographic approach. CANADA and COSTA RICA said that development of indicators should focus on the national level.

Thursday's discussions focused on the Chair's draft recommendations. The EC proposed a "framework for selection" instead of a "menu" of potential indicators. NEW ZEALAND recalled from COP discussions that principles, questions and the menu should together provide a framework. On this issue, CANADA, supported by the NETHERLANDS, suggested developing an indicator manual, guidelines and training. NORWAY, ZIMBABWE and NEW ZEALAND noted that this was premature and that more experience was needed. Based on proposals by COSTA RICA and BRAZIL, the Executive Secretary was requested to develop a set of standard questions and a list of available and potential indicators for use by Parties at the national level and in national reporting. ZIMBABWE and KENYA proposed language on capacity-building, training, establishing networks and sharing experiences. The NETHERLANDS suggested an interim progress report for consideration at SBSTTA-6 or 7.

Recommendation: The final plenary adopted the recommendation (UNEP/CBD/SBSTTA/5/L.5) with one minor amendment. The recommendation calls upon the COP to request that the Executive Secretary develop a set of principles for designing national-level monitoring programmes and indicators, as well as a set of standard questions and a list of potential indicators for use at the national level and in national reporting. It also encourages Parties to establish regional cooperation, and invites Parties to assist in capacity-building efforts in the areas of training, national networking and sharing of experiences.

SUSTAINABLE USE: On Wednesday, the Secretariat introduced the background document on sustainable use (UNEP/CBD/SBSTTA/5/13), which aims to identify sectoral activities that could incorporate biodiversity-friendly practices and technologies. Whereas SBSTTA-4



considered tourism in the context of sustainable use, SBSTTA-5's mandate was to concentrate on other sectors. ZIMBABWE said the document should support enhancement, incentives and promotion, instead of control and regulation, and, supported by AUSTRALIA, suggested establishing a liaison group. COLOMBIA, NIGERIA and TOGO suggested an *ad hoc* group of experts, taking into account social sciences and cross-cutting issues, such as welfare, gender and employment. The REPUBLIC OF KOREA stressed that sustainable use activities be considered in national policies. CONGO and ZAMBIA underlined involving local and indigenous communities' sustainable use practices.

NAMIBIA requested strengthening of direct benefits for local communities in education programmes, capacity-building for policy-makers, cooperation between scientists and policy-makers, and collaboration on sustainable use schemes between countries sharing a common resource. SWITZERLAND proposed that guiding principles should be elaborated to serve as a framework for voluntary, sectoral guidelines. BRAZIL, supported by the NETHERLANDS, stressed the interlinkages between sustainable use concepts and the ecosystem approach, and the importance of economic valuation, stakeholder participation, indicator development and benefit-sharing. Regarding case studies, BRAZIL favored integration of bottom-up and top-down approaches, and, with NEW ZEALAND, stressed a higher profile for biodiversity in carbon sequestration. ECUADOR, supported by AUSTRALIA, the NETHERLANDS, NEW ZEALAND and MADAGASCAR called for involving IUCN and other bodies with expertise. SRI LANKA asked for case studies to promote awareness and use of locally developed indicators. ROMANIA recommended complementary legislation between neighboring countries with transboundary ecosystems.

On Thursday, the Chair introduced a draft recommendation based on a contact group's discussions. AUSTRALIA suggested deleting language on integrating sustainable use into sectoral and cross-sectoral plans, programmes, policies and national strategies and action plans. On experiences to draw upon, NORWAY proposed deleting reference to the CSD and the OECD, and stressed the importance of cooperation with the private sector.

Recommendation: During Friday's Plenary, delegates adopted the recommendation (UNEP/CBD/SBSTTA/5/L.10) without significant discussion. The recommendation requests the Executive Secretary to gather and compile case studies for dissemination through the CHM and to assemble practical principles, operational guidelines and associated instruments on sustainable use. The recommendation also invites Parties to undertake activities at the regional, national and local levels, including workshops, information dissemination and assistance in priority sectors and for development of action plans.

CLOSING PLENARY

Chair Samper opened the final Plenary at 10:20 am on Friday, 4 February 2000. The INDIGENOUS CAUCUS and INDIGENOUS BIODIVERSITY INFORMATION NETWORK delivered a joint statement recalling COP Decision IV/9, calling for Parties to include indigenous representatives on their delegations and to support active indigenous participation in the *ad hoc* working group on Article 8(j), with specific attention to its upcoming meeting in Sevilla. He also supported appointment of a thematic indigenous focal point within the CHM and collaboration on indigenous information management.

Chair Samper called for comments on the draft recommendation on forest biodiversity (UNEP/CBD/SBSTTA/5/CRP.5), which was adopted with some amendments. Delegates then discussed the draft recommendation on *ad hoc* technical expert groups (UNEP/CBD/SBSTTA/5/CRP.7/Rev.1). Discussions focused on language regarding

the methodology for using rosters and expert groups and its relation to SBSTTA's *modus operandi*, which was deleted. Additions were made to the terms of reference for the forest expert group on issues of forest restoration, collaboration with indigenous and local communities and forest carbon sequestration projects. With other minor amendments, delegates adopted the recommendation. Delegates then adopted the report of SBSTTA-5 (UNEP/CBD/SBSTTA/5/L.1; Add.1; and Add.1.Corr.1).

Working Group I Chair Mary Fosi (Cameroon) reported on the working group and introduced its report, which was adopted. Recommendations on drylands and agricultural biodiversity were adopted without revision. After a discussion, language on sub-species and varieties, which was reflected in the report of the meeting, as well as the unfinalized nature of the definition of alien species, delegates also adopted the recommendation on alien species. The recommendation on marine and coastal biodiversity, including coral bleaching, was adopted with a minor amendment.

Working Group II replacement Chair John Herity (Canada), presented the group's report (UNEP/CBD/SBSTTA/5/WG.II/L.1/Rev.1), which was adopted along with recommendations on indicators of biodiversity and sustainable use. Regarding the recommendation on the ecosystem approach, significant discussion arose over language on managing ecosystems for the benefits of humans, which some argued conflicted with CBD reference to the "intrinsic value" of biodiversity. After informal consultations, delegates adopted the recommendation with compromise language referencing both intrinsic value and human benefits. Plenary then adopted recommendations on the GTI, inland water biodiversity and national reports, without amendment.

The Secretariat introduced the document (UNEP/CBD/SBSTTA/5/16) on the provisional agenda for SBSTTA-6. NEW ZEALAND called on the SBSTTA Bureau to ensure the focus of future SBSTTAs. The Plenary adopted the decision. Delegates then discussed the dates and location for SBSTTA-6, which was set for Montreal, in January or February 2001. CANADA, supported by NEW ZEALAND, suggested February or March, which was then adopted. On other matters, KENYA, on behalf of the African Group, supported by PERU, on behalf of the Latin American and Caribbean Group (GRULAC), proposed a recommendation urging support for preparatory regional meetings. After discussion about whether SBSTTA was the appropriate body to address such financial issues, and the request was placed in the report of the meeting. A statement by ECUADOR regarding standardized structures for joint work programmes and the consideration of cross-cutting issues was also placed in the report.

During closing Plenary statements, SWITZERLAND thanked Samper for his work throughout the ExCOP for the Adoption of the Biosafety Protocol and SBSTTA-5. NEW ZEALAND noted its satisfaction with efforts to facilitate the participation of small delegations, especially from island States, within the work of SBSTTA. POLAND, on behalf of the Central and Eastern European States, PERU, on behalf of GRULAC, KENYA, on behalf the African Group, and INDIA on behalf of the Asian region, thanked the Chair, the SBSTTA Bureau, the Secretariat and the interpreters for their work throughout the meeting. CBD Executive Secretary Hamdallah Zedan, noting SBSTTA's constructive nature and the adoption of the Cartagena Protocol, stated that the CBD is off to good start at the dawn of the new millennium. Given additional recommendations for work by the Secretariat, he requested delegates to consider the significant workload and financial needs of the Secretariat at COP-5. Samper, noting the broad agenda of SBSTTA-5, hoped future SBSTTA agendas would be more focused and able to address issues in greater depth. He expressed his appreciation to all in attendance, Bureau members old and new, and the interpreters. He then gavelled SBSTTA-5 to a close at 5:00 pm.



A BRIEF ANALYSIS OF SBSTTA-5

Unlike the biosafety negotiations the week before, SBSTTA-5 went relatively smoothly. No particular agenda item dominated the week's discussions in a way that impinged on the work on other items. This is certainly due, in large part, to the Chair, as once again the Colombian delegation proved its ability, with Cristián Samper ably guiding delegates through the agenda, handling the issues with efficiency, wit and clarity. The relative ease with which participants moved through the hefty agenda might ironically also be due to the pressing workload with five thematic areas on inland water, forest, agricultural, marine and coastal, and dry and sub-humid lands biodiversity, three cross-cutting issues, namely the ecosystem approach, sustainable use, and indicators, and four institutional subjects, the Clearing-House Mechanism, cooperation with other bodies, national reports and *ad hoc* technical expert groups. The sheer number of complex issues to be dealt with in five days prevented in-depth discussion of most of the issues. This brief analysis looks at the meeting's accomplishments and shortcomings, as well as its implications for COP-5 in May in Nairobi and beyond.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS: The work programmes on dry and sub-humid lands and on inland water biodiversity were adopted for recommendation to the COP without major changes. Both profited from sound preparations. The recommendation on inland water biodiversity benefited from discussions and intersessional meetings since COP-2 and cooperation with the Ramsar Convention. The recommendation on dry and sub-humid lands biodiversity resulted from long-standing discussions within the development community and the Convention to Combat Desertification.

Another achievement of SBSTTA-5 is the recommendation on coral bleaching, embedded in the one on marine and coastal biodiversity. Placed on the agenda as recently as COP-4, delegates took up the issue with considerable speed and decisiveness, prodded along by the SEYCHELLES and other small island States. While the process now seems capable of identifying urgent environmental problems, the issue of coral bleaching will test whether the CBD, as a negotiating body encumbered by a large bureaucratic structure, can take rapid action on the ground.

One seasoned CBD veteran wondered what it really meant to take an "ecosystem approach" and how the concept could be translated into something meaningful for conservation, sustainable use and benefit-sharing. Three years of informal debates and intersessional activities on the ecosystem approach culminated at SBSTTA-5 in the recommendation that the COP adopt the 12 Malawi Principles for the ecosystem approach and five operational guidelines. Although these principles and their guidance certainly need further conceptualization, their adoption by SBSTTA is a major breakthrough: decision-makers, project planners and practitioners now have a basic set of agreed principles against which they can evaluate whether their activities are consistent with the CBD. In turn, the principles and guidance forming the "ecosystem approach" will be nourished and improved by experiences on the ground. Delegates took a pragmatic approach, realizing that a perfect set of principles is difficult, if not impossible, to achieve, and that flexibility, practicality and good will are needed.

SBSTTA-5 also made inroads on discussing socio-economic aspects within the issue areas, including gender and poverty. While references to gender and poverty were general in nature, some delegates saw this as a positive move forward in broadening SBSTTA's "scientific" approach. Several delegates highlighted the inclusion of socio-economic considerations into the ecosystem approach, especially with regard to those local and indigenous communities serving as stewards of biodiversity.

Finally, delegates expressed satisfaction with the recommendation on agriculture, although underlying political debates emerged, and were carried over from Wednesday to the early morning hours on Thursday. Concerns regarding the larger political and economic context of trade, as discussed in the WTO and the recent biosafety negotiations, were a subtle undercurrent to SBSTTA's deliberations. However, some pointed out that the debate on multi-functionality and production systems was only a sidebar to the issues at stake in implementing the core objectives of the Convention. In this view, the recommendation on agriculture still qualifies as one of the achievements of SBSTTA-5.

SHORTCOMINGS: Generally, participants felt that SBSTTA-5's shortcomings centered primarily on procedural and administrative problems and larger conceptual differences. For example, in the area of indicators, significant concern was expressed over the state of the background document and the quality of intersessional work, which was ostensibly due to recent turnover in and excessive demands on the Secretariat. As the CBD matures and discussions on thematic and cross-cutting issues progress, the question remains how to prioritize and ensure adequate capacity within the Secretariat. With this in mind, the envisaged strategic plan for the operations and implementation of the CBD supported during the ISOC gains even more importance.

SBSTTA-5 faced an overloaded agenda, a problem common to most SBSTTA and COP meetings. Lack of time for substantive discussion on all the ecosystem themes was further exacerbated by agenda items forwarded from SBSTTA-4, including alien species, sustainable use and *ad hoc* technical expert groups. The broad agenda was criticized, especially by NGOs, as constricting the substantive depth of discussions. General agreement to avoid detailed debate on the guidelines for alien species is a case in point.

This raises the question of how SBSTTA could serve its function as a scientific body. Some participants noted SBSTTA's role as a filter between science and international policy-making. Given SBSTTA's quasi-science/quasi-political co-existence, it was suggested that better use of intersessional meetings, such as the Trondheim series and its recent focus on the ecosystem approach, could provide scientific input. In this vein, there was some discussion in the corridors about the utility of an Intergovernmental/International Panel on Biodiversity, similar in nature to the IPCC.

SBSTTA-5 also highlighted underlying conceptual differences on key items. Discussions on agricultural biodiversity reflected previous debates in other fora about the nature of multi-functionality and agricultural ecosystems as strictly production systems or as including larger socio-cultural considerations. While the question is linked to larger issues of trade and subsidies, several delegates noted the need to frame implementation of the work programme to avoid such political differences and focus on scientific and technical issues.

The debate under the ecosystem approach, pitting the intrinsic value of biodiversity against ecosystem management for human benefit, also raised conceptual flags. Alleviation of poverty and the need to protect pristine lands were both seen as legitimate objectives. The conflict arose over whether such positions, if pushed to the extreme, could justify exploitation of ecosystems or deny the right of local communities to use such resources. Again the political issue arose of how to craft language to provide a middle ground accommodating both positions.

COP-5 AND BEYOND: Finding the middle ground is the nature of international negotiations, and the experience of SBSTTA-5 pointed to some positive avenues forward. Despite the conceptual differences, a number of participants highlighted the ecosystem approach as an example of a practical approach. With intersessional discussions on the ecosystem approach feeding substance into the process, SBSTTA-5



was able to agree on a general set of principles that governments can use to assess on-the-ground activities. Some participants thought that the operationalization of sustainable use might also benefit from the same procedural and substantive approach, incorporating both sound intersessional discussions and an element of pragmatism.

COP-5 faces the same challenges as SBSTTA-5, namely considering a packed agenda, balancing breadth and depth of discussion, and maintaining momentum on a diverse range of issues. How these dynamics are mediated will indicate how rapidly and efficiently the CBD process shifts into a more matured implementation stage. Ultimately, the true test of such implementation lies, not in the text of SBSTTA recommendations or COP decisions, but in translating such language into action in the planet's waters, drylands, fields and forests.

THINGS TO LOOK FOR

CONVENTION ON BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY: The *Ad Hoc* Working Group on Article 8(j) will meet from 27-31 March 2000, in Sevilla, Spain. The fifth meeting of the Conference of the Parties will take place from 15-26 May 2000, in Nairobi. For information, contact: CBD Secretariat, World Trade Center, 393 St. Jacques Street, Suite 300, Montreal, Quebec, Canada H2Y 1N9; tel: +1-514-288-2220; fax: +1-514-288-6588; e-mail: chm@biodiv.org; Internet: <http://www.biodiv.org/>.

INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON MANAGING NATURAL RESOURCES FOR SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTION: This conference will be held from 14-18 February 2000, in New Delhi, India. For information, contact: A.K. Singh, IARI, New Delhi, India; tel: +91-11-5731491/5786790; fax: +91-11-575529; e-mail: icmnr@iari.ernet.in.

EASTERN AND SOUTHERN AFRICA REGIONAL BIODIVERSITY FORUM: This forum will be held from 21-23 February 2000, in Mombasa, Kenya. For information, contact: Lucy Emerton, IUCN Eastern Africa Regional Office, Nairobi, Kenya; tel: +254-2-2890-605-12; fax: +254-2-2890-615/407; e-mail: lae@iucnearo.org; Internet: <http://iucn.org/themes/gbf>.

PROTECTING KNOWLEDGE AND TRADITIONAL RESOURCE RIGHTS IN THE NEW MILLENNIUM: This meeting will be held from 24-26 February 2000, in Vancouver, Canada. For information, contact: Donald Bain, Union of BC Indian Chiefs, British Columbia, Canada; tel: +1-604-684-0231; fax: +1-604-684-5726; e-mail: research@ubcic.bc.ca; Internet: <http://www.ubcic.bc.ca/protect.htm>.

INTERNATIONAL LANDCARE CONFERENCE: This conference will be held from 2-5 March 2000, in Melbourne, Australia. For information, contact: Joanne Safstrom, tel: +613-9412-4382; fax: +613-9412-4442; e-mail: j.safstrom@dce.vic.gov.au.

TENTH WORLD WATER CONGRESS: This congress will be held from 12-17 March 2000, in Melbourne, Australia. For information, contact: Secretariat ICMS Pty Ltd., Victoria, Australia; tel: +613-9682-0244; fax: +613-9682-0288; e-mail: worldwater@icms.com.au; Internet: <http://www.icms.com.au/worldwater>.

SECOND WORLD WATER FORUM AND MINISTERIAL CONFERENCE: This forum will be held from 17-22 March 2000, in The Hague, the Netherlands. For information, contact: Project Secretariat for the Second World Water Forum & Ministerial Conference, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, DML/PS, PO Box 20061, EB The Hague, the Netherlands; tel: +31-70-348-5402; fax: +31-70-348-6792; e-mail: office@worldwaterforum.org; Internet: <http://www.worldwaterforum.org>.

INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON THE CONSERVATION OF BIODIVERSITY IN ARID REGIONS: This conference will be held from 27-29 March 2000, in Safat, Kuwait. For information, contact: Mahammed Al Sarawi, Environment Protection Agency, Safat, Kuwait; tel: +965-565-0554; fax: +965-565-3328; e-mail: muna@epa.org.kw; Internet: <http://www.epa.org.kw/bio-conf/page.htm>.

GLOBAL SUSTAINABILITY CONFERENCE: The conference will be held from 28-29 March 2000, in Springfield, Illinois, US. For information, contact: Michele Gidcumb, US Department of Agriculture; tel: +1-618-272-4521 ext. 3; e-mail: michele.gidcumb@il.nrcs.usda.gov; Internet: <http://www.il.nrcs.usda.gov>.