

The Convention on Biological Diversity: Understanding and Influencing the Process

A Guide to Understanding and Participating Effectively in
The Eighth Conference of the Parties to the Convention
on Biological Diversity (COP8)

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I. Introduction

Biological diversity the - variability among living things and the ecosystems they inhabit - is the foundation upon which human civilizations have been built. Its conservation is a prerequisite for sustainable development and, as such, constitutes one of the greatest challenges of the modern era.

I.1 What is biodiversity?

Biological diversity, or biodiversity, is the variety of life on earth. It comprises the variability within species, among species, and of ecosystems. It also refers to the complex relationships among living things, and between living things and their environment.

Biodiversity is therefore the sum total of all life on our planet, and includes all the different species of plants, animals and micro-organisms (estimated at more than ten million species), all the genetic variability within these species (estimated at between 10-100,000 genes per species) and all the diversity of the ecosystems formed by the different combinations of species.

Biodiversity includes the environmental services responsible for maintaining life on earth, for the interactions between living beings, and for the supply of the goods and services that support human societies and their economies. These goods and services include food, medicine, clean water and air, and other natural resources that support a broad range of human activities and industries, from forestry to mining to pharmaceuticals. Recent studies suggest the aggregate annual value of these environmental services globally amounts to trillions of dollars.

Biodiversity includes both wild species and those species domesticated by humans over the last ten thousand years. A single domesticated species such as rice may now comprise as many as two thousand different local varieties.

Biodiversity includes those biological resources that are the object of economic use by humans, whether by hunting and fishing, by plant collection or timber extraction, or by cultivation and the breeding of domesticated species in agriculture, forestry, fish breeding and animal husbandry.

Biodiversity includes the genetic resources that make up our genetic ...7...

heritage, the basis for research and genetic improvements that result in more productive and resistant cultivars and breeds, as well as constituting the basis for the growing biotechnology industry.

The availability of such goods and services, and therefore the persistence of both industry and life in general, is under increasing threat from overexploitation, habitat loss and degradation, pollution, invasive species, and climate change. Sustaining biodiversity in the face of increasing human impact on it is one of the greatest challenges of the modern era.

1.2 The importance of biodiversity

Biodiversity - and the policy decisions that are taken about it - are particularly important to local and indigenous communities in many parts of the world. Local and indigenous communities are most directly dependent on biodiversity for their livelihoods, be they fisherfolk, forest-dwelling peoples, or mobile peoples. For many local and indigenous communities, many particular sites, species and ecosystems have important spiritual significance as well. Local and indigenous communities also possess a rich store of traditional knowledge about how to conserve and sustainably use biodiversity. Conversely, local and indigenous peoples suffer most directly when the biodiversity they depend upon is destroyed or expropriated, and their traditional knowledge is appropriated without their consent or eroded due to the pressures of “modern” economic and cultural development.

Unfortunately, local and indigenous peoples have generally been excluded from meaningful participation in national and international decisions about biodiversity that have often painfully affected their lives, cultures and livelihoods. The Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), provides one important international forum, however, where local and indigenous interests are better represented than in many other international processes.

Representatives of local and indigenous communities have increasingly participated in CBD meetings over the past 10 years of the Convention's life. But all too often, these representatives are not equipped with adequate information about how CBD processes work, and as a result cannot participate as effectively as they might. This is not surprising, because the CBD process is very complex and bureaucratic, filled with obscure acronyms and legalistic terminology, and difficult to understand for an outsider.

1.3 The importance of biodiversity in Brazil

Brazil is universally recognised as the country with the largest portion of global biodiversity (15 to 20% of the entire biodiversity on Planet Earth is to be found in Brazil). It is the first among the megadiverse countries.

Half of Brazil's GDP derives from direct use of biodiversity in the form of agriculture, livestock, capture fishing and fish farming, timber and non-timber forest products, and tourism.

Brazil contains rich social diversity, as represented by more than two hundred indigenous peoples and a range of local communities (such as *quilombolas*, *caiçaras*, *seringueiros*¹ and others) holding a priceless store of traditional knowledge relating to the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity.

Brazil possesses a qualified scientific community with great potential for generating new knowledge and products that could add value to the components of its biodiversity and promote the generation of new opportunities for generating employment and wealth.

Brazil has established an extensive network of protected areas to support biodiversity conservation, including over 8 per cent of the national territory classified as conservation areas and 12 per cent as indigenous lands, together with extensive areas of permanent protection and legal forest reserves as provided for under the Forest Code.

However, Brazil also has a long list of endangered species, economically over-exploited species, degraded ecosystems and rapidly disappearing genetic resources (genetic erosion).

1.4 The purpose of this guide

The purpose of this guide, therefore, is to provide local and indigenous peoples, as well as other participants in the eighth meeting of the Conference of the Parties (COP-8) with basic information on the CBD and the COP process, and some advice on how to effectively participate at COP8. The

¹ Quilombolas: members of rural communities of descendents of escaped or freed slaves; caiçaras: members of coastal communities practicing traditional fishing and subsistence activities; seringueiros: collectors of wild rubber.

guide does not take positions on any of the substantive issues that will be discussed at COP8, but rather attempts to provide the representatives of local and indigenous communities with the tools to effectively put forward their own interests and positions.

1.5 History of the Convention

The importance of the challenge of sustaining biodiversity in the face of increasing human impact was universally acknowledged at the Earth Summit held in Rio de Janeiro in 1992, where the Convention on Biological Diversity was opened for signature by national governments. This legally binding treaty was the first global agreement on the conservation and sustainable use of all components of biodiversity, including genetic resources, species, and ecosystems. It was also the first to define biodiversity in the context of social, economic, and other environmental issues. The Convention entered into force in 1993 and currently has 188 Parties (187 national governments and one regional economic integration organization), reflecting virtually universal participation.

In ratifying the Convention, the Parties have committed themselves, in general terms, to undertaking national and international measures aimed at achieving three explicit objectives: the conservation of biological diversity; the sustainable use of its components; and the equitable sharing of benefits arising out of the utilization of genetic resources². These three objectives are translated into binding commitments in the provisions contained in Articles 6 to 20.

Since 1992, Governments have collectively developed these commitments through decisions of the Conference of the Parties (COP) which is the Convention's governing body and taken steps necessary to translate the general provisions of the Convention into practical action. These measures have included, among other things, the adoption of programmes of work for a number of thematic areas and cross-cutting issues, the issuance of specific guidance for funding of projects through the financial mechanism established under the Convention, and the establishment of various temporary (*Ad Hoc*) bodies to focus on the implementation of specific provisions of the Convention, such as those relating to genetic resources

² The CBD defines "genetic material" as "any material of plant, animal or other origin containing functional units of heredity", and defines "genetic resources" as "genetic material of actual or potential value."

access and benefit-sharing, traditional knowledge, and safety in biotechnology.

A central purpose of the CBD is to promote sustainable development, and the underlying principles of the Convention are consistent with those of the other “Rio Agreements” (Agenda 21 and the Framework Convention on Climate Change). The CBD stresses that the conservation of biological diversity is a common concern of humankind, but recognizes that nations have sovereign rights over their own biological resources, and will need to address the overriding priorities of economic and social development and the eradication of poverty.

The CBD recognizes that the causes of the loss of biodiversity are diffuse in nature, and mostly arise as a secondary consequence of activities in economic sectors such as agriculture, forestry, fisheries, water supply, transportation, urban development, or energy, particularly activities that focus on deriving short-term benefits rather than long-term sustainability. Dealing with economic and institutional factors is therefore key to achieving the objectives of the Convention.

For the first time in an international legal instrument, the Convention recognizes the importance of traditional knowledge - the wealth of knowledge, innovations and practices of indigenous and local communities that are relevant for the conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity (Articles 8(j) and 10(c) in particular). As a result of these provisions and concerted advocacy by indigenous and local community representatives over the past decade indigenous and local peoples have created considerable political space to participate in and influence the CBD process.

II. Obligations on Parties to the Convention

The Convention's provisions are expressed as overall goals and policies, with specific action for implementation to be developed in accordance with the circumstances and capabilities of each Party, rather than as hard and precise obligations. The Convention does not set any concrete targets, and there are no lists or annexes relating to particular sites or protected species; thus the responsibility of determining how most of its provisions are to be implemented at the national level falls to the individual Parties themselves. The Convention constitutes a framework for action and provides a menu of options for Parties to select. Most of the commitments of Parties under the Convention are qualified, and their implementation depends upon the particular national circumstances and priorities of individual Parties, and the resources available to them.

2.1 Article 6: National strategies and plans

The implementation of the CBD requires mobilization of both information and resources at the national level. As a first step, the CBD requires Parties to develop national strategies, plans or programmes for the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity, or to adapt existing plans or programmes for this purpose (Article 6(a)). Apart from the obligation to provide a national report this is the only unqualified commitment in the Convention.

The CBD's financial mechanism has supported 145 countries in the preparation of their national biodiversity strategies and action plans. 82 of the 153 developing countries Parties or Parties with economies in transition have completed the preparation of their NBSAPs. 26 developed country Parties have developed an NBSAP or adapted existing strategies to meet their commitments under the Convention.

The CBD also requires Parties to mainstream biodiversity into relevant cross-sectoral plans and national decision-making (Article 6(b)).

2.2 Article 7: Identification and monitoring of biodiversity

In contrast to some previous international or regional agreements on conservation, the CBD does not contain an internationally-agreed list of species or habitats subject to special measures of protection. This is in line with the country-focused approach of the Convention. Instead, the Convention requires Parties to identify for themselves components of

biodiversity important for conservation and sustainable use (Article 7).

Whilst it contains no lists, the Convention does indicate, in Annex I, the types of species and ecosystems that Parties might consider for particular attention. These are:

a. *Ecosystems and habitats:*

- with high diversity, large numbers of endemic or threatened species, or wilderness;
- required by migratory species;
- of social, economic, cultural or scientific importance;
- representative, unique or associated with key evolutionary or other biological processes.

b. *Species and communities:*

- threatened;
- wild relatives of domesticated or cultivated species;
- of medicinal, agricultural or other economic value;
- of social, scientific or cultural importance;
- of importance for research into the conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity, such as indicator species;

c. *Described genomes or genes of social, scientific or economic importance.*

Parties are also required to monitor important components of biodiversity, and to identify processes or activities likely to have adverse effects on biodiversity. The development of indicators may assist Parties in monitoring the status of biological diversity and the effects of measures taken for its conservation and sustainable use.

2.3 Article 8: *In situ* conservation

The Convention addresses both *in-situ* and *ex-situ* conservation³, but the emphasis is on in-situ measures, i.e. within ecosystems and natural habitats or, in the case of domesticated or cultivated species, in the surroundings where they have developed their distinctive properties. Article 8 sets out a comprehensive framework for *in-situ* conservation and a Party's national biodiversity planning process should include consideration of the extent to which it currently addresses the following issues:

2.3.1 *Protected areas*

Parties should establish a system of protected areas or areas where special measures are required to conserve biological diversity, covering both marine and terrestrial areas. They are expected to develop guidelines for the selection, establishment and management of these areas, and to enhance the protection of such areas by the environmentally sound and sustainable development of adjacent areas.

2.3.2 *Regulation and management of biological resources*

Parties should regulate or manage important components of biological diversity whether found within protected areas or outside them. Legislation or other regulatory measures should therefore be introduced or maintained to promote the protection of ecosystems, natural and semi-natural habitats and the maintenance of viable populations of species in natural surroundings.

2.3.3 *Regulation and management of activities*

Under Article 7 Parties should attempt to identify activities that may have negative impacts on biological diversity. Where such activities have been identified, Article 8(l) obliges Parties to take steps to manage them to reduce their impacts.

³ The CBD defines "*in-situ*" conservation as "the conservation of ecosystems and natural habitats and the maintenance and recovery of viable populations of species in their natural surroundings and, in the case of domesticated or cultivated species, in the surroundings where they have developed their distinctive properties." "*Ex-situ*" conservation means "the conservation of components of biological diversity outside of their natural habitats."

2.3.4 *Rehabilitation and restoration*

Parties should develop plans and management strategies for the rehabilitation and restoration of degraded ecosystems and the recovery of threatened species.

2.3.5 *Alien species*

Parties should prevent the introduction of, and control or eradicate alien species which threaten ecosystems, habitats, or native species.

2.3.6 *Living modified organisms*

Parties should establish or maintain means to manage the risks associated with the use and release of living modified organisms (LMOs) resulting from biotechnology. Parties are thus required to take action at the national level to ensure that LMOs do not cause adverse effects to biodiversity.

2.3.7 *Traditional knowledge and practices*

The Convention recognizes that indigenous and local communities embodying traditional lifestyles have a crucial role to play in the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity. In articles 8(j) and 10(c), it calls on Parties to respect, preserve and maintain the knowledge, innovations and practices of indigenous and local communities and to encourage their customary uses of biological resources compatible with the conservation and sustainable use of these resources. By this, the Convention acknowledges the significance of traditional knowledge and practices, which should be taken into account in the implementation of all aspects of the Convention. To implement these provisions, the COP established an “Ad Hoc Open-Ended Working Group on Article 8(j) and Related Provisions of the CBD” which has met three times, most recently in December 2003, with significant participation by indigenous representatives.

2.4 Article 9: *Ex situ* conservation

The Convention requires Parties to adopt measures for the *ex situ* conservation of components of biodiversity (i.e. outside of their natural habitats), preferably in the country of origin of such components. Parties should adopt measures: to establish and maintain facilities for *ex situ*

conservation of and research on plants, animals and micro-organisms; for the recovery and rehabilitation of threatened species and for their reintroduction into their natural habitats; to regulate and manage collection of biological resources from natural habitats for *ex situ* conservation purposes so as not to threaten ecosystems and in situ populations of species; and cooperate in providing financial and other support for *ex situ* conservation and the establishment and maintenance of *ex situ* conservation facilities in developing countries.

2.5 Article 10: Sustainable use

Although the term conservation has sometimes been taken to incorporate sustainable use of resources, in the Convention the two terms appear side by side, and a specific Article of the Convention is devoted to sustainable use. This reflects the view of many countries during the negotiation of the Convention that the importance of sustainable use of resources be accorded explicit recognition. Sustainable use is defined in the Convention as: "the use of components of biological diversity in a way and at a rate that does not lead to the long-term decline of biological diversity, thereby maintaining its potential to meet the needs and aspirations of present and future generations".

The practical implications of this definition in terms of management are difficult to assess. Article 10 does not suggest quantitative methods for establishing the sustainability of use, but sets out five general areas of activity: the need to (a) integrate conservation and sustainable use into national decision-making; (b) avoid or minimize adverse impacts on biological diversity; (c) protect and encourage customary uses of biodiversity in accordance with traditional cultural practices; (d) support local populations to develop and implement remedial action in degraded areas; and (e) encourage cooperation between its governmental authorities and its private sector in developing methods for sustainable use of biological resources.

Article 10(c) is particularly important for indigenous and local communities, calling on Parties to "protect and encourage customary use of biological resources in accordance with traditional cultural practices that are compatible with conservation or sustainable use requirements."

2.6 Articles 11-14: Measures to promote conservation and sustainable use

The CBD makes explicit reference to a number of additional policy and procedural measures to promote conservation and sustainable use. For example, it requires Parties to adopt economically and socially sound incentives for this purpose (Article 11). It also recognizes the importance of public education and awareness to the effective implementation of the Convention (Article 13). Parties are therefore required to promote understanding of the importance of biodiversity conservation, and of the measures needed.

Research and training are critical to the implementation of almost every substantive obligation. Some deficit in human capacity exists in all countries, particularly so in developing countries. The Convention requires Parties to establish relevant scientific and technical training programmes, to promote research contributing to conservation and sustainable use, and to cooperate in using research results to develop and apply methods to achieve these goals (Article 12). Special attention must be given to supporting the research and training needs of developing countries, and this is explicitly linked to the provisions on access to and transfer of technology, technical and scientific cooperation and financial resources.

Parties are required to introduce appropriate environment impact assessment (EIA) procedures for projects likely to have significant adverse effects on biodiversity (Article 14). Legislation on EIA will generally incorporate a number of elements, including a threshold for determining when an EIA will be required, procedural requirements for carrying it out, and the requirement that the assessment be taken into account when determining whether the project should proceed. In addition, Parties are required to consult with other States on activities under their jurisdiction and control that may adversely affect the biodiversity of other States, or areas beyond national jurisdiction.

2.7 Articles 15-21: Benefits

The Convention provides for scientific and technical cooperation to support the conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity, and a clearing-house mechanism (CHM) is being developed to promote and facilitate this cooperation. The provisions on scientific and technical cooperation provide a basis for capacity-building activities. For example, the COP has requested ..17.

the financial mechanism to support a Global Taxonomy Initiative (GTI) designed, among other things, to develop national, regional and sub-regional training programmes, and to strengthen reference collections of specimens in countries of origin.

In addition to general provisions on cooperation, research and training, the CBD includes articles promoting access to the potential benefits resulting from the use of genetic resources, access to and transfer of relevant technology, and access to increased financial resources. The CBD gives developing countries an opportunity to derive financial and technical benefits from their biological resources, while the world overall benefits from the goods and services that the biodiversity thus conserved will continue to provide. The extent to which these benefits materialize is likely to be crucial to determining the long-term success of the Convention.

2.7.1 Access to genetic resources and benefit-sharing

Article 15, which contains the provisions regarding the use of genetic resources reaffirms the sovereignty of Parties over their genetic resources, and recognizes the authority of States to determine access to those resources. While the Convention addresses sovereignty over resources, it does not address their ownership, which remains to be determined at national level in accordance with national legislation or practice. The three key elements of the framework promoted by the Convention are:

- the need to obtain the prior informed consent of the country of origin before obtaining access to resources;
- the need for mutually agreed terms of access with the country of origin (and potentially with direct providers of genetic resources such as individual holders or local communities); and
- the importance of benefit-sharing; the obligation to share, in a fair and equitable way, benefits arising from the use of genetic resources with the Party that provides those resources.

How these elements can be implemented is elaborated in the Bonn Guidelines on Access and Benefit Sharing, which were adopted by COP-6 in 2002. Although the Bonn Guidelines are voluntary, they provide important support for indigenous and local interests. One of the explicit objectives of the Guidelines is “to contribute to the development by Parties of mechanisms and access and benefit-sharing regimes that recognize the protection of traditional knowledge, innovations and practices of indigenous

and local communities, in accordance with domestic laws and relevant international instruments.”

The Bonn Guidelines also note that three of the responsibilities of Parties which are countries of origin of genetic resources are to (a) “Seek to ensure that the commercialization and any other use of genetic resources should not prevent traditional use of genetic resources; (b) Establish mechanisms to ensure that their decisions are made available to relevant indigenous and local communities and relevant stakeholder, particularly indigenous and local communities”; and (c) “support measures, as appropriate, to enhance indigenous and local communities' capacity to represent their interests fully at negotiations [concerning access to genetic resources].

Users of genetic resources, should, under the Guidelines: (a) “respect customs, traditions, values and customary practices of indigenous and local communities; (b) “respond to requests for information from indigenous and local communities”; and (c) “ensure the fair and equitable sharing of benefits....arising from the commercialization or other use of genetic resources, in conformity with the mutually agreed terms they established with the indigenous and local communities or stakeholders involved.”

2.7.2 Access to and transfer of technologies

Under CBD Article 16, Parties agree to share technologies relevant to the conservation of biological diversity and the sustainable use of its components, and technologies that make use of genetic resources. Technology transfer under the Convention therefore incorporates both “traditional” technologies and newer biotechnologies. Biotechnology is defined in the Convention as “any technological application that uses biological systems, living organisms, or derivatives thereof, to make or modify products or processes for specific use.”

Technologies which make use of genetic resources are subject to special provisions aimed at allowing the country of origin of the resources to share in the benefits arising out of the development of these technologies. The Convention makes it a specific requirement that all Parties create a legislative, administrative or policy framework with the aim that such technologies are transferred, on mutually agreed terms, to those providing the genetic resources. This obligation extends to technology protected by patents and other intellectual property rights.

Article 16 provides that where relevant technology is subject to an intellectual property right such as a patent, the transfer must be on terms, which recognize and are consistent with the adequate and effective protection of the property right. However, it also goes on to provide that Parties are to cooperate in ensuring that intellectual property rights are supportive of, and do not run counter to, the objectives of the Convention.

2.7.3 Financial resources

All Parties undertake to provide financial support and incentives for implementation of the Convention at the national level, in accordance with their capabilities. In addition, developed country Parties agree to make available to developing country Parties, new and additional financial resources to meet "the agreed full incremental costs" of implementing measures to fulfil their CBD obligations. The key mechanism for delivering this incremental cost is the financial mechanism of the Convention, which is operated by the Global Environment Facility (GEF).

The Convention explicitly recognizes that the extent to which developing country Parties will be able to implement their obligations under the Convention will depend on the developed country Parties fulfilling their obligations to provide resources. The Convention also acknowledges that economic and social development remains the overriding priority of developing countries, and in this regard recognizes the special circumstances and needs of the small island developing states.

III. Institutional Structure of the Convention and the Decision-Making Process

3.1 Institutions of the CBD

The Convention establishes the standard institutional elements of a modern environmental treaty: a governing body (the Conference of the Parties); a secretariat; a scientific advisory body; a clearing-house mechanism and a financial mechanism. Collectively, these translate the general commitments of the Convention into binding norms or guidelines, and assist Parties with implementation.

3.1.1 The Conference of the Parties (COP)

The Convention establishes an institutional structure to monitor the implementation and the on-going development of the Convention. The Conference of the Parties is the governing body of the CBD process. It comprises all the Parties to the Convention and meets every two years, or as needed, to review progress in the implementation of the Convention, consider amendments and the adoption of Protocols to the Convention, and adopt programmes of work to achieve its objectives. It may establish such subsidiary bodies as may be required. Meetings are also attended by observers representing other governments (i.e. of countries that have not yet ratified the Convention) and international, non-governmental and community organizations, representative of many sectors of civil society, including indigenous and local communities, academia and the private sector.

Although the CBD is an international treaty, responsibility for its implementation resides with each Party at the national level. Thus the decisions of COP constitute guidance to Parties on how to proceed with their implementation of the Convention.

The COP has held seven ordinary meetings (see Box 1). It has also had an extraordinary meeting at which the Biosafety Protocol was adopted (which was held in two parts, January 1999 in Cartagena, Colombia and January 2000 in Montreal).

Previous Meetings of the Conference of the Parties

COP-1: The first meeting of the Conference of the Parties (Nassau, the Bahamas, November-December 1994) adopted decisions on: the medium-term work programme; designation of the permanent Secretariat; establishment of the Clearing-House Mechanism (CHM) and the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice (SBSTTA); and designation of the Global Environment Facility (GEF) as the interim financial mechanism.

COP-2: Major outcomes of the second meeting of the COP (Jakarta, Indonesia, November 1995) included: designation of Montreal, Canada, as the permanent location of the Secretariat; establishment of the Open-ended *Ad Hoc* Working Group on Biosafety; adoption of an overall programme of work for the Convention; and consideration of marine and coastal biodiversity.

COP-3: At its third meeting (Buenos Aires, Argentina, November 1996) the COP adopted decisions on several topics, including: work programmes on agricultural and forest biodiversity; a Memorandum of Understanding with the GEF; an agreement to hold an inter-sessional workshop on Article 8(j) regarding traditional knowledge; an application by the Executive Secretary for observer status to the World Trade Organization's (WTO) Committee on Trade and the Environment; and a statement from the CBD to the Special Session of the UN General Assembly to review implementation of Agenda 21.

COP-4: At its fourth meeting (Bratislava, Slovakia, May 1998) the COP adopted decisions on: inland water ecosystems; marine and coastal biodiversity; agricultural and forest biodiversity; the CHM's pilot phase; Article 8(j) on traditional knowledge; national reports; cooperation with other agreements, institutions and processes; activities of the GEF; incentive measures; access to genetic resources and benefit-sharing (ABS); public education and awareness; and the long-term work programme. A Ministerial Round Table was convened to discuss integrating biodiversity concerns into sectoral activities, such as tourism, and private sector participation in implementing the Convention's objectives.

COP-5: At its fifth meeting (Nairobi, Kenya, May 2000) the COP adopted decisions on: a work programme on dry and sub-humid lands; the ecosystem approach; access to genetic resources; alien species; sustainable use; biodiversity and tourism; incentive measures; the Global Strategy for Plant Conservation; the Global Taxonomy Initiative (GTI); the CHM; financial resources and mechanism; identification, monitoring and assessment, and indicators; and impact assessment, liability and redress. COP-5 also included a high-level segment on the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety, with a Ministerial Round Table and a special signing ceremony.

COP-6: The sixth meeting of the COP took place from 7-19 April 2002, in The Hague, the Netherlands. It adopted: a revised work programme for forest biodiversity; guiding principles for alien species; the Bonn Guidelines on ABS; and the CBD Strategic Plan. Its outcome also included decisions on: the Global Strategy for Plant Conservation; the GTI; the ecosystem approach; sustainable use; incentive measures; liability and redress; the CHM; financial resources and mechanism; cooperation with other conventions and international initiatives; a contribution to the ten-year review of Agenda 21; and Article 8(j) on traditional knowledge. A high level segment on the World Summit on Sustainable Development, including a Ministerial Round Table and a multi-stakeholder dialogue, were convened during the meeting.

COP-7: The seventh meeting of the COP-7 (Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, February 2004) adopted programmes of work on mountain biodiversity, protected areas, transfer of technology and scientific and technical cooperation. It called upon the Working Group on Access and Benefit Sharing to start negotiations towards an international regime of access to genetic resources and benefit sharing. COP-7 also adopted a series of other important decisions, including: goals and indicators for reviewing implementation of the Convention, its Strategic Plan and progress towards achieving the 2010 target of significantly reducing the rate of loss of biological diversity; the Akwé:Kon guidelines for the conduct of cultural, environmental and social impacts of proposed development activities likely to impact lands and waters traditionally occupied or used by indigenous or local communities; the Addis Ababa Principles and Guidelines for the Sustainable Use of Biodiversity; decisions on communication, education and public awareness; incentive measures, inland waters, and marine and coastal biodiversity. A Ministerial Segment focused on access and benefit sharing, transfer of technology and scientific assessments.

Source: International Institute for Sustainable Development, a Brief Introduction to the Convention on Biological Diversity,
http://www.iisd.ca/process/biodiv_wildlife-cbdintro.htm.

3.1.2 *Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice (SBSTTA)*

SBSTTA is the principal subsidiary body of the COP. It is constituted by government representatives with relevant specialist expertise, as well as observers from non-Party governments, the scientific community and other relevant organizations. Its mandate is to provide assessments of the status of biological diversity, assessments of the types of measures taken in accordance with the provisions of the Convention, and advice on any questions that the COP may put to it. SBSTTA has met eleven times (See Box 2).

As the scope and workload of the CBD's programme of work has expanded, SBSTTA has taken on an increasingly important role in carrying out preparatory negotiations in advance of meetings of the COP. Indeed, a great deal of SBSTTA's work now consists of negotiating the text of draft decisions to be put before the COP. As a result, SBSTTA has increasingly become more of a political than a technical body, with really substantive technical work delegated to both the Secretariat and a range of ad hoc technical expert groups and working groups.

Previous Meetings of SBSTTA

SBSTTA-1: SBSTTA-1 (Paris, France, September 1995) produced recommendations on: SBSTTA's *modus operandi*; components of biodiversity under threat; access to and transfer of technology; scientific and technical information to be contained in national reports; contributions to the UN Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) meetings on plant genetic resources for food and agriculture; and marine and coastal biodiversity. SBSTTA-1 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.

SBSTTA-2: SBSTTA-2 (Montreal, Canada, September 1996) produced recommendations on: 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.

SBSTTA-3: At SBSTTA-3, (Montreal, September 1997) delegates considered the implementation of the CHM's pilot phase, and formulated recommendations on: biodiversity in inland waters; marine and coastal biodiversity; agricultural biodiversity; forest biodiversity; biodiversity indicators; and participation of developing countries in the SBSTTA.

SBSTTA-4: During its fourth meeting (Montreal, June 1999), SBSTTA delegates made recommendations on: SBSTTA's work programme; the GTI; guiding principles to prevent the impact of alien species; control of plant gene expression; sustainable use of terrestrial biodiversity; incorporation of biodiversity into environmental impact assessment, and approaches and practices for sustainable use of biological resources, including tourism.

SBSTTA-5: The SBSTTA's fifth session (Montreal, January-February 2000) developed recommendations on, *inter alia*: inland water biodiversity; forest biodiversity; agricultural biodiversity; marine and coastal biodiversity, including coral bleaching; a programme of work on dry and sub-humid lands; alien species; the ecosystem approach; indicators; the pilot phase of the CHM; the second national reports; and *Ad Hoc* technical expert groups.

SBSTTA-6: The sixth meeting of the SBSTTA (Montreal, March 2001) featured a streamlined agenda with a focus on invasive alien species and emphasis on providing background information through presentations, side events, round tables and additional documentation. Recommendations were adopted on: *Ad Hoc* technical expert groups; marine and coastal biodiversity; inland water ecosystems; invasive alien species; scientific assessments; the GTI; biodiversity and climate change; and migratory species.

SBSTTA-7: The seventh session of SBSTTA (Montreal, November 2001) focused on forest biodiversity and its draft work programme, while also producing recommendations on: agricultural biodiversity, including the International Pollinators Initiative; the Global Strategy for Plant Conservation; incentive measures; indicators; and environmental impact assessment.

SBSTTA-8: The eighth meeting of SBSTTA (Montreal, March 2003) focused on drafting a programme of work on mountain biodiversity, and also adopted recommendations on: inland waters; marine and coastal biodiversity; dry and sub-humid lands; biodiversity and tourism; and SBSTTA operations.

SBSTTA-9: The ninth meeting of SBSTTA (Montreal, November 2003) produced recommendations on protected areas; technology transfer and cooperation; genetic use restriction technologies; biodiversity and climate change; monitoring and indicators; the Global Taxonomy Initiative; the integration of outcome-oriented targets into the CBD's programmes of work; outcome-oriented targets for the Global Strategy on Plant Conservation; mountain biodiversity; sustainable use; perverse incentives; invasive alien species; and guidelines for implementing the ecosystem approach.

SBSTTA-10: The tenth meeting of SBSTTA (Bangkok, Thailand, February 2005) developed a work programme on island biodiversity, and confirmed the suitability of various indicators for an assessment of progress towards the 2010 target to significantly reduce the current rate of biodiversity loss at the global level. It also adopted recommendations on: the integration of global outcome-oriented targets into the Convention's work programmes; steps for the review of implementation of the Global Taxonomy Initiative (GTI) programme of work; options for a cross-cutting initiative on biodiversity for food and nutrition; and proposals for the application of ways and means to remove or mitigate perverse incentives. SBSTTA-10 also adopted terms of reference for an *Ad Hoc* Technical Expert Group (AHTEG) on Biodiversity and Climate Change and transmitted its comments on the report of the AHTEG on genetic use restriction technologies (GURTs) to the Article 8(j) (traditional knowledge) Working Group, and recommended that the COP determine the scope of the mandate of the CBD's bodies in relation to GURTs.

SBSTTA-11: The eleventh meeting of SBSTTA (Montreal, November-December 2005) adopted fourteen recommendations to be transmitted to COP-8 in Curitiba in March 2006. As part of the preparatory process of COP-8, SBSTTA-11 considered a wide range of strategic, scientific and technical questions relating to the implementation of the Convention, with special attention the biodiversity of arid and sub-humid regions and the Global Taxonomy Initiative (GTI). It refined the goals and targets adopted by COP-7 in respect of access to genetic resources and benefit sharing, and provided guidance on the sustainable use of biodiversity and the promotion of synergies between activities relating to biodiversity, climate change, and land degradation and desertification. Discussions on the outcomes of the Millennium Ecosystem Assessment and the second Global Biodiversity Outlook further consolidated the scientific basis for the implementation of the Convention. On the other hand, discussions on marine and coastal biodiversity, access and benefit sharing, and alien invasive species proved

difficult and, as a result, brackets remained in some of the recommendations. Many believed this to be the result of the political concerns underlying these issues, including those relating to issues of sovereignty over natural resources, trade and genetic resources. These issues posed serious challenges that SBSTTA was obliged to face, leading many to question whether a scientific and technical body should have included such highly politicized items in the agenda of the meeting.

Source: International Institute for Sustainable Development, a Brief Introduction to the Convention on Biological Diversity, http://www.iisd.ca/process/biodiv_wildlife-cbdintro.htm.

3.1.3 *CBD Secretariat*

The CBD Secretariat is provided by UNEP and is located in Montreal, Canada. The principal functions of the Secretariat are to prepare for and service meetings of the COP and other subsidiary bodies of the Convention, and to coordinate with other international bodies. As a practical matter, a great deal of the Secretariat's time is devoted to preparing the increasing load of documentation for meetings of the COP and its subsidiary bodies, work which requires considerable substantive as well as procedural expertise. In any given year, the Secretariat must organize dozens of international meetings ranging from relatively small experts meetings to the massive, two-week meetings of the COP and prepare hundreds of papers. To facilitate its work, the Secretariat has developed partnerships with a wide variety of UN agencies, environmental conventions and non-governmental organizations to provide technical input and assistance.

3.1.4 *Clearing-House Mechanism*

The Convention provides for the establishment of a clearing-house mechanism to promote and facilitate technical and scientific cooperation (Article 18). A pilot phase of the clearing-house mechanism took place from 1996 to 1998 and, following evaluation of this, the COP has approved a clearing-house mechanism strategic plan and a programme of work until 2004. The CHM can be accessed at www.biodiv.org/CHM.

3.1.5 *Financial Mechanism*

The CBD establishes a financial mechanism for the provision of resources to developing countries for the purposes of implementing the provisions of the Convention. The financial mechanism is operated by the Global Environment Facility (GEF) and functions under the authority and guidance of the COP. GEF

activities are implemented by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), UNEP and the World Bank.

Under the provisions of the CBD, developed country Parties undertake to provide “new and additional financial resources to enable developing country Parties to meet the agreed full incremental cost of implementing the obligations of the Convention” (Article 20) and, in addition to the provision of resources through the GEF, these Parties may also provide financial resources through bilateral and multilateral channels. The COP at its first meeting adopted comprehensive guidance for the financial mechanism. This guidance has been refined and augmented at each of the subsequent meetings of the COP.

The GEF reports to each meeting of the COP on its implementation of the guidance. Since the establishment of the GEF as a pilot program in 1991 through June 2001, over \$1.3 billion has been provided in grants from the GEF Trust Fund for biological diversity activities, complemented by \$1.3 billion in co-financing, for a total of \$2.6 billion. Analysis of GEF data from 1991 through 2004 reveals that total GEF allocations to the biodiversity focal area for that period were almost \$1.89 billion and that a further US\$3.8 billion were mobilized in co-funding (from counterpart funding, bilateral agencies, other development institutions, the private sector and non-governmental organizations). The GEF is, therefore, a significant source of international financing for protected areas, and it will continue to be so in the coming years. The 2002-2006 GEF replenishment, agreed in mid-2002, totals \$2.92 billion, and roughly US \$552 million of this will be programmed for biodiversity projects in developing countries and countries with economies in transition.

The biodiversity portfolio is made up of four strategic priorities which define and guide work in the biodiversity focal area: catalyzing the sustainability of protected areas, integrating biodiversity into productive landscapes and sectors, building capacity for implementing the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety, and generating and disseminating best practices for addressing current and emerging biodiversity issues.

Six operational programmes covering a variety of ecosystems and the GEF's other existing policies also provide guidance.

The strategic emphasis of the biodiversity focal area is on the in situ conservation and sustainable use (Strategic Priorities One and Two), and on increasing the catalytic impact of the GEF throughout its portfolio. The Strategic Priorities support the current work and programmes of the CBD.

3.1.6 *Other CBD Bodies and Meetings*

The COP can establish inter-sessional bodies and meetings to carry out work and provide advice between ordinary meetings of the COP. Examples of such bodies include:

- *Ad Hoc* Working Groups on Biosafety, Article 8(j) and Related Provisions, and Access and Benefit-Sharing;
- *Ad Hoc* Technical Expert Groups (AHTEGs), Liaison Groups and international technical meetings on a wide variety of topics;
- The Inter-sessional Meetings on the Operations of the Convention (ISOC) and the Multi-Year Programme of Work (MYPOW).

All such bodies report to the COP or to SBSTTA, depending on the nature of the body and the COP's instructions.

Implementation of the Convention is also supported by working groups, meetings and activities outside the formal Convention process. These can be organized in conjunction with the Secretariat and Parties, or outside the structure of the Convention. Examples can include expert meetings, regional and sub-regional preparatory meetings for COP, side events during COP and SBSTTA meetings, and initiatives such as the Global Taxonomy Initiative (GTI)⁴.

3.1.7 *Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety*

The sole existing protocol to the Convention is the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety⁵. It was adopted by the Conference of the Parties in 2000 and entered into force in September 2002. The aim of the Protocol is to protect biodiversity from potential risks arising from living modified organisms (LMOs)⁶ resulting from modern biotechnology. It establishes procedures to guarantee that countries receive the information necessary to take informed decisions on whether to permit the import of such organisms into their territory (the 'advanced informed agreement procedure'). The Protocol is a pioneer in its practical application of the precautionary approach: the idea that the lack of clear scientific certainty is not a reason to not take measures to avoid potential risks. The Protocol also has the potential to make a real

⁴ The Global Taxonomy Initiative was established by COP to address the lack of taxonomic information (the identification and classification of organisms) and of specialists in many parts of the world, as a means of improving decision making on matters relating to biodiversity.

⁵ Biosafety is the term used to denote measures to reduce or eliminate potential risks resulting from biotechnology and its products.

⁶ A living modified organism is any organism that possesses a novel combination of genetic material obtained through the use of modern biotechnology.

contribution to the transfer of technology and to access to information by developing countries.

The Conference of the Parties to the Convention also acts as the Meeting of the Parties to the Protocol, and the Secretariat and the Financial Mechanism undertake the same functions in relation to the Protocol. The Protocol is supported by a Biosafety Clearing House, established to facilitate the exchange of information on living modified organisms and to assist countries with implementing the Protocol. The Protocol currently has 132 Parties and the next Meeting of the Parties (MOP-3) will be held in Curitiba from 13 to 17 March 2006, the week before COP-8.

3.2 Decision-making process

Collectively these bodies work together to develop the provisions of the Convention. The programme of work identifies when a topic is to be considered in detail. Progress on issues requires the collection of accurate and reliable information from Parties. Articles 23, 24 and 25 indicate the types of information required, including preliminary rapid assessments, indicators and criteria, human impacts and ways and means to minimize negative influences. Information is provided by Parties through national and thematic reports, which have been standardized into common formats. This allows for analysis and comparison to be made, which in turn allows for the identification of priorities.

The Secretariat prepares a preliminary synthesis of the information provided by Parties for consideration by the appropriate body of the CBD. The Secretariat also draws on other sources such as the latest literature on the topic to supplement the information provided by Parties and to provide the context or background to the issue. The Secretariat often uses small groups of experts to assist with the preliminary synthesis. The two main types of groups it uses for these purposes are liaison groups and ad hoc technical experts groups. Liaison groups tend to be composed of representatives of partners organizations, mostly intergovernmental organizations. Ad hoc technical experts group (AHTEGs) are composed of government nominated experts. AHTEGs are established by SBSTTA and as a result report directly to SBSTTA.

The appropriate subsidiary body considers the papers prepared by the Secretariat and relevant technical panels or groups. This information is contained in the official documents of the meeting. Other information from unofficial sources is also made available to the meeting. SBSTTA is the only permanent subsidiary body of the Convention and deals with the scientifically-oriented matters. "Non-scientific" issues such as access and benefits sharing or traditional knowledge are dealt with by other ad hoc bodies. All subsidiary bodies provide their advice to COP in the form of recommendations. Reports of SBSTTA and other subsidiary bodies generally consist of two parts a formal report of the proceedings of the meeting, and the actual draft decisions being recommended to the SBSTTA or COP.

COP adopts decisions based on these recommendations, particularly the recommended draft decisions. Most of its decisions to date have been to establish a programme to consider and further develop particular issues. These programmes tend to be quite elaborate and long term. They usually establish a vision for future work and identify the types of products which the programme should be working towards, a timetable for those products and the means to achieve these goals. Periodically, SBSTTA and COP review implementation of these work programmes.

The outputs produced under these work programmes include: (a) manuals of best practice; (b) guidelines; (c) codes of conduct; (d) guidance for the institutions of the Convention; (e) criteria; (f) indicators; (g) standards/labelling; and (h) protocols.

Only decisions of the Conference of the Parties have any legal significance recommendations of subsidiary bodies are only of significance for the subsidiary body and the Secretariat.

3.3 COP procedures, management and documents

The conduct and management of CBD meetings of all types are governed by the rules of procedure. These are contained in COP decision I/1 and cover things such as the setting of the agenda, representation and credentials, officers of the meeting, conduct of business and voting. As a result, most CBD meetings follow similar types of procedures, with meetings of the COP being the most important and complex.

3.3.1 The COP plenary

In order to improve efficiency, meetings of the COP are organized into various different groups. The largest and most important is the Plenary. The Plenary is chaired by the President of the meeting. The meeting of the COP in plenary decides upon organizational matters, such as the election of officers, considers the reports of subsidiary bodies, and adopts the report of the meeting along with the decisions taken. The meeting in Plenary is also directly responsible for the negotiation of the budget and any “pending issues”, which refers to those issues that were not decided at the previous meeting.

The COP usually only meets in Plenary at the beginning and end of COP meetings, although it sometimes briefly convenes to review progress in the Working Groups (discussed below). The present agenda for COP8, for example, has the COP8 plenary meeting only on the morning of the first day, a day and a half at the end of the meeting, and one afternoon mid-way through the meeting for a review of progress.

3.3.2 COP Working Groups

The main work of the COP is carried out in two parallel Working Groups, each of which takes up a specific set of issues on the agenda⁷. This mechanism is where most of the agenda items are taken up and where Parties develop draft decisions for consideration in the final Plenary. Typically an item is introduced by the Secretariat highlighting the relevant document(s) for the item. Then Parties, followed by observers, make introductory interventions.

If there is general agreement on an issue the chair of the working group will then propose a draft text that represents the various views expressed. If there are important differences in the views expressed then the chair will use an informal negotiating process, usually called a “contact group” or “friends of the chair” group.

3.3.3 Contact groups and “friends of the chair”

Contact groups are generally established for issues where many Parties have intervened, there are significant differences, and the chair believes there will be significant participation in informal negotiations. “Friends of the Chair” groups are generally used for issues where the differences expressed were not so great, or where fewer Parties express interest in negotiating the issue.

There is no legal difference between the two mechanisms as both are informal and both are established by the chair. Even though these mechanisms are informal, most of the negotiation at COP meetings takes place in these informal groups, and it is in these arenas that most of the text of decisions is developed and agreed.

The chair may decide whether a contact or friends of the chair group is “open-ended” (open to all Parties who wish to participate) or restricted to certain parties, or that decision may be left to the individual or individuals that the chair asks to chair the informal group. In some cases, the Working Group chair may appoint two co-chairs for a contact group, one from a developed country and one from a developing country. As a general matter, the COP process has been fairly relaxed about allowing open-ended attendance in contact groups, and chairs have been generally relaxed about allowing interventions from NGOs, indigenous representatives, and other observers particularly where observers make useful suggestions that move the negotiations forward.

⁷ In COPs 1-3, this work was carried out by a “Committee of the Whole” (CoW), meaning a single Working Group in which all issues on the agenda were taken up except those reserved for the plenary. As the COP agenda has grown in complexity, the Parties have decided to operate through two parallel Working Groups, and this has been the practice since COP-4.

The COP plenary and Working Groups meet Monday-Friday from 10:00-13:00 and 15:00-18:00, with simultaneous interpretation provided in all six official UN languages (Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Russian and Spanish). For COP-8 the Government of Brazil will arrange for simultaneous interpretation into Portuguese during the official sessions. Contact groups, regional group meetings, and other informal meetings generally meet outside of these hours, either early in the morning, during the lunch break, or in the evening, without benefit of interpretation. Contact groups on contentious issues have often extended late into the evening at previous COPs.

3.3.4 The ministerial segment of the COP

In addition to the main meeting there are usually many satellite or side meetings. The most important of these satellite meetings is the High-level or Ministerial Segment, where Ministers meet together to consider some of the key political issues on the agenda of the COP. The Ministerial Segment is organized and hosted by the host government, which also chooses the issues for discussion. At COP-8 the Ministerial Segment will take place at the start of the second week (27-29 March) and will be presided by Minister Marina Silva.

The objective of the Ministerial Segment of COP-8 is to examine ways to promote the cross-cutting implementation of the Convention, focusing on the inter-connections between the CBD and other key international regimes and processes, and the harmonization of implementation at global and national levels. The background to the discussions will be the report of the Millennium Ecosystem Assessment and the urgency of action to meet the 2010 target. Through four interactive panels on biodiversity and trade, biodiversity and agriculture, biodiversity and the eradication of poverty, and access to genetic resources and benefit sharing environment ministers will debate these issues with specialists and representatives of these other regimes and processes.

3.3.5 Other side meetings

Other types of side meetings include the regional preparatory meetings prior to the actual meeting itself, the Global Biodiversity Forum event often held immediately prior to COP meetings, and the numerous side events organized by Parties and observers during the course of the meeting during the lunch interval or after the closure of the official sessions at 18:00 hours.

The programme of side events inside the COP venue is the responsibility of the CBD Secretariat. Application forms for organizations who would like to organize side events are available on the Convention website⁸. There is also the possibility to

⁸ www.biodiv.org

organize events and meetings in other locations in Curitiba and organizations interested in this possibility should contact the local organizing committee⁹. Side events are useful opportunities with good outreach possibilities for addressing scientific and political questions, or for demonstrating project or other experiences relating to implementation of the CBD. Many members of official COP delegations and other participants will try to attend these events.

Particularly at COPs, there are often evening receptions hosted by the host country, the CBD Secretariat, Parties and observers. While they may appear outwardly to be informal social events enlivened by light refreshments and drinks, they are in fact a key venue for gathering information on countries' positions and for informal negotiations.

None of these are side events are officially part of the COP meeting. Nevertheless, they provide a significant amount of important information and provide an important opportunity for networking and for the exchange of experiences and views.

3.3.6 COP governance: The president and the bureau

There are numerous official bodies and officers that provide for the governance of COP meetings. The most important of these is the President. In the past, this post has generally been held by the Minister of Environment from the host government. He or she acts in this capacity as an official of the meeting and no longer participates in the meeting as a representative of his or her particular government. The President opens and closes meeting, determines the order of speakers, and rules on Points of Order.

The President relies upon the Bureau to help manage the meeting. The Bureau is made up of 10 Parties ("Vice-Presidents") plus the President. Each UN Region elects two representatives to the Bureau. In practice the Bureau plays a similar role to an executive board. The Rapporteur of the meeting is the member of Bureau who is responsible for preparing the report. He or she discharges this function with the assistance of the Secretariat. Current members of the Bureau are Albania, Canada, Cuba, Ecuador, Egypt, Ireland, Kiribati, Mongolia, Namibia and the Russian Federation. These Parties were elected at COP-7, and will serve until the end of COP-8. Another 10 Parties will be elected by COP-8, to serve from the end of COP-8 until the end of COP-9 in 2008.

3.3.7 *Types of COP participants*

There are various types of participants in COP meetings. The key ones are Parties, because it is they at the end of the meeting that adopt the report and its decisions. Since the relevant rules of procedure that would allow for voting have not been adopted yet by the COP, COP decisions are taken by consensus of the Parties. All delegates of Parties need to prove that they have been duly appointed by their government. This is done by presenting their “credentials”. Credentials are issued by the Head of State or Government or by the Minister for Foreign Affairs and reviewed by the Bureau to ensure that they are in order and comply with the rules of procedure.

Parties operate in many different groups. The official groups recognized in the rules of procedure are the UN Regional Groups (Africa, Asia, CEE, GRULAC and WEOG). Some of the other active groupings in the CBD processes are: G77+China, JUSCANZ, EU, AOSIS, and the Group of Like-minded Megadiverse Countries¹⁰. Particularly in the COP setting, where many issues are being negotiated simultaneously and many smaller delegations do not have the capacity to formulate their own detailed positions on each issue, the positions of regional groupings are very important. Regional groupings generally establish their initial positions in regional preparatory meetings held a month or two before the COP. At the COP, more detailed group positions and negotiating strategies are worked out in closed meetings of the relevant group, held outside of formal COP hours.

The term “observers” usually refers to governments who have not become Parties, but also includes other types of participants. These other participants are categorized by the Secretariat as UN bodies, inter-governmental organizations (IGOs), non-governmental organizations (NGOs,) indigenous communities and academic institutions.

Participant can be identified by the colour of their badge: Green (Parties); Orange (non-Party governments); Beige (Secretariat); Blue (UN Agencies); Yellow (Intergovernmental Organizations); Pink (NGOs); Orange (Indigenous Communities)¹¹.

¹⁰ See the Glossary for an explanation of these terms.

¹¹ Curiously, the badge colors for indigenous communities and non-Party governments have been almost identical at past CBD meetings – two very similar shades of orange.

3.3.8 COP documents

The COP considers each item of the agenda on the basis of the documents before the meeting. There are five basic classes of documentation. The first is the official documents of the meeting (known as 'pre-session documents'). These are prepared by the Executive Secretary. They are denoted by the code UNEP/CBD/COP/8/#. One is prepared for each item of the agenda. Additional or supplementary information is sometime presented in a document whose number is UNEP/CBD/COP/8/#/Add#. Sometimes a revised version of a document is distributed with the number UNEP/CBD/COP/7/#/Rev#. The pre-session documents for COP-8 are available on the CBD website¹². There are approximately 45 documents, together with a possibly even greater number of 'Information Documents' (identified as UNEP/CBD/COP/8/Inf.#). The total volume of documents to be studied by delegates as the basis for the discussions thus runs to several hundred pages and this can represent a difficult burden for those countries with small delegations.

These official documents provide the reason for the matter being on the agenda, a synthesis of views submitted on the item, other relevant information and where appropriate draft elements of a decision. The documents are presented in the six UN languages.

Another important set of documents are the draft decisions and draft reports produced during the process of the COP meeting. These include "L" (Limited) documents, which are given a number, are translated, are referred to in the final report of the COP and represent the final version of a text. "CRP" (Conference Room Paper) documents are also given a number and translated, but are not referred to in the final COP report, since they are only near-final versions of draft decisions. Next there is the chair's text. These are not given a number code, are not translated and are legally considered "non-documents" or "non-papers".

"Information" documents are officially provided to the COP by the Secretariat, and are generally either background information on particular topics gathered by the Secretariat, reports of subsidiary bodies such as expert panels, or documents officially submitted by Parties and observers.

While not officially discussed in the COP, Information documents often provide important background information and, in some cases, illuminate the views of Parties on particular issues before the COP. Information documents are not translated unless the translation is done by the Party or observer providing the document.

In order to save money and cut back on paper waste, and as the number of papers and people at COP meetings has grown, the Secretariat has, over the past years, become increasingly reluctant to print vast numbers of the official documents. Observers therefore sometimes find it difficult to get copies of COP documents. All of the official COP documents are posted on the CBD Secretariat website, however and can be downloaded and printed from there by those with access to the internet and a printer.

In addition to these documents that are officially prepared and distributed by the Secretariat, observers generally distribute vast numbers of unofficial documents at COP meetings. These are generally displayed on tables outside of the principal meeting rooms.

Perhaps the most read of these informal documents are the daily bulletins prepared by the *Earth Negotiations Bulletin*, a non-partisan reporting service which provides a succinct daily summary of the negotiations the previous day, as well as photos and audio and video footage on their website¹³. The daily bulletins are produced in English, French and Spanish, and are generally distributed at the official documents desk as well as outside the meeting rooms. They are also available on the website.

In order to follow the discussions, perhaps the two most important documents for COP8 are:

Document UNEP/CBD/COP/8/1/Add.1/Rev.1 - Annotated Agenda: This document explains the background to each item on the agenda, references the official documents to be considered in relation to each item, and reviews the various meetings and reports that have consider the issue since the last COP. This document is particularly important because it gives an indication of the type of decision that is expected at COP, which can range from merely “noting progress” on an issue to taking very important and substantive decisions such as establishing a work program. This document also has an

¹³ <http://www.iisd.ca>

“organization of work” annexed to it, which gives a preliminary indication of which issues will be taken up by which working groups on particular days during the COP.

Document UNEP/CBD/COP/8/1/Add.2: This document compiles the various elements of draft decisions that have been proposed by the inter-sessional meetings for the consideration of the Conference of the Parties and in the official documents prepared by the Secretariat. As such it represents the starting point for most of the negotiations that will go on at COP-8.

IV Development of the Provisions of the Convention

The work of the COP has been organized through programmes of work that identify the priorities for future periods. The first medium-term programme of work (1995-1997) saw a focus on developing the procedures and *modus operandi* (methods of operating) of the institutions, determining priorities, supporting national biodiversity strategies, and developing guidance to the financial mechanism. Implementation of this programme of work also saw the evolution of a process for the development of COP decisions and the application of the general principles of the Convention to specific thematic areas and crosscutting issues. In addition, at its second meeting, the COP decided that the ecosystem approach should be the primary framework of action to be taken under the Convention. This view has been reiterated in subsequent decisions of the COP.

At its fourth meeting, the COP adopted a programme of work for its fifth, sixth and seventh meetings (1999-2004), and, at its fifth meeting, approved a longer-term programme of work for SBSTTA, and began the development of a strategic plan for the Convention, which was adopted at COP-6 in 2002.

4.1 Thematic work programmes

Since the entry into force of the Convention, Parties have developed seven thematic programmes of work. Each of these lays out a vision and basic principles to guide future work, identifies potential results, and suggests a timetable and means to achieve the outcomes (see Table 1). The Parties, the Secretariat and relevant organizations contribute to the implementation of the thematic programmes of work, which are periodically reviewed by COP and by SBSTTA.

CBD thematic programmes of work

- Agricultural biodiversity
- Biodiversity of inland waters
- Marine and coastal biodiversity
- Forest biodiversity
- Biodiversity of dry and sub-humid lands
- Mountain biodiversity
- Island biodiversity (under development)

Each thematic programme establishes basic principles to guide future work; sets out key issues for consideration; identifies potential outputs; and suggests a timetable and means for achieving these outputs. COP and SBSTTA periodically review implementation of the work programmes provided. It is intended that implementation of the work programmes will involve contributions from Parties, the Secretariat, relevant intergovernmental organizations and other organizations, including NGOs.

4.2 Cross-cutting issues

The COP has explicitly directed that the consideration of certain cross-cutting issues should be integrated into the thematic work programmes. Essentially these correspond to the issues addressed in the Convention's substantive provisions in Articles 6-20. The current cross-cutting issues include the following:

- Access to Genetic Resources and Benefit Sharing;
- Alien Species;
- Article 8(j): Traditional Knowledge, Innovations and Practices;
- Biological Diversity and Tourism;
- Climate Change and Biological Diversity;
- Economics, Trade and Incentives;
- Ecosystem Approach;
- Global Strategy for Plant Conservation;
- Global Taxonomy Initiative;
- Impact Assessment, Liability and Redress;
- Indicators;
- Liability and redress
- Protected Areas;
- Public Education and Awareness;
- Sustainable Use of Biodiversity; and
- Transfer of Technology and Technological Cooperation

Some cross cutting initiatives directly support work under thematic programmes, for example the work on indicators. Others develop discrete products, which in some instances are quite separate from the thematic programmes - for example, the work on access to genetic resources and benefit sharing that led to adoption of the Bonn Guidelines. These cross cutting issues have an important role to play in bringing cohesion to the work of the Convention as they provide the substantive bridges or links between the thematic programmes.

4.3 Ecosystem approach

The ecosystem approach has been adopted by the Conference of the Parties as the principal framework for the analysis and implementation of the objectives of the Convention. It is a strategy for the integrated management of resources that constitutes an holistic approach to the management of biodiversity and its components. It involves the management of resources in scales and coverage that not only conserve the components of biodiversity, but also protect the essential processes and functions of the ecosystem of which they are part (for example, nutrient cycles, carbon sequestration, freshwater supply and food security). The ecosystem approach recognizes that humans, and their cultural diversity, are an integral part of ecosystems. However the approach involves the management of ecosystems and natural resources in such a way as to reflect their intrinsic values, as well the services they provide to humans, in a fair and equitable way. The entire implementation of the Convention is to be carried out and assessed in accordance with the ecosystem approach.

At its fifth meeting, the COP endorsed a description of the ecosystem approach as follows:

“....a strategy for the integrated management of land, water and living resources that promoted conservation and sustainable use in an equitable way....An ecosystem approach is based on the application of appropriate scientific methodologies focused on levels of biological organization, which encompass the essential structure, processes, functions and interactions among organisms and their environment. It recognizes that humans, with their cultural diversity, are an integral component of many ecosystems.”

Subsequently, a series of expert meetings organized by the Secretariat have elaborated a set of principles for implementing the ecosystem approach. COP-7 agreed that priority should be given to the implementation of the ecosystem approach, and that additional guidelines would be welcome.

4.4 Principles, guidelines and other tools

Work carried out under thematic areas and in respect of important provisions of the Convention has resulted in a series of principles, guidelines and other tools that facilitate implementation of the CBD. These have been developed on the basis of recommendations of technical and legal experts.

Principles, Guidelines and other tools developed within the framework of the Convention

- Description, Principles and Operational Guidance of the Ecosystem Approach (<http://www.biodiv.org/programmes/cross-cutting/ecosystem/default.asp>)
- Bonn Guidelines on Access to genetic Resources and the Fair and Equitable Sharing of the Benefits Arising out of their Utilization (<http://www.biodiv.org/programmes/socio-eco/benefit/bonn.asp>)
- Addis Abeba Principles and Guidelines for the Sustainable Use of Biodiversity (<http://www.biodiv.org/programmes/socio-eco/use/addis-principles.asp>)
- Guiding principles for the prevention, introduction and mitigation of impacts of alien species that threaten ecosystems, habitats or species (<http://www.biodiv.org/decisions/?dec=VI/23>)
- Akwé:Kon Voluntary Guidelines for the Conduct of Cultural, Environmental and Social Impact Assessment regarding Developments Proposed to Take Place on, or which are Likely to Impact on, Sacred Sites and on Lands and Waters Traditionally Occupied or Used by Indigenous and Local Communities (<http://www.biodiv.org/doc/ref/tk-akwe-en.pdf>)
- Guidelines for incorporating biodiversity-related issues into environmental impact assessment legislation and/or processes and in strategic environmental assessment (<http://www.biodiv.org/decisions/default.aspx?dec=VI/7>)
- Guidelines on Sustainable Tourism Development (<http://www.biodiv.org/programmes/socioeco/tourism/guidelines.asp>)
- Proposals for the Development and Implementation of Incentive Measures (<http://www.biodiv.org/programmes/socio-eco/incentives/proposals.asp>)
- Proposals for the application of ways and means to remove or mitigate perverse incentives (<http://www.biodiv.org/decisions/default.aspx?dec=VII/18>)

4.5 Strategic Plan

In 2002 the Conference of the Parties adopted a Strategic Plan under which Parties commit themselves to a more effective and coherent implementation of the three objectives of the Convention, to achieve by 2010 a significant reduction of the current rate of biodiversity loss at the global, regional and national level as a contribution to poverty alleviation and to the benefit of all life on earth. This target was subsequently endorsed by Heads of Government at the World Summit on Sustainable Development and by the United Nations General Assembly. The World Summit also emphasized the essential role played by biodiversity and by the 2010 target in achieving the Millennium Development Goals¹⁴.

Strategic goals

Goal 1: The Convention is fulfilling its leadership role in international biodiversity issues.

Goal 2: Parties have improved financial, human, scientific, technical, and technological capacity to implement the Convention.

Goal 3: National biodiversity strategies and action plans and the integration of biodiversity concerns into relevant sectors serve as an effective framework for the implementation of the objectives of the Convention.

Goal 4: There is a better understanding of the importance of biodiversity and of the Convention, and this has led to broader engagement across society in implementation.

In 2004 the Conference of the Parties adopted a framework to evaluate progress in the implementation of the Strategic Plan and, in particular, the 2010 target. This includes the establishment of the Working Group on Review of Implementation, and the identification of a set of goals and sub-targets for seven focal areas. Indicators for these sub-targets are being developed. The combination of goals, sub-targets and indicators builds on

¹⁴ In September 2000, at the United Nations Millennium Summit, world leaders agreed a set of goals and outcome-oriented targets to combat poverty, hunger, disease, illiteracy, environmental degradation, and discrimination against women. These Millennium Development Goals are to be achieved by 2015.

the approach adopted by the Global Strategy for Plant Conservation. It provides a flexible framework within which national and/or regional targets may be developed to assist progress towards the 2010 target.

4.6 Provisional Framework for Goals and Targets

Protect the components of biodiversity

Goal 1. Promote the conservation of the biological diversity of ecosystems, habitats and biomes

Target 1.1: At least 10% of each of the world's ecological regions effectively conserved.

Target 1.2: Areas of particular importance to biodiversity protected

Goal 2. Promote the conservation of species diversity

Target 2.1: Restore, maintain, or reduce the decline of populations of species of selected taxonomic groups

Target 2.2: Status of threatened species improved.

Goal 3. Promote the conservation of genetic diversity

Target 3.1: Genetic diversity of crops, livestock, and of harvested species of trees, fish and wildlife and other valuable species conserved, and associated indigenous and local knowledge maintained.

Promote sustainable use

Goal 4. Promote sustainable use and consumption

Target 4.1: Biodiversity-based products derived from sources that are sustainably managed, and Production areas managed consistent with the conservation of biodiversity.

Target 4.2 Unsustainable consumption, of biological resources, or that impacts upon biodiversity, reduced

Target 4.3: No species of wild flora or fauna endangered by international trade

Address threats to biodiversity

Goal 5. Pressures from habitat loss, land use change and degradation, and unsustainable water use, reduced.

Target 5.1: Rate of loss and degradation of natural habitats decreased

Goal 6. Control threats from invasive alien species

Target 6.1: Pathways for major potential alien invasive species controlled.

Target 6.2: Management plans in place for major alien species that threaten ecosystems, habitats or species.

Goal 7. Address challenges to biodiversity from climate change, and pollution

Target 7.1: Maintain and enhance resilience of the components of biodiversity to adapt to climate change

Target 7.2: Reduce pollution and its impacts on biodiversity

Maintain goods and services from biodiversity to support human well-being

Goal 8. Maintain capacity of ecosystems to deliver goods and services and support livelihoods

Target 8.1: Capacity of ecosystems to deliver goods and services maintained.

Target 8.2: biological resources that support sustainable livelihoods, local food security and health care, especially of poor people maintained

Protect traditional knowledge, innovations and practices

Goal 9 Maintain socio-cultural diversity of indigenous and local communities

Target 9.1 Protect traditional knowledge, innovations and practices

Target 9.2: Protect the rights of indigenous and local communities over their traditional knowledge, innovations and practices, including their rights to benefit sharing

Ensure the fair and equitable sharing of benefits arising out of the use of genetic resources

Goal 10. Ensure the fair and equitable sharing of benefits arising out of the use of genetic resources

Target 10.1: All transfers of genetic resources are in line with the Convention on Biological Diversity, the International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture and other applicable agreements.

Target 10.2: Benefits arising from the commercial and other utilization of

genetic resources shared with the countries providing such resources

Ensure provision of adequate resources

Goal 11: Parties have improved financial, human, scientific, technical and technological capacity to implement the Convention

Target 11.1: New and additional financial resources are transferred to developing country Parties, to allow for the effective implementation of their commitments under the Convention, in accordance with Article 20.

Target 11.2: Technology is transferred to developing country Parties, to allow for the effective implementation of their commitments under the Convention, in accordance with its Article 20, paragraph 4.

4.7 Cooperation

An important aspect of the implementation of the Convention is cooperation at global, regional and national levels. At the international level, coordination with other treaties, particularly multilateral environmental agreements such as the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change or the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands, is essential in order to ensure that goals and targets are mutually supportive, or at least are not in conflict. The CBD cooperates with related treaties by means of liaison groups. It also cooperates with international treaties and organizations, such as the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) and the International Maritime Organization (IMO), through its work programmes. The CBD is currently assessing options for a global partnership on biodiversity, involving relevant stakeholders from all sectors.

Cooperation with relevant treaties and organizations at national and regional levels is as important as global cooperation, given that the majority of international treaties are implemented at national level. In addition, cooperation maximises the use of scarce resources, improving efficiency in the implementation of biodiversity-related activities. Cooperation can also result in the availability of additional resources for biodiversity management.

The 2010 target highlights the importance of engaging in the implementation of the Convention and its three objectives all those organizations and sectors that have an impact on biodiversity. Goal 4 of the Strategic Plan acknowledges the role played by the private sector through its impacts on biodiversity. The Plan encourages cooperation with all relevant sectors, including the private sector, as a means of achieving the 2010 target.

V. Implementation of the Convention

Implementation of the CBD is largely the responsibility of Parties and most action for implementation needs to be taken at the national level. Each Party has autonomy to decide how to go about implementing the general provisions of the Convention and the specific guidance provided by the Conference of the Parties.

Nevertheless, the Convention as a framework or road map, guides all Parties to similar goals, namely, to conserve biological diversity, to use the components of biodiversity in a sustainable way, and to share the benefits arising out of the use of genetic resources. Also, even given the wide disparities and differences between Parties, many measures will be common to all, and some will even be universal. Foremost among the universal measures are the requirements of Article 6, which requires Parties to develop national biodiversity strategies and action plans (or adapt existing strategies) and mainstream biodiversity into all sectors. Another key commitment is the requirement of Article 26 for Parties to report on their efforts to implement the Convention. Tellingly, Articles 6 and 26, unlike the other provisions of the Convention, are mandatory and not qualified by the phrase “as far as possible and appropriate”, which qualifies many other CBD obligations.

5.1 National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans (NBSAPs)

Because the CBD relies on national-level implementation, development and adoption of NBSAPs is the foundation for implementation of the Convention by Parties. Ideally, a national strategy reflects how the country intends to fulfil the objectives of the Convention in light of its specific national circumstances, and the related action plan constitutes the sequence of steps to be taken to meet these goals.

Procedures recommended by the Conference of the Parties for developing national biodiversity strategies start with the need to identify the biodiversity within the country and assess its status, if this hasn't already been done. With this assessment, and having identified an institutional framework and operational responsibilities, the strategy can then be developed to address the three objectives of the Convention in the light of national circumstances.

COP has emphasized that a) NBSAPs are the principle vehicle for implementation of the CBD and its Strategic Plan, and b) that NBSAPs ..47.

should be developed or revised as a means of contributing to the implementation of the Strategic Plan and the framework of goals and sub-targets, covering the different programmes of work.

Despite the differences between Parties, many of the NBSAPs are very similar in structure and contain a similar level of detail. For most Parties, developing a national biodiversity strategy has involved:

- establishing the institutional framework for developing the strategy, including designating leadership and ensuring a participative approach;
- allocating or obtaining financial resources for the strategy process;
- assessing the status of biological diversity within its jurisdiction;
- articulating and debating the vision and goals for the strategy through a national dialogue with relevant stakeholders;
- comparing the actual situation to the objectives and targets;
- formulating options for action that cover key issues identified;
- establishing criteria and priorities to help choose from among options; and
- matching actions and objectives.

Developing and implementing the national biodiversity action plans generally involves:

- assigning roles and responsibilities;
- agreeing the tools and approaches to be used;
- establishing timeframes and deadlines for completion of tasks;
- obtaining the budget;
- agreeing indicators and measurable targets against which progress can be assessed;
- determining reporting responsibilities, intervals and formats; and
- establishing procedures for incorporating lessons learned into the revision and updating of the strategy.

There have been a number of intergovernmental workshops to review regional implementation of the Convention, providing an opportunity for national focal points and others to share experiences. A common general conclusion is that biodiversity planning, in the context of the comprehensive scope of the Convention, has been a new concept for which there were no prior models or examples of best practice, and for which few methodological tools were available.

Specific problems identified by Parties across the globe in the biodiversity planning process included:

- inadequate political support for crucial aspects of the planning process and for approval of action;
- weak legislative base;
- inadequate information;
- lack of appropriate scientific and technical expertise and experience in biodiversity planning;
- lack of institutional coordination within Governments, and between Governments and stakeholders;
- difficulties in access to and availability of funding;
- direct economic pressure on ecosystems and a lack of national budget allocations;
- need for increased public education and awareness;
- need for recognition of the long-term nature of the NBSAP process;
- complexity of translating a biodiversity strategy into a costed and prioritized action plan; and
- scarcity of examples of the effective integration of biodiversity considerations into sectoral or cross-sectoral planning.

The Secretariat has recently noted that:

Progress towards this goal¹⁵ remains poor. While some 100 Parties have developed national biodiversity strategies and action plans, this represents little over half of all Parties 12 years after the entry into force of the Convention. Satisfactory implementation of national biodiversity strategies and action plans is presumably limited to even fewer countries. However, there is a paucity of good information available to gauge this, because of the low compliance rate in preparing national reports and the limited usefulness of the information contained therein. This lack of information limits the potential for improvement through either exchange of good practices among Parties or through feedback to inform further guidance to Conference of the Parties.

¹⁵ Goal 3: National biodiversity strategies and action plans and the integration of biodiversity concerns into relevant sectors serve as an effective framework for the implementation of the objectives of the Convention.

The Secretariat also noted that:

there are a number of shortcomings in the total body of guidance developed:

(a) Guidance relating to the substantive scope of national biodiversity strategies and action plans is scattered among a large number of individual decisions, particularly among those dealing with the thematic programmes of work;

(b) There are a number of tools developed by the Conference of the Parties (including, for example, the principles and guidance on the ecosystem approach and the guidelines on environmental assessments) that are probably not used to their full potential in developing and implementing national biodiversity strategies and action plans;

(c) Parties have been encouraged to promote national biodiversity strategies and action plans with corresponding plans and strategies under other Conventions (including the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification) and to include elements relevant to the other biodiversity-related conventions, but little specific guidance has been made available regarding this issue;

(d) The guidelines recommended for use in 1995 have not been updated and therefore do not reflect the growing body of guidance of the Conference of Parties including that on the thematic programmes of work. Moreover, the Biodiversity Planning Support Project, previously operated by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), is no longer operational.

The Working Group on Review of Implementation, which met in September 2005, has recommended that COP develop, prior to its ninth meeting, consolidated and up-to-date guidance for the future development, implementation and review of national biodiversity strategies and action plans and the effective integration of biodiversity concerns into relevant sectors, including financial considerations for the implementation and updating of national strategies, and guidance on facilitating the involvement of indigenous and local communities.

COP-8 will therefore consider this recommendation and the possibility of establishing a process for developing consolidated and up-to-date guidance on NBSAPs for COP-9.

5.2 Action to integrate conservation and sustainable use into other sectors

Most countries recognize the importance of integrating biodiversity into other sectors, in particular agriculture and forestry. Mechanisms, such as land-use planning systems, are widely being put in place to achieve this. It is often difficult to determine, though, to what extent this is a result of the Convention itself. In some regions, for example, Parties have clearly made significant efforts to include all stakeholders in the development of NBSAPs, and it appears that a wide range of sectors and interests are involved in the implementation of action plans. In most cases, a steering or coordination group has been set up, usually under the auspices of the ministry of environment or its equivalent. These groups mainly comprise representatives of the relevant ministries, research institutes and non-government organizations. Some countries mention the involvement of different levels of government, and others stress the involvement of trade, industry and the private sector. The development of cross-sectoral responsibility clearly emerges as a key issue, to be addressed through collaborative development of NBSAPs.

Generally, although many countries have made some start on integrating biodiversity concerns in to mainstream economic sectors, notably in those sectors most immediately associated with biodiversity such as forestry, fisheries and agriculture, much more needs to be done, particularly in areas that traditionally are economically and politically dominant such as industry, trade and transport.

5.3 National Reports

The first national reports were due at the end of 1998, and 138 reports were submitted. The second national reports were due by 15 May 2003, and 144 reports have been received by the Secretariat. The third national reports were to have been submitted by 15 May 2005, but by February 2006 only 63 reports had been received. These national reports provide summaries of the status of biodiversity, threats to it, the legal and policy framework for action and the institutions responsible for action. The reports contain detailed information on Parties' efforts to implement the Convention,

including the amount of resources available for the implementation, the capacity building needs of the Party, and nature of the plans and guidelines implemented.

The reports are based on an extensive planning and assessment exercise which has been supported by the financial mechanism. Collectively, the process of producing the reports, which has engendered the development of national biodiversity strategies and action plans (NBSAPs) in almost every country in the world, represents the most extensive planning exercise addressing biodiversity to date.

The Working Group on Review of Implementation has recommended that the fourth and subsequent national reports address outcomes and focus on the status and trends of biodiversity, national actions and their results in respect of achieving the 2010 target and the goals of the Strategic Plan, as well as on progress in the implementation of national strategies and action plans. It suggested that Parties submit their fourth national report by 30 March 2009. This recommendation will be considered by COP-8.

VI. The importance of the eighth meeting of the Conference of the Parties (COP-8) to be held in Brazil

Brazil will host COP-8 in the city of Curitiba from 20 to 31 March 2006. It is the first time Brazil has hosted a meeting of COP; it is also the first time COP has been held in a city other than the capital of the host country.

For Brazil, hosting COP-8, together with the third meeting of the Conference of the Parties Acting as the Meeting of the Parties to the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety (MOP-3), provides a unique opportunity for the country to:

- promote a greater involvement of representatives of different sectors of government and of civil society to participate, become informed and influence the decision making processes relating to biodiversity at the international level;
- promote better dissemination of the extensive list of successful national biodiversity management activities, many of them unique;
- promote better dissemination of the potential for the sustainable use of Brazilian biodiversity, including forest, fish and genetic resources, and ecotourism;
- promote the establishment of further international partnerships in support of Brazilian biodiversity;
- emphasize the political importance of biodiversity in the country and in South America generally; and
- give greater weight to its national interests in international biodiversity negotiations.

COP-8 will result in the adoption of important decisions arising out of the intensive preparatory and negotiation processes that have taken place since COP-7. These include:

- two negotiating meetings of the Open-ended Working Group on Access to Genetic Resources and Benefit Sharing (ABS), one in Thailand (February 2005) and another in Spain (February 2006);
- the meeting of the Open-ended Working Group on Traditional Knowledge (Article 8j), held in Spain in January 2006;
- meetings of the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice, SBSTTA-10 in Thailand and SBSTTA-11 in Canada, both in 2005);
- the meeting of the Working Group on Review of Implementation,

-
- held in Canada in 2005; and
 - various meetings of Ad Hoc Technical Groups of Experts (AHTEGs) on different issues.

6.1 Issues that will be addressed by COP-8

The main issues that will be considered by COP-8 are:

6.1.1 *Items for in-depth consideration*

- **Island biological diversity:** COP-7 decided to consider this issue at COP-8. An ad hoc technical expert group was convened in the Canary Islands in December 2004 to prepare the draft elements of a programme of work on island biological diversity. The recommendations of this group were considered by SBSTTA-10. COP-8 will consider SBSTTA recommendation X/1.
- **Biological diversity of dry and sub-humid lands:** COP-7 decided to review this programme of work at COP-8. SBSTTA-11 thus reviewed the implementation of the programme of work, information on progress and obstacles concerning the assessment of the status and trends of the biological diversity of dry and sub-humid lands, and global outcome-oriented targets and their integration into the programme of work. COP-8 will consider SBSTTA recommendation XI/1.
- **Global Taxonomy Initiative:** SBSTTA-11 reviewed the implementation and effectiveness of the GTI and submitted its recommendation XI/2 to COP.
- **Access to genetic resources and benefit sharing:** the Open-ended Working Group on Access to Genetic Resources and Benefit Sharing met for the third time in Bangkok (Thailand) in February 2005 and for the fourth time in Granada (Spain) in February 2006. The third meeting began negotiations towards the adoption of an international regime on access to genetic resources. The two meetings made progress on identifying options relating to the scope, nature, objectives and elements of a regime on access to genetic resources and benefit sharing on the basis of a single consolidated text. COP-8 will consider the recommendations of the working group and is likely to adopt a decision on the continuation

of the negotiations and the future work of the working group.

- **Article 8(j) and related provisions (traditional knowledge):** the fourth meeting of the *Ad Hoc* Open-ended Inter-Sessional Working Group on Article 8(j) and Related Provisions was held in Granada (Spain) in January 2006. The group: reviewed the first phase of the composite report on the status and trends regarding the knowledge, innovations and practices of indigenous and local communities relevant to the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity; considered its input in the negotiations of the international regime on access and benefit-sharing; provided further guidance on participatory mechanisms for indigenous and local communities in the implementation of the Convention; considered *sui generis* systems for the protection of traditional knowledge, innovations and practices; an ethical code of conduct to ensure respect for the cultural and intellectual heritage of indigenous and local communities; further consideration of the potential socio-economic impacts of genetic use restriction technologies (GURTs) on indigenous and local communities; indicators for assessing progress towards the 2010 biodiversity target; and the recommendations of the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues. COP-8 will consider the working group's recommendations.
- **Communication, education and public awareness:** at previous meetings COP adopted measures for the establishment of a global initiative on communication, education and public awareness regarding biodiversity. COP-7 requested the Executive Secretary to convene an informal advisory committee. This committee, composed by representatives from Governments, United Nations agencies, international organizations, non-governmental organizations, research and academic institutions, met in Bangkok in February 2005. On the basis of the recommendations of this committee and those of the Working Group on Review of Implementation (WGRI), which met in Montreal in September 2005, the Executive Secretary identified priority activities in the programme of work as well as recommendations for their implementation at national, regional and global levels. COP-8 will consider these recommendations.

6.1.2 *Strategic issues for evaluating progress or supporting implementation*

Other strategic questions that COP-8 will consider include:

- Progress in implementation of the Convention and its Strategic Plan including the 2010 target and the Convention's contribution to relevant Millennium Development Goals
- Implementation of national biodiversity strategies and action plans, cross-sectoral integration of biodiversity concerns, and options for the provision of increased technical support;
- Implications of the findings of the Millennium Ecosystem Assessment;
- Refining mechanisms to support implementation through evaluation of the effectiveness and impacts of:
 - Convention bodies and processes
 - Scientific and technical cooperation
 - The clearing-house mechanism
 - Transfer of technology and technology cooperation
 - Financial resources and the financial mechanism
- Monitoring progress and reporting processes, including integration of targets into the thematic programmes of work, national reporting and the Global Biodiversity Outlook:
 - Framework for monitoring progress and for reviewing the programmes of work of the Convention
 - Integration of targets into thematic programmes of work
 - National reports
 - Preparation of the third edition of the Global Biodiversity Outlook
- Cooperation with other conventions and international organizations and initiatives, and engagement of stakeholders in the implementation of the Convention
- Guidance to the Financial Mechanism

6.1.2 ***Other substantive questions that COP-8 will consider include:***

- Progress made in the implementation of a number of thematic programmes of work. Although these programmes will be the subject of in-depth review, elaboration and refinement at future meetings, there are a number of specific matters that will require the attention of the Conference of the Parties at the current meeting:
 - Forest biodiversity: implementation of the programme of work
 - Biological diversity of inland water ecosystems
 - Proposals regarding the issues identified in paragraphs 3 and 6 of decision VII/4 on national reporting on inland water ecosystems
 - Consideration of questions relating to paragraphs 29 and 30 of decision VII/4 on criteria for the designation of Ramsar sites in the context of this Convention and guidelines for their application
 - Ways and means for making the review of the programme of work more comprehensive
 - Identification of technical options for the conservation and sustainable use of deep sea-bed genetic resources
 - Integrated marine and coastal area management
 - Further development of the International Soil Biodiversity Initiative and options for a cross cutting Initiative on Biodiversity for Food and Nutrition
- Cross-cutting issues
 - Consideration of the recommendations of the Working Group on Protected Areas
 - Incentive measures: development of proposals on the removal or mitigation of perverse incentives; on positive incentive measures; and on valuation tools
 - Alien species that threaten ecosystems, habitats or species: gaps and inconsistencies in the international regulatory framework
 - Refinement of guidelines for biodiversity-inclusive impact assessment
 - Consideration of the recommendations of the Group of Legal and Technical Experts on Liability and Redress

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- o Guidance to promote synergy among biodiversity conservation, mitigating or adapting to climate change and combating land degradation

6.2 Report of the Millennium Ecosystem Evaluation

In 2005 the United Nations published the findings of the Millennium Ecosystem Evaluation. This is the first global evaluation of the impacts of human activities on the capacity of the environment and biodiversity to continue providing the environmental goods and services that maintain life on Earth and the quality of life for human societies. The study, over four years, was launched by institutions within the UN system at the request of governments and international environmental conventions, and involved more than two thousand scientists. Conceived by Secretary-General Kofi Annan, the central purpose of the study is to provide guidance to decision makers and formulators of public policies on the consequences that the conversion of ecosystems has on the quality of life for humans and to answer some basic questions: for how long will the planet's ecosystems be able to support predatory human activity? Is it possible to reverse these processes of environmental and social degradation? What will the future hold if the current patterns of production and consumption continue?

The Millennium Ecosystem Assessment contains six main conclusions:

1: Human actions are fundamentally, and to a significant extent irreversibly, changing the diversity of life on Earth, and most of these changes represent a loss of biodiversity. Changes in important components of biological diversity were more rapid in the past 50 years than at any time in human history. Projections and scenarios indicate that these rates will continue, or accelerate, in the future.

2: Biodiversity contributes directly (through provisioning, regulating, and cultural ecosystem services) and indirectly (through supporting ecosystem services) to many constituents of human well-being, including security, basic material for a good life, health, good social relations, and freedom of choice and action. Many people have benefited over the last century from the conversion of natural ecosystems to human-dominated ecosystems and the exploitation of biodiversity. At the same time, however, these losses in biodiversity and changes in

ecosystem services have caused some people to experience declining well-being, with poverty in some social groups being exacerbated.

3: Improved valuation techniques and information on ecosystem services tells us that although many individuals benefit from the actions and activities that lead to biodiversity loss and ecosystem change, the costs borne by society of such changes is often higher. Even in instances where our knowledge of benefits and costs is incomplete, the use of the precautionary approach may be warranted when the costs associated with ecosystem changes may be high or the changes irreversible.

4: The drivers of loss of biodiversity and the drivers of changes in ecosystem services are either steady, show no evidence of declining over time, or are increasing in intensity.

5: Many of the actions that have been taken to conserve biodiversity and promote its sustainable use have been successful in limiting biodiversity loss and homogenization to rates lower than they would otherwise have been in the absence of such actions. However, further significant progress will require a portfolio of actions that build on current initiatives to address important direct and indirect drivers of biodiversity loss and ecosystem service degradation.

6: Unprecedented additional efforts would be needed to achieve, by 2010, a significant reduction in the rate of biodiversity loss at all levels.

VII. Influencing the COP Process: Strategies for Observers

The rules regarding the participation of non-governmental organizations and other sectors of civil society in CBD meetings have been drafted with a view to facilitating the participation of organizations who can contribute to the discussions and to the implementation of the Convention.

7.1 Procedures for registration as an observer at the MOP-3 and COP-8 meetings

The Rules of Procedure of the COP state that (Rule 7):

1. The Secretariat shall notify any body or agency, whether governmental or non-governmental, qualified in fields relating to the conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity, which has informed the Secretariat of its wish to be represented, of meetings of the Conference of the Parties so that they may be represented as observers unless at least one third of the Parties present at the meeting object.
2. Such observers may, upon invitation of the President, participate without the right to vote in the proceedings of any meeting in matters of direct concern to the body or agency they represent unless at least one third of the Parties present at the meeting object.

Thus any organization whose mandate or activities involve the conservation or sustainable use of biodiversity can participate as an observer, upon notification to the Secretariat in Montreal. This can be done by completing the registration form annexed to the document 'Information for Participants' available on the CBD website¹⁷ and submitting this electronically or by fax. Pre-registration in this way means that the relevant name badges can be prepared in advance by the Secretariat and will be ready for collection at the registration counter at the venue.

The registration of observers at MOP-3 and COP-8 is the responsibility of the Secretariat. The procedures are explained in section 3 of the document 'Information for Participants'.

Section 3 states:

“Registration of representatives of international and intergovernmental organizations, and non-governmental organizations, is subject to the receipt **no later than 12 March** for COP/MOP-3 and **20 March 2006** for COP-8, by the Executive Secretary of an official letter from the head of the organization concerned providing the names, titles and contacts of their representatives.

It should be noted that the above registration procedure, which is outlined on the Secretariat's web site (<https://www.biodiv.org/doc/notifications/2006/ntf-2006-008-cop-mop-en.pdf>), also applies to those who have already submitted pre-registration forms (**annexes A and or B**).

Participants are kindly requested to submit, along with the official notification and letter referred to above the pre-registration forms, duly completed, attached as Annex A for COP/MOP-3 meeting and Annex B for COP-8 meeting.”

These documents should be submitted by the date specified above to:

Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity
413 St. Jacques St., Suite 800
Montreal, Quebec
H2Y 1N9 Canada
Fax: + 1 514 288 6588
Email: secretariat@biodiv.org

Representatives of civil society organizations who wish to register as observers at these meeting should therefore follow the above guidance, paying careful attention to the deadlines.

Organizations who have already submitted pre-registration forms to the Secretariat without the official letter from the head of the organization specifying the names and titles of their representatives should submit this letter to the Secretariat in order to confirm their registration.

Representatives of organizations that have complied with these procedures and met the deadlines will be able to collect their badges from the registration desk upon presentation of their passport or other official identification from 9:00 a.m. on Saturday, 11 March (in the case of MOP-3)

and Saturday, 18 March (in the case of COP-8). The venue of the meetings is:

Centro de Convenções e Exposições Expo Trade
Rodovia Deputado João Leopoldo Jacomel, 10454
Pinhais
Curitiba, Paraná
83320-005 Brazil

7.2 Interventions in COP plenary and working group sessions

The formal dialogue in COP meetings takes place through “interventions”: oral statements made by Parties and observers when they have requested the floor and are recognized by the Chair of the Plenary or Working Group. Observers are generally welcome to make statements in formal COP sessions, after all the Parties who have requested the floor on a particular topic have spoken.

Statements at the COP and other CBD meetings by representatives of indigenous and local communities, and by NGOs, have been influential on many occasions in the past. In other cases, they have not been particularly effective.

A few simple rules can help make interventions more effective:

- Joint interventions on behalf of a large number of like-minded organizations or an entire constituency (e.g. on behalf of a large coalition of NGOs, or all of the indigenous community representatives present) are generally more influential than statements by single organizations.
- An exception to this rule is when an individual speaker has a powerful personal story to tell, as is often the case with indigenous and local representatives. In cases such as this, it is the power and eloquence of the story that may change minds more than the fact that the speaker is representing a large group of other organizations.
- Write interventions down before presenting them, and give a clear copy to the interpreters in advance (so they can most effectively translate it when it is read out).

- Speak slowly and clearly, so that the interpreters can translate clearly, and Parties for whom none of the UN languages are their first language can understand.
- Restrict interventions to the specific agenda item and document(s) that are being discussed. It is not useful, for example, to give a long intervention on the problems of small island fisherfolk during the debate on mountain biodiversity.
- Make interventions as short as possible while still getting the point across. Parties appreciate interventions that are short and to the point, especially at the end of a long session (which is the only time observers get to speak). Three minutes should be an absolute maximum. It is useful to practice in front of colleagues, to check the length and to become comfortable with reading the text.
- Give support statements and positions already made by Parties, if they are reasonably supportive of the position one is putting forward. It is more effective to say “We fully agree with the position of the Africa Group that....” than it is to just say “We urge the Parties to....” One can always suggest an addition to a previous position: “we fully agree with the position of the Africa group that.....and in that spirit, we would further suggest that....”
- Refer to specific text in the document before the meeting, either supporting existing language in the document or proposing alternative language. When proposing alternative language, always write it down clearly, inform the Chair that it will be provided to him/her in writing, and do so once the intervention is completed. (This is generally done by going to the podium and handing the text to one of the Secretariat members who will be assisting the Chair.)
- Be polite. Thank the chair for the floor, congratulate his/her election as chair, compliment his/her leadership of the debate, etc. Avoid sounding angry or self-righteous, and don't list out “demands” there is no power to enforce them in a process that works by consensus decision-making. None of this implies that one should not press positions clearly and forcefully. It is more a matter of style.
- Don't be nervous! Remember, everyone has as much right to speak as anyone else in the hall.

7.3 Negotiating text

Once an issue has been discussed in a Working Group and moved into a contact group, the real negotiation of the text of the COP decision begins. If participation in the contact group has not been restricted by the Working Group Chair, observers including indigenous and local community representatives are able to attend, and are generally welcome to make interventions.

Contact groups are generally run in a similar fashion to Working Groups: There is a Chair (or two co-chairs) who has often prepared a negotiating text based on the range of views presented in the Working Group debate on the issue under consideration. A contact group will generally move through the text in detail, often with proposed changes being entered on a computer projected onto a large screen at the front of the room. The process can be a very lengthy and torturous one, requiring stamina to work late into the night. In some cases, the “winners” of contact group negotiations are delegates with the capacity to remain sharp and talkative into the early morning hours.

Contact groups are not the appropriate place to make general statements of principle. Rather, Parties here will be trying to find compromise language acceptable to those holding opposing views on what a particular paragraph, sentence, or word should say. Technically, the contact group chair is not obliged to take observers' views into account. But most chairs will listen to observers, especially if they propose compromise language that both satisfies opposing factions and supports the observer's position.

Since contact groups generally operate in English only, it is very useful to have a native English speaker available to help frame suggested text.

7.4 Influencing the positions of government delegations

As a general rule, interventions and positions held by Parties are far more influential than those of any Observer, be it the World Bank or a small indigenous community group. It is therefore often more effective to enlist Parties to present Observer positions as their positions, to the extent possible. In order to get Parties to do so, one needs to “lobby” them engage them in informal conversations and convince them (a) of the wisdom of the position one wishes them to adopt; and (b) to formally put that position forward in the relevant COP process.

There are no hard and fast rules about how to effectively lobby delegates; it depends on who one is talking to, one's own personality and style, the issue at hand, and many other factors. Here are a few guidelines that may help:

- Don't be shy. It is important to identify who one wants to talk to, and to introduce oneself to them. Remember, everyone at the COP is lobbying everyone else, so there is nothing strange about asking a delegate their views on an issue, telling them one's view, and then trying to get them to incorporate that view into their government's position in the negotiations.
- Ask experienced observers from NGOs and other delegations about which delegations are influential, or need to be lobbied, on specific issues of interest.
- Not all delegations are equal in their interest in specific issues, or in their influence over the process. Figure out which Parties are influential on what issues, and try to focus on them.
- Not all members of delegations focus on all issues, and not all members have the authority to adopt new or modified positions on an issue. One might raise an issue with one member of delegation and find out that someone else on the delegation is actually the one handling that issue. In that case, one should ask to be introduced to that person.
- It is better to get several delegations to take forward a position rather than just one. Getting a regional group to take forward a position is most effective, and this requires figuring out which delegations in a region are most active and influential in developing the positions of regional groups
- Work with colleagues to develop a coordinated lobbying strategy on particular issues. Different colleagues will have contacts with different delegations and regions.

Lobbying goes on in all manner of locations: at coffee breaks and lunch; at receptions; over dinner, and at hotel bars. There is also nothing wrong with approaching a delegate when they are sitting at their place in the meeting hall, just walk on down front and do it. Ask them if it is a good time to talk if not, make a date to talk with them at the next break.

Don't be afraid to wait around while a delegate finishes a conversation with someone else. This is normal, and persistence pays off.

To strike up a conversation, it is always useful to ask what a delegate's country's position is on a particular issue, and how they think the negotiations on it will come out. This can be put forward as a hypothetical question "Could your delegation support additional language on that issue that said.....?" Asking experienced delegates questions about how the COP process works is also a good way to start a conversation.

Lastly, remember that reaching consensus in the COP always involves compromise. Nobody gets exactly what they want in a consensus-based negotiating process, and if one's position is "all or nothing", then one is likely to become quite frustrated at the COP. Don't be afraid to compromise on specific language if it serves the overall goal.

7.5 Distributing written materials

Government agencies, NGOs, donor agencies and all manner of other COP participants will bring vast quantities of literature to distribute: books, reports, magazines, memos, manifestos, brochures, CD-ROMs, etc. Mountains of these materials pile up on the tables outside of COP meeting rooms.

Indigenous and local organizations may wish to contribute to these overloaded tables with their own literature. Much of it does get picked up by delegates, although it is unclear how much is ever read or even taken home at the end of the meeting.

A more effective strategy is to carry literature, and give it personally to delegates when speaking to them. They will be much more likely to focus on it if they can connect a real person to it

NGOs are particularly prolific producers of "joint NGO statements" on various issues. While these can be very useful (as noted in the section on interventions), they are only as useful as the lobbying efforts used to take the positions forward with delegations. Some NGOs seem to spend most of their time behind the scenes, barricaded in an "NGO room" negotiating with each other over NGO statements, rather than engaging with the Parties in the actual negotiating process.

In short, distributing written materials at the COP is a means to an end, not an end in itself. The end is to influence the outcomes of the meeting to reflect particular positions and concerns, and this generally done more effectively through personal contact and involvement than the production of written statements and manifestos, no matter how eloquent.

7.6 Side events and associated events

Although negotiations are the *raison d'être* of the MOP and COP meetings, many delegates and observers will try to actively participate in events that are organized alongside the official sessions, at the venue or outside. This is an important and healthy tradition that promotes and facilitates the exchange of ideas and experiences, initiates or strengthens partnerships, and even helps to modify political positions. Among the events planned for COP-8 in Curitiba, participants will find:

- **Side events:** a programme of seminars, debates and presentations organized by the Secretariat and taking place in the intervals between the official sessions (between 13:00 and 15:00 hours and after 18:00 hours). Side events address issues linked to the implementation of the Convention, have a supra-national focus, and are organized by governments, international organizations, NGOs and other social sectors, such as indigenous communities or the private sector. As they take place in rooms within the meeting venue, side events are accessible only to those who are registered for MOP or for COP (delegates or observers).
- **Exhibition area:** there will be a large area at ExpoTrade reserved for the stands of exhibitors from numerous sectors and countries, national and local governments, NGOs and social movements, international organizations, and the private sector. Participants will be able to get to know the projects and activities of the exhibitors, obtain books and publications, and perhaps identify new partners.
- There are a number of separate spaces being planned for the external area of ExpoTrade:
 - The **Community Tab** organized by UNDP as a meeting place and centre for the activities of its partners in the Equator Initiative, a global network of projects involving local communities and indigenous peoples.

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- The **Ocas** constructed by Brazilian indigenous communities and their international partners.
 - The **Global Civil Society Forum** organized by the Brazilian Forum of NGOs and Social Movements for Environment and Development, the venue for an extensive programme of meetings and debates.
 - The **Biodiversity Fair** organized by the Ministry of the Environment with the support of the Government of Paraná and other agencies, where the experiences and the products of local projects in all Brazilian biomes involving the sustainable use of biodiversity will be shared with participants.
 - The **Travelling Exhibition on Water Resources** of the National Water Agency and WWF, hauled by a truck and currently travelling the country, will be set up at ExpoTrade during COP8.
 - The **Global Biodiversity Forum** organized by IUCN and partners, and a tradition at COP, will take place at ExpoTrade on 25th March (further details, including registration, at www.gbf.ch).
 - **Brazil Day** at ExpoTrade on 25 March will offer participants an opportunity to attend presentations by staff of government and non-governmental organizations on national policies and projects in support of implementation of the Convention.
 - There will be a series of **associated events** at various venues in the city of Curitiba addressing various aspects of the implementation of the Convention and organized by local, national and international organizations, some open to the public, others by invitation.
 - From the 16 to 26 March Curitiba will be the stage for the Curitiba Theatre Festival with 232 events and the celebrations of the **Anniversary of Curitiba** (29 March) will begin the previous week and extend throughout the period of COP.

Glossary of Terms

ABS	Access and Benefit Sharing (with respect to genetic resources)
AHTEG	Ad Hoc Technical Experts Group
AOSIS	Association of Small Island States
BSWG	Ad Hoc Working Group on Biosafety
CBD	Convention on Biological Diversity
CHM	Clearing-House Mechanism
CEE	Central and Eastern European Group (an official UN regional group)
COP	Conference of the Parties
FAO	United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization
G77+China	The Group of 77 + China (the grouping of all developing countries)
GEF	Global Environment Facility (financial mechanism of the CBD)
GTI	Global Taxonomy Initiative
GMOs	Genetically Modified Organisms
GRULAC	Latin America and Caribbean Group (an official UN regional group)
EC	European Commission
EU	European Union
IPRs	Intellectual Property Rights
ITPGRFA	International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture
JUSCANZ	Japan, US, Canada, Australia and New Zealand Grouping
LMOs	Living Modified Organisms
MYPOW	Multi-Year Programme of Work (of the CBD)
NBSAP	National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan
ODA	Official Development Assistance
PGRFA	Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture
SBSTTA	Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice
TRIPS	WTO Agreement on Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
WEOG	Western Europe and Others Group (an official UN grouping)
WTO	World Trade Organization

