

IX/30. Scientific and technical cooperation and the clearing-house mechanism

The Conference of the Parties,

Noting with appreciation the Executive Secretary's efforts to enhance the Convention's website and to translate it into French and Spanish,

Having considered the note (UNEP/CBD/COP/9/23) prepared by the Executive Secretary in consultation with the informal advisory committee of the clearing-house mechanism,

Aware that full implementation of the strategic plan of the clearing-house mechanism is constrained by the limited capacity and resources available at the national and global levels,

1. *Decides* to extend the mandate of the informal advisory committee, as defined by its operational guidelines, and to review it at the eleventh meeting of the Conference of the Parties;

2. *Encourages* Parties, whenever appropriate, to take the following steps with a view to establishing strong and sustainable national clearing-house mechanisms:

(a) If not yet done, designate, as soon as possible, a national focal point for the clearing-house mechanism, as requested by paragraph 7 of decision II/3, with the appropriate expertise to coordinate and implement the national clearing-house mechanism;

(b) Prepare a national implementation strategy for the clearing-house mechanism, where appropriate, preferably as a component of the national biodiversity strategy and action plan, based on identified needs;

(c) Develop their national clearing-house mechanisms as a key means for the implementation and review of their national biodiversity strategies and action plans;

(d) Whenever possible, develop links between the national clearing-house mechanism and existing networks, and develop information exchange mechanisms with relevant national databases, making use, whenever applicable and appropriate, of well-established open standards;

(e) Establish a national structure, as appropriate, to coordinate the development of the clearing-house mechanism, such as an inter-institutional steering committee with participation of relevant biodiversity-related organizations and stakeholders;

(f) Mobilize and allocate resources for strengthening the institutional capacity to implement the national clearing-house mechanism and for sustaining its operations;

(g) Define roles and responsibilities for collecting, reviewing and disseminating information, managing website content, and for outreach activities;

(h) Identify relevant biodiversity-related information sources at the national level and promote them through the national clearing-house mechanism, and if not yet done, first provide basic information on national contacts and on biodiversity in the country;

(i) Encourage the use of the national clearing-house mechanism as a tool to dialog with the civil society, major groups and stakeholders

(j) Whenever applicable and feasible, make the national clearing-house mechanism website available also in national or local languages, and disseminate relevant materials at the national level, including to indigenous and local communities in appropriate formats and languages;

3. *Encourages* relevant partners holding biodiversity-related information to:

(a) Designate an appropriate technical contact or focal point for the clearing-house mechanism;

(b) Investigate, in collaboration with the Secretariat, ways to make their information accessible through the clearing-house mechanism;

(c) Contribute to the establishment of regional, subregional or thematic clearing-house mechanisms, with a view to provide support to national clearing-house mechanisms, to share knowledge and to facilitate scientific and technical cooperation, including cooperation on science and innovation as well as the transfer of technology;

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4. *Invites* Parties, other Governments, relevant agencies and other donors to provide resources to enable developing country Parties, in particular the least developed countries and small island developing States, and countries with economies in transition, to carry out the above activities while fostering a structured cooperation strategy between Parties;

5. *Urges* the Global Environment Facility and other donors to continue to provide funding to developing country Parties, in particular the least developed countries and small island developing States, and countries with economies in transition, for the establishment and maintenance of their clearing-house mechanisms;

6. *Requests* the Executive Secretary to:

(a) Gradually build a knowledge base, to facilitate access to relevant references, such as guidelines, strategies, reports and other information;

(b) Provide collaboration tools to enable Parties to maintain contact, share ideas and brainstorm on how to implement the Convention; keeping in mind that such collaboration is most effective when appropriate incentives such as well-defined discussion topics and clear objectives are available to encourage participation;

(c) In consultation with the informal advisory committee (CHM-IAC), provide a detailed analysis about the scope and complexity of a potential on-line submission system for sharing knowledge and experiences, and, if feasible and appropriate, develop a prototype for review and comments by interested Parties;

(d) Establish, whenever applicable and feasible, common formats and vocabularies for the clearing-house mechanism information systems with a view to enhance clarity, user-friendliness, efficiency, interoperability, and data comparability;

(e) Strengthen the Secretariat's capacity in areas related to the clearing-house mechanism, such as information technology, website, knowledge management and other modern information services, focussing on the priority areas identified in this paragraph;

(f) Improve the Convention's website, its accessibility, and make this website available in all United Nations languages;

(g) Provide guidance and support to Parties to assist in the establishment of their national clearing-house mechanism, including through organizations which are present and active at the national or regional levels, and based on the special capacity-building needs of developing countries;

(h) Further collaborate with key partner organizations, *inter alia*:

(i) Other Rio conventions to develop synergies for national implementation and support to the clearing-house mechanism;

(ii) The Global Biodiversity Information Facility for the management of biodiversity data;

(iii) The United Nations Environment Programme and its related institutions for biodiversity issues and knowledge management;

(iv) Regional and subregional organizations that have the expertise and mandate to support the clearing-house mechanism;

(v) Organizations active in the field of technology transfer, the 2010 indicators, and communication, education and public awareness;

(i) Take into account the strategy for the preparation of the International Year of Biodiversity adopted under decision IX/33 when further developing the services offered by the clearing-house mechanism leading up to the year 2010;

(j) Consider the role of the clearing-house mechanism in analyses prepared for revisions to the Strategic Plan of the Convention beyond 2010;

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(k) Facilitate cooperation between the informal advisory committee on the clearing-house mechanism (CHM-IAC) and the informal advisory committee on communication, education and public awareness (CEPA-IAC) in order to further develop the clearing-house mechanism as a tool for communication, education and public awareness activities.