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منظمة الأغذية
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联合国
粮食及
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Food
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des
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pour
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et
l'agriculture

Organización
de las
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Unidas
para la
Agricultura
y la
Alimentación

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COMMISSION ON GENETIC RESOURCES FOR FOOD AND AGRICULTURE

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REPORTS FROM INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS ON THEIR POLICIES, PROGRAMMES AND ACTIVITIES ON AGRICULTURAL BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY

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**REPORTS FROM INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS
ON THEIR POLICIES, PROGRAMMES AND ACTIVITIES
ON AGRICULTURAL BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY**

UNITED NATIONS AND OTHER INTER-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS

Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD)

1. On the basis of progress made in implementing the Convention, and taking into account new and emerging issues, the fourth meeting of the Conference of the Parties (COP) (Bratislava, May 1998) adopted decision IV/6 and related decisions regarding genetic resources for food and agriculture, including forest and aquatic genetic resources.
2. Decision IV/6 complements decision III/11 regarding the multi-year programme of work on the conservation and sustainable use of agricultural biological diversity. The findings of the assessment of activities and instruments at national and international levels and identification of priorities will be addressed by the fifth meeting of the Subsidiary Body for Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice (SBSTTA) (Montreal, 31 January –4 February 2000) with a view to the further development of the programme of work for subsequent consideration by COP at its fifth meeting (Nairobi, 15–26 May 2000). Progress made is noted in the joint CBD Secretariat-FAO report to this meeting on Cooperation between FAO and the CBD (document CGRFA -8/99/12).
3. In decision IV/5 and its annex, COP adopted a substantive programme of work on marine and coastal biological diversity which highlights the ecosystem and precautionary approaches. It includes programme elements on the implementation of integrated marine and coastal area management, marine and coastal living resources and protected areas, mariculture, as well as alien species and genotypes. The CBD Secretariat is actively developing cooperative arrangements and partnerships with relevant institutions to ensure cost-effective implementation of the work programme.
4. The programme of work on forest biological diversity, endorsed by COP decision IV/7 and its annex, focuses on research and technology development. Programme elements address holistic and inter-sectoral ecosystem approaches for the conservation and sustainable use of biological resources as well as criteria and indicators for forest biological diversity. Specific research and technical priorities are identified for minimizing or mitigating the underlying causes of the loss of forest biological diversity and for assessing ecological landscape models and protected area networks. Technical cooperation is emphasized and FAO is invited to integrate forest biological diversity into work on the Global Forest Resources Assessment.
5. In decision IV/4 and its annex, COP adopted a programme of work on the biological diversity of inland water ecosystems, including the assessment of the status and trends, the identification of options for conservation and sustainable use, as well as associated matters of identification and monitoring, assessment methodologies and taxonomy.
6. In the implementation of the work programmes, governments and relevant organizations are invited to submit inputs and case studies and consultations and cooperation are established with key partners and institutions. The four thematic programmes of work are supported by decision IV/1 which addresses the cross-cutting scientific and technical issues regarding indicators, identification, monitoring and assessment, development of the ecosystem approach, alien species that threaten ecosystems, habitats or species as well as taxonomy. During 1999, the Secretariat is

planning to organize three liaison group meetings of experts to assist it in its work on the ecosystem approach, indicator development and agricultural biological diversity.

7. In December 1998, the CBD Secretariat and FAO jointly organized an international workshop, supported by the Government of the Netherlands on *Opportunities, incentives and approaches for the conservation and sustainable use of agricultural ecosystems and production systems*. Through reviewing case studies and experiences at ecosystem level, experts from 20 countries and 15 organizations identified priority areas requiring attention for promoting sustainable agricultural strategies, farming systems and practices, as well as landscape management approaches that enhance biological diversity and ecosystem functioning. The workshop report will be at the disposal of the Commission during the session.

8. Further decisions and programmes of relevance to the Commission include decision IV/8 on access and benefit-sharing, decision IV/9 on the implementation of Article 8(j) and related provisions and decision IV/15 which addresses, *inter alia*, intellectual property rights through the relationship of the CBD with the World Trade Organization (WTO) and World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO). The inter-sessional meeting on the operations of the Convention, to be held in Montreal from 28 to 30 June 1999, immediately after SBSTTA-IV (Montreal, 21-25 June 1999), pursuant to decision IV/16, will also address access and benefit-sharing. The Secretariat is preparing documents on the basis of submissions from governments and organizations on: (i) *ex situ* collections that were acquired prior to the entry into force of the Convention and which are not addressed by the Commission; (ii) activities and experiences in the development and promotion of legislative and administrative measures, policies and programmes for access and benefit-sharing arrangements; and (iii) developing a common appreciation of the relationship between IPRs and the relevant provisions of the Agreement on Trade Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS) and the CBD. In addition, pursuant to decision IV/8, a Panel of Experts on Access and Benefit Sharing is being convened from 4 to 8 October 1999. To date, 13 Governments have nominated 47 experts for this panel. Recommendations of the meeting and the panel will be considered by COP-V.

9. Decision IV/9 established the *ad hoc* open-ended inter-sessional working group on the implementation of Article 8(j). It will convene in Montreal from 24 to 28 January 2000, just prior to SBSTTA-V. The Secretariat has prepared an outline for case studies and invited submissions from national focal points, local and indigenous community organizations and other relevant organizations. A joint work plan is being developed with WIPO to determine how best to protect the knowledge, innovations and practices of indigenous and local communities embodying traditional lifestyles relevant to the conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity.

10. The sixth and final negotiating meeting of the *ad hoc* open-ended Working Group on Biosafety for the elaboration of a Protocol for the safe handling, transfer and use of living modified organisms (Cartagena, 14-19 February 1999) submitted its report to the first Extraordinary COP. Substantial progress was made in the negotiating text but the meeting was suspended due to lack of time to achieve consensus. The Extraordinary COP will reconvene before COP-V, probably during 1999, to conclude its negotiations and adopt the Protocol. Also reflecting the precautionary approach, in accordance with paragraph 11 of decision IV/6, the Secretariat is preparing a scientific assessment on the consequences of the development and use of new technology for the control of plant gene expression, as exemplified by US patent 5,723,765, for the conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity. The document UNEP/CBD/SBSTTA/4/9 will be considered by SBSTTA-IV.

The World Bank

1. The Bank's biodiversity lending has grown rapidly, now totalling US\$ 956 million for 101 projects or components in 56 countries. Of the total, US\$ 619 million represents borrowing and another US\$ 337 million represents grants from the Global Environment Facility (GEF) or the Brazil Rain Forest Trust Fund. This investment has leveraged US\$ 536 million from other donors and borrowing governments, bringing the total commitment since 1988 to US\$ 1.34 billion.
2. We are engaged in active partnerships with all stakeholders concerned with biodiversity: government, local communities, the private sector, NGOs and international institutions. These partnerships have contributed to regional biodiversity strategies and priority-setting exercises.
3. Through its work on the Global Overlays Program (launched in 1995), the Bank is continuing to develop the conceptual framework and toolkit for mainstreaming global environmental objectives into national environmental planning and Bank operations. The initial focus has been biodiversity conservation in agricultural development, resulting in *Mainstreaming Biodiversity in Agricultural Development: Towards Good Practice*, which was presented to the Parties to the Convention in Buenos Aires last November.
4. An ongoing study on *Managing Global Genetic Resources*, which is a joint plan of work between SIDA and our Rural Development Department, focuses on: (i) harmonizing national policies related to genetic resources in the light of various commitments made by governments; (ii) analyzing technical and economic implications (trade-offs) associated with policy decisions; and (iii) suggesting policy options to developing and industrialized countries. Outputs of this initiative include a Bank-published paper entitled *Strategic Issues for National Policy Decisions in Managing Genetic Resources*, and eight country case studies. A synthesis paper on the case studies will be finished by the end of 1999.
5. In 1997 the World Bank and the Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research (CGIAR) initiated a study panel of international experts to assess the potential of crop bioengineering as well as the inherent risks involved. The panel's work, including recommendations to the Bank and the CGIAR, were published in the panel's discussion paper, *Bioengineering of Crops... Building on the Work of that Panel*, a biotechnology task force has recently been convened in the Bank. Its terms of reference are to explore further the benefits and risks associated with the application of biotechnology to rural development, with strong emphasis on the conservation and utilization of genetic resources.
6. Future operational objectives of the Bank are aimed at ensuring that all of its relevant sector work will fully integrate biodiversity into the Country Assistance Strategies. Implementing this is now an urgent challenge and the Bank, along with its partners, is helping its client countries mobilize the expertise and resources they need to meet their obligations under the Convention on Biological Diversity.

The World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO)

1. The World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) is the UN specialized agency responsible for encouraging creativity and innovation throughout the world by promoting the protection of intellectual property. WIPO administers more than 20 international treaties for the protection of intellectual property and carries out work programmes which include the harmonization of national intellectual property law and procedures, provision of services for international applications for industrial property rights, exchange of information on intellectual property rights (IPRs), provision of training, technical and legal assistance on intellectual property and resolution of private intellectual property disputes.

2. Under the WIPO Programme and Budget for the 1998/99 biennium, WIPO takes an exploratory approach to emerging intellectual property issues, including some issues related to genetic resources for food and agriculture, through Main Programme 11, entitled 'Global Intellectual Property Issues'. In this Main Programme, activities relevant to genetic resources for food and agriculture are included in sub-programmes on 'Biological Diversity and Biotechnology' and 'New Approaches to the Use of the IPR System/IPRs for New Beneficiaries'.

3. One objective of WIPO's Sub-programme 11.2, 'Biological Diversity and Biotechnology', is to explore the role of intellectual property in the preservation, conservation and dissemination of global biological diversity... This objective is pursued through activities including *inter alia*:

- a project for on-site documentation of traditional knowledge relevant to the preservation, conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity, with an eye to sharing the benefits of such knowledge.
- a study on the IPR-related needs of holders of indigenous knowledge, innovations and genetic resources, such as in agriculture and medicine.
- the convening of a Working Group to study intellectual property aspects of biotechnology and of the implementation of the Convention on Biological Diversity, including the potential role of the industrial property system in facilitating access to and transfer of related technology.

4. Sub-programme 11.1, 'New Approaches to the Use of the IPR System/IPRs for New Beneficiaries', aims to identify and explore the intellectual property needs and expectations of the holders of indigenous knowledge and innovations, in order to promote the contribution of the intellectual property system to their social, cultural and economic development. This includes intellectual property needs and expectations of holders of traditional agricultural knowledge and is pursued, *inter alia*, through a study of current approaches to, and future possibilities for, the protection of intellectual property rights of holders of indigenous knowledge, innovations and culture, based on fact-finding missions to various regions. The information compiled from these missions will be published and disseminated by WIPO.

INTERNATIONAL NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS

The Intermediate Technology Development Group (ITDG)

1. ITDG is a specialist international development NGO founded in 1966. It works on a range of technical areas with, and in support of, communities in developing countries from national offices in eight countries – Bangladesh, Kenya, Nepal, Peru, Sri Lanka, Sudan, UK, Zimbabwe.
2. ITDG believes that it is essential to sustain agricultural biodiversity and productive agro-ecosystems in order to achieve food and livelihood security for the majority. The current International Food Production Strategy (1997-2000) prioritizes the conservation and sustainable use of agricultural biodiversity through the improvement of policy and the development of the technological and institutional capabilities of small-scale farmers, herders and fisherfolk and their ability to negotiate equitable terms in a rapidly changing policy, legal, commercial and institutional environment.
3. In publications, fieldwork and policy advocacy work, ITDG promotes the conservation and sustainable use of genetic resources for food and agriculture, through:
 - Books and papers, for example, *Growing Diversity* (1992); *Cultivating Knowledge* (1993); *Beyond Farmer First* (1994); *Farmers, Herders, Fisherfolk – securing food supplies, producing change* (1995); *The Life Industry* (1996); *Dynamic Diversity* (1996); *New Seed and Old Laws* (1997); *TRIPs, Biodiversity and Commonwealth Countries* (1998); *Biological and Cultural Diversity* (1999) and seminars and conferences, for example, *The Gene Traders* (1992), *Food for Life* (1996), *Recipe for Change* (1998).
 - Fieldwork in Zimbabwe, Kenya, Peru and Bangladesh focusing on sustaining agricultural biodiversity and researching the strategies used by farmers in maintaining a wide range of agricultural biodiversity of crops and small indigenous fish species, and on the impacts of modern biotechnology. A current three-country joint research programme with ODI on *in situ* conservation of plant genetic resources for food and agriculture is being funded by DFID.
 - Active involvement in the normative processes of FAO through ITC/PGR and the Commission on Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture as well as the COP/CBD, facilitating information exchange, development of NGO positions and development of criteria and priorities for work programmes at all levels.
 - Facilitating involvement of European NGOs in the ECP/GR, especially in work on on-farm conservation and policies concerning access and benefit-sharing, and presenting an NGO keynote address to the 1998 European Symposium on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture.
 - An active website set up for the UK agricultural biodiversity coalition (UKabc) covering the sustainable use, conservation, benefit-sharing, trade, patents, intellectual property, biopiracy, biotechnology, genetic engineering, biosafety and other issues related to the equitable use of agricultural biodiversity for local food and livelihood security. <<http://ds.dial.pipex.com/ukfg/ukabc.htm>>. This website contains relevant papers and reports on current negotiations and forums including the CGRFA.

The International Union of Forestry Research Organizations (IUFRO)

Task Force

Management and Conservation of Forest Genetic Resources

After a decision by the IUFRO Executive Board in September 1997, the Task Force was established on 21 January 1998.

Long-term objectives

- A dynamic and recurrent management of FGR for genetic improvement,
- Conservation of a representative sample of the diversity of all forest tree species for the future generations.

The Task Force is asked to gather and synthesize all the information available on the subject and to detect knowledge gaps. It will be asked to publish its syntheses and recommendations under IUFRO's umbrella as state-of-knowledge reports. A special sub-plenary session will be devoted to this question during the IUFRO World Congress in 2000.

Activities 1998

As the first steps the TF was organized by collecting the co-ordination group, nominating the chairman and the co-chairman, and formulating its terms of reference.

The co-ordinating group consists of the following persons:

- Division 1.: Per. St. hl., Sweden.
- Division 2 : Veikko Koski, Finland, and Francis Yeh, Alberta, Canada,
- Division 3 : Dr. Clark Lantz, USA.
- Division 4 : Heinrich Spiecker, Germany.
- Division 6 : George Peterson, USA
- Division 7 : Florian Scholz, Germany.
- Division 8 : Tim Boyle, USA and Abdou Salam Ouedraogo, Italy
- FAO : Pierre Sigaud, Italy
- IPGRI : Abdou Salam Ouedraogo, Italy

Chair : Francis Yeh. Methodology, conservation of FGR

Co-Chair : Veikko Koski. Management of FGR for genetic improvement

Terms of reference

- Gather and synthesize scientific information on :
 - Scientific knowledge necessary for the conservation of FGR : management of base and breeding populations, maintenance of representative diversity, including rare populations, case studies on *in* and *ex situ* conservation,
 - Interaction between human activity and integrity of FGR : silviculture, forest operations, agroforestry, forest and landscape management, others,
 - Effect of environmental factors on the integrity of FGR : insect pests, diseases, air pollution, climate change.

- Organize sessions, particularly during the IUFRO Congress 2000.
- Prepare publications on all these items.
- Report to the IUFRO EB twice a year until August 2000 : April and August. The April 2000 report should make proposals for the continuation or the termination of the Task Force according to internal and external factors connected to the management and conservation of FGR.

The Task Force did not organize any workshop, but some members of the co-ordination group held two short satellite meetings during the All-Division 2 Conference in Beijing, China, 22-28 August 1998. The chairman (F. Yeh) compiled a report on the following issues, based on the discussions in Beijing.

- i. Global strategies on FGR
- ii. Integration with forest management and economy
- iii. The need to provide comprehensive information on the current status of global FGR
- iv. Samples species
- v. Regional differences
- vi. Interaction of FGR and other forest and environment factors
- vii. The need for the FGR Task Force to meet

Plans for 1999

The Task Force coordinators will organize a sub-plenary session during the IUFRO World Congress, Malaysia, August 2000. During that session a State-of-Knowledge Report will be presented and discussed. One of its scopes will be the detection of knowledge gaps and research needs in the field of management and conservation of forest gene resources.

Special emphasis will be put on tropical and sub-tropical species and forests, where the genetic systems of species are poorly known. In all actions close cooperation with other relevant international organizations, such as FAO and IPGRI, needs to be enforced, and workplans prepared accordingly. The next meeting of the TF is likely to be connected to the Eleventh Session of the FAO Panel of Experts on Forest Gene Resources (planned 29 September - 1 October 1999 in Rome).