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Convention on Biological Diversity
Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals
Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora
International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture
Ramsar Convention on Wetlands
World Heritage Convention

LIAISON GROUP OF THE BIODIVERSITY-RELATED CONVENTIONS
Seventh meeting, Paris, 9 April 2009

**REPORT OF THE SEVENTH MEETING OF THE LIAISON GROUP OF THE
BIODIVERSITY-RELATED CONVENTIONS**

ITEM 1. OPENING OF THE MEETING

1. The seventh meeting of the Liaison Group of the Biodiversity-related Conventions (BLG) was hosted by the World Heritage Centre and took place at the headquarters of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) in Paris. It was opened on Thursday, 9 April 2009, at 10 a.m. The list of participants is contained in annex I to this report.
2. In his welcoming remarks Mr. Francesco Bandarin, Director of the World Heritage Centre, emphasized the importance of the Liaison Group of the Biodiversity-related Conventions as a coordinating mechanism among conventions and a tool to demonstrate to member States that joint activities and approaches and shared tools in the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity maximize the outcomes from limited resources in accordance with the goal to deliver as one United Nations.
3. Mr. Bandarin drew attention to a draft document prepared for the 33rd session of the World Heritage Committee, to be held in Seville, Spain, from 22 to 30 June 2009, which synthesizes the collaboration between the World Heritage Convention and other multilateral environmental agreements, including the Liaison Group of the Biodiversity-related Conventions (BLG) and its members, and which calls for a renewal of the mandate of the World Heritage Centre to engage in BLG activities. To exemplify that cooperation he referred to the Memorandum of Understanding with the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) and with the Ramsar Convention (both agreed in 1999), the Convention on Conservation of Migratory Species (CMS, 2003) as well as links with the Man and the Biosphere Programme, IUCN and the Arctic Treaty. He also referred to the new Memorandum of Understanding between UNESCO and UNEP, which makes reference to collaboration between multilateral environmental agreements. He said the interactive CD-ROM on the applications of the Addis Ababa Principles and Guidelines constituted a tangible output of the collaboration between BLG members, and provides concrete guidance for States Parties on linking sustainable use with heritage conservation.
4. A recent meeting of the Forum on the Future of the Convention had discussed how the values advocated through the Convention contribute to human development in all its facets and how the link between safeguarding World Heritage sites and the social, economic and cultural aspirations of humanity can be further elucidated. The meeting also considered the efficiency of the World Heritage system, which was approaching 40 years of existence (in 2012), 1,000 inscribed sites (currently 878, of which about one quarter are natural heritage sites) and reports upon some 176 (in 2009) state of conservation of

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sites annually, implying significant costs to sustain the monitoring process. Any suggestions to alleviate the reporting burden of Parties, such as through joint reporting or the use of existing national databases, would therefore be of interest to the Convention. In this context, Mr. Bandarin explained that the second cycle of periodic World Heritage reporting had just started (the first cycle was completed in 2007, followed by a reflection year concerning periodic reporting). For the period 2009-2014 a web-based questionnaire would be used for States Parties reporting by, starting with the Arab region in 2009.

5. Following an invitation for comments, Mr. Djoghlafl, the Executive Secretary of the Convention on Biological Diversity, thanked Mr. Bandarin and the World Heritage Centre for hosting the meeting. He referred to the International Congress on Biological and Cultural Diversity being jointly organized in 2010 with UNESCO and the Canada Research Chair in Ethnoecology and Biodiversity Conservation at the Université de Montréal as a tangible activity to jointly celebrate the International Year of Biodiversity (IYB) and suggested that BLG members take an active role in preparing and steering the Congress, starting with the identification of a focal point from each member by the end of April 2009. He informed the meeting about IYB preparations referring to the implementation document made available for the current meeting and highlighted the role of the BLG and the complementarity of its members as a powerful instrument to achieve a lasting impact beyond 2010. Accordingly, the Convention on Biological Diversity would keep BLG members informed as plans for IYB are being further developed.

6. Mr. Djoghlafl cited the Issue Management Group of the Environment Management Group on the 2010 process as a demonstration of how the United Nations system and existing mechanisms can be used to their full extent. The session of Heads of State and Government on biodiversity at the United Nations General Assembly in September 2010 showed how high biodiversity was on the international agenda and that the BLG should make full use of these opportunities. The initial proposal for the preparation of the high-level meeting during the sixty-fifth session of the General Assembly “on biodiversity challenges and responses” would be circulated to BLG members. He also proposed the organization of a high-level panel of Executive Heads of biodiversity-related conventions to discuss pertinent issues at the margins of the tenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity to be held in Nagoya in 2010, and to thereby demonstrate collaboration among conventions on substantive issues.

7. He emphasized the commitment of the Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity to collaboration with all partners, including through the designation of a member of staff, Susanne Heitmüller, who had been seconded by Germany to provide liaison services with the agencies located in Bonn (as well as Geneva and Paris, as appropriate). He thanked the CMS Secretariat for their support in hosting Ms. Heitmüller.

8. Ms. Yeater, Chief of the Legal Affairs and Trade Policy Support, CITES, confirmed the relevance of discussions on the linkages between culture and nature to CITES, noting that wildlife trade conducted in a legal, sustainable manner may nevertheless have both proponents and opponents (e.g. hunting trophies and circuses). She reported on the preparations for CITES CoP-15 (tentatively scheduled for 13-25 March 2010 in Doha, Qatar), including the 58th meeting of the Standing Committee (to be held in Geneva, 6-10 July 2009). She said that, among other things, the Standing Committee was expected to discuss a possible theme for the Conference of the Parties which might be expressed as a strategic target, e.g. to ensure that by 2020 CITES documents serve as reliable certificates of legal and sustainable wildlife trade and are issued as well as tracked electronically. Given the CoP venue she suggested that it might be worth examining whether some kind of link could be made with the Arab region reporting to the World Heritage Convention. She also expressed support for the notion of making better use of existing national databases to gather information on MEA implementation. In the context of efforts to harmonize reporting she referred to recent government initiatives such as the trial of a consolidated reporting template for Pacific Island countries to the biodiversity-related multilateral environmental agreements as well as a meeting of ASEAN countries on harmonized reporting.

9. With regard to strategic considerations under CITES, Ms. Yeater referred to the ongoing process to review national wildlife trade policies regarding the use of and trade in specimens of CITES-listed species and the possibility of a new strategic target as described in paragraph 8 above. She also mentioned

that the marking of CITES specimens and the reporting of CITES trade in the future would also focus on the increased use of electronic means.

10. Ms. Virtue (CMS) reported that she had been recruited by CMS as Liaison Officer and would join the Secretariat in June 2009 from her current position as coordinator of the Great Apes Survival Partnership (GRASP) at the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP). Ms. Herrenschmidt, acting officer for the development of the CMS/CITES list of joint activities 2008-2010, drew attention to the cultural importance of many endangered migratory species and in this context referred also to joint activities with CITES on elephants. As a major outcome of CMS COP-9 strategic considerations regarding the future shape of CMS and its agreements were under way and these would benefit from interaction with similar processes in other Conventions, such as the process in the WHC. She also made reference to the ongoing work on harmonizing taxonomic nomenclature, particular of species on the CMS and CITES appendices.

11. Mr. Tiega, Secretary General of the Ramsar Convention, reported that under the Ramsar Convention a working group was dedicated to the links between wetlands and culture, for which UNESCO had designated a focal point and which was open to other interested organizations. The group aimed to improve the conservation and wise use of wetlands from a cultural perspective. He reported that Ramsar's cooperation with the World Heritage Convention went beyond natural sites and included cultural aspects of site conservation. However, linkages between cultural and natural heritage could be a complicated matter and it was important to approach this carefully.

12. Mr. Davidson, Deputy Secretary of the Ramsar Convention, added that Ramsar's Scientific and Technical Review Panel (STRP) had now developed its workplan for COP-10 decisions which is being submitted for approval by the 40th meeting of the Standing Committee (mid May 2009). COP-11 was now scheduled for the first half 2012 in Romania, which led to a 3.5 year cycle between COPs and the budget allocation has been approved for the 2009-2012 cycle to enable the implementation of the Strategic Plan of the Convention. With regard to strategic considerations, he reported that the new Strategic Plan of Ramsar is now being implemented. The STRP had developed indicators for assessing the effectiveness of the implementation of the Convention based on information from national reports. This experience feeds into considerations regarding the format for national reports required for COP-11, which would probably focus on implementation reporting. He referred to the Changwon Declaration on human well-being and wetlands as a successful example of addressing key messages to other sectors and this could provide a model for successfully mainstreaming and communicating biodiversity considerations beyond the conservation community.

13. Ms. MacDevette, Deputy Director, reported on UNEP-WCMC's activities to support harmonization of biodiversity-related reporting, knowledge management and the development of biodiversity indicators (see also under item 3.1.2 below). With regard to UNEP, Ms. MacDevette referred to the Medium-term Strategy for the period 2010-2013 with six cross-cutting thematic priority areas (ecosystem management, climate change and environmental governance being the ones most closely linked to the biodiversity agenda) and the role of UNEP-WCMC to provide technical expertise on biodiversity. For example, UNEP-WCMC coordinates the World Database on Protected Areas which serves as a basis for the preparation of information on World Heritage Sites in Danger, which will be included in the forthcoming fifth edition of UNEP Global Environment Outlook.

14. Ms. Rössler, Chief of Section, reminded the meeting that the World Heritage Centre had worked on the links between culture and nature for over ten years with now 25 World Heritage sites recognized under both cultural and natural criteria for their designation ("mixed sites") as well as 60 World Heritage cultural landscapes. In UNESCO, this work entailed collaborative activities between the Culture and Science Sectors, such as case-studies in different regions of the world on linkages between cultural and biological diversity, which were also presented at an international symposium in Tokyo in June 2005, organized jointly by the two sectors and the Convention on Biological Diversity on "Conserving Cultural and Biological Diversity: The Role of Sacred Natural Sites and Cultural Landscapes". Furthermore, the joint IUCN-UNESCO publication on "Sacred Natural Sites – Guidelines for Protected Area Managers"

was completed in 2008 and broadly disseminated. Other activities linking cultural and natural diversity included work in the Arctic region (together with UNEP/GRID-Arendal) and the preparation of a Handbook on Cultural Landscapes, which is currently being tested at an international training course in April 2009 at ICCROM before it is finalized.

15. It was agreed that the agenda would serve as guidance while leaving flexibility in the discussions.

ITEM 2. REVIEW OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF DECISIONS FROM PREVIOUS BLG MEETINGS

16. The meeting reviewed progress in the implementation of agreed actions from previous meetings. Overall, progress was considered satisfactory, noting that delivery often depended on a Convention or individual to take the initiative.

17. The meeting emphasized the particular value of the meetings of the Chairs of the Scientific Advisory Bodies of Biodiversity-Related Conventions (CSAB). A third CSAB meeting, originally envisaged to be held at the margins of the IUCN World Conservation Congress (Barcelona, 5-14 October) could not be organized. The meeting therefore agreed to plan for a CSAB meeting at the margins of the second meeting on an intergovernmental science-policy platform on biodiversity and ecosystem services (Nairobi, 5-9 October 2009).

18. The meeting also deplored the status of the follow-up project on Knowledge Management and agreed that it was important to identify sources of funding (see also additional details under 3.2.4 below).

DECISION

CBD to explore the possibility of organizing the third meeting of Chairs of the Scientific Advisory Bodies of Biodiversity-Related Conventions before the second IPBES meeting (Nairobi, 4 October 2009).

ITEM 3. MATTERS ARISING FROM RECENT MEETINGS OF THE CONVENTIONS' GOVERNING BODIES AND SCIENTIFIC BODIES

3.1 Strategic matters

3.1.1 Updating of the Conventions' Strategic Plans

19. Noting the list of ongoing processes on implementing the Conventions' Strategic Plan in document BLG/7/1.Add.1, the World Heritage Convention explained that it did not have a strategic plan as such but that its work was guided by five strategic objectives known as "the 5 C's" (credibility, conservation, capacity-building, communication and communities) as well as the Forum on the Future of the Convention.

20. In addition to the issues already raised in the introductory round of comments the meeting discussed challenges faced by the conventions including:

(a) The new types of sites envisaged under the World Heritage Convention to address phenomena like the migration of Monarch butterflies, or the joint nomination of designating sites involving several States Parties, such as the African Rift Valley;

(b) The application of agreed principles, such as the application of the Addis Ababa Principles and Guidelines and the Voluntary guidelines on biodiversity-inclusive impact assessment in concrete situations, for example the proposed bioethanol production scheme in the lower Tana River valley and the question of joint technical missions to support member States in decision making;

(c) Uncertainties about the practical applicability of Ramsar procedures in internationally important wetlands that are not yet formally designated as Ramsar sites but have been identified as

qualifying through domestic application of the Strategic Framework and guidelines for the future development of the List of Wetlands of International Importance or an equivalent process in accordance with Goal 2 of the Strategic Plan.

DECISIONS

BLG members to share technical developments in areas relevant to other Conventions.
BLG to explore a mechanism for joint missions or for information exchange prior to missions aimed at supporting members States in the implementation of the provisions of biodiversity conventions.
BLG members to examine the feasibility of a joint list of focal points.

3.1.2 Report from the 2010 Biodiversity Indicators Partnership

21. Ms. MacDevette reported that UNEP-WCMC coordinates the 2010 Biodiversity Indicators Partnership (2010BIP) to assist the Convention on Biological Diversity in assessing progress towards the achievement of the 2010 target. The partnership involves over 40 institutions who are holding and analysing biodiversity trends data, and prepare summary reports and storylines. The activities of the partnership are aligned with the time table for the preparation of the third edition of Global Biodiversity Outlook (GBO-3). With support from the Government of the United Kingdom, UNEP-WCMC and the Convention on Biological Diversity are jointly organizing a technical workshop on the use and effectiveness of the framework of targets and indicators which will also feed into GBO-3 and provide the scientific underpinning for elements of a post-2010 framework. The meeting will be held from 6-8 July in Reading, United Kingdom, and aims to (i) review the use of indicators; (ii) review findings of biodiversity scenarios; (iii) examine options for a future framework of indicators for the post-2010 period; and (iv) analyse experiences with using indicators at different scales (particularly national – global). A number of publications have been produced and these are accessible from the 2010BIP website (www.twentyten.net), as is a questionnaire on the use and effectiveness of the current indicators framework.

22. In the discussion it became apparent that the indicators are in different stages of development with some being at the early stage of development. Access to data and data ownership was identified as a challenge, particularly the mobilization of data held outside Governments. For GBO-3, the primary focus is on global data for which time series with at least three data points exist. These would allow assessing whether or not a significant reduction in the rate of biodiversity loss has been achieved over time. Given the challenges in obtaining globally homogenous data with sufficient resolution and length of time series, GBO will also make use of local/national examples that demonstrate the effectiveness of biodiversity policies or management actions in achieving desired biodiversity outcomes. The indicators of the effectiveness of implementation of the Ramsar Convention are an excellent example of using national reports information for assessing national awareness and capacities. Challenges still remain to demonstrate links between biodiversity outcomes and human livelihoods as well as causal linkages to the drivers of biodiversity loss.

23. UNEP-WCMC was invited to provide a detailed report on the status of implementation of the 2010BIP project. A summary report is contained in annex II to this report. More detailed information as accessible from the project website.

24. The meeting continued to discuss the implications of using a wide range of data sources and the role of focal points in identifying and making available such information. Experiences were exchanged about examples where focal points had been particularly effective in implementing conventions and providing national information, including:

(a) Ramsar national committees, rather than individual focal points pursuing implementation of the Convention and exchange with various national partners and the Ramsar Secretariat;

(b) The development of central national systems to manage biodiversity-related information which facilitates access to data and information beyond the tenure of individual focal points;

(c) Regular exchanges among focal points of biodiversity-related conventions at national level and joint international meetings between focal point of different biodiversity related instruments.

25. To promote further cooperation between conventions, particularly at national level, CMS proposed the development a guidance document for national focal points on aspects related to the enhancement of synergies and joint actions between biodiversity-related conventions.

26. Ms. Kaboza, Special Projects Unit, reported on the experiences of the World Heritage Convention in supporting Government and non-governmental partners in the implementation of the Convention in the Democratic Republic of Congo. In this context, participating NGOs were asked to share their data with the Government so that it could consolidate such data and use it for taking and implementing policy decisions. A summary report is contained in annex III to this report.

DECISION

CMS to prepare draft guidance document to assist national focal points in further promoting synergies among, and implementing joint activities of, biodiversity-related conventions.

3.2 Options for enhanced cooperation

3.2.1 Capacity-building at regional and national level

27. The meeting discussed joint capacity-building activities among BLG members and the specific scope for collaboration between CMS and CITES on species-specific concerns. Other activities mentioned included a joint CMS-Ramsar initiative with activities in Panama and Côte d'Ivoire and the series of capacity-building workshops on national biodiversity strategies and action plans and mainstreaming biodiversity into sectors and the development and poverty reduction agendas, led by the Convention on Biological Diversity and carried out in collaboration with UNEP and UNDP.

28. The meeting discussed the agreement between the Convention on Biological Diversity and UNITAR to plan for a virtual biodiversity university 2010, UNITAR's offer to collaborate with Ramsar on electronic learning and the E-learning tools already developed by CITES (e.g. modules for self-training, an interactive CD-Rom for customs officers, etc.). It was suggested that relevant activities by BLG members be aligned with each other and with the United Nations system-wide programme on e-learning.

29. Ramsar reported on a training workshop for magistrates in Côte d'Ivoire, to which they had invited all biodiversity conventions to contribute and the formation of an Advisory Board for Capacity-Building which is developing mechanisms for increasing capacities.

30. The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) reported on training activities focusing on youth, which were considered to be particularly cost-effective.

31. The Convention on Biological Diversity referred to capacity-building activities for journalists, carried out in collaboration with UNEP and the World Heritage Convention at the margins of the ninth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity and a planned meeting with journalists in Montreal in connection with the International Year of Biodiversity. The African Association of Journalists and the International Association of Environmental Journalists were mentioned as possible partners.

32. The meeting also discussed the new positions of MEA focal points in UNEP regional offices and the need for BLG members to delegate suitable participants in the selection panel. It was suggested that additional details be sought from UNEP about the functions of these focal points. It was also suggested that secretariats participating in UNEP's new MEA Management Team share the results of MMT meetings with the World Heritage Convention and Ramsar.

DECISION

CBD, CITES and/or CMS to share with the World Heritage Convention and Ramsar the terms of reference and meeting minutes for MEA Management Team.
BLG members to nominate participants for the recruitment panel.

3.2.2 Options for enhanced cooperation with regard to work on cross-cutting issues, such as climate change and invasive alien species

33. It was agreed that it was critical to ensure consistency of the messages about cross cutting issues that drive biodiversity loss, such as climate change and invasive alien species and to further strengthen collaboration with key partners in the respective fields. A successful example was the collaboration of Ramsar and the Convention on Biological Diversity on a resolution on Wetlands and Climate Change. Attention was also drawn to the Policy Document on the Impacts of Climate Change on World Heritage Properties.

34. With regard to invasive alien species, reference was made to the IDB 2009 Booklet and the establishment of a fund to control and eradicate invasive alien species in the Galápagos Islands World Heritage site.

35. The joint development and use of technical guidance on priority issues was considered particularly effective. An example is the guidance in environmental impact assessment, originally developed under the Convention on Biological Diversity and endorsed by Ramsar and CMS, which has recently been expanded and completed. Ramsar's STPR added wetland-specific annotations to the new guidance to tailor the document for use by wetlands managers.

36. The meeting went on to discuss the development of guidance and scientific advice, including the ongoing discussions about a possible Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES). A brief oral report was given on a meeting organized by UNEP on 7 April 2009 regarding the preparations for the second Ad hoc Intergovernmental and Multi-Stakeholder Meeting on IPBES. UNEP had invited two BLG members to play an active part in the informal advisory group being established ahead of this second meeting and the Executive Secretaries of the Convention on Biological Diversity and Ramsar had signalled their willingness to participate in this group. They would consult with the other BLG members in this process.

DECISION

Executive Secretaries of CBD and Ramsar to represent BLG in the informal advisory group on the preparation of the second meeting on IPBES.

3.2.3 International Day for Biological Diversity 2009 and International Year of Biodiversity in 2010

37. Mr. Djoghlaif reported on plans and developments in preparation of International Day for Biological Diversity 2009 and the International Year of Biodiversity (IYB) in 2010. He emphasized that these events presented opportunities for all BLG members to collaborate and join forces and that BLG members had been invited to participate in a task force to prepare and steer the outreach activities. Greenwave, an initiative started at the ninth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity with participation of initially 50 schools, has now been expanded to a multi-year global campaign to raise awareness among children about biodiversity (see <http://greenwave.cbd.int>), which is being pursued in partnership with Airbus and the National Geographic Society and aimed at engaging other private sector partners. The theme of urban biodiversity is being pursued with a number of cities, including Curitiba, Bonn, Nagoya, Singapore and Montreal piloting the development of an urban biodiversity index. A series of events were also carried out in partnership with UNESCO within the framework of the United Nations Decade of Education for Sustainable Development aimed at

mainstreaming biodiversity in curricula at all levels. The IYB strategy and implementation plan have been made available for the BLG meeting and these provide additional details.

38. The Secretary-General is expected to nominate a Special Representative for IYB and the official launch will take place in early January 2010 in Berlin, hosted by the Presidency of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity, followed by the concert and launch of the IYB exhibition on 21 and 22 January 2010 at UNESCO. The exhibition will be reproduced for a number of travelling versions in order to maximize its impact. Following the launch of the exhibition, UNESCO will be hosting a scientific conference on biodiversity, including Heads of State, in preparation for the September meeting of the United Nations General Assembly. Agencies throughout the wider United Nations system are expected to mark IYB by having a biodiversity theme during 2010.

39. Throughout the year, a number of other events will lend support to the goals and objectives of the IYB. Among others, the sixth Trondheim Conference on Biodiversity will be organized in February 2010 and serve to give additional guidance on the post 2010 target and the Strategic Plan of the Convention on Biological Diversity and its results will feed into the documentation for the fourteenth meeting of the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice (SBSTTA) and the third meeting of the Working Group on the Review of Implementation of the Convention on Biological Diversity (WGRI), in May 2010. UNEP's Governing Council will meet in Washington in February 2010 with biodiversity as the theme for the Global Ministerial Environment Forum. The theme for International Day for Biological Diversity on 22 May 2010 will be "Biodiversity for development". This will coincide with the holding of SBSTTA-14 and WGRI-3, as well as with the release of GBO-3. A tree planting event involving Wangari Maathai is anticipated. Building on the G8 Environment Ministers Meeting in Syracuse (Sicily) from 22 to 24 April, and the Syracuse Charter on Biodiversity, it is expected that the G8 environment agenda in 2010, in Canada will have biodiversity as a main theme. In September, the United Nations General Assembly will hold a high level segment on the IYB, which will produce a summary of the chair, which will represent an input to the tenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity, in Nagoya, in October. The closing of the IYB will take place in Ishikawa prefecture, Japan, where the celebrations will also mark the opening of the International Year of Forests 2011. The Convention on Biological Diversity will work with the United Nations Forum on Forests on preparations for this event as well as on developing a plan of action on South-South Cooperation in the context of forests.

40. Information materials for IYB, including a logotype and essential branding, books, a website and promotional videos will be produced to assist partners in holding celebrations. Branding will be available to BLG partners by mid-2009. Other materials will be available by the end of the year. It will be helpful if activities of BLG members can be coordinated to ensure a maximum of complementarities and mutual reinforcement. In this connection, it was suggested that an activity related to IYB be organized in the margins of CITES CoP15 (e.g. a reception for the IYB special representative).

41. It was suggested to use the 34th Session of the World Heritage Committee in Brazil in 2010, as a platform for activities, with a possibly Youth Forum to be organized and building on the establishment of a World Heritage Training Centre in Rio de Janeiro. The launching in Brazil on IDB 2009 of a certification system related to the three objectives of the Convention on Biological Diversity will mark a major milestone in promoting the mainstreaming of biodiversity in the private sector. Companies might want to use the World Heritage Committee to demonstrate their efforts.

42. Mr. Davidson informed the meeting that World Wetlands Day 2010 would be on "wetlands, biodiversity and climate change". A major redevelopment of the website of the Ramsar Convention is underway which seeks to improve communication and outreach. Noting the growing percentage of world population living in urban centres and complementary to the activities on urban biodiversity initiated by the Convention on Biological Diversity he referred to the resolution of Ramsar COP-10 on wetlands and urbanization, which had been introduced at the initiative of the host country Korea.

43. The meeting agreed to that a task force would discuss and coordinate activities among BLG members.

DECISIONS

CBD to arrange for a conference call to keep BLG members informed about preparations for the International Day on Biodiversity 2009 and the International Year of Biodiversity 2010, including the International Congress on Biological and Cultural Diversity.

CBD to circulate proposal submitted for the format of the Heads of States discussions on biodiversity in September 2010

BLG members to examine feasibility and form of organizing a high-level panel of Executive Heads of biodiversity-related conventions immediately before the high-level segment of CBD COP-10 in Nagoya

3.2.4 Knowledge management for multilateral environmental agreements

44. Participants reviewed the status of the project on knowledge management for multilateral environmental agreements (MEAs) and noted that the expectation of completing elements of the joint database of information and resources, including the joint list of focal points, as well as the search mechanism for a common database platform (into which data from separate but interoperable on-line reporting forms for several MEAs could be fed) had not been implemented in the first project phase. A second project phase which seeks to address this and other follow-up activities originally seemed likely to receive financial and technical support from UNEP but the latest indicators suggest that funding has not yet been secured by UNEP and now has to be found elsewhere. CITES and UNEP-WCMC would follow up on this. The meeting was further informed of the establishment at the UNEP Regional Office for Europe of a Knowledge Management Unit under Division on Environmental Law and Conventions (DELIC) and efforts by UNEP to promote a corporate identity, *inter alia*, through a coherent domain name (unep.org) for UNEP-administered bodies.

45. The meeting agreed that the issue-based modules for coherent implementation of biodiversity related conventions (TEMATEA; www.tematea.org) provide a very useful entry point for Parties to support and streamline the implementation of different conventions. It was also noted that BLG members are not involved in the interpretation of guidance but might be able to contribute to this effort. Accordingly, it was suggested that activities aimed at strengthening collaboration between BLG members and TEMATEA be incorporated into phase 2 of the Knowledge Management project.

46. The meeting agreed that the report on the preconditions on the harmonization of reporting should be finalized by UNEP-WCMC and Ramsar and put forward to the governing bodies of participating BLG members. In this context, UNEP-WCMC reported on a pilot project on national reporting to Rio conventions, involving six least developed countries. The meeting also agreed that BLG members should each designate a focal point for a joint technical group on national reporting, which could continue to coordinate work on issues related to harmonized reporting and knowledge management.

DECISION

CITES and UNEP-WCMC to lead the follow-up project on Knowledge Management.
UNEP-WCMC, in consultation with Ramsar, to finalize document on the preconditions on the harmonization of reporting for presentation to governing bodies of participating BLG members.
BLG members to each designate a focal point for a technical group on national reporting.

3.3 Environmental governance

3.3.1 International environmental governance

47. The meeting considered the implications of the report of the Joint Inspection Unit Management review of environmental governance within the United Nations system and the report of third meeting of

the Ad Hoc Joint Working Group on Enhancing Cooperation and Coordination among the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm conventions. It took note of the proposal for a “Super-COP” of the three chemical and waste conventions (Rotterdam, Stockholm and Basel) and a UNU study on how to organize the chemical-waste cluster but concluded that it was up to Governments and governing bodies to make decisions for the biodiversity cluster.

3.3.2 Trade and the environment

48. The meeting discussed a joint approach to the World Trade Organization. It was noted that CITES and the Convention on Biological Diversity are in comparable situations, having been granted observer status in some committees while awaiting responses to their requests for reciprocal observer status in others. Both CITES and the Convention on Biological Diversity have explored the possibility of concluding cooperative MoUs with the World Trade Organization (WTO), but it may now appear more appropriate to pursue informal rather than formal cooperation. Ramsar and CMS indicated their interest to pursue a similar approach. It was agreed that brief reports should be made available from participation of any BLG member in relevant WTO sessions. For this purpose each interested BLG member should nominate a focal point on trade and the environment who would pursue the proposed elements in the work plan contained in annex IV to this report as appropriate.

49. CITES suggested to collaborate in the preparation of MEA-related modules on trade and the environment for use in appropriate WTO or other training events.

DECISION

Interested BLG members to nominate focal points on trade-related issues.
CITES to lead preparation of capacity-building modules on trade and the environment.

ITEM 4. UPCOMING MEETINGS AND EVENTS

50. The meeting took note of the BLG calendar (www.cbd.int/blg/calendar) which extracts all meetings organized by any BLG member from the global calendar.

ITEM 5. DATE AND VENUE OF NEXT MEETING

51. The meeting agreed to organize the eighth meeting of the Liaison Group of the Biodiversity-related Conventions on 20 January 2010 at UNESCO in Paris, before the launch of the IYB exhibition.

DECISION

BLG-8 to take place on 20 January 2010 at UNESCO in Paris.

ITEM 6. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

52. The meeting discussed participation and status of other organizations in BLG meetings. While recalling decisions specifying the composition of the BLG and its nature as an informal liaison group, it was noted that some agenda items might be relevant to regional partners, for example the Bern Convention, while DELC’s presence could be helpful in providing guidance on developments and plans in UNEP. The meeting agreed to formally address the question of invitees to BLG meetings at its next meeting. The meeting also learned of UNEP’s plans to launch an initiative on transnational environmental crime and BLG members expressed interest in cooperating on this issue. It was suggested that BLG members might wish to establish a technical group on resource mobilization and members undertook to identify focal points for such a group.

DECISION

BLG-8 to consider list of invitees.

53. The meeting was closed at 4.30 p.m. on 9 April 2009.

Annex I

LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

World Heritage Convention	Francesco Bandarin (Chair) Kishore Rao Mechtild Rössler Yvette Kaboza
CBD	Ahmed Djoghlaif (Co-chair) Robert Höft Susanne Heitmüller
CITES	Marceil Yeater
CMS	Melanie Virtue Véronique Herrenschmidt
Ramsar	Anada Tiéga Nick Davidson
UNEP-WCMC	Monika MacDevette
ITPGR:	Apologies

Annex II

INDICATOR SYNOPSES & SUMMARY OF PROGRESS: JULY 2007 – DECEMBER 2008

For more information, see <http://www.twentyten.net>

Focal Area	Indicator	Collaborating Agency	Progress				Description of progress made since July 2007
			Data collation	Storylines	Graphics	Ongoing development	
Status and trends of the components of biodiversity	Trends in extent of selected biomes, ecosystems, and habitats: Forests	<i>FAO</i>	✓			✓	New methods and tools developed to improve access / temporal interpretation of satellite imagery (1990-2000-2005). Paucity of country data. Assessment made of forest area in different ecological zones, no global trend studies yet.
	Trends in extent of selected biomes, ecosystems, and habitats: Others	<i>UNEP-WCMC</i>	✓		✓	✓	Extent assessment (statistics, graphics) prepared for: coral reefs, seagrasses, mangroves, dry lands, grasslands and wetlands. Mostly a single global data set, with one or more regional time series. Case studies identified.
	Living Planet Index	<i>Zoological Society of London (ZSL) & WWF</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	Well developed, data now include ~9,700 population time series. Gaps in temporal distributions filled, improving overall quality of index.
	Global Wild Bird Index	<i>BirdLife International</i>	✓			✓	Early phase of development at the global level. Regional indicators developed in Europe. Progress made in Africa (Botswana, Nigeria, Rwanda, South Africa, Uganda, Zimbabwe). Discussions ongoing with potential partners in China and Colombia.
	Waterbird Indicator	<i>Wetlands International</i>	✓		✓	✓	Based on the International Waterbird Census, with data beginning in 1967. This indicator is not formally part of the 2010 BIP suite.
	Coverage of protected areas	<i>UNEP-WCMC</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	Protected areas data are sourced from the World Database on Protected Areas (WDPA). Improvement to WDPA marine protected area data enabled separation of the indicator into marine and terrestrial components. Indicator methodology refined by automation of ArcGIS spatial analysis processes.
	Overlay of biodiversity with protected areas	<i>UNEP-WCMC</i>				✓	No progress has been made on developing this indicator because of staff shortages. This is expected to be imminently rectified.
	Management effectiveness of protected areas	<i>UNEP-WCMC & University of Queensland (UQ)</i>	✓			✓	A suite of Protected Areas Management Effectiveness (PAME) indicators, developed between UNEP-WCMC, IUCN WCPA, and UQ, currently under peer review. The 14 metrics will be linked to the WDPA.
	Red List Index and Sampled Red List Index	<i>ZSL</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	Comprehensive coverage now exists for three vertebrate groups (birds, mammals, amphibians) and a representative sample of reptiles. Marine fish assessments will be

Focal Area	Indicator	Collaborating Agency	Progress				Description of progress made since July 2007
			Data collation	Storylines	Graphics	Ongoing development	
							completed in January 2009. Three invertebrate groups (Corals, Freshwater Crabs, Dragonflies) were also added to the 2008 Red List.
	<i>Ex situ</i> crop collections	<i>FAO & Bioversity International</i>	✓			✓	Studies currently undertaken to review indicators measuring the genetic diversity present in agricultural populations on farm and held in germplasm collections. Also options to detect erosion, or serious loss of diversity in time, and warn of vulnerability from adverse deployment of genetic diversity in space.
	Genetic diversity of terrestrial domesticated animals	<i>FAO & ILRI</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	Indicator finalisation and status/trends report format will be agreed at the forthcoming Intergovernmental Technical Working Group on Animal Genetic Resources (ITWG-AnGR) of the Commission on Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture (CGRFA), end January 2009.
Sustainable use	Area of forest under sustainable management: certification	<i>UNEP-WCMC</i>	✓		✓	✓	Limited progress has been made on developing this indicator because of staff maternity leave. Data collection has occurred and draft graphics have been produced, available March 2009.
	Area of forest under sustainable management: degradation and deforestation	<i>FAO</i>	✓			✓	Recently released Landsat satellite imagery has been validated by a network of national experts on deforestation. There is no globally-agreed, operational definition of “degradation”. Analysis of existing definitions is being undertaken to classify degradation parameters and to provide case studies.
	Area of agricultural ecosystems under sustainable management	<i>FAO</i>	✓			✓	An overall land use system developed in consultation with LADA countries (Argentina, China, Cuba, Senegal, South Africa, Tunisia) and is online. Methodology developed for country-level application that inventories land degradation and sustainable land management. Data collection started in six countries and a study is underway to establish global trends in vegetation greenness as an ecosystems health indicator.
	Proportion of fish stocks in safe biological limits	<i>FAO</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	The indicator is based on formal national stock assessments that relate catches to the fishing effort deployed since 1978. This methodology is already used by FAO for describing status and trends in capture fisheries in the biannual publication SOFIA and for regular reviews of the state of the world marine fisheries. This indicator is not formally part of the 2010 BIP suite.
	Status of species in trade	<i>CITES</i>	✓			✓	A draft indicator methodology and data collation underway; to be ready for GBO-3 reporting deadline.
	Wild Commodities Index	<i>UNEP-WCMC</i>	✓			✓	The methodology developed with marine species data and is currently being tested using analogous terrestrial species data. The index is based on long term datasets which contain harvest data of wild populations.
	Ecological footprint and	<i>Global Footprint</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	The 2008 National Footprint Accounts have been published with revised calculation

Focal Area	Indicator	Collaborating Agency	Progress				Description of progress made since July 2007
			Data collation	Storylines	Graphics	Ongoing development	
	related concepts	<i>Network</i>					template, enhancing data robustness and transparency. Coverage expansion now includes Hong Kong, China, India and Africa. Development underway of the latest Ecological Footprint Standards.
Threats to biodiversity	Nitrogen deposition	<i>International Nitrogen Initiative</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	Global nitrogen deposition knowledge based on indicator. Dry deposition rates and total deposition rates of organic nitrogen compound have improved methodology. Regional scale workshops planned.
	Invasive alien species	<i>Global Invasive Species Programme</i>	✓			✓	Indicator work started at CIB in June 2008 with four indicators under development: i) <i>Status of Alien Species Invasion</i> ; ii) <i>Trend in National Invasive Alien Species Policy</i> ; C. <i>Trends in International Invasive Alien Species Policy</i> ; D. <i>Global Indicator of Biological Invasion</i> . The delivery of these indicators for 2010 will require further minor development and additional data collation.
Ecosystem integrity and ecosystem goods and services	Marine Trophic Index	<i>University of British Columbia</i>		✓	✓	C ¹	Indicator is complete and available online at: www.seararoundus.org
	Water quality	<i>UNEP GEMS/Water Programme</i>	✓	✓	✓		Funding for the UNEP GEMS/Water Programme was almost entirely suspended and program activities were largely halted in April 2007.
	Forest Fragmentation	<i>UNEP-WCMC & FAO</i>	✓			✓	Metadata analyses of case study landscapes resulted in a “BioFrag” index, which assigns a value for fragmentation effects on biodiversity to each cell of a landscape and allows calculation of an average across a landscape. In addition MODIS global data being used to identify fragmentation hotspots to concentrate finer resolution studies.
	River fragmentation and flow regulation	<i>The Nature Conservancy</i>		✓	✓	C ¹	Indicator is complete and published (Nilsson, C. <i>et al.</i> 2005. Fragmentation and Flow Regulation of the World’s Large River Systems. <i>Science</i> 308(5720) : 405-408). This is version 3 of the indicator; it includes fragmentation and flow regulation analysis for rivers with a Virgin Mean Annual Discharge (VMAD) of more or equal to 350m ³ /s. Only dam and reservoir information were included; i.e. water withdrawals and diversion not specifically considered, although a proxy for water withdrawal from irrigation pressure has been calculated.
	Health and well-being of communities	<i>UNEP-WCMC & WHO</i>	✓			✓	This indicator is in the very early stages of development. Some potential variables for a metric have been identified and a series of data sources are under review. Consultations have occurred with experts in this field to ensure the most accurate representation of the current situation.

¹ C = Complete

Focal Area	Indicator	Collaborating Agency	Progress				Description of progress made since July 2007
			Data collation	Storylines	Graphics	Ongoing development	
	Nutritional status of biodiversity	<i>FAO</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	A technical report on baseline for Indicator 1 (food composition) has been prepared and will be submitted to the <i>Journal of Food Composition and Analysis</i> . An administrative report is being prepared. The planning of the Expert Consultation on Nutrition Indicators for biodiversity 2 (food consumption), to be held in June 2009, is well underway.
	Biodiversity for food and medicine	<i>TRAFFIC International</i>	✓			✓	Two approaches developed: i) Red List Approach - Identifying where more than one temporal assessment of species harvested for food and medicine undertaken; and collating; ii) Availability approach - To measure changing population and the changing affordability of goods from species (i.e., changing price of a “basket of species”). Global list of medicinal plant species has also been improved, now containing ~16,000 species.
Status of knowledge, innovations and practices	Status and trends of linguistic diversity and numbers of speakers of indigenous languages	<i>UNESCO & Terralingua</i>	✓			✓	The database of indigenous languages (numbers of speakers) has been expanded to 1,476 entries, from studies of North America, Latin America, Australia and some of Pacific.
Status of access and benefits sharing		<i>To be determined</i>					No technical partner has been identified to develop this indicator. The Secretariat of CBD retains responsibility to take this forward.
Status of resource transfers	Official development assistance provided in support of the Convention	<i>OECD</i>				✓	Methodology agreed and data collation planned (at OECD office, Paris) - agreed to be undertaken by staff from Secretariats of 2010 BIP and SEBI2010.

Annex III

**WHC REPORT ON OPTIONS FOR EFFECTIVE OPERATION AND COMMUNICATION OF
BLG MEMBERS IN A COUNTRY CONTEXT**

**How could the BLG operate and communicate more effectively in a country context
using the Democratic Republic of Congo as one possible model?**

BACKGROUND INFO

1. DRC holds more than 50% of the Congo Basin Forest (a biodiversity hotspot) and hosts a numerous endemic fauna and flora;
2. The country is signatory to all the Conventions related to Biodiversity Conservation. As regard to the *Convention Concerning the Protection of World Cultural and Natural Heritage*, DRC signed it in 1974 and had its first property (Virunga National Park) inscribed on the World Heritage List in 1979. This first inscription was followed by four others, respectively Garamba and Kahuzi-Biega NP (1980), Salonga NP (1984) and Okapi Wildlife Reserve (1996);

How do BLG's members operate and communicate in the specific context of the DRC?

- Ramsar relies on its two national focal points, one for the Scientific and Technical Review Panel (Mr. Kabembe Muembo) and one for Communication, Education and Public Awareness (Mr. Matushi Louis Lungu);
- CITES has no focal point in the DRC but operates through a Management Authority (M. Pascal Ngoy –Toki) and Scientific Authorities (Mr. Benoît Kisuki Mathe and Mr. Edmond Shabani Kianzele). It operated quite well through its MIKE programme (Monitoring Illegal Killing of the Elephants) implemented in Garamba National Park and Okapi Wildlife Reserve;
- CMS relies on GRASP (Great Apes Survival Partnership) focal point in the DRC (who is also the Management Authority of CITES)
- The *World Heritage Convention* has no focal point in the DRC. It operates and communicates through regular field missions as well as through a strong collaborative mechanism developed with the Congolese Institute for Nature Conservation (ICCN) and its partners' NGOs. In addition, the World Heritage Secretariat can rely on MONUC with which it collaborates on regular basis.

BLG could improve its way of operating and communicating in the DRC and contribute more effectively in biodiversity conservation by:

- a) **Nominating a single focal point to address issues of common interest to the BLG;**
- b) **Joining the existing co-ordination mechanism, the CoCoCongo** (Coalition for the Conservation in Congo) that gathers all the partners (UNESCO, German Technical Cooperation, nine International Conservation NGOs, the European Union and the World Bank) of the Congolese Institute for Nature Conservation (ICCN). This platform was set up early 2000 in order to facilitate the implementation of the UNESCO/UNF project "*Biodiversity Conservation in time of Armed Conflict: Preserving World Heritage in the DRC*" in a country enmeshed in the Great Lake Conflict.

Members of the CoCongo meet once a year in Kinshasa. This annual meeting enables ICCN to set priorities with its partners for the following year. It is also a good opportunity for those partners to keep informed of their respective activities/programmes in the DRC.

- c) **Providing to ICCN data/info on sites of common interest** in order to feed its management information system on protected areas. This would enable ICCN to produce more comprehensive factsheets and to better monitor the state of conservation of DRC's protected areas.
- d) **Establishing contact with the UN Country Team.** This point is particularly important because UN is expected to deliver "as one" in the framework of the setting up of the "One UN" reform.

- e) **Relaying the World Heritage Committee position** which has been recommending since 2007 (Cairns, 2007) to mobilize efforts from DRC partners, UN programmes and agencies were to design a common policy that would address in an efficient and sustainable way the issue of the deterioration of the World Heritage properties still present on the List of World Heritage in Danger after 10 years.

To achieve this, the World Heritage Committee called upon “the Director-General of UNESCO and the Chairperson of the World Heritage Committee to convene a meeting with the DRC authorities, together with representatives of the African Union and appropriate subregional organizations and the President of IUCN, to discuss progress in addressing the deteriorating state of conservation of the DRC World Heritage properties [...]”

The BLG could seize this opportunity to make itself better known and communicate on its mission and role.

Annex IV

ELEMENTS FOR A POSSIBLE JOINT APPROACH OF BLG MEMBERS VIS-À-VIS WTO

1. Observer status: MEAs have various requests at various WTO committees pending. For the CBD the status is as follows: CTE-R granted; CTE-SS, TRIPS Council, Agriculture, SPS, TBT committees: pending. For CITES the status is as follows: CTE-R granted; CTE-SS pending; General Council and committees on SPS, TBT, trade and development and regional trade agreements to be requested.

Proposed Action item 1: Compile for each MEA a list of relevant WTO committees in which observer status has been achieved, is pending or is to be requested.

Proposed Action item 2: Invite specific Committee chairs to follow the ‘special invitee’ model of the CTE-SS. This could be done by a joint letter of the Executive Secretaries, or COP Presidents. However, this would probably be sensible only if several MEAs have applied for observer status in one particular committee.

2. Technical cooperation: Various MEAs, including the CBD and CITES, have in the past participated in the WTO regional workshops on trade and environment. Cooperation among MEAs could be strengthened with a view to have the MEA representative(s) attending a particular workshop also representing other MEAs (e.g. by delivering a joint presentation at the workshop). In light of the time and resource constraints of individual responsible officers in MEA secretariats, this could be an interesting option for realizing synergy. Consideration could also be given to a national authority, which serves as focal point for more than one MEAs, delivering a joint presentation.

Proposed Action item 3: Each interested MEA to prepare slides of relevant trade issues under the MEA, for joint perusal at upcoming technical cooperation/capacity building events.

Proposed Action item 4: MEAs to nominate a (rotating?) focal point for liaising with the WTO Secretariat on a regular basis in order to keep abreast with the latest calendar of planned events.

Proposed Action item 5: Coordinate among MEAs in order to secure representation of at least one representative in these events.

3. Information exchange: The UNEP Economics and Trade Branch in Geneva (which in the past informally organized meetings with the WTO Secretariat after CTE sessions) already provides information on an informal basis. We also had in the past an email list of officers following WTO developments (they could probably be updated). CITES and WTO have discussed organizing further, informal discussions among members of both organizations, perhaps in the margins of the CITES SC, on issues of common interest identified by the secretariats. Details about the discussions held between the Chairman of the CITES Standing Committee and one of the Deputy Directors General of WTO are contained in the SC57 Summary Record, under agenda item 12 on cooperation with WTO.

Proposed Action item 6: Update email lists of officers following WTO developments and consider joint organization of an informal discussion.
