

CONVENTION ON INTERNATIONAL TRADE IN ENDANGERED SPECIES  
OF WILD FAUNA AND FLORA



Eighteenth meeting of the Plants Committee  
Buenos Aires (Argentina), 17-21 March 2009

Cooperation

COOPERATION WITH OTHER MULTILATERAL INSTRUMENTS

1. This document has been prepared by the Secretariat and the chair of the Plants Committee.
2. The *Strategic Vision through 2005* and its *Action Plan* as well as the *CITES Strategic Vision: 2008-2013* place strong emphasis on ensuring that CITES cooperates with other multilateral instruments and processes. The present document reports on the activities of the Secretariat and the Chairmen of the Animals and Plants Committees, in relation to three such instruments and processes. This document reports on linkages with instruments which are not covered elsewhere in the agenda for the current meeting.

Meeting of the chairmen of the scientific advisory bodies of biodiversity-related conventions.

3. Following a suggestion made by the CITES Secretariat at the fourth meeting of the Biodiversity Liaison Group (BLG) (Bonn, October 2005), the BLG agreed to propose a meeting of the chairmen of the scientific advisory bodies of biodiversity-related conventions (CSAB). The purpose was for the chairmen of these bodies together with representatives of the secretariats to enhance cooperation, share information about their conventions' activities and processes and collectively support progress towards the 2010 biodiversity target.
4. Convened by the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) and with the support of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), the first meeting of the CSAB took place on 1 July 2007. CITES was represented by the chairmen of the Animals and Plants Committees and a representative of the Secretariat. Details are reported in document PC17 Doc. 7.
5. The second meeting of the CSAB took place on 25 May 2008 and CITES was represented by the chair of the Plants Committee and a representative of the Secretariat. The meeting reviewed processes and approaches of the Conventions' scientific bodies in providing advice. The Animals and Plants Committees' work programmes were circulated for information. Participants were briefed on developments concerning the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (see paragraph 8 below). The group expressed its support for CITES' suggestion of moving towards harmonization of nomenclature and taxonomy in lists of species used by the Conventions. The report of the meeting can be found at the following URL: <http://www.cbd.int/doc/meetings/csab/csab-02/official/csab-02-03-en.doc> (English only).

2010 Biodiversity Indicators Partnership

6. The background to this initiative to streamline biodiversity indicators for the 2010 biodiversity target can be found in document PC17 Doc. 7.

7. The second technical meeting of the 2010 Biodiversity Indicators Partnership was held in Montréal, Canada from 25-26 June 2008. Working with UNEP-WCMC, the CITES Secretariat is the key indicator partner for the 'Status of species in trade' element of the indicators of sustainable use. The meeting took stock of the progress made in the development of the key indicators. In the case of the 'Status of species in trade' indicators linkages and overlaps were noted with the wild commodities index, living planet index, global wild bird index and IUCN red list index. In the case of the latter, a recently published paper; Stuart H. M. Butchart (2008). Red List Indices to measure the sustainability of species use and impacts of invasive alien species. *Bird Conservation International*, 18, pp S245-S262. doi:10.1017/S095927090800035X, available at the following url: (<http://journals.cambridge.org/action/displayAbstract?aid=2040144>) already indicates some of the possibilities. Further work will be needed to try and incorporate consideration of factors that influence volumes of legal trade, such as legislation and estimates of illegal trade. The final indicator will be published in the 3rd edition of the Global Biodiversity Outlook which is scheduled to be launched at the 14th meeting of the Convention on Biological Diversity's Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice in May 2010.

#### Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES)

8. As reported to the Committee in document PC17 Doc. 7 an International Mechanism of Scientific Expertise on Biodiversity held consultations between 2005-2007 on the need for an objective source of information about biodiversity change and its impacts on ecosystem services and human well-being. This culminated in a request from stakeholders that the Executive Director of UNEP to convene an intergovernmental meeting to consider establishing an international interface between science and policy to address these objectives.
9. This meeting, under the title Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services, was held in Putrajaya, Malaysia 10-12 November 2008 and was attended by the chair of the Plants Committee and the Secretary General. The meeting also addressed follow-up action for the Millennium Ecosystem Assessment. It used as its basis for discussion, a concept note prepared jointly by UNEP and the Government of France: <http://ipbes.epeerreview.com/app/Chapter.315.8.aspx>. The proposed IPBES would provide scientific support to multilateral environmental agreements, national governments and other decision-makers concerned with consequences of biodiversity loss and ecosystem change. The results of the meeting can be found at the following URL: <http://ipbes.net/en/index.aspx>. The meeting did not adopt any recommendations as such but agreed that the Chair's summary would serve as the outcome of the meeting. This is attached as an Annex to this document. The next step is that the outcome of the meeting will be presented by the Executive Director of UNEP to the 25th session of the UNEP Governing Council (16-20 February 2009) who should be asked in turn to request the Executive Director to convene a second intergovernmental multi-stakeholder meeting with a view to strengthening and improving the science-policy interface for biodiversity and ecosystem services for human well-being, including consideration of a new science-policy platform. The role, needs of and relationship to, multilateral environmental agreements like CITES was frequently referred to at the first meeting. Consequently it is important that the voice of the Convention is heard during future deliberations.
10. The Committee is invited to offer any comments on this document and take note of its content. The Secretariat repeats its request, made in documents AC23 Doc. 7/PC17 Doc. 7, for volunteers amongst the Committee members and observers, particularly from Scientific Authorities, to offer guidance on the development of indicators for the sustainable use of species in trade as mentioned in paragraphs 6 and 7 above.

## SUMMARY BY THE CHAIR: PUTRAJAYA ROAD MAP

1. Following the Millennium Ecosystem Assessment, the international mechanism of scientific expertise on biodiversity consultations and decision IX/15 of the ninth meeting of the Parties of Convention on Biological Diversity, the Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) convened a meeting to consider establishing an efficient intergovernmental science-policy interface on biodiversity and ecosystem services for human well-being and sustainable development.
2. There was uniform recognition of the importance of biodiversity and ecosystem services, which are currently experiencing significant loss and are critically important for human well-being, particularly poverty alleviation. The Millennium Ecosystem Assessment demonstrated that, over the past 50 years, humanity had caused unprecedented losses in biodiversity and declines in ecosystem services. In all, 60 per cent of the 24 assessed ecosystem services were in decline and further degradation was expected if immediate action was not taken. That would in particular, but not exclusively, have a negative impact on the development processes in developing countries.
3. The meeting documents were based on a concept note prepared by UNEP and reviewed by Governments and stakeholders.
4. Participants from 78 countries and 25 organizations met in Putrajaya, Malaysia, to discuss needs and modalities to strengthen the science-policy interface on biodiversity and ecosystem services, including the potential of an intergovernmental science-policy platform on biodiversity and ecosystem services.
5. For three days there was a highly constructive exchange of views on the concept, content and structure of a potential intergovernmental science-policy platform on biodiversity and ecosystem services, with the current meeting being viewed as the first step towards strengthening the science-policy interface.
6. There was broad recognition that there was a need to improve the science-policy interface, which should use existing relevant assessments and the best available multidisciplinary knowledge (i.e., natural, social and economic sciences, including traditional and indigenous knowledge).
7. Most participants recognized that there were currently numerous national and international science-policy interfaces (mechanisms and processes) for biodiversity and ecosystem services. Those participants expressed the need for a gap analysis of the strengths and weaknesses of the existing interfaces and coordination among them at all spatial scales (including the scientific subsidiary and advisory bodies of relevant biodiversity-related multilateral environment agreements and United Nations bodies). The gap analysis should also assess the potential for strengthening existing interfaces and the added value of a potential new mechanism that would overcome the recognized weaknesses in the current system. Participants had differing views as to which gaps in the science-policy interface were most significant, with some participants noting the lack of an effective assessment process that provided policy-relevant information and advice to multiple biodiversity-related conventions, while most developing country participants viewed the greatest gap as capacity-building.
8. To complement and add value to the existing mechanisms, many participants supported the need for an intergovernmental science-policy platform on biodiversity and ecosystem services that would be distinct and independent from existing institutions or mechanisms. Others, however, considered that it was too early to conclude whether there was a need for a new and independent body, preferring to wait for the results of the gap analysis.
9. While there was broad agreement that the platform should be intergovernmental, a range of views were expressed on how to involve other stakeholders.
10. It was argued that any new body must complement existing mechanisms, have added value and therefore strengthen existing mechanisms. Some participants suggested that a network of networks could enhance current capabilities.
11. Many participants supported the proposal that the platform should be independent but linked to an existing organization or organizations (e.g., UNEP with other United Nations organizations such as the United Nations Educational, Cultural and Scientific Organization). They also expressed the view that the platform should serve a range of stakeholders, including multiple biodiversity-related conventions. Some

participants supported the platform being a subsidiary body to the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice of the Convention on Biological Diversity. Most participants noted that if the platform were to be a subsidiary of a single convention then it would be difficult to serve other stakeholders and conventions, though one participant noted that it would be difficult for a single body to serve many different forums.

12. Many participants agreed that the role of a science-policy platform should be to compile, assess and synthesize existing scientific knowledge, thereby identifying areas of science requiring further development, and to provide policy-relevant information to multiple stakeholders, including multilateral environmental agreements, without being policy-prescriptive. One participant suggested that a framework for contextualizing existing and future assessments could be useful.
13. Many participants stated that the assessment should be independent, but policy-relevant, to provide credible, evidence-based knowledge.
14. Most participants noted that the assessments and other activities should be demand-driven, depending on user requests, with some noting the importance of input from the scientific community. The assessments would include:
  - a) Assessments at the local, national, and regional level, which would be promoted, catalyzed and synthesized by the platform, but not necessarily undertaken by it;
  - b) Thematic assessments (e.g., regional impact of climate change on biodiversity);
  - c) Global assessments (e.g., Millennium Ecosystem Assessment).
15. There was broad agreement that the assessments must have a rigorous peer review.
16. With regard to document UNEP/IPBES/1/3 on the programme of work and budget, there was broad agreement that the discussion on the detailed programme of work and budget was premature, although a work programme and budget would be needed later.
17. Some participants suggested that the early warning and lessons activity (3 (a)) was an important activity in its own right, while others suggested that it could be integrated into the assessment processes (activity 3 (b)), as outlined in document UNEP/IPBES/1/3. One participant recommended that the two main activities of any new mechanism should be capacity-building and assessment, rather than the broader suite of activities outlined in document UNEP/IPBES/1/3, with capacity-building being incorporated into those other activities.
18. There was broad agreement that the platform should include building capacity in developing countries in respect of assessing and using knowledge. Some participants suggested that capacity-building was an integral part of the assessment process.
19. Even though there was general agreement that the discussion on legal status was premature, there was a very useful preliminary discussion of views. In general there was strong support for options B<sup>1</sup> or D<sup>2</sup> with some support for option C<sup>3</sup> but without removing any options from the table.
20. There was broad agreement that detailed discussion of the governance paper was premature concerning the plenary, scientific body and executive body. There was, however, some support for the platform to use the structure of a body akin to the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change. Two participants suggested that the plenary could be the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice of the Convention on Biological Diversity.

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<sup>1</sup> Option B: The platform is established as an intergovernmental body whose status is distinct from the existing intergovernmental organizations but is institutionally linked with one or more of the existing international organizations (e.g., through the provision of the secretariat or administrative services therefore). It might be established by a decision of an intergovernmental conference or by a decision of an existing intergovernmental organization or concurrent decisions of two or more intergovernmental organizations.

<sup>2</sup> Option D: The platform is established as a body in which intergovernmental and non-governmental entities are combined and is distinct from the existing intergovernmental organizations. It might be established by a decision of an intergovernmental or other international conference.

<sup>3</sup> Option C: The platform is established as an intergovernmental body, which is a subsidiary body of an existing intergovernmental organization. It might be established by a decision of the governing body of an existing intergovernmental organization).

21. Several participants suggested the need for criteria and a transparent process for selecting the secretariat. There was agreement that it should be a small secretariat, with one participant suggesting the use of an existing secretariat if the proposed platform was a subsidiary body of the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice of the Convention on Biological Diversity. Several participants offered to support and host a secretariat.
22. There was no discussion on document UNEP/IPBES/1/5.
23. The Chair recommended:
  - a) That mechanisms to improve the science-policy interface for biodiversity and ecosystem services for human well-being and sustainable development should continue to be explored. Such mechanisms could include components of early warning, multiple-scale assessments, policy information and capacity development;
  - b) That a gap analysis should be undertaken for the purpose of strengthening the science-policy interface and that a preliminary report should be made available at the twenty-fifth session of the Governing Council/Global Ministerial Environment Forum.
24. The meeting recommended that the Executive Director of UNEP should report at the twenty-fifth session of the Governing Council/Global Ministerial Environment Forum on the outcome of the present meeting and that the Governing Council should request the Executive Director to convene a second intergovernmental multi-stakeholder meeting on an intergovernmental science-policy platform on biodiversity and ecosystem services with the view to strengthening and improving the science-policy interface for biodiversity and ecosystem services for human well-being, including consideration of a new science-policy platform. One participant further requested that the outcome of the meeting should be presented at the third meeting of the Ad Hoc Open-ended Working Group on Review of Implementation of the Convention on Biological Diversity.