



General Assembly

Distr.: General

10 August 2011

Original: English

Sixty-sixth session

Item 20 (d), (e) and (f) of the provisional agenda*

Implementation of United Nations environmental conventions

Note by the Secretary-General

The Secretary-General has the honour to transmit to the General Assembly the reports submitted by the secretariats of United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in Those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, Particularly in Africa and the Convention on Biological Diversity.

Report of the Executive Secretary of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change on the United Nations Climate Change Conference, Cancun, Mexico, 2010, and its follow-up.

I. Introduction

1. The United Nations General Assembly, by its resolution 65/159, of 20 December 2010, invited the secretariat of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change¹ to report to it at its sixty-sixth session on the work of the Conference of the Parties (COP). This report is submitted in response to that invitation.

II. Outcomes of the sixteenth session of the Conference of the Parties (COP) and the sixth session of the COP serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Kyoto Protocol

A. Summary

2. The United Nations Climate Change Conference was held in Cancun, Mexico, from 29 November to 10 December 2010, and comprised the following sessions:

- (a) The sixteenth session of the COP;
- (b) The sixth session of the COP serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Kyoto Protocol;
- (c) The thirty-third session of the Subsidiary Body for Implementation;
- (d) The thirty-third session of the Subsidiary Body for Scientific and Technological Advice;
- (e) The fifteenth session of the Ad Hoc Working Group on Further Commitments for Annex I Parties under the Kyoto Protocol;
- (f) The thirteenth session of the Ad Hoc Working Group on Long-term Cooperative Action under the Convention.

3. The Cancun Conference had a high level of participation, and was attended by 16 Heads of State and Government, approximately 5,100 government delegates, 5,300 observers and 1,200 media representatives. Prior to the Conference, various sessions of the ad hoc working groups and a number of informal consultations by Parties on various elements of the Bali Action Plan helped to lay the foundations for an agreement. During those sessions and consultations, as well as throughout the Conference, the Presidency of the COP and the Chairs of the ad hoc working groups and the subsidiary bodies advanced work through an open, transparent and inclusive process. That allowed for exchanges among Parties that would ultimately lead to an agreed outcome in Cancun.

¹ United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 1771, No. 30822.

4. The Cancun Conference was a major step forward that put in place a solid framework for action on climate change. The set of decisions known as the Cancun Agreements,² adopted by the COP and the COP serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Kyoto Protocol, addresses the long-term challenges of climate change collectively and comprehensively over time. The decisions envisage concrete action now to speed up the global response and to advance implementation of actions to combat climate change, particularly for the following:

- (a) Adaptation: its priority was affirmed and the Cancun Adaptation Framework was established;
- (b) Technology: a Technology Mechanism that will support innovation and the development of new technologies, and will give priority to the diffusion, deployment and transfer of technologies, was created;
- (c) Finance: a new Green Climate Fund was established as an operating entity of the financial mechanism of the Convention and a Standing Committee was established to assist in improving coherence and coordination in the delivery of climate change finance;
- (d) REDD-plus³: guidance and safeguards were provided and a work programme was established.

5. The COP adopted 12 decisions and the COP serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Kyoto Protocol adopted 13 decisions. The decisions contained in the Cancun Agreements set the foundation for a far-reaching collective effort to address climate change. The outcome reached at the Cancun Conference established the basis for a comprehensive operational architecture of implementation on adaptation, mitigation, finance, technology and capacity-building.

B. High-level segment

6. The joint high-level segment of the sixteenth session of the COP and the sixth session of the COP serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Kyoto Protocol was opened by the President, the Secretary of Foreign Affairs for Mexico, and was preceded by a welcoming ceremony attended by the President of Mexico, the Secretary-General and other dignitaries.

7. The Secretary-General delivered a statement on behalf of the United Nations system, acknowledging that the negotiations would not end in Cancun, but that complacency and business as usual were not options. He recognized that countries face political and economic constraints, but he highlighted that the longer the world delays action on climate change, the higher the costs will be, economically and environmentally and in human

² The Cancun Agreements refer to decisions 1/CP.16, 1/CMP.6 and 2/CMP.6.

³ REDD-plus is short for policy approaches and positive incentives on issue relating to reducing emission from deforestation and forest degradation in developing countries; and the role of conservation, sustainable management of forest and enhancement of forest carbon stocks in developing countries.

lives. He therefore asked Parties for determination, leadership, flexibility and compromise in the negotiations.

8. At the high-level segment, statements were made by 165 Parties, of which 16 were given by Heads of State or Government, nine were given by either vice-presidents or deputy prime ministers, 100 were given by ministers and 40 were given by Party representatives.

C. Outcomes of the sixteenth session of the COP

Cancun Agreements

9. Based on and following the structure of the Bali Action Plan, the Cancun Agreements provide a comprehensive package of decisions by the international community to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, and to help developing country Parties cope with climate change, including through the provision of financial, technological and capacity-building support for both mitigation and adaptation to the adverse effects of climate change.

Shared vision, global goal and review

10. Parties to the Convention recognized that deep cuts in global greenhouse gas emissions are required to reach the global goal of holding the increase in global average temperature below 2 °C above pre-industrial levels, which is to be reviewed periodically for its adequacy together with the progress made towards achieving that goal. In the context of the first review, which is to start in 2013 and to be concluded by 2015, Parties also recognized the need to consider strengthening the long-term global goal on the basis of the best available scientific knowledge, including in relation to a global average temperature rise of 1.5 °C.

Adaptation

11. The Cancun Agreements include a number of institutions and processes to address adaptation to climate change. A Cancun Adaptation Framework was established with the objective of enhancing action on adaptation.

12. The Cancun Agreements requested the Subsidiary Body for Implementation to take up a newly established work programme to address the loss and damage associated with the impacts of climate change. Also, the Agreements established a process to enable least developed country Parties to formulate and implement national adaptation plans as a means of identifying medium- and long-term adaptation needs and implementing strategies and programmes to address those needs.

13. An Adaptation Committee will promote the coherent implementation of enhanced action on adaptation, providing support, guidance and recommendations to Parties. The Ad Hoc Working Group on Long-term Cooperative Action under the Convention has been requested by the COP to elaborate the composition of, and modalities and procedures for, the Adaptation Committee during 2011.

Mitigation

14. Under the Cancun Agreements, and building on emission reduction targets that had been put forward informally in 2010, all industrialized nations have officially communicated and have committed themselves to developing low-carbon development plans or strategies. Additionally, a number of developing country Parties have officially communicated their nationally appropriate mitigation actions (NAMAs),⁴ which seek a deviation from ‘business as usual’ scenario emissions by 2020, with financial and technological support.

15. Industrialized nations have committed to enhance reporting on their mitigation targets and on their provision of support to developing country Parties. Additionally, developing country Parties may voluntarily report on their NAMAs. A registry will be set up in order to record information on the following: developing country Parties’ NAMAs seeking international support; support available from developed country Parties for NAMAs; and support provided for NAMAs.

16. The COP established a work programme on REDD-plus, which is to be developed by the Subsidiary Body for Scientific and Technological Advice and is to include the development of modalities for measuring, reporting and verifying emissions and removals of greenhouse gases related to the forest sector.

17. The COP requested the Ad Hoc Working Group on Long-term Cooperative Action under the Convention to elaborate market and non-market mechanisms that would enhance the cost-effectiveness of, and promote, mitigation actions. The market mechanisms to be elaborated are to maintain and build upon existing mechanisms, including those under the Kyoto Protocol, such as the clean development mechanism (CDM) and joint implementation (JI).

18. The Chairs of the Subsidiary Body for Scientific and Technological Advice and the Subsidiary Body for Implementation were mandated by the COP to convene a forum on the impact of the implementation of response measures to mitigate climate change. During 2011, the Subsidiary Body for Scientific and Technological Advice and the Subsidiary Body for Implementation are to develop a work programme on response measures.

Finance, technology and capacity-building

19. The secretariat was requested to compile information on the resources provided for the fulfilment of the commitment made at the fifteenth session of the COP by developed country Parties to provide USD 30 billion in fast-start finance for developing countries for the period 2010–2012. Furthermore, at the Cancun Conference, developed country Parties also made official their commitment to long-term finance, of the order of USD 100 billion per year by 2020, to address the needs of developing country Parties.

⁴ As of 19 April 2011, 48 developing countries had made their NAMAs official. Available in document FCCC/AGWLCA/2011/INF.1

20. At the Cancun Conference the Green Climate Fund was established, to provide long-term financing to projects, programmes, policies and other activities in developing country Parties. The design of the Fund is being carried out by a Transitional Committee, which shall present its recommendations to the COP at its seventeenth session in Durban, South Africa, at the end of 2011, for approval.

21. A Technology Mechanism was also established at the Cancun Conference and is to be operational in 2012. The mechanism will facilitate international cooperation on technology for both mitigation and adaptation, enabled through increased public and private investments.

22. The Technology Mechanism consists of a Technology Executive Committee (TEC) and a Climate Technology Centre and Network (CTCN). The TEC will provide an overview of the technological needs, analyse policy and technical issues related to the development and transfer of technologies, and recommend related actions. The CTCN will mobilize the required expertise and resources from the public and private sectors to assist developing country Parties at their request to establish technology-related policies, programmes and projects in support of action on mitigation and adaptation.

23. The COP recognized that capacity-building is a cross-cutting issue that is necessary in order to enable developing country Parties to enhance their actions for addressing climate change. During 2011, the Ad Hoc Working Group on Long-term Cooperative Action under the Convention is to elaborate modalities on the institutional arrangements for capacity-building under the Convention.

Other decisions adopted by the COP

24. The COP provided additional guidance to the GEF, calling on it to complete its reforms as soon as possible in order to facilitate the successful completion of its fifth replenishment cycle and requesting it to further simplify its procedures and improve its effectiveness and efficiency.

25. On other climate finance matters, the COP decided to conclude the assessment of the status of the implementation of decision 1/CP.12, paragraph 2, on the Special Climate Change Fund, and provided further guidance to the GEF for the operation of the Least Developed Countries Fund. The COP will assess progress made in the implementation of the guidance for the operation of the Least Developed Countries Fund.

26. At the Cancun Conference, the Least Developed Countries Expert Group (LEG) had its mandate extended by the COP in order to continue providing technical guidance and advice. The LEG is to develop a two-year rolling programme of work for consideration by the Subsidiary Body for Implementation, and the COP will review the progress, need for continuation and terms of reference of the LEG at its twenty-first session, in 2015.

27. The COP invited all Parties and international organizations to enhance the support provided on Article 6, on education, training and public awareness, to the national focal points of developing country Parties.

28. The COP, at its sixteenth session, requested the secretariat to prepare a compilation and synthesis report containing information from the fifth national communications from Parties included in Annex I to the Convention (Annex I Parties). The secretariat has prepared a synthesis report on the information contained in the national communications of 40 Annex I Parties that had been submitted by 31 March 2011.

29. The COP requested the Ad Hoc Working Group on Long-term Cooperative Action under the Convention to continue consideration of issues relevant to the promotion of access by Annex I Parties undergoing the process of transition to a market economy to technology, capacity-building and finance in order to enhance their ability to develop low-emission economies.

D. Outcomes of the sixth session of the Conference of the Parties (COP) serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Kyoto Protocol

Cancun Agreements

30. As part of the Cancun Agreements, the COP serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Kyoto Protocol adopted a decision in which it agrees that the Ad Hoc Working Group on Further Commitments for Annex I Parties under the Kyoto Protocol complete its work as early as possible and in time to ensure that there is no gap between the first and second commitment periods of the Kyoto Protocol. Annex I Parties were also urged to raise the level of ambition of their mitigation targets.

31. The COP serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Kyoto Protocol also adopted decisions as part of the Cancun Agreements with regard to the following: the base year for the second commitment period of the Kyoto Protocol; the continued use of emissions trading and project-based mechanisms; the continued use of activities on land use, land-use change and forestry that reduce emissions and enhance removals; the global warming potentials to be used; and the continued consideration of information on potential consequences of tools, policies, measures and methodologies.

32. The COP serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Kyoto Protocol agreed to use the same definitions as in the first commitment period of various key terms in relation to land use, land-use change and forestry. The COP serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Kyoto Protocol mandated the secretariat to assess the forest management reference levels of Annex I Parties. The secretariat has already finalized this technical assessment.

Other decisions adopted by the COP serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Kyoto Protocol

33. At its sixth session, the COP serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Kyoto Protocol adopted amendments to the terms and conditions of service to be provided by the interim trustee of the Adaptation Fund and decided to carry out the review of the Adaptation Fund at the seventh session of the COP serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Kyoto Protocol, and every three years thereafter.

34. The secretariat was requested by the COP serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Kyoto Protocol to prepare the compilation and synthesis of supplementary information from the fifth national communications of Annex I Parties, as well as to organize centralized reviews of such national communications.

35. The COP serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Kyoto Protocol, at its sixth session, provided further guidance on the CDM, including general guidance with regard to governance, accreditation, baseline and monitoring methodologies and additionality, standardized baselines, registration of project activities, regional and subregional distribution and capacity-building, and the resources for work on the CDM.

36. Guidance was also provided by the COP serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Kyoto Protocol at its sixth session on the implementation of Article 6 of the Kyoto Protocol (on joint implementation).

E. Progress on the implementation of the Cancun Agreements

37. Since the Cancun Conference, Parties have continued negotiations on the implementation of the Cancun Agreements. Parties have worked on a road map and procedure to make the technology mechanism operational in 2012. Further discussions on technology development and transfer have been in relation to the possible linkage between the Technology Mechanism and the financial arrangements, and the relationship between the TEC and the CTCN.

38. Parties have also achieved further clarity on the work ahead under the Ad Hoc Working Group on Long-term Cooperative Action under the Convention and the progress that the Cancun Agreements represent. Parties continue negotiations under the framework of the outcomes of the Conferences in Bali, Indonesia, and Cancun, in order to take the decisions adopted at the Cancun Conference to their full implementation, while at the same time addressing those issues that were not resolved during the Conference in Cancun.

39. Progress has been made by Parties under the Ad Hoc Working Group on Long-term Cooperative Action under the Convention in bringing together their views on various aspects of the Adaptation Committee established by the Cancun Agreements (see para. **Error! Reference source not found.**). In particular, progress has been made with regard to the Adaptation Committee's governance, modalities and procedures, linkages with other institutions and its composition.

40. Parties have engaged in useful conversations with each other under the Ad Hoc Working Group on Long-term Cooperative Action under the Convention on the issue of mitigation. Such discussions include the type of elements to be contained in biennial reports by developed country Parties, where there is broad recognition on the need to build upon the existing reporting and review system. On mitigation by developing country Parties, discussions have focused on biennial update reports, a registry for NAMAs (see para. **Error! Reference source not found.**), and international consultation and analysis.

41. The Ad Hoc Working Group on Long-term Cooperative Action under the Convention is continuing discussions on REDD-plus addressing the issue of financing REDD-plus. In parallel, the Subsidiary Body for Scientific and Technological Advice has initiated consideration of views on methodological guidance for activities relating to REDD-plus, as mandated by the Cancun Agreements. Such initial consideration has focused on reference levels and reference emission levels.

42. Parties have also had discussions on finance focussing on the Standing Committee on finance. Those discussions addressed various aspects of the Committee, including its functions, composition, membership, participation, key principles and reporting lines.

43. Furthermore, Parties have initiated discussions on the consideration of further commitments for Annex I Parties under the Kyoto Protocol. The main issues under discussion relate to the need for clarity on the outstanding political questions pertaining to a second commitment period and the rules, as well as concerns, regarding continuity of the Kyoto Protocol, and comparability of efforts and achievements to date relating to greenhouse gas emission reductions by Annex I Parties. In reference to common metrics, Parties have made progress towards an agreement on key technical issues on new gases, with options clearly identified and ready for a political decision. The Ad Hoc Working Group on Further Commitments for Annex I Parties under the Kyoto Protocol is also considering in its discussions the issue of potential environmental, economic and social consequences, including spillover effects of tools, policies, measures and methodologies.

F. Conclusions and recommendations

44. The United Nations General Assembly may wish to, inter alia:

- a. Take note of the report of the Executive Secretary of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, as transmitted by the Secretary-General;**
- b. Note the outcomes of the sixteenth session of the COP and the sixth session of the COP serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Kyoto Protocol, hosted by the Government of Mexico from 29 November to 10 December 2010;**
- c. Pledge its support to the continued negotiating processes under the Bali Road Map and encourage progress towards the full and prompt implementation of the Cancun Agreements;**
- d. Invite the Executive Secretary to continue to report to it on the work of the Conference.**

Report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of resolution 65/160 and the implementation of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and /or Desertification particularly in Africa

I. Introduction

1. In its resolution 65/ 160 of 20 December 2010, the General Assembly requested the Secretary- General to report to it at its sixty sixth session on the implementation of that resolution. The present report constitutes an update to the Assembly on principal activities that have been undertaken in implementation of the above mentioned resolution.

II. Implementation of resolution 65/160 of 20 December 2010

A. Background

2. In its resolution 65/160, the General Assembly decided to convene a one – day high level meeting on the theme “Addressing desertification, land degradation and drought in the context of sustainable development and poverty eradication”, on 20 September 2011, just before the opening of the general debate of the 66th session of the United Nations General Assembly. It encouraged the holding of the meeting at the highest possible political level with inter alia, the participation of Heads of State and Government. The Assembly decided that the preparations for the meeting would be undertaken under the authority of the President of the General Assembly of the sixty fifth session and that the Executive Secretary of the UNCCD would serve as the focal point for the meeting. The resolution also provided that the high level meeting would be structured around an opening plenary, followed by an interactive panel in the morning and a second interactive panel in the afternoon followed by a closing plenary. The General Assembly resolution also decided that the panels would be co chaired by Heads of State or Government one from the North and one from the South for each panel and appointed by the President of the General Assembly, with due regard to geographical balance in consultation with regional groups. The resolution also requested the Secretary General to prepare a background paper for the meeting in consultation with member States to be made available no later than June 2011.

3. The Assembly also expressed concern that one billion inhabitants of drylands are amongst the poorest on the planet and were lagging behind in the achievement of the MDGs. It invited member states, in particular the donor community and the United Nations system to address the needs of the more than one billion inhabitants of the drylands by encouraging

appropriate investments to contribute to achieving the internationally agreed goals, including the Millennium Development Goals in those areas.

4. The Assembly also invited all Parties and all involved institutions to engage in and actively support the process of strengthening the scientific basis of the activities on desertification and drought under the Convention, in particular those required to assess the economic impacts of desertification land degradation and drought and to measure the impact of the implementation of the Convention and the subsequent enhancement of the technical capabilities of national coordination bodies and national focal points of the Convention.

B. Preparations for the High Level meeting

5. Shortly after the adoption of resolution 65/160, the Executive Secretary, in his capacity as the focal point for the High-level meeting appointed by the General Assembly, started consultations with key stakeholders to initiate early preparations. Early February 2011, he met with the President of the 65th session of the UN General Assembly, to brief him on the preparations being undertaken by the Executive Secretary and to coordinate organizational issues during the preparatory process and discuss the cooperation necessary to ensure its success.

6. As mandated by GA 65/160, arrangements were made to assist the UN Secretary-General by providing inputs to his background document. The UNCCD secretariat also assisted in the consultations with member states on the background paper that was to be prepared by the Secretary General for the High-level meeting.

7. The secretariat also organized several briefings for Parties to the Convention on this matter during the ninth session of the Committee for the Review of the implementation held in Bonn in February 2011 (CRIC.9). To create further awareness and in order to facilitate a consistent level of participation, the Executive Secretary pursued his approach of featuring the event in all his encounters with various Parties representatives. Further, Parties were notified of the meeting through correspondences sent to all Ministers in charge of Foreign Affairs and to those line Ministers who handle UNCCD portfolio. To create further sufficient publicity and support and ensure that the high level event is adequately covered by the media, the UNCCD secretariat also developed a media strategy to promote the UN High level meeting.

C. CRIC 9 and CST S-2

8. The second special session of the Committee on Science and Technology (CST S-2) and the ninth session of the Committee for the Review of the Implementation of the Convention (CRIC 9) of the UN Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) took place in Bonn, Germany, from 16-25

February 2011. The sessions reviewed the intersessional work related essentially to impact and performance indicators as agreed upon by the ninth session of the Conference of the Parties (COP).

9. The CST S-2 session, considered the status of work on methodologies and baselines for the effective use of the subset of impact indicators on strategic objectives 1, 2 and 3 of the 10-year Strategic Plan and Framework to enhance the implementation of the Convention (the Strategy), along with: an assessment of the organization of the 1st Scientific Conference; preparations for the 2nd Scientific Conference; Science and Technology Correspondents (STCs); and progress made on the implementation of the knowledge-management system. The development and implementation of the impact indicators to measure the three strategic objectives of the UNCCD Strategy was the key focus of the scientists at this meeting. The GEF's Scientific and Technical Advisory Panel (STAP) was involved in this exercise, and the indicators have been opened for public consultation through an e-forum.

10. However, the scientists also observed that some alignment between the GEF portfolio level indicators and the UNCCD set of impact indicators would improve the Parties' reporting obligations. Therefore, they recommended a closer involvement of the STAP towards harmonizing the objectives and methodologies for collecting and reporting on indicators.

11. Progress was also made in setting up a scientific knowledge management system. CST S-2 also expressed interest in establishing a geographically-balanced *ad hoc* advisory group of experts, to support the refinement of impact indicators, and establishing an institutional partners group. The institutional partners would comprise the organizations that would contribute to the generation and management of the data sets of the impact indicators of desertification/land degradation and drought.

12. The ninth session of CRIC considered issues relating to preliminary analyses of information contained in the reports of parties, UN agencies and intergovernmental organizations, and civil society organizations (CSOs) on implementation of the Convention against performance indicators; best practices in the implementation of the Convention; and improving the procedures for communication of information as well as the quality and format of reports to be submitted to the COP. Delegates also engaged in an open dialogue with CSO representatives and an interactive thematic discussion on the outcome of the reporting process. There was appreciation of the assessment and outcomes of progress related to impact and performance indicators. An important feature of the CRIC was that documents presenting preliminary analyses of the information contained in national reports, had been uploaded into the Performance Review and Assessment of Implementation System (PRAIS) portal.

13. As a result for the first time in the history of the Convention, Parties were able to quantify the fruits of their labour, thanks to the use of a comprehensive monitoring and reporting process. The financial support of the GEF and other donors, including the European Commission, was crucial in the implementation of the performance review and assessment of implementation system – the PRAIS system. By the time the CRIC opened, more than 50% of the affected country Parties, and almost 30% of the developed country parties, submitted their

national reports. As of November 2010, 89% of affected countries had submitted their reports. This successful project has become the cornerstone of an indicator-driven monitoring and online reporting of the implementation of the 10-year strategy of the Convention. This is a paradigm shift for the Convention towards becoming an instrument that pursues measurable results, and whose Strategy provides the roadmap for all its stakeholders.

14. PRAIS was well received, and there was considerable discussion of this improvement of the reporting system and dissemination of the results. Discussions also focused on the development of a knowledge-management system, the compilation of the best practices identified through the PRAIS reports, and the further refinement of the impact indicators, among others. On all of its agenda items, CST S-2 and CRIC 9 adopted reports summarizing delegates' ideas, suggestions and proposals, leaving the tenth session of the COP with a variety of options to pursue and take decisions.

D. UN Decade for Deserts and the Fight Against Desertification

15. In pursuance of resolution 64/201 the UN mandated Decade for Deserts and the Fight Against Desertification was launched on 16 August 2010 in Fortaleza, Brazil. The primary objective of the international decade is to raise awareness and galvanise action to improve the protection and management of the world's drylands, home to a third of the world's population and which face serious economic and environmental threats.

16. Regional launches were also organized including in Nairobi, Kenya, for the African region on 16 August 2010. The launch for the Asian region took place on 12 October 2010 in Seoul, Republic of Korea, with the objective of highlighting that in Asia, the threats of desertification, land degradation and drought affect more people and land than in any other region of the world. The North American launch was hosted by Colorado State University (CSU) on 11 November 2010. The launch ceremony was followed by short seminars addressing land degradation issues in North America and the signing of a letter of intent between UNCCD secretariat and CSU to work closely on future desertification research. The European launch was organized on 16 December 2010, in London, United Kingdom and focused on exploring the links between drylands and global human security with a special focus on Europe, including the state of its soil degradation. Two observances of the Decade were held this year on the occasion of the regional launches of the UN Decade on Biological Diversity in Havana and Addis-Ababa respectively on 4th and 22 July 2011.

E. Observance of 2011 World Day to Combat Desertification and Drought

17. The World Day to Combat Desertification is observed every year on 17 June all over the world. The aim of the United Nations in designating a day of observance is to sensitize the public and policy makers to the increasing dangers of desertification, land degradation and drought for the international community. The observance events are designed to get everyone to undertake at least one action that year to help minimize the threat highlighted. 2011 being the International Year on Forests, the world day to Combat Desertification for 2011 focused specifically on the forests in the drylands areas of the world, guided by the motto 'Forests

keep drylands working'. In this respect, the UN Secretary-General, the UNCCD Executive Secretary and other senior UN Officials issued special messages on the occasion of the celebration. The main thrust of those messages were that people who live in the arid lands, which occupy more than 40 per cent of land area, are among the world's poorest and most vulnerable to hunger and frequently depend on land that is degraded and where productivity has shrunk to below subsistence levels. They also pointed out that in the world's efforts to meet the Millennium Development Goals, the challenges facing these "forgotten billion" men, women and children deserve special attention. Flagging the importance of educating the global community about the relevance of forests for drylands in that dry forests and scrubland provide the backbone of arid ecosystems, those messages also indicated that unsustainable land management and agriculture are a significant cause of the land degradation and desertification that inevitably follow. One salient key message was a call to reward those who make drylands productive, so they will prosper and others will seek to emulate their example.

F. Land Day

18. Since the last report to the General Assembly, the UNCCD secretariat organised two Land Days.

19. Land Day 3 was organised on Saturday, 23 October 2010 on the margins of the tenth session of the COP to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD COP 10 which was held in Nagoya, Japan, from 18-29 October). Ambassador Tommy Koh (Singapore), delivered a key note address to the participants. Ambassador Koh served as the Chairman of the preparatory Committee for the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (Earth Summit). Land Day 3 was attended by Government delegates, representatives of intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations, as well as academic institutions, business and research organizations. The event was a joint initiative of the secretariats of the Convention on Biodiversity (CBD) and the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD), and was part of the Rio Conventions Ecosystem and Climate Change Pavilion.

20. Important points that emerged from the discussion included land degradation as a local issue with global consequences; an axiomatic relationship between the CBD and UNCCD Conventions; biodiversity loss, climate change and land degradation as a vicious cycle; the challenges of overcoming a compartmentalized approach to the implementation of the three sister Rio Conventions whereas there is no separation at the local level; and the needs for an integrated approach when addressing the issues, for high-level political commitment, and to facilitate communication and focus on the underlying drivers.

21. Land Day 4 was organized in Bonn, Germany on Saturday, 11 June 2011. The fourth Land day was designed with four main aims including : to examine the climate change adaptation and mitigation scenarios that can be implemented at the national level and where climate financing is required; to demonstrate how long-term food security can be achieved by adapting to climate change and to sustainable land management; to address how the Long-term Cooperative Action can be realized through a concrete implementation as set forth in the

National Action Programmes (NAPs) and the National Action Plans of Action (NAPAs), respectively of the Desertification and Climate Change Conventions, through partnerships at global and national levels and to involve the business and other stakeholders in the exchange over green growth and the green economy. Important points that emerged from the interactive discussions included the case for sustainable land management, the highlighting of the fact that land has an unlimited potential to sequester carbon over time, and by a magnitude greater than that of oceans. It also emerged from the discussions that soil quality would be a key priority for climate resilient growth.

G. Collaboration with the GEF

22. The UNCCD secretariat continued to strengthen its partnership with the GEF, in particular in the light of the amendment of the GEF Instrument to list the UNCCD among the Treaties for which the Facility plays the role of financial mechanism. The partnership was also strengthened by the decision of the GEF Council to support the Convention's enabling activities and the new System for Transparent allocation of Resources (STAR).

23. To further operationalize that reform, the first ever joint retreat of the UNCCD and GEF secretariats was organised in Bonn, Germany, on 4 January 2011. Co-hosted by the Executive Secretary and the Chief Executive Officer and Chairperson of the GEF, the overall objective of the retreat was to jointly discuss and clarify key aspects of the GEF-5 policies and programs as they relate to supporting the implementation of the Convention by affected country Parties. Discussions during the retreat inter alia covered: GEF reforms and the implications for ongoing UNCCD activities, and procedures of the System for Transparent Allocation of Resources (STAR) under the Land Degradation Focal Area. During the discussions, priorities that were identified included the need to build on PRAIS and a pilot tracking exercise for all indicators in targeted countries.

24. The outcome of the retreat was a Joint Action Plan that includes a set of recommendations for strengthening collaboration between the UNCCD and the GEF Secretariats in order to advance the implementation of the Convention and its 10-year Strategy by Parties. For each of the recommendations, roles and expectations for the two Secretariats were discussed and agreed upon based on the actions and milestones proposed. Recommendations that emerged from the retreat included the need for enhanced advocacy and awareness of the land agenda among key stakeholders, and the need for increased investment in sustainable land management globally, including the effective use of GEF resources. The retreat also recommended actions at the policy level to facilitate stronger engagement by the GEF in UNCCD processes, as well as in building synergies with the other Conventions, particularly at the country level to facilitate planning and programming of resources for sustainable land management;

H. Joint Liaison Group (JLG)

25. The UNCCD secretariat also pursued close collaboration with the other two Rio Conventions. The eleventh meeting of the Joint Liaison Group (JLG) of the Rio Conventions was held on 11 April 2011 in Bonn, Germany. The UNCCD Executive Secretary chaired the

meeting which discussed (i) current and requested activities undertaken by the JLG, (ii) support for the coordination of national planning and reporting processes, (iii) cooperation on gender mainstreaming (iv) plans for joint events at Rio+20, including the Rio Conventions Pavilion and (v) joint outreach and communication initiatives. Main outcomes from the meeting include an agreement to formalize the terms of reference and modus operandi of the JLG, a set of joint high level activities identified for Rio+20 as well as the 20th anniversary of the conventions in 2012, and new and revised joint publications on climate change adaptation, forests and gender. In September last year, the JLG had met to discuss issues of common interest, including synergies. The meeting was chaired by the Executive Secretary of the Convention on Biodiversity and attended by his colleagues Executive Secretaries of UNCCD and UNFCCC.

III. Observations and possible General Assembly action

26. The adoption of resolution 65/160 convening a High-level meeting on desertification, land degradation and drought (DLDD) constitutes a milestone in the process of the Convention. For the first time since its inception, the Convention's core issues will be addressed at the highest political level. The outcome of the meeting will be conveyed to the COP and to the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development. The Assembly may therefore wish to take note of the said outcome and pursue its support to raising the profile of DLDD issues.

27. Furthermore, the Assembly has always been calling for the strengthening of the scientific basis of the Convention. The latest session of the Committee on Science and Technology made important strides in this respect. The Assembly may wish to reiterate its support to more involvement of science to better comprehend DLDD issues.

28. The effective implementation of the Convention requires assessment and monitoring of all its phases. Recent developments have featured a paradigm shift for the Convention towards becoming an instrument that pursues measurable results, and whose Strategy provides the roadmap for all its stakeholders. In this respect, the new Performance Review and Assessment of Implementation System (PRAIS) promises to respond to this quest. In the same vein, as the international community engages onto the road to Rio + 20, it is becoming increasingly clear that sustainable land use, agriculture, food security and forestry will constitute a cornerstone of the green economies for poverty eradication and sustainable development. The Assembly may wish therefore to add its support to the new UNCCD reporting system and encourage for the move towards setting quantitative targets and consider the possibility of a "zero net land degradation rate" as a sustainable development target.

Report of the Executive Secretary of the Convention on Biological Diversity

I. Introduction

1. In its resolution 65/161, the General Assembly invited the Executive Secretary of the Convention on Biological Diversity to report on the work of the COP. The present report is submitted in response to that invitation.

II. Outcome of the Tenth Meeting of the Conference of the Parties (COP) to the Convention on Biological Diversity

2. The tenth meeting of the COP to the Convention on Biological Diversity (COP10) was held in Nagoya, Aichi, Japan, from 18 to 29 October 2010, with the theme “Life in harmony, into the future”. Attended by more than 18,000 participants, the conference adopted 47 decisions including a Strategic Plan for Biodiversity for 2011-2020 comprising 20 ambitious targets known as Aichi Targets. With the financial support of Japan, the secretariat has organized at the time of the submission of this report nine regional and sub-regional workshops with the participation of over 400 participants including Parties and relevant organizations, with a view to revising national biodiversity strategies and action plans (NBSAPs) and incorporating the Aichi Targets at national level. The Government of Japan is also supporting thirty other capacity building projects to assist developing countries to implement the outcomes of the Aichi-Nagoya Conference. In partnership with Japan, the Secretariat organized a series of briefings on the “Nagoya biodiversity compact” in all United Nations chapters and headquarters of United Nations regional economic commissions.

3. COP 10 also adopted the Nagoya Protocol on Access to Genetic Resources and Fair and Equitable Sharing of Benefit Arising from Their Utilization. The Protocol, which was deposited with the Secretary-General, was opened for signature in New York on 2 February 2010 and has received at the time of submission of this report, 40 signatures. The Nagoya Protocol will remain open for signature until 1 February 2012. The Nagoya Protocol will enter into force ninety days after the date of deposit of the fiftieth instrument of ratification, acceptance, approval or accession. A Medium Sized Project of the Global Environment Facility implemented by UNEP has been adopted to facilitate the early entry into force of the Nagoya Protocol. In addition at the initiative of Japan, a GEF Trust Fund on the Nagoya Protocol has been also established. The first meeting of the Intergovernmental Committee of the Nagoya Protocol was held in Montreal from 6 to 10 June 2011. It elected its Bureau and adopted four decisions on modalities of operation of the clearing house mechanism, capacity building, compliance and awareness raising. The second meeting of the ICNP will be held in New Delhi, India from 9 - 13 April 2012.

4. At COP10, the Parties committed to “substantially increasing resources from all sources, balanced with the effective implementation of the Convention on Biological Diversity and its Strategic Plan for the period 2011-2020, against an established baseline. In addition, with a

view to adopting targets for resource mobilization at COP11, Parties agreed to specific indicators for monitoring the implementation of the Convention's strategy for resource mobilization. The meeting also adopted to undertake a full assessment of the amount of funds that are necessary to implement the biodiversity agenda for the sixth replenishment period of the Global Environment Facility.

5. The Parties recognized the urgent need to improve capacity for mainstreaming the three objectives of the Convention into poverty eradication strategies and plans. In this context, they established an expert group on biodiversity for poverty eradication and development. The Parties have nominated 25 experts to the group, in addition to observers from international organizations, which is scheduled to meet in December at the Forest Research Institute of India in Dehradun.

6. The meeting further advanced the engagement of business encouraging establishment of the national and regional business and biodiversity initiatives by facilitating a forum of dialogue among Parties and other Governments, business, and other stakeholders, with a particular focus on the global level. The decision also asked the secretariat to compile and analyze the existing tools to further engage businesses in integrating biodiversity concerns into corporate strategies and decision-making. The Secretariat has undertaken a renewed programme of outreach to the business community which will lead to the establishment of national business and biodiversity networks, launched Phase 1 of the Global Platform on Business and Biodiversity website, and, in conjunction with partner organizations, is undertaking a Gap Analysis of existing standards, tools and mechanisms.

7. Aware of the critical importance of urbanization and local action on biodiversity, COP 10 also endorsed a plan of action on cities and biodiversity (decision X/22) developed through several meetings of the Global Partnership on Local Action for Biodiversity⁵ since 2006. The plan was also supported by the 650 representatives of cities, States and regions attending the City Biodiversity Summit in Nagoya, Aichi Prefecture, on May 25-26, 2010, including 220 mayors. Implementation of the plan was discussed at the first meeting of the Advisory Committee of Cities for the Global Partnership, held in Montpellier, France on 17-19 January 2011. The decision also requested the Secretariat to prepare an assessment of the links and opportunities between urbanization and biodiversity for the eleventh meeting of the COP, based on the third edition of the Global Biodiversity Outlook (first version of the City Biodiversity Outlook).

8. The meeting also welcomed, through decision X/23, the Multi-Year Plan of Action on South-South Cooperation on Biodiversity for Development adopted by the First Forum on South-South cooperation on biodiversity for development and the Group of 77 and China in partnership with the secretariat (the Plan is available at <http://www.cbd.int/ssc/myapa/>, the report of the Forum at <http://www.cbd.int/doc/?meeting=SSC-FOR-01>). Following up on the further development of the Plan, the third Expert Meeting on this initiative was held in

⁵ See <http://www.cbd.int/authorities/Gettinginvolved/GlobalPartnership.shtml>

Incheon, Republic of Korea on 18-20 May 2011⁶ (see report at <http://www.cbd.int/doc/?meeting=EMSSC-03>) and the Plan will be submitted for consideration and adoption by the fourth meeting of the Working Group on the Review of Implementation of the CBD and the eleventh meeting of the COP to be held in Hyderabad, India, in October 2012.

9. With respect to traditional knowledge, COP10 reached another milestone through the adoption of a Code of Ethical Conduct to Ensure Respect for the Cultural and Intellectual Heritage of Indigenous and Local Communities. The Code aims to promote respect for the cultural and intellectual heritage of indigenous and local communities relevant for the conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity.

10. COP-10 adopted a comprehensive guidance to further enhance the implementation of the Convention's programme of work on marine and coastal biodiversity including setting in place a mechanism for the identification of ecologically and biologically significant areas (EBSAs) and expediting national, regional and global efforts toward achieving 2012 WSSD target for marine protected areas as well as addressing the impacts on marine and coastal biodiversity of unsustainable fishing, ocean fertilization, ocean acidification, underwater noise and other human activities. Many of these relate to processes under the General Assembly and other UN entities, including the Ad Hoc Open-ended Informal Working Group to study issues relating to the conservation and sustainable use of marine biological diversity beyond areas of national jurisdiction. Accordingly, the Secretariat is working closely with these entities in undertaking its expert processes, regional workshops and other activities in implementing COP 10 decision.

11. COP-10 also adopted a decision on biodiversity and climate change, including guidance on ecosystem-based approaches to adaptation and mitigation and on a process for developing advice, including on the application of relevant safeguards for biodiversity, without pre-empting any future decisions taken under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change so that actions are consistent with the objectives of the Convention on Biological Diversity and avoid negative impacts on and enhance benefits for biodiversity. The decision also proposed a process for further enhancing synergies with the UNCCD and UNFCCC. The CBD Secretariat is collaborating closely with other UN entities in the implementation of this decision.

12. At the initiative of Japan, COP10 recommended to the General Assembly to proclaim the United Nations Decade on Biodiversity. In adopting its resolution 65/161, the General Assembly proclaimed 2011-2020 the United Nations Decade on Biodiversity (UNDB). A draft strategy for the celebration of the decade was adopted as well as the official logo. The Republic of Korea launched the UNDB in Songwan, on 19 May 2011. India, as incoming COP11 President, launched the UNDB for Asia and Pacific in New Delhi on 23 May 2011. The President of Philippines launched the UNDB for ASEAN on 29 May 2011. The President adopted a Presidential decree declaring 2011-2020 a biodiversity decade for the Philippines.

⁶ See report at <http://www.cbd.int/doc/?meeting=EMSSC-03>.

Cuba launched on 4 July the UNDB for the Caribbean region. Ecuador launched the decade for South America on 13 July. Ethiopia launched the decade for Africa in Addis Ababa on 22 July in collaboration with the African Union and the Economic Commission for Africa, the event was attended by the President of Ethiopia. Japan, as President of the COP will host on 17-18 December 2011 an international event to launch the Decade.

III. Outcome of the Fifth Meeting of the Conference of the Parties (COP) to the Convention on Biological Diversity serving as the Meeting of the Parties to the Cartagena Protocol on biosafety

13. The fifth meeting of the COP serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety (COP-MOP 5) was held from 11 to 15 October 2010 in Nagoya, Aichi, Japan, bringing together more than 1,600 participants. The meeting adopted 17 decisions, including the Nagoya – Kuala Lumpur Supplementary Protocol on Liability and Redress to the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety. The Supplementary Protocol provides international rules and procedures in the field of liability and redress relating to living modified organisms. The Secretary General is the Depository for the instrument and the Supplementary Protocol was opened for signature on 7 March 2011 in New York. At the time of submission of this report, the Supplementary Protocol had received 24 signatures. It will remain open for signature until 6 March 2012. The Supplementary Protocol will enter into force on the ninetieth day after the date of deposit of the fortieth instrument of ratification, acceptance, approval or accession.

14. The Parties to the Protocol also adopted the first Strategic Plan for the Biosafety Protocol, covering the period 2011-2020, and a programme of work for their next three meetings. They also adopted a programme of work for public awareness, education and participation for 2011 to 2015; a methodology and indicators for the second assessment and review of the effectiveness of the Protocol, which is planned to be conducted in 2012; and a format for the second national reports. Furthermore, the Parties welcomed the guidance on risk assessment developed by a group of experts and extended the mandate of the group to further improve the guidance. It also considered a report and recommendations from the Compliance Committee under the Protocol and adopted decisions to strengthen the role of the Committee. The Parties also took decisions with regard to the Biosafety Clearing-House, capacity-building, financial mechanism and resources and cooperation with other organizations, conventions and initiatives.

IV. Meetings of the Subsidiary Organs

15. The first meeting of the COP-10 Bureau was held in Kanazawa, Ishikawa Prefecture, Japan, on 19 December 2010 and adopted a work plan for the implementation of the decisions adopted by the COP at its tenth meeting. It was followed by the first meeting of MOP5 Bureau. The second meeting of the Bureau of COP10 was held in Montreal on 4 June 2011 and was followed by a joint meeting with the bureau of the Intergovernmental committee of the Nagoya Protocol.

16. The fifteenth meeting of the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice to be held from 7 to 11 November 2011 in Montreal, will develop recommendations for the consideration of the COP at its eleventh meeting next year. Among other issues, the meeting will consider: (i) tools and guidance for monitoring implementation of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020, including the use of indicators needed to assess progress in achieving the Aichi Biodiversity Targets; and (ii) ways and means to support ecosystem restoration activities following a decision by the tenth meeting of the COP to restore and safeguard by 2020 ecosystems that provide essential services and contribute to health, livelihoods and well-being, and to conserve and restore at least 15 per cent of degraded ecosystems and thus contribute to climate change mitigation and adaptation and to combating desertification. Other issues on the agenda of SBSTTA-15 are related to water, invasive alien species, sustainable use, capacity-building for the Global Taxonomy Initiative and arctic biodiversity. Finally, the Subsidiary Body will discuss ways and means to implement its mandate more efficiently and effectively, bearing in mind that the Intergovernmental Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES) will meet a month prior to the fifteenth meeting of the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice.

17. The seventh meeting of the Working Group on Article 8(j) and Related Provisions of the Convention will be held from 31 October to 4 November to advance COP-10 decisions. Of particular significance is a new major component of work on Article 10(c) of the Convention, on customary sustainable use of biological diversity, as well as continuing work on repatriation of traditional knowledge and associated cultural property (task 15); indicators for traditional knowledge and customary sustainable use; tasks 7 (guidelines for benefit sharing, prior informed consent and obligations of countries of origin); 10 (guidelines to stop to unlawful appropriation of traditional knowledge); and 12 (guidelines for the implementation of Article 8(j) including definitions); all of which may assist and be complementary to the implementation of the Nagoya Protocol. .

V. International Year of Biodiversity and other United Nations Observances

18. In adopting its resolution 61/203 proclaiming 2010 as the International Year of Biodiversity (IYB), the General Assembly requested the Secretariat to report to the present session. The Secretariat submitted an interim report to the sixty-fifth session of the General Assembly (A/65/294). Some 191 Parties celebrated the IYB and more than 2,000 national and international events took place. At the time of submission of the present report, 54 Parties had submitted to the Secretariat their national report. The logo and slogan used by 1,751 registered users of the logo. During 2010, the website for the year (www.cbd.int/2010), had 952,184 unique page views, with a peak of 14,517 views on 11 January 2010. The Facebook page for the Year had over 56,000 friends. Overall, the web presence of the Year was extensive. A simple Google search for “International Year of Biodiversity” produced over 8 million pages in English, 3.5 million in Spanish, over 2 million in French, over 250,000 pages in Chinese, over 50,000 pages in Russian and almost 17,000 pages in Arabic. 27 countries (Argentina, Belarus, Brazil, Canada, China, Hong Kong/China, Dominican Republic, Hungary, Iceland, India, Iraq, Japan, Malaysia, Malta, Morocco, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Saint Lucia, Sao Tome and

Principe, Singapore, South Africa, Switzerland, Syria, Thailand, Trinidad and Tobago, United Kingdom) and the UN (Geneva, Vienna & Postal Administration) have produced stamps to commemorate the IYB. The Secretary General appointed the American movie maker and actor Ed Norton as Honorary Ambassador for biodiversity. The official closing of the International Year of Biodiversity was held in Kanazawa, Ishikawa Prefecture, Japan, on 18-19 December 2010. This telescoped into a ceremony bridging the International Year of Biodiversity to the International Year of Forests. The International Year of Biodiversity was also honoured by the Green Awards (2010) which characterized the IYB as the Best Green International Campaign.

19. Supportive of the International Year of Forests, the International Day for Biological Diversity was celebrated on 22 May 2011 under the theme of Forest Biodiversity. In a significant contribution to this observance, more than 325 schools and groups in 47 countries took part in *The Green Wave* for biodiversity, an ongoing global initiative for children and youth to raise awareness and educate on biodiversity. . The theme for IDB in 2012 will be marine and coastal biodiversity.

VI. Collaboration with other Conventions

20. The Secretariat continued to actively pursue collaboration with the other two Rio Convention secretariats in order to build on successes realized in 2010. For example, the Rio Conventions' Ecosystems and Climate Change Pavilion was convened in Nagoya, Japan, at the tenth meeting of the COP to the Convention on Biological Diversity. This new collaborative outreach activity involving the three Rio Convention secretariats, with support from the Global Environment Facility and other important partners, including Parties, United Nations and non-government organizations. The Pavilion provides a platform for raising awareness and sharing information about the latest practices and scientific findings on the co-benefits that can be realized through implementation of the three Rio Conventions. With over 50 sessions convened during COP-10, attended by over 2000 participants, presenters and panel members in Pavilion activities included Ministers, scientists, policy makers and civil society representatives. The Pavilion was also convened during the UNFCCC COP 16 held in Cancun, Mexico in November and December 2011. This year, the Pavilion will be convened in October 2011 at the UNCCD COP 10 in Changwon, Republic of Korea and at the UNFCCC COP17 in Durban, South Africa. The Pavilion partners will also extend the momentum of these collaborative initiatives to the UN Conference on Sustainable Development in Brazil in 2012 as well at COP11 of the CBD to be held in Hyderabad, India, in October 2012.

21. The eleventh meeting of the Joint Liaison Group of the Rio Conventions was convened in Bonn on 11 April 2011, chaired by the Executive Secretary of the UNCCD. Participants in the meeting discussed: (i) current and requested activities undertaken by the JLG; (ii) support for the coordination of national planning and reporting processes; (iii) cooperation on gender mainstreaming; (iv) plans for joint events at Rio+20, including the Rio Conventions Pavilion; and (v) joint outreach and communication initiatives. Main outcomes from the meeting include an agreement to formalize the terms of reference and modus operandi of the JLG, a set of joint high level activities identified for Rio+20 as well as the twentieth anniversary of the

conventions in 2012, and new and revised joint publications on climate change adaptation, forests and gender. The draft *modus operandi* of the JLG was discussed at the teleconference held on 2 August 2011 and will be submitted for the consideration of relevant bodies under each of the conventions.

22. The Secretariat continued to actively pursue cooperation with the other biodiversity-related conventions. The first ever high-level retreat among the Secretariats of biodiversity-related conventions was held on 1 September, Geneva, Switzerland. The second high level retreat will take place on 4 September 2011 in Geneva to discuss collaboration for the implementation of the 2011-2020 Strategic Plan for Biodiversity. The eighth meeting of the Liaison Group of the Biodiversity-related Conventions (BLG) was held on 13 April 2011, hosted by the CITES Secretariat in Geneva. The meeting addressed the following items: (i) update on the activities of the Japan Fund and capacity building support for the implementation of the Nagoya Outcomes; (ii) other activities being undertaken by BLG members in support of the 2011-2020 Strategic Plan for Biodiversity; (iii) activities in preparation for the United Nations Decade on Biodiversity; and (iv) the need for a more formal, agreed *modus operandi* for the BLG. A draft *modus operandi* of the BLG has been prepared by the SCBD and circulated to BLG members, and will be adopted at the BLG retreat in September 2011.

VII. Recommendations

21. The General Assembly may, at its sixty-sixth session, wish to:

(a) Stress the importance of the eleventh meeting of the COP to the Convention on Biological Diversity to be held in Hyderabad, India from 8 to 19 October 2012 including its high-level segment scheduled for 17-19 October 2012 since this provides a unique opportunity to assess the progress achieved in the implementation of the Nagoya biodiversity outcomes;

(b) Call on all United Nations departments, agencies, funds and programmes and regional commissions to fully support and implement the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020, as appropriate;

(c) Welcome the establishment of the Japan Biodiversity Fund and call on other donors to finance the implementation of decisions adopted at the tenth meeting of the COP to the Convention on Biological Diversity and at the fifth meeting of the Parties to the Cartagena Protocol;

(d) Welcome the adoption of the Tkarihwaie:ri Code of Ethical Conduct to ensure respect for the cultural and intellectual heritage of indigenous and local communities;

(e) Urge States that have not yet done so to ratify or accede to the Convention and thereby make participation universal;

(f) Urge Parties to the Convention that have not yet done so to ratify or accede to the Cartagena Protocol as soon as possible;

(g) Urge Parties to the Convention to sign and ratify or accede to the Nagoya Protocol at the earliest opportunity;

(h) Urge Parties to the Cartagena Protocol to sign and ratify or accede to the Nagoya –Kuala Lumpur Supplementary Protocol at the earliest opportunity;

(i) Welcome the progress achieved in raising public awareness during the celebration of the 2010 International Year on Biodiversity and Invite all relevant United Nations departments, agencies, funds and programmes and regional commissions to contribute to the achievements of the objectives of the United Nations Decade on Biodiversity for 2011-2020.
