



General Assembly

Distr.: General
10 August 2011

Original: English

Sixty-sixth session

Item 19 (d), (e) and (f) of the provisional agenda*

Sustainable development: Protection of global climate for present and future generations of humankind

Implementation of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in Those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, Particularly in Africa

Convention on Biological Diversity

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 the 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.

* A/66/150.

I. 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

A. Introduction

1. The General Assembly, in its resolution 65/159, invited the secretariat of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change to report to it at its sixty-sixth session on the work of the Conference of the Parties. The present report is submitted in response to that invitation.

B. Outcomes of the sixteenth session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and the sixth session of the Conference of the Parties serving as the Meeting of the Parties to the Kyoto Protocol

1. 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) Sixteenth session of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention;
- (b) Sixth session of the Conference of the Parties serving as the Meeting of the Parties to the Kyoto Protocol;
- (c) Thirty-third session of the Subsidiary Body for Implementation;
- (d) Thirty-third session of the Subsidiary Body for Scientific and Technological Advice;
- (e) Fifteenth session of the Ad Hoc Working Group on Further Commitments for Annex I Parties under the Kyoto Protocol;
- (f) 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 among 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 Conference and the Chairs of the ad hoc working groups and the subsidiary bodies made progress through an open, transparent and inclusive process. This allowed for exchanges among parties that would ultimately lead to an agreed outcome in Cancun.

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,¹ adopted by the Conference of the Parties and the Conference of the Parties 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 advance the implementation of actions to combat climate change, particularly for the following issues:

(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) Policy approaches and positive incentives on issues relating to reducing emissions from deforestation and forest degradation in developing countries and the role of conservation, sustainable management of forests and enhancement of forest carbon stocks in developing countries (REDD-plus).² Guidance and safeguards were provided and a work programme was established.

5. The Conference of the Parties adopted 12 decisions and the Conference of the Parties 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.

2. High-level segment

6. The joint high-level segment of the sixteenth session of the Conference of the Parties and the sixth session of the Conference of the Parties serving as the Meeting of the Parties to the Kyoto Protocol was opened by the President, the Secretary of Foreign Affairs of 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 stating that complacency and “business as usual” were not options. He recognized that countries face political and economic constraints, but he emphasized that the longer the world delays action on climate change, the higher the costs will be, economically and environmentally and in human lives. He therefore asked parties for determination, leadership, flexibility and compromise in the negotiations.

¹ See FCCC/CP/2010/7/Add.1, decision 1/CP.16 and FCCC/KP/CMP/2010/12/Add.1, decisions 1/CMP.6 and 2/CMP.6.

² See the Bali Action Plan (FCCC/CP/2007/6/Add.1, para. 1 (b) (iii)).

8. During the high-level segment, statements were made by 165 parties, of which 16 were made by Heads of State or Government, 9 by either vice-presidents or deputy prime ministers, 100 by ministers and 40 by representatives of parties.

3. Outcomes of the sixteenth session of the Conference of the Parties

Cancun Agreements

9. Based on and following the structure of the Bali Action Plan, the Cancun Agreements provide a comprehensive package of decisions adopted 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 of 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 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. The Cancun Adaptation Framework was established with the objective of enhancing action on adaptation.

12. In the Cancun Agreements, the Conference of the Parties and the Conference of the Parties serving as the Meeting of the Parties to the Kyoto Protocol 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. A process was also established through the Agreements 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 Conference of the Parties 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,³ which seek a deviation from “business as usual” emissions by 2020, with financial and technological support.

15. Industrialized nations have committed to improving the reporting on their mitigation targets and to enhancing their provision of support to developing country parties. Additionally, developing country parties may voluntarily report on their mitigation actions. A registry will be set up in order to record information on the following: mitigation actions of developing country parties for which international support is sought; support available from developed country parties for mitigation actions; and support provided for mitigation actions.

16. The Conference of the Parties 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 Conference of the Parties 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 and joint implementation.

18. The Chairs of the Subsidiary Body for Scientific and Technological Advice and the Subsidiary Body for Implementation were mandated by the Conference of the Parties to convene a forum on the impact of the implementation of response measures to mitigate climate change. In 2011, the two Subsidiary Bodies 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 Conference of the Parties by developed country parties to provide \$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, in the order of \$100 billion per year by 2020, to address the needs of developing country Parties.

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 Fund is being designed by a transitional committee, which will present its recommendations for approval by the Conference of the Parties at its seventeenth session in Durban, South Africa, at the end of 2011.

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.

³ As of 19 April 2011, 48 developing countries had made their nationally appropriate mitigation actions official. See FCCC/AWGLCA/2011/INF.1

22. The technology mechanism consists of the Technology Executive Committee and the Climate Technology Centre and Network. The Committee will provide an overview of technological needs, analyse policy and technical issues related to the development and transfer of technologies and recommend related actions. The Centre and Network 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 Conference of the Parties 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 Conference of the Parties

24. The Conference of the Parties provided additional guidance to the Global Environment Facility (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 finance matters, the Conference of the Parties decided to conclude its 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 GEF for the operation of the Least Developed Countries Fund. The Conference of the Parties will assess progress made in the implementation of its guidance.

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

27. The Conference of the Parties invited all parties and international organizations to enhance the support provided for in article 6 of the Convention on education, training and public awareness to the national focal points of developing country parties.

28. The Conference of the Parties 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 Conference of the Parties also 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.

4. Outcomes of the sixth session of the Conference of the Parties serving as the Meeting of the Parties to the Kyoto Protocol

Cancun Agreements

30. As part of the Cancun Agreements, the Conference of the Parties serving as the Meeting of the Parties to the Kyoto Protocol adopted a decision in which it agreed that the Ad Hoc Working Group on Further Commitments for annex I parties under the Kyoto Protocol should 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 Conference of the Parties 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; measures to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and enhance removals resulting from land use, land-use change and forestry activities; the global warming potentials to be used for calculations; and the continued consideration of information on the potential consequences of tools, policies, measures and methodologies.

32. The Conference of the Parties 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. It 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 Conference of the Parties serving as the Meeting of the Parties to the Kyoto Protocol

33. The Conference of the Parties 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 a review of the Adaptation Fund at its seventh session and every three years thereafter.

34. The secretariat was requested by the Conference of the Parties 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 Conference of the Parties serving as the Meeting of the Parties to the Kyoto Protocol provided further guidance on the clean development mechanism, including general guidance with regard to governance, accreditation, baseline and monitoring methodologies, standardized baselines, registration of project activities, regional and subregional distribution and capacity-building, and the resources for work on the mechanism.

36. Guidance was also provided by the Conference of the Parties serving as the Meeting of the Parties to the Kyoto Protocol on the implementation of article 6 of the Kyoto Protocol on joint implementation.

5. Progress on the implementation of the Cancun Agreements

37. Since the Cancun Conference, parties have continued negotiations on the implementation of the Cancun Agreements. They have worked on a road map and a 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 Technology Executive Committee and the Climate Technology Centre and Network.

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 have continued 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. 13 above). In particular, progress has been made with regard to the governance, modalities and procedures, linkages with other institutions and composition of the Adaptation Committee.

40. Parties have engaged in useful discussions with each other on the issue of mitigation under the Ad Hoc Working Group on Long-term Cooperative Action under the Convention. Such discussions have included the type of elements to be contained in biennial reports by developed country parties, where there is broad recognition of 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 nationally appropriate mitigation actions (see para. 15 above) 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 and addressing the issue of its financing. 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 focusing 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 and 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 the issue of the potential environmental, economic and social consequences, including spillover effects of tools, policies, measures and methodologies.

C. Conclusions and recommendations

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

(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 Conference of the Parties and the sixth session of the Conference of the Parties 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.

II. 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

A. Introduction

45. In its resolution 65/160, 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 the principal activities that have been undertaken in implementation of the resolution.

B. Implementation of General Assembly resolution 65/160

1. Background

46. By 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 sixty-sixth session of the 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.

47. The Assembly also decided that:

(a) The preparations for the meeting would be undertaken under the authority of the President of the General Assembly at its sixty-fifth session and that the Executive Secretary of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in Those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, Particularly in Africa, would serve as the focal point for the meeting;

(b) The high-level meeting would be structured around an opening plenary meeting, followed by an interactive panel in the morning and a second interactive panel in the afternoon, followed by a closing plenary meeting;

(c) The panels would be co-chaired by one Head of State or Government from the North and one from the South for each panel, to be appointed by the President of the General Assembly, with due regard to geographical balance, in consultation with regional groups.

48. In addition, in resolution 65/160 the Assembly 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.

49. The Assembly also expressed concern that one billion inhabitants of drylands are amongst the poorest on the planet and are lagging behind in the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals. It invited Member States, in particular the donor community and the United Nations system, to address the needs of the inhabitants of the drylands by encouraging appropriate investments to contribute to achieving the internationally agreed goals, including the Millennium Development Goals, in those areas.

50. 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.

2. Preparations for the high-level meeting

51. Shortly after the adoption of resolution 65/160, the Executive Secretary of the Convention, in his capacity as the focal point for the high-level meeting, started consultations with key stakeholders to initiate preparations for the meeting. In early February 2011, he met with the President of the sixty-fifth session of the General Assembly to brief him on those preparations, to coordinate organizational efforts during the preparatory process and to discuss the cooperation necessary to ensure its success.

52. As mandated in resolution 65/160, arrangements were made to assist the Secretary-General by providing inputs to his background document. The Convention 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.

53. The Convention 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 of the Convention, held in Bonn in February 2011. To create

further awareness and in order to facilitate a consistent level of participation, the Executive Secretary has pursued his approach of featuring the event in all his encounters with the representatives of various parties. In addition, parties have been notified of the meeting through correspondence sent to all Ministers of Foreign Affairs and to those line ministers who are responsible for the Convention. To create further sufficient publicity and support and ensure that the high-level event is adequately covered by the media, the Convention secretariat has also developed a media strategy to promote the high-level meeting.

3. Ninth session of the Committee for the Review of the Implementation of the Convention and second special session of the Committee on Science and Technology

54. The ninth session of the Committee for the Review of the Implementation of the Convention and the second special session of the Committee on Science and Technology were held in Bonn, Germany, from 16 to 25 February 2011. At the sessions the intersessional work related essentially to impact and performance indicators, as agreed upon at the ninth session of the Conference of the Parties, was reviewed.

55. The second special session of the Committee on Science and Technology, 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 first Scientific Conference, held in Buenos Aires in 2009; preparations for the second Scientific Conference; the role of science and technology correspondents; 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 Strategy was the key focus of the scientists at this meeting. The GEF Scientific and Technical Advisory Panel was involved in this exercise and the indicators have been opened for public consultation through an e-forum.

56. However, the scientists also observed that some alignment between the GEF portfolio level indicators and the set of impact indicators of the Convention would improve the reporting obligations of parties. They therefore recommended that the Panel be more closely involved in the process of harmonizing the objectives and methodologies for collecting and reporting on indicators.

57. Progress was also made in setting up a scientific knowledge-management system. Interest was also expressed at the second special session in establishing a geographically-balanced ad hoc advisory group of experts to support the refinement of the impact indicators and in 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.

58. The ninth session of the Committee for the Review of the Implementation of the Convention considered issues relating to preliminary analyses of information contained in the reports of parties, United Nations agencies and intergovernmental organizations, and civil society organizations 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 Conference of the Parties. Delegates also engaged in an open dialogue with representatives of civil society organizations and in 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. The Committee recognized the important feature of the online reporting tool that ensures the uploading of information contained in national reports provided by parties and other reporting entities into the portal of the performance review and assessment of implementation system.

59. 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. By the time the ninth session of the Committee opened, more than 50 per cent of affected country parties and almost 30 per cent of developed country parties had submitted their national reports. As of November 2010, 89 per cent 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 a road map for all its stakeholders.

60. The performance review and assessment of implementation system was well received, and there was considerable discussion of this improvement in the reporting system and in dissemination of the results. Discussions also focused on the development of a knowledge-management system, the compilation of best practices identified through the performance review system reports and the further refinement of the impact indicators, among others. On all agenda items, the second special session of the Committee on Science and Technology and the ninth session of the Committee for the Review of the Implementation of the Convention adopted reports summarizing the ideas, suggestions and proposals of delegates, leaving the tenth session of the Conference of the Parties with a variety of options to pursue and on which to take decisions.

4. United Nations Decade for Deserts and the Fight Against Desertification

61. In pursuance of resolution 64/201, the Decade for Deserts and the Fight Against Desertification, mandated by the General Assembly, was launched on 16 August 2010 in Fortaleza, Brazil. The primary objective of the Decade is to raise awareness and stimulate action to improve the protection and management of the world's drylands, home to one third of the world's population and facing serious economic and environmental threats.

62. Regional launches were also organized, including in Nairobi for the African region on 16 August 2010. The launch for the Asian region took place on 12 October 2010 in Seoul with the objective of highlighting the fact 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 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 the Convention secretariat and the university to work closely on future research into desertification. The European launch was organized on 16 December 2010 in London 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 United Nations Decade on Biodiversity in Havana and Addis Ababa on 4 and 22 July 2011 respectively.

5. Observance of the 2011 World Day to Combat Desertification and Drought

63. The World Day to Combat Desertification and Drought 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 policymakers 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 that is highlighted. As 2011 is the International Year of Forests, the World Day for 2011 focused specifically on the forests in the drylands areas of the world, guided by the motto "Forests keep drylands working". On the occasion of the celebration of the World Day, the Secretary-General, the Executive Secretary of the Convention and other senior United Nations officials issued special messages. The main thrust of those messages was that people who live in the arid lands, which account for more than 40 per cent of the world's 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, the messages also indicated that unsustainable land management and agriculture are a significant cause of the land degradation and desertification that inevitably follow. One key message was a call to reward those who make drylands productive, so that they will prosper and others will seek to emulate their example.

6. Land Day

64. Since the last report to the General Assembly, the Convention secretariat has organized two Land Days.

65. Land Day 3 was organized on 23 October 2010 in the margins of the tenth session of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity, which was held in Nagoya, Japan, from 18-29 October. Ambassador Koh of Singapore, who served as the Chair of the Preparatory Committee for and the Main Committee of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (Earth Summit), delivered a keynote address to the participants. Land Day 3 was attended by government delegates and representatives of intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations, academic institutions and business and research organizations. The event was a joint initiative of the secretariats of the Convention on Biodiversity and the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification and was part of the Rio Conventions ecosystem and climate change pavilion.

66. Important points that emerged from the discussion included land degradation as a local issue with global consequences; an axiomatic relationship between the two 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 need for an integrated approach, when addressing the issues, for high-level political commitment and to facilitate communication and focus on the underlying drivers.

67. Land Day 4 was organized in Bonn, Germany, on 11 June 2011. The Land Day was designed with four main aims: 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 long-term cooperative action can be realized through concrete implementation as set forth in the national action programmes of the Convention to Combat Desertification and the national adaptation programmes of action of the Framework Convention on Climate Change, through partnerships at global and national levels; and to involve 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 and 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.

7. Collaboration with the Global Environment Facility

68. The Convention secretariat continued to strengthen its partnership with GEF, in particular in the light of the amendment of the GEF Instrument to list the Convention 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 enabling activities of the Convention and the new system for transparent allocation of resources.

69. To further operationalize that reform, the first ever joint retreat of the Convention and GEF secretariats was organized in Bonn, Germany, on 4 January 2011. Co-hosted by the Executive Secretary of the Convention and the Chief Executive Officer and Chair of the GEF, the overall objective of the retreat was to jointly discuss and clarify key aspects of the policies and programmes of the fifth replenishment cycle as they relate to supporting the implementation of the Convention by affected country parties. Discussions during the retreat covered, inter alia, GEF reforms and the implications for ongoing Convention activities, and procedures of the system for transparent allocation of resources under the land degradation focal area. During the discussions, priorities that were identified included the need to build on the performance review system and a pilot tracking exercise for all indicators in targeted countries.

70. The outcome of the retreat was a joint action plan that includes a set of recommendations for strengthening collaboration between the two secretariats in order to advance the implementation by the parties of the Convention and its 10-year strategy. 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 GEF in Convention 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.

8. Joint Liaison Group of the Rio Conventions

71. The Convention secretariat also pursued close collaboration with the secretariats of the other two Rio Conventions. The eleventh meeting of the Joint Liaison Group of the Rio Conventions was held on 11 April 2011 in Bonn, Germany. The Executive Secretary of the Convention to Combat Desertification chaired the meeting which discussed (a) current and requested activities undertaken by the Joint Liaison Group, (b) support for the coordination of national planning and reporting processes, (c) cooperation on gender mainstreaming (d) plans for joint events at the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development in 2012, including the Rio Conventions pavilion, and (e) joint outreach and communication initiatives. The main outcomes from the meeting included an agreement to formalize the terms of reference and modus operandi of the Joint Liaison Group, a set of joint high-level activities identified for the Conference and for the 20th anniversary of the Conventions in 2012, and new and revised joint publications on climate change adaptation, forests and gender. In September 2010, the Joint Liaison Group had met to discuss issues of common interest, including synergies. That meeting was chaired by the Executive Secretary of the Convention on Biological Diversity and attended by the Executive Secretaries of the Convention to Combat Desertification and the Framework Convention on Climate Change.

C. Observations and possible General Assembly actions

72. The adoption of General Assembly resolution 65/160 convening a high-level meeting on desertification, land degradation and drought constitutes a milestone in the process of the Convention. For the first time since its inception, the core issues of the Convention will be addressed at the highest political level. The outcome of the meeting will be conveyed to the Conference of the Parties 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 for raising the profile of issues relating to desertification, land degradation and drought.

73. Furthermore, the Assembly has frequently called for strengthening the scientific basis of the Convention. The most recent session of the Committee on Science and Technology made important strides in this respect. The Assembly may wish to reiterate its support for more involvement of science to better comprehend issues relating to desertification, land degradation and drought.

74. 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 road map for all its stakeholders. In this respect, the new performance review and assessment of implementation system promises to respond to this quest. In the same vein, as the international community engages with preparations for the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development in 2012, 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 reporting system of the Convention, encourage the move towards setting quantitative targets and consider the possibility of a “zero net land degradation rate” as a sustainable development target.

III. Report of the Executive Secretary of the Convention on Biological Diversity

A. Introduction

75. 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 Conference of the Parties. The present report is submitted in response to that invitation.

B. Outcome of the tenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity

76. The tenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity was held in Nagoya, Japan, from 18 to 29 October 2010, on the theme “Life in harmony, into the future”. At the Conference, attended by more than 18,000 participants, the parties adopted 47 decisions including a strategic plan for biodiversity for 2011-2020, comprising 20 ambitious targets known as the Aichi Biodiversity Targets. At the time of the submission of the present report, the secretariat, with the financial support of Japan, had organized nine regional and subregional workshops with over 400 participants, including representatives of parties and relevant organizations, with a view to revising national biodiversity strategies and action plans and incorporating the Aichi Targets at national level. The Government of Japan is also supporting 30 other capacity-building projects to assist developing countries to implement the outcomes of the conference. In partnership with Japan, the secretariat organized a series of briefings on the Nagoya biodiversity compact at all major United Nations offices and at the headquarters of the regional economic commissions.

77. The Conference of the Parties also adopted the Nagoya Protocol on Access to Genetic Resources and the Fair and Equitable Sharing of Benefit Arising from their Utilization to the Convention on Biological Diversity. The Protocol, which was deposited with the Secretary-General, was opened for signature in New York on 2 February 2010 and had received 40 signatures at the time of submission of the present report. The Protocol will remain open for signature until 1 February 2012. It will enter into force 90 days after the date of deposit of the fiftieth instrument of ratification, acceptance, approval or accession. A GEF medium-sized project, implemented by UNEP, has been adopted to facilitate the early entry into force of

the Protocol. In addition, at the initiative of Japan, a GEF trust fund for the Nagoya Protocol has also been established. The first meeting of the Intergovernmental Committee of the Nagoya Protocol was held in Montreal, Canada, from 6 to 10 June 2011. It elected the 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 Committee will be held in New Delhi from 9 to 13 April 2012.

78. At the tenth meeting, the Conference of 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 the eleventh meeting of the Conference of the Parties, the parties agreed to specific indicators for monitoring the implementation of the strategy for resource mobilization. The parties also agreed to undertake a full assessment of the funds necessary to implement the biodiversity agenda for the sixth replenishment period of GEF.

79. 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. In addition to observers from international organizations, the parties have nominated 25 experts to the group, which is scheduled to meet in December 2011 at the Forestry Research Institute of India in Dehradun.

80. The parties further advanced the engagement of business, encouraging the establishment of national and regional business and biodiversity initiatives by facilitating a forum for dialogue between parties and other Governments, business and other stakeholders, with a particular focus on the global level. In decision X/21 the parties also asked the secretariat to compile information on, and analyse the effectiveness of, 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 website of the Global Platform on Business and Biodiversity; and, in conjunction with partner organizations, is undertaking a gap analysis of existing standards, tools and mechanisms.

81. Aware of the critical importance of urbanization and local action on biodiversity, the Conference of the Parties also endorsed a plan of action on cities and biodiversity (decision X/22), which has been developed through several meetings of the Global Partnership on Cities and Biodiversity⁴ since 2006. The plan was also supported by the 650 representatives of cities, states and regions attending the City Biodiversity Summit in Nagoya on May 25 and 26 2010, including 220 mayors. Implementation of the plan was discussed at the first meeting on the implementation of the Plan of Action on Subnational Governments, Cities and Other Local Authorities for Biodiversity (2011-2020), held in Montpellier, France, from 17 to 19 January 2011. The parties also requested the secretariat of the Convention to prepare an assessment of the links and opportunities between urbanization and

⁴ See <http://www.cbd.int/authorities/Gettinginvolved/GlobalPartnership.shtml>.

biodiversity for the eleventh meeting of the Conference of the Parties, based on the third edition of the *Global Biodiversity Outlook*.

82. In decision X/23, the Conference of the Parties also welcomed the Multi-Year Plan of Action for South-South Cooperation on Biodiversity for Development, adopted by the first Forum on South-South Cooperation on Biodiversity for Development convened by the Group of 77 and China in partnership with the secretariat.⁵ Following up on the further development of the Plan, the third expert meeting on this initiative was held in Incheon, Republic of Korea, from 18 to 20 May 2011⁶ and the Plan will be submitted for consideration and adoption at the fourth meeting of the Ad Hoc Open-ended Working Group on the Review of Implementation of the Convention on Biological Diversity and the eleventh meeting of the Conference of the Parties to be held in Hyderabad, India, in October 2012.

83. With respect to traditional knowledge, the Conference of the Parties reached another milestone with the adoption of the Tkarihwaí:ri Code of Ethical Conduct to Ensure Respect for the Cultural and Intellectual Heritage of Indigenous and Local Communities (decision X/42). The Code aims to promote respect for the cultural and intellectual heritage of indigenous and local communities that is relevant for the conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity.

84. The Conference of the Parties also provided comprehensive guidance on how to further enhance the implementation of the programme of work of the Convention on marine and coastal biodiversity, including setting in place a mechanism for the identification of ecologically and biologically significant areas and expediting national, regional and global efforts towards achieving the 2012 target of the World Summit on Sustainable Development 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 United Nations 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 and holding regional workshops and other activities in implementing decision X/29 on marine and coastal diversity adopted at the tenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties.

85. The Conference of the Parties also adopted a decision on biodiversity and climate change (decision X/33), 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 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. In the decision the Conference of the Parties also proposed a process for further enhancing synergies with the Convention to Combat Desertification and the Framework Convention on Climate Change. The secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity is collaborating closely with other United Nations entities in the implementation of this decision.

⁵ The Plan is available from <http://www.cbd.int/ssc/myapa/> and the report of the Forum at <http://www.cbd.int/doc/?meeting=SSC-FOR-01>.

⁶ The report of the meeting is available from <http://www.cbd.int/doc/?meeting=EMSSC-03>.

86. At the initiative of Japan, the Conference of the Parties recommended that the General Assembly 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. A draft strategy for the celebration of the Decade was adopted as well as the official logo. The Republic of Korea launched the Decade in Songwan on 19 May 2011. India, as incoming President of the eleventh meeting of the Conference of the Parties, launched the Decade for Asia and the Pacific in New Delhi on 23 May 2011. The President of the Philippines launched the Decade for the Association of Southeast Asian Nations on 29 May 2011 and adopted a presidential decree declaring 2011-2020 a biodiversity decade for the Philippines. On 4 July, Cuba launched the Decade for the Caribbean region and, on 13 July, Ecuador launched the decade for South America. 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 Conference of the Parties, will host an international event to launch the Decade on 17 and 18 December 2011.

C. Outcome of the fifth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity serving as the Meeting of the Parties to the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety to the Convention on Biological Diversity

87. The fifth meeting of the Conference of the Parties serving as the Meeting of the Parties to the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety was held from 11 to 15 October 2010 in Nagoya, Japan, bringing together more than 1,600 participants. The parties 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 the present 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.

88. The parties to the Protocol also adopted the first Strategic Plan for the Biosafety Protocol, covering the period from 2011 to 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 it is planned will 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.

D. Meetings of the subsidiary organs

89. The first meeting of the Bureau of the tenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties was held in Kanazawa, Japan, on 19 December 2010, at which a workplan was adopted for the implementation of the decisions adopted by the Conference at its tenth meeting. It was followed by the first meeting of the Bureau of the fifth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity serving as the Meeting of the Parties to the Cartagena Protocol. The second meeting of the Bureau of the Conference of the Parties was held in Montreal on 4 June 2011 and was followed by a joint meeting with the Bureau of the Open-ended Ad Hoc Intergovernmental Committee for the Nagoya Protocol.

90. 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 Conference of the Parties at its eleventh meeting in 2012. Among other issues, the meeting will consider: (a) 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 Targets and (b) ways and means to support ecosystem restoration activities following a decision taken at the tenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties 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 the fifteenth meeting of the Subsidiary Body 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 Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services will meet a month prior to the fifteenth meeting of the Subsidiary Body.

91. The seventh meeting of the Ad Hoc Open-ended Intersessional Working Group on Article 8 (j) and Related Provisions of the Convention will be held from 31 October to 4 November to advance the decisions of the tenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties. 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; indicators for traditional knowledge and customary sustainable use; guidelines for benefit sharing, prior informed consent and obligations of countries of origin; guidelines to stop unlawful appropriation of traditional knowledge; and 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.

E. International Year of Biodiversity and other United Nations observances

92. In its resolution 61/203, in which it proclaimed 2010 the International Year of Biodiversity, the General Assembly requested the Secretary-General to report to it at its sixty-sixth session. The Secretary-General submitted an interim report to the

sixty-fifth session of the General Assembly (A/65/294). Some 191 parties celebrated the Year and more than 2,000 national and international events took place. At the time of submission of the present report, 54 parties had submitted their national reports to the secretariat of the Convention. The logo and slogan were used by 1,751 registered users. 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. Twenty-six countries (Argentina, Belarus, Brazil, Canada, China, Dominican Republic, Hungary, Iceland, India, Iraq, Japan, Malaysia, Malta, Morocco, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Saint Lucia, Sao Tome and Principe, Singapore, South Africa, Switzerland, Syrian Arab Republic, Thailand, Trinidad and Tobago and United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland), the United Nations Offices at Geneva and Vienna and the United Nations Postal Administration have produced stamps to commemorate the Year. The Secretary-General appointed the American cinematographer and actor Edward Norton as United Nations Goodwill Ambassador for Biodiversity. The official closing of the Year was held in Kanazawa, Japan, on 18 and 19 December 2010, which included 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 it as the best green international campaign.

93. 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 of and educate others on biodiversity. The theme for the International Day in 2012 will be marine and coastal biodiversity.

F. Collaboration with other conventions

94. The secretariat continued to actively pursue collaboration with the secretariats of the other two Rio Conventions 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 Conference of the Parties. This new collaborative outreach activity involves the secretariats of the three Rio Conventions, with support from GEF and other important partners, including parties to the Convention, the United Nations and non-governmental organizations. The pavilion provides a platform for raising awareness and sharing information about the latest practices and scientific findings on the mutually reinforcing benefits that can be realized through implementation of the three Rio Conventions. With over 50 sessions convened during the Conference and attended by over 2,000 participants, presenters and panel members, those taking part in pavilion activities included ministers, scientists, policymakers and civil society representatives. The pavilion was also convened during the sixteenth session of the Conference of the Parties to the Framework Convention on Climate Change held in Cancun, Mexico, in November and December 2011. This year, the pavilion will be convened in October

2011 at the tenth session of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention to Combat Desertification in Changwon, Republic of Korea, and at the seventeenth session of the Conference of the Parties to the Framework Convention on Climate Change in Durban, South Africa. The pavilion partners will also extend the momentum of these collaborative initiatives to the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development to be held in Brazil in 2012, as well as to the eleventh meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity to be held in Hyderabad, India, in October 2012.

95. 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 Convention to Combat Desertification. Participants in the meeting discussed: (a) current and requested activities undertaken by the Group; (b) support for the coordination of national planning and reporting processes; (c) cooperation on gender mainstreaming; (d) plans for joint events at the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development in 2012, including the Rio Conventions pavilion; and (e) joint outreach and communication initiatives. The main outcomes from the meeting include an agreement to formalize the terms of reference and modus operandi of the Joint Liaison Group, a set of joint high-level activities identified for the Conference and for 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 Group was discussed at the teleconference held on 2 August 2011 and will be submitted for the consideration of the relevant bodies under each of the conventions.

96. The secretariat continued to actively pursue cooperation with the other conventions related to biodiversity. The first ever high-level retreat for the secretariats of these conventions was held on 1 September 2010 in Geneva. The second high-level retreat will take place on 4 September 2011 in Geneva to discuss collaboration on the implementation of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020. The eighth meeting of the Liaison Group of the Biodiversity-related Conventions was held on 13 April 2011 in Geneva, hosted by the secretariat of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora. The meeting addressed the following items: (a) update on the activities of the Japan Biodiversity Fund and capacity-building support for the implementation of the Nagoya outcomes; (b) other activities being undertaken by members of the Group in support of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020; (c) activities in preparation for the United Nations Decade on Biodiversity; and (d) the need for a more formal, agreed modus operandi for the Group. A draft modus operandi for the Group has been prepared by the secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity and circulated to other members of the Group, and will be adopted at the retreat in September 2011.

G. Recommendations

97. **At its sixty-sixth session, the General Assembly may wish to:**

(a) **Stress the importance of the eleventh meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity to be held in Hyderabad, India, from 8 to 19 October 2012, including its high-level segment scheduled from 17 to 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, 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 Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity and at the fifth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity serving as the Meeting of the Parties to the Cartagena Protocol;

(d) Welcome the adoption of the Tkarihwaí: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 on Biosafety as soon as possible;

(g) Urge parties to the Convention to sign and ratify or accede to the Nagoya Protocol on Access to Genetic Resources and the Fair and Equitable Sharing of Benefits Arising from their Utilization at the earliest opportunity;

(h) Urge Parties to the Cartagena Protocol to sign and ratify or accede to the Nagoya-Kuala Lumpur Supplementary Protocol on Liability and Redress to the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety 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 achieving the objectives of the United Nations Decade on Biodiversity for 2011-2020.