

NON-PAPER

Informal consultation on the development of the Strategic Plan of the Convention on Biological Diversity Siguenza, Spain, 22 March 2002

Chair's Text

Background

The Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity at its fifth meeting indicated, pursuant to decision V/20, its intent to adopt a Strategic Plan at its sixth meeting and invited Governments, intergovernmental organizations and non-governmental organization to submit their views on the matter. A note was prepared by the Secretariat on the basis of submissions received and national biodiversity strategies and action plans presented by Parties. The note provided an outline of the overall process for developing the Strategic Plan, an initial review of the process and some draft elements of the Plan. Further submissions were invited. The note provided also guidance to the Workshop on the Strategic Plan, convened by the Executive Secretary in Mahe at the kind invitation of the Government of Seychelles in May 2001, to further develop the Strategic Plan.

The conclusions of the Seychelles Workshop provided the basis for the pre-session document to be discussed at the Open-ended Inter-sessional Meeting on the Strategic Plan, National Reports and Implementation of the Convention, which took place in Montreal in November 2001. The meeting developed elements of the strategic plan, including the issue, mission statement, vision, constraints, operational goals, monitoring and reporting and periodical assessment and review, review of implementation, and communication. In addition, the meeting requested the Executive Secretary to identify, in consultation with Parties and other relevant actors, Parameters for as many of the operational goals of the Strategic Plan as possible, as outlined in paragraph 15 of decision V/20. Such Parameters include: planned activities; expected products; timing of planned activities; actors carrying out the activities; mechanisms to realize the goals; and financial, human resources and other capacity requirements.

In order to facilitate discussion at the sixth Conference of the Parties on the elements and parameters of the Strategic Plan, an informal consultation was organized in Siguenza, Spain on 22 March 2002, at the kind invitation of the Government of Spain. The meeting was attended by 18 participants from the following countries and international organizations: Belgium, Brazil, Check Republic, China, Denmark, Iran, Jamaica, the Netherlands, Norway, South Africa, Spain, the European Commission and the Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity.

General remarks

The informal meeting exchanged views on the draft Strategic Plan adopted by the Open-Ended Inter-Sessional Meeting on the Strategic Plan, National Reports and Implementation of the Convention and made suggestions for the further development of the draft Strategic Plan. The meeting noted that the draft Strategic Plan was not sufficiently strategic, despite its function to develop a strategy for the further implementation of the Convention. According to the participants, a strategic plan for the Convention should serve two main purposes: it should guide and support the implementation of the Convention; and, be a political communication and outreaching tool, pro- actively raising the profile of the Convention. Ways and means to make the plan more 'strategic' were subsequently discussed.

The informal group felt that there was a need to simplify the draft Strategic Plan in order to facilitate its understanding and implementation at the national level. The draft plan was also perceived as being too ambitious for the time allocated to its implementation. Furthermore, the plan was considered difficult for countries to implement in its current format and in need of a clearer and smaller set of achievable strategic goals, as recommended by the SBSTTA Bureau at its last meeting.

The implementation of the strategic plan could be also facilitated by the prioritization and identification of goals and actions. According to the group, the Plan lacks broad strategic goals, and most of the current operational goals appear to be a blend of objectives and activities with different priority levels. Consequently, participants identified four main strategic goals:

1. Promote greater understanding of the importance of biodiversity and the role of the Convention;
2. Strengthen the capacity of Parties to improve the implementation of the Convention¹ ;
3. Enhance national and international partnerships with relevant conventions, institutions and processes, with clearly defined responsibilities;
4. Enable relevant sectors to integrate biodiversity concerns into their policies, strategies and action plans².

In addition to the discussion on the general format of the draft Strategic Plan, the meeting allocated time to the consideration of bracketed texts. Although consensus could not be reached, and it was agreed that further discussion is needed at COP-6 to overcome this lack of consensus. There was also insufficient time to discuss adequately the draft

¹ The group noted that this strategic goal could also be split in three strategic stand alone sub-goals covering: 1. Implementation tools and instruments; 2. Human and financial resource needs; 3. Scientific knowledge and know-how.

² On this strategic the group was unable to reach consensus on whether this goal should be a separate goal or a sub-goal under goal 2. In the event that goal n.2 is split in three strategic goals, there was some agreement that goal n.4 could then be considered as one of the strategic goals.

document prepared by the Secretariat on the Parameters on the strategic plan. Participants also stated that it was unnecessary to consider these Parameters prior to the finalization of the Strategic Plan.

Remarks on specific sections of the draft Strategic Plan

Section A. The issue.

There were no specific remarks on this section.

Section B. Mission statement.

Section C. Vision.

There was a general agreement that that both sections offer little or no added value to the document as they restate what was affirmed in the objectives of the Convention.

Section D. Constraints.

The analysis was judged to be too limited since it did not address failures to implement the Convention and the reasons underlying these failures. According to participants, the Strategic Plan should analyze current constraints to the implementation of the Convention and the causes of existing or possible failures. Analysis of failures in implementation should guide the development of the action plans for operational goals to ensure that the MSP addresses and corrects past failures.

Section E. Operational goals.

The group noted that operational goals vary widely; some are rather objectives, while others are activities of practical nature. Participants to the informal meeting also felt that operational goals did not follow a coherent sequence of priorities and needed to be re-organized under the identified broader strategic goals. Operational goals dealing with the same issue should be listed in a more consistent manner under the same heading, and other operational goals, recognized as practical activities, should be listed under a different category. The group was of the view that such goals should eventually be included in an action plan for the implementation of the Strategic Plan of the Convention. Given the short time allocated to the meeting, the group requested the Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity to complete this exercise. The outcome of the re-organization of operational goals is contained in the Annex.

Section F. Monitoring and reporting and periodic assessment and review.

Participants noted that the monitoring of achievements is an essential tool for the assessment of progress made in the implementation of the Strategic Plan and its priority issues. To this purpose, the plan should identify measurable targets.

Section G. Review of implementation.

The group noted that the review of the implementation of the Convention should be made at the national and international levels. Although the implementation of the Convention takes place at the national level, its implementation can also be assessed at the international level through a review of the Strategic Plan, relevant COP decisions and their effectiveness.

Section H. Communication.

Given the strategic importance of this issue, the meeting suggested to list this item as one of the operational goals, and to delete section H.

ANNEX

Strategic and operational goals³

1. Promote greater understanding of the importance of biodiversity and the role of the Convention

1.7 Mechanisms are enhanced and fully mobilized to promote increased understanding of biodiversity and to develop and transfer improved biodiversity management techniques and research findings, and decisions are made on the basis of the best available science and traditional knowledge systems.

1.9 The relationship between biodiversity and poverty is examined and its sustainable role in poverty alleviation is promoted and the negative effect of poverty on biological diversity is mitigated.

1.10 Communication, education and public awareness are used effectively to increase broad understanding of biodiversity, thus facilitating the full implementation of the Convention.

[4.4 Information exchange on sharing of benefits from the use of genetic resources is enhanced, considering the special needs of developing countries.]

2. Strengthen the capacity of Parties to improve the implementation of the Convention

1.3 [Increased financial, human and technical resources are [made available] [provided by developed country Parties and other donors to developing country Parties, in particular the least developed countries, small island developing States and countries with economies in transition] to elaborate, revise and implement this Strategic Plan.]

1.4 Increased capacity-building support for implementation of priority actions in national biodiversity strategy and action plans is provided. Technical and scientific cooperation to implement strategic plan is promoted and facilitated through the clearing-house mechanism, as well as other mechanisms.

1.5 Key actors and stakeholders in the national implementation of the Convention have increased awareness and are actively supporting and involved in implementation.

1.8 The Convention and Parties have better methods to monitor and evaluate progress in implementation of the Convention, to enable Parties, the Conference of the Parties and other bodies to assess the effectiveness of actions and measures taken to achieve the objectives of Convention.

1.11 Tools are developed for the economic valuation of ecological goods and services provided by biological diversity with the goal of incorporating them into national accounts and as a contribution to global services.

2.1 Species, ecosystems and genetic diversity that are at imminent risk of [irreversible loss] [extinction] are subject to appropriate actions to prevent that loss.

³ Operational goals listed in this Annex reflect the numbering of document UNEP/CBD/COP/6/5.

2.2. Populations and ecosystems that are not currently threatened are monitored and managed to maintain species viability and the structure and natural function of those ecosystems.

2.3 Significant and emerging threats to biodiversity are identified and prevented or minimized.

[2.4 Conservation and management efforts are focused on areas with high biodiversity value, particularly through the establishment of a global ecological network.]

3.1 National biodiversity strategies and action plans and biosafety frameworks identify the sustainable uses of biodiversity components at the national level.

3.2 [Living modified organisms that may have an adverse effect on the conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity, taking into account human health, are transferred, handled, and used in a safe manner through the full and world-wide application of the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety]

3.3 Awareness of the negative impacts on biological diversity of unsustainable patterns of consumption and production is raised [and economic [policy][instruments]] that support sustainable use are developed and readily available.

3.4 Tools, appropriate technologies and management systems that facilitate sustainable use of biological components are developed and promoted at national levels.

4.1 National legislation or other measures (including access and benefit-sharing strategies) on access and benefit-sharing, including financial, human, technical and technological resources, are developed and implemented [taking into account the Bonn Guidelines as appropriate].

[4.2 Intellectual property rights and other *sui generis* rights relating to the use of genetic resources, including the knowledge, innovations and practices of indigenous and local communities, respect the countries of origin of those genetic resources, or the rights of the populations involved, so as to ensure the fair and equitable sharing of benefits arising from their use.]

[4.3 The traditional knowledge, innovations and practices of local and indigenous communities are respected, preserved, maintained, protected and promoted for wider application with those communities' full and effective involvement and approval.]

[4.5 Biotechnological and biochemical research and development activities that use genetic resources are promoted and established in countries of origin of these resources.]

3. Enhance national and international partnerships with relevant conventions, institutions and processes, with clearly defined responsibilities.

1.6 The Convention is playing its leadership role in international biodiversity issues in cooperation with other conventions that support its implementation; other international processes shall actively support its implementation consistent with their respective frameworks.

4. Enable relevant sectors to integrate biodiversity concerns into their policies, strategies and action plans.

1.1 Parties have a national biodiversity strategy and action plan, revised as needed, in place and under implementation that is adequately integrated into other national sectoral strategies and planning instruments related to biodiversity.

1.2 Biodiversity concerns are integrated nationally, regionally and internationally into relevant sectoral and cross-sectoral plans, programmes and policies.

3.5 A framework for mainstreaming biodiversity concerns into relevant sectoral or cross-sectoral plans, programmes and policies is established and widely implemented.