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Item 7 of the Provisional Agenda

COMMISSION ON GENETIC RESOURCES FOR FOOD AND AGRICULTURE

Thirteenth Regular Session

Rome, 18 – 22 July 2011

**COOPERATION WITH THE CONVENTION ON BIOLOGICAL
DIVERSITY**

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I. INTRODUCTION

1. Cooperation between the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) has been strong and effective ever since the Convention came into force in 1993. A Memorandum of Cooperation between FAO and the Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity, first signed in 1997 and revised in 2005,¹ highlights the specific reciprocal roles of both FAO and the CBD and recognizes the Commission on Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture (the Commission) as the international forum where governments specifically address all components of biological diversity of relevance to food and agriculture.
2. The Commission plays a lead role in the cooperation between FAO and the Conference of the Parties to the CBD, and the Commission and the Conference of the Parties to the CBD have regularly recognized the importance of cooperation. Both have called for the development of mutually supportive activities during their respective intergovernmental sessions and conferences.
3. Cooperation between FAO and the Secretariat of the CBD is advanced through a *Joint work plan of the Secretariats of the Convention on Biological Diversity and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations and its Commission on Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture* (joint work plan). The 2009-2011 joint work plan is a framework in which the Secretariats advance biodiversity initiatives of mutual interest.
4. The Commission, at its last session (in 2009), noted that the next Conference of the Parties of the CBD (COP 10 in 2010) would address a number of matters related to targets and indicators for biodiversity for food and agriculture, and agreed to take a lead role in the development and use of biodiversity targets and indicators related to the work of the Commission.² It stressed the need not to overburden the CBD and FAO and its Commission, indicating the need to selectively identify and to synchronize areas of collaboration.³
5. CBD COP 10 welcomed and noted the importance of the joint work plan between the secretariats of the CBD and the FAO and its Commission on Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture; its important contribution to the achievement of Millennium Development Goals 1 and 7, and the opportunities to further enhance the joint work plan in accordance with relevant matters arising from the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020, including consideration of matters in relation to targets and indicators of relevance to the programme of work, and relevant matters arising from the Commission's *Strategic Plan 2010-2017 for the Implementation of the Multi-Year Programme of Work*.⁴
6. The Annex of the current document contains the invitations by the tenth Conference of the Parties to the CBD to FAO and its Commission on Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture. Section II provides a brief analysis of the opportunities for the Commission to strengthen collaboration with the CBD in light of the various requests arising from COP 10 and the ongoing work of the Commission. Based on this analysis a joint work plan 2012-2020 has been produced and is available as document CGRFA-13/11/Inf.11.
7. Section III requests advice from the Commission on strengthening cooperation with the CBD in response to the various invitations arising from COP 10, and within the context of the joint work plan with the CBD. This paper was prepared in collaboration with the CBD Secretariat.

¹ Memorandum of Cooperation between the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations and the Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CGRFA-11/07/Inf.11).

² CGRFA-12/09/Report, paragraph 98

³ CGRFA-12/09/Report, paragraph 99

⁴ COP Decision X/ 34, paragraph 4

II. STRENGTHENING COOPERATION BETWEEN THE CBD AND FAO AND ITS COMMISSION ON GENETIC RESOURCES FOR FOOD AND AGRICULTURE

8. The adoption of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020, including the Aichi Biodiversity Targets,⁵ and the Nagoya Protocol,⁶ presents opportunities for further cooperation, synergies and mutual support between FAO and the CBD. Specific invitations arising from COP 10 call for strengthening collaboration in a number of mutual areas of interest. The numerous requests reinforce the need for the joint work plan to provide a broad framework for collaboration between the Secretariats to plan work so as not to overburden the CBD and FAO and the Commission, as was stressed by the Commission at its Twelfth Regular Session (2009).

9. Most of the areas for collaboration identified at COP 10 already fall within an existing focal area of the joint work plan. Invitations for collaboration that do not fall directly under a particular focal area, such as collaboration to reduce unsustainable use of bushmeat and investigating ways to reduce the negative impacts of agricultural water use and drainage on ecosystems, can be considered in the course of technical support activities being undertaken by FAO, as opportunities arise. Indeed, by implementing its own programmes of work, FAO continues to contribute to many aspects of the implementation of the CBD and the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity as well as specific invitations for cooperation.

10. The invitation to FAO and the Commission, in areas within its mandate, to refine biodiversity targets for agricultural biodiversity, including at the ecosystem and genetic resources levels, and monitoring progress toward them using indicators,⁷ is timely. The Commission is considering targets and indicators in relation to its own work at the current session, including indicators for the implementation of Global Plans of Action on animal and plant genetic resources, and FAO's work on indicator development, including as a partner in the Biodiversity Indicator Partnership (BIP).⁸

11. The COP10 request that their Executive Secretary collaborate with international organizations, including FAO, to continue to facilitate capacity building in updating and revising national biodiversity strategies and action plans, provides an important opportunity to ensure that genetic resources for agriculture are given adequate consideration in national biodiversity strategies and action plans.⁹ Updating of national biodiversity strategies and action plans will benefit from recently published reports on the state of the world's plant and animal genetic resources and from Global Plans of Action for plant and animal genetic resources.

12. The request by COP10 that their Executive Secretary collaborate with FAO in the preparation of *The State of the World's Forest Genetic Resources*¹⁰ should help to profile the importance of forest genetic resources and assist in attracting financial resources necessary to undertake the work to prepare this important global assessment. In addition, efforts are underway to prepare Country Reports on forest genetic resources, and these efforts could contribute to updating national biodiversity strategies and action plans.

⁵ COP Decision X/2

⁶ COP Decision X/1

⁷ COP Decision X/34, paragraph 3

⁸ CGRFA-13/11/18

⁹ COP Decision X/5, paragraph 6

¹⁰ COP Decision X/36, paragraph 10

III. GUIDANCE SOUGHT

13. The Commission may wish to:
- (i) Welcome the joint work plan as a framework in which the Secretariats of the CBD and of the Commission advance biodiversity initiatives of mutual interest; and request its Secretary to continue to participate in relevant meetings of the CBD;
 - (ii) Reaffirm its agreement to take a lead role in the development and use of biodiversity targets and indicators related to the work of the Commission, taking fully into account the recently adopted 2011-2020 Strategic Plan for Biodiversity, including the Aichi Biodiversity Targets and the Nagoya Protocol;
 - (iii) Welcome the request by the tenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the CBD to their Executive Secretary to collaborate with international organizations, including FAO, to continue to facilitate capacity building in updating and revising national biodiversity strategies and action plans; and
 - (iv) Stress that Members of the Commission take appropriate action to ensure that genetic resources for food and agriculture are given adequate consideration in the updating and revising of their national biodiversity strategies and action plans, and in particular, note the timely preparation of Country Reports on forest genetic resources in this regard.

Annex**Invitations by the tenth Conference of the Parties to the CBD to FAO and its Commission on Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture****Decision X/34. Agricultural biodiversity**

The Conference of the Parties

(...)

2. *Notes with appreciation* the ongoing work of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations and its Commission on Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture on the implementation of the agricultural biodiversity programme of work and the three international initiatives, on soil biodiversity, pollinators and biodiversity for food and nutrition, and *welcomes* the Strategic Plan for the period 2010-2017 for the implementation of the multi-year programme of work approved at the twelfth regular session of the Commission on Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture in 2009,¹¹ and, in this context, *welcomes* the planned periodic publication of the State of the World's Biodiversity for Food and Agriculture (...);¹²
3. *Invites* the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations and its Commission on Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture, for areas within its mandate, to contribute to the implementation of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 by refining targets for agricultural biodiversity, including at the ecosystem and genetic resources levels, and monitoring progress towards them using indicators;¹³
4. *Welcomes, and notes the importance of,* the joint work plan between the secretariats of the Convention on Biological Diversity and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations and its Commission on Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture contained in the annex to the note by the Executive Secretary on the follow-up to requests contained in its decision IX/1 prepared for the fourteenth meeting of the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice,¹⁴ its important contribution to the achievement of Millennium Development Goals 1 and 7, and the opportunities to further enhance the joint work plan in accordance with relevant matters arising from the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020, including consideration of matters in relation to targets and indicators of relevance to the programme of work, and relevant matters arising from the Strategic Plan 2010-2017 for the implementation of the multi-year programme of work of the Commission on Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture;¹⁵
5. *Requests* the Executive Secretary and *invites* the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations and its Commission on Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture to work together in their design of the second phase of their joint work plan covering at least until 2017 focusing on refinements required as a result of the Aichi Biodiversity Targets of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020, but also considering, as necessary, *inter alia*:¹⁶

¹¹ CGFRA-12/09/Report, Appendix G

¹² COP Decision X/ 34, paragraph 2

¹³ COP Decision X/ 34, paragraph 3

¹⁴ UNEP/CBD/SBSTTA/14/11

¹⁵ COP Decision X/ 34, paragraph 4

¹⁶ COP Decision X/ 34, paragraph 5

- (a) Underutilized crops, wild relatives of cultivated plants and other potential food sources, to improve human nutrition, to address the impacts of climate change and other pressures as well as to contribute to food security;
- (b) On-farm, *in situ* and *ex situ* conservation of agricultural biodiversity; in accordance with decision IX/1 of the Conference of the Parties;
- (c) Relevant aspects of access and benefit sharing consistent with relevant provisions of the Convention on Biological Diversity, including as subject to the outcomes of the negotiation on the international regime on access and benefit sharing under the convention, as well as within the context of the Commission on Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture, taking into account existing cooperation between the two secretariats consistent with resolution 18/2009 of the Conference of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations;
- (d) A review of the trends on the extent of patents and other intellectual property rights, such as plant variety protection, applied for and granted over plant, animal and microbial genetic resources, including relevant forest and pasture and rangeland genetic resources, as identified by the Global Assessments of Biodiversity for Food and Agriculture of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, including the impacts of such property rights on local and indigenous communities, and small-scale farmers in developing countries, bearing in mind action item VI.1 of the Strategic Plan 2010-2017 for the implementation of the multi-year programme of work approved at the twelfth regular session of the Commission on Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations. This review should include, where appropriate, the impact on food security when genetic resources are patented or intellectual property rights are acquired for other sectors such as the pharmaceutical, cosmetic and other types of industries;
- (e) Potential actions to promote sustainable biodiversity-related agricultural practices that contribute to biodiversity as well as ecosystem based carbon sequestration of soils and to conserve and restore organic carbon in soil and biomass;
- (f) Ways and means to promote the positive and minimize or avoid the negative impacts of biofuel production and use on biodiversity and impacts on biodiversity that affect related socioeconomic conditions, bearing in mind decisions IX/2 and X/37, and any other relevant decisions of the Conference of the Parties;
- (g) Ways and means to strengthen cooperation to:
- (i) Obtain and consider the views of farmers' and producers' organizations and the views of indigenous and local communities; and
 - (ii) Facilitate their effective participation in the deliberations of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity and of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations and its Commission on Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture and their contributions to the implementation of the work of these bodies, as appropriate;
- (h) A strengthened process to identify, indicate and disseminate information to relevant focal points of the Convention on Biological Diversity and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations and its Commission on Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture regarding matters of common interest;

(i) Strengthening approaches which promote the sustainability of agricultural systems and landscapes such as, but not limited to, the Globally Important Agricultural Heritage Systems (GIAHS) of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, consistent with the Convention on Biological Diversity and other relevant international obligations;

(j) Promoting opportunities for sustainable increases in agricultural productivity, including through maintaining and/or restoring the functioning of agro-ecosystems, the biodiversity within them and the services they deliver, building on, *inter alia*, available synergies between sustainable agriculture and biodiversity including the conservation and sustainable use of genetic resources;

(k) Promoting public awareness of the importance of agricultural biodiversity and its relationship to advancing food security, in the context of production oriented agro-ecosystems, at the global, regional, national and local levels;

(l) The relevant findings and recommendations of the International Assessment of Agricultural Knowledge, Science and Technology for Development and their implementation, as appropriate; and¹⁷

(m) Further exploring possibilities for actions, where necessary, to rehabilitate agricultural ecosystems and landscapes and restore their socio-economic functions on land where agriculture has declined, or ceased, and where the land was degraded as a result, with the full and effective participation of indigenous and local communities, where appropriate;

(...)

11. *Invites* the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations to provide an expanded progress report on the implementation of the International Initiative on Soil Biodiversity (in addition to information already submitted in the progress report of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations on selected activities related to agricultural biodiversity circulated at the fourteenth meeting of the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice¹⁸) to the Executive Secretary for dissemination through the clearing-house mechanism;¹⁹

(...)

18. *Requests* the Executive Secretary and *invites* the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations and Bioversity International, together with other relevant partners, including indigenous and local communities, subject to available resources, to provide further information on the nature of sustainable use of agricultural biodiversity and sustainable agriculture, including building upon information contained in the information note submitted by Bioversity International to the fourteenth meeting of the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice;²⁰

(...)

20. *Recognizes also* the importance of agro-ecosystems, in particular rice-paddy and oasis systems, for the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity, and *invites* the Food and

¹⁷ Agriculture at a Crossroads. International Assessment of Agricultural Knowledge, Science and Technology for Development

¹⁸ UNEP/CBD/SBSTTA/14/INF/30

¹⁹ COP Decision X/ 34, paragraph 11

²⁰ COP Decision X/ 34, paragraph 18

Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, subject to resources, and in consultation with the Executive Secretary and relevant partners, including indigenous and local communities, to undertake further studies on the valuation of the biodiversity and ecosystem services provided by agricultural ecosystems, in order to further support policy-relevant guidance to Parties for consideration by the Conference of the Parties at its eleventh meeting, consistent and in harmony with the Convention on Biological Diversity and other relevant international obligations.²¹

Decision X/36. Forest biodiversity

The Conference of the Parties

(...)

8. *Recognizes* the importance of forest genetic diversity for the conservation and sustainable use of forest biodiversity, including in the context of addressing climate change and maintaining the resilience of forest ecosystems; and in this context *welcomes* the preparation by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations of the country-driven report *The State of the World's Forest Genetic Resources*;
9. *Invites* Parties, other Governments, and relevant organizations to support the preparation of the country-driven first *The State of the World's Forest Genetic Resources* report, including with the aim of ensuring the quality of national reports; this may include preparation of country reports and reports from international organizations, noting that capacity-building and technical and financial assistance should be provided to developing country Parties, in particular the least developed countries and small island developing States, as well as countries with economies in transition, where and when appropriate;
10. *Requests* the Executive Secretary to collaborate with the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations in the preparation of *The State of the World's Forest Genetic Resources*, including by participating in relevant sessions of the Commission on Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture and its Intergovernmental Technical Working Group on Forest Genetic Resources;²²

(...)

Decision X/28. Inland waters biodiversity

The Conference of the Parties

(...)

18. *Requests* the Executive Secretary, in partnership with relevant organizations, including the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations and the International Water Management Institute, to continue to investigate ways to reduce the negative impacts of agricultural water use and drainage on ecosystems and to enhance their ability to provide water for food production for present and future generations;²³

(...)

30. *Notes* the importance of robust data on inland water species in determining the status and trends of these ecosystems, including as key underlying data for other assessments and initiatives, including, inter alia, the third edition of the Global Biodiversity Outlook and the 2010 Biodiversity Indicators Partnership, and new initiatives, such as the State of the World's Aquatic Genetic Resources, being undertaken by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, and *expresses its appreciation* to these organizations,

²¹ COP Decision X/ 34, paragraph 20

²² COP Decision X/ 36, paragraphs 8,9,10

initiatives and individuals responsible for generating and maintaining the underlying datasets;²⁴

(...)

Decision X/5. Implementation of the Convention and the Strategic Plan

The Conference of the Parties

(...)

6. *Requests* the Executive Secretary, subject to the availability of resources, in collaboration with Parties, other Governments and relevant international organizations such as the United Nations Development Programme, the United Nations Environment Programme, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations and other partners, to continue facilitating the provision of support to countries for capacity-building activities, including through regional and/or subregional workshops on updating and revising national biodiversity strategies and action plans, the mainstreaming of biodiversity and the enhancement of the clearing-house mechanism;²⁵

(...)

Decision X/32. Sustainable use of biodiversity

The Conference of the Parties

(...)

4. *Requests* the Executive Secretary to:
 - (a) In order to support current and future livelihood needs and to reduce unsustainable use of bushmeat, develop, through the Liaison Group on Bushmeat and in cooperation with the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, the United Nations Development Programme, the Center for International Forestry Research and other relevant organizations and based on available case-studies, options for small-scale food and income alternatives in tropical and sub-tropical countries based on the sustainable use of biodiversity, and submit a report for the consideration by the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice at a meeting prior to the eleventh meeting of the Conference of the Parties, and to submit to that meeting a revised version of the recommendations of the Liaison Group on Bushmeat referred to in paragraph 1 above;
 - (b) Compile information on how to improve sustainable use of biodiversity in a landscape perspective, including on sectoral policies, international guidelines, and best practices for sustainable agriculture and forestry, including a review of relevant criteria and indicators, and report on the results to the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice at a meeting prior to the eleventh meeting of the Conference of the Parties. This work should be carried out in collaboration with relevant organizations, including but not limited to: the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations and its Committees on Forestry and on Agriculture, the Commission on Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture, the secretariat of the International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture, the United Nations Forum on Forests, the Wildlife Trade Monitoring Network (TRAFFIC), the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN), and the members of the Collaborative Partnership on Forests;²⁶ (...)

²³ COP Decision X/ 28, paragraph 18

²⁴ COP Decision X/28, paragraph 30

²⁵ COP Decision X/5, paragraph 6

²⁶ COP Decision X/32, paragraph 4