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COOPERATION WITH RELEVANT INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

Submissions from Parties

Note by the secretariat

1. At its fifteenth session, the Subsidiary Body for Scientific and Technological Advice (SBSTA) reaffirmed the need for enhanced cooperation between the UNFCCC, the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) and the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD), with the aim of ensuring the environmental integrity of the conventions and promoting synergies under the common objective of sustainable development, in order to avoid duplication of effort and use available resources more efficiently. The SBSTA noted that enhancing cooperation between the UNFCCC, the CBD, the UNCCD and other global environmental conventions involves action at the national level, the level of convention bodies and potentially at other levels. The SBSTA agreed to consider this matter further at its sixteenth session. It invited Parties to submit further views including suggestions for specific action towards achieving such cooperation with other relevant intergovernmental bodies, in particular the UNFCCC, the CBD and the UNCCD, by 15 March 2002, to be compiled into a miscellaneous document (FCCC/SBSTA/2001/8, para. 41).

2. The secretariat has received six such submissions, including one from Samoa on behalf of the Alliance of Small Island States and one from Spain on behalf of the European Community and its member States.* In accordance with the procedure for miscellaneous documents, these submissions are reproduced in the language in which they were received and without formal editing.

* These submissions have been electronically imported in order to make them available on electronic systems, including the World Wide Web. The secretariat has made every effort to ensure the correct reproduction of the texts as submitted.

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PAPER NO 1: CANADA

**COOPERATION WITH RELEVANT INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS
(FCCC/SBSTA/2001/L.14)**

Submission of the Government of Canada
March 2002

Canada welcomes the opportunity to comment on UNFCCC cooperation with other relevant international organizations, particularly the Convention of Biological Diversity (CBD) and the Convention to Combat Desertification (CCD), as requested by SBSTA15 in Marrakesh.

The IPCC TAR provides further scientific evidence of the strong inter-relationship between climate change, biodiversity and desertification, and the importance of development paths to achieving environment objectives. We look forward to the IPCC Technical Paper on Climate Change and Biodiversity (and Desertification) to be completed in April of this year, the proposed IPCC paper on Climate Change and Sustainable Development, and work in the OECD and other for a, to provide further clarification of these inter-linkages.

Parties of the three conventions can benefit from cooperation in addressing fundamental implementation issues such as capacity building in order to capture synergies across the three conventions as well as enhance a country's ability to integrate multilateral environmental agreements with sustainable development and other national planning issues. The UNFCCC, while giving priority to its mandate and objectives, should co-operate with other conventions to make best use of information and resources. Co-ordination at the national level is particularly important to assist developing countries to deal with the many different but inter-related global environment instruments.

This submission will address the following:

1. Cooperation between the three conventions
2. Integration of environmental issues into national sustainable development plans
3. Role of the Joint Liaison Group in enhancing MEA cooperation

1. Cooperation between the three conventions

While each convention has a specialized focus and its own unique strengths and implementation instruments, there are a number of fundamental issues/needs which are cross-cutting such as scientific knowledge, capacity building, adaptation, technology transfer, information sharing and reporting. A coherent and co-ordinated approach to these issues can contribute to meeting common objectives of the three conventions most effectively.

There are significant benefits to enhancing coordination of national Action Plans and other reporting requirements for the different conventions, particularly in the area of adaptation. For example, decision 28/CP.7 of the Marrakech accords recommends that the preparation of National Adaptation Programmes of Action (NAPAs) should build upon existing plans and programmes such as the CCD-National Action Plan (NAP) and the CBD-National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (NBSAP). As many countries already have NAPs and NBSAPs the information and work that has gone into these processes can be transferred to NAPAs to avoid unnecessary duplication of effort as well as to draw out important lessons learned in each process.

Lack of resources and capacity makes data collection and reporting under the three conventions difficult for many Parties. Co-ordination and streamlining of common aspects of reporting under the conventions

may serve to alleviate resource pressures, but the opportunities for harmonizing any areas of reporting must not interfere with the ability to monitor progress on implementation of each convention.

Cooperation between the three conventions offers the opportunity to ensure that implementation measures undertaken under each convention do not conflict. Each convention should ensure that actions taken towards its implementation are environmentally sound (normal-adaptation) and will contribute to sustainable development. In the UNFCCC context, for example, it is our responsibility to ensure that adaptation to the adverse effects of climate change and efforts to mitigate GHG emissions are sustainable, long-term and take into account preservation of biodiversity and prevention of desertification.

2. Integration of environmental issues into national sustainable development plans

The IPCC TAR, the OECD DAC work on Guidance on Mainstreaming Global Environment Conventions in Development Co-operation, as well as several other studies, point out the need for not only co-ordination among the Actions Plans addressing the three conventions, but also their incorporation into national planning.

All three Rio conventions have environmental and sustainable developmental goals. Thus a key challenge is to integrate environmental agreements into the overall framework of national sustainable development plans that involve multiple sectors and stakeholders. MEA focal points should be encouraged to engage development, economic and planning ministry officials to identify how MEA commitments fit into national development frameworks. Cooperation between conventions to integrate environmental objectives into sustainable development and other national strategies can lead to a better use of resources and more efficient efforts to realize the sustainable development aspects of the conventions.

3. Role of the Joint Liaison Group in enhancing MEA cooperation

The Joint Liaison Group has a role to play to recommend actions on how to make use of existing institutions and mechanisms to reduce duplication of efforts and resources, and enhance cooperation and coordination between conventions towards maximum environmental and cost effectiveness. This will involve exploring the opportunities and challenges for cooperation on implementation at the convention as well as regional, national and sector level. The work of the Joint Liaison Group should especially focus on the needs of developing countries.

SBSTA 14 requested the Joint Liaison Group to collect and share information on the work programmes and operations of each convention, including: (i) The roles and responsibilities of the secretariats, and any relevant scientific and technical bodies or expert groups; (ii) The types of activities under each convention; (iii) Potential areas of cooperation, possible joint activities, and any potential conflicts associated with different mandates.

In addition, some key priorities for the Joint Liaison Group might include:

Identifying opportunities for synergies at the national level:

- identification of potential areas of cooperation to establish or strengthen national focal points or secretariats for the conventions, including country-level dissemination of information and sharing of good practices and lessons learned.

-explore means of fostering increased linkage between environment focal points, environmental ministries and agencies and development sectors; and advise Parties on how to engage the relevant stakeholders from the development sectors.

- share experience with implementation of national Action Plans under the three different conventions in order to point out opportunities and challenges for enhancing synergies between implementation of the three conventions at the national level, including improving data collection and processing.

-discuss how to cooperate to address the crosscutting capacity building needs of individual countries, building on the work in this direction of the GEF Capacity Development Initiative.

Identifying opportunities for synergies at the convention level:

- discuss how to raise awareness of environmental issues in other international fora, such as development community/agencies, in order to better achieve sustainable development objectives.

- study the extent to which CDM/JI projects can meet common objectives of the three conventions.

- discuss reporting (national communication) requirements under the three conventions and areas developing countries most need support.

- discuss potential synergies regarding development and assessment of methods and tools for evaluating impacts and adaptation, and the dissemination of this information.

-discuss potential cooperation on technology and adaptation information systems.

Conclusions

Achieving the ultimate objective of the UNFCCC suggests that we strive towards achieving synergies between other conventions, organizations and processes to reduce costs and to maximize effectiveness of adaptations and abatement measures. Cooperation between the three conventions offers the opportunity **to share information and experiences, to minimize duplication of resources and ensure that actions do not conflict**. In addition, cooperation between the three conventions offers the opportunity to **promote synergies that will also help meet national sustainable development priorities**.

The key priority of the UNFCCC and its joint liaison group should be how to enhance cooperation between the three conventions **at the convention and country-level** and how to integrate synergies on horizontal issues into the existing work program of the UNFCCC and not to create new processes or mechanisms.

Synergies between the conventions and the benefits of cooperation should be encouraged in UNFCCC program areas that deal with cross-cutting issues, such as workshops on adaptation, capacity building, technology transfer, reporting, public education, policies and measures. The **secretariat should be encouraged to invite experts** from other environment conventions and agencies, the scientific community, academic institutions, etc. to workshops as appropriate.

The **sharing of experts** from the Consultative Group of Experts on National Communication's (NC) with the LDC Expert Group (decision 29/CP.7) will serve to avoid duplication or overlap between

NAPAs and NCs and also provide the opportunity to identify synergies and explore coherency and streamlining with other convention action plans.

Canada prefers that the Joint Liaison Group remain an **informal body** so as to maximize flexibility, minimize administrative demands and avoid creating new institutional structures. Canada would support an informal meeting of the joint liaison group to undertake initial scoping work to identify areas of cooperation for the conventions, and provide guidance on how to enhance cooperation at the national level. The meeting could provide input to the workshop on synergies and joint actions with other multilateral environmental conventions approved under Decision 5/CP.7 on the implementation of Article 4.8 and 4.9 of the Convention.

With the many workshops already on the UNFCCC agenda, to avoid any duplication of efforts, we suggest that decision to hold a separate workshop under SBSTA 15 Agenda Item 7 (Cooperation with Relevant International Organizations) be made pending the outcome of the 4.8/4.9 workshop on joint actions with other multilateral environmental conventions, or alternatively, that the two workshops be combined.

PAPER NO 2: CHINA

**Cooperation between United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change,
Convention on Biological Diversity and Convention to Combat Desertification**

Introduction and general position

1. *At its 15th session of the SBSTA, Parties were invited to submit, by 15 March 2002, views including suggestions for specific actions towards achieving the cooperation with other relevant intergovernmental organizations, in particular, the cooperation between United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) and United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD).*
2. *China supports to tackle this issue in all possible forums with a view to facilitating the ongoing discussions on how to improve cooperation and coordination within the context of the three conventions, as required by the Vienna Convention on the Law of Treaties.*
3. *China also supports generally the approach and efforts to promote the cooperation between UNFCCC, CBD and UNCCD, and shares the view in principle that the rationale for enhancing cooperation and collaboration among them is apparent: efficient use of collective resources - information and expertise; reduction of duplication and overlaps; emphasis on programme and policy coherence; averting fragmented sectoral initiatives.*
4. *China supports further efforts and work of Secretariats of UNFCCC, CBD and UNCCD through their joint liaison group for consultation and promotion of such cooperation. At the same time, China has concerns over the transparency and participation by the Parties in the process, and the strengthening of capacity building in developing countries in respective fields.*

Cooperation for integrity and synergy

5. *China believes that following key aspects should be observed in dealing with integrity and synergy of the Conventions concerned:*
 - 1) *Any initiative or approach in this regard should be beneficial to reaching the purposes and carrying out the tasks established in Agenda 21, particularly, to promoting sustainable development*
 - 2) *Special need of and full participation by developing countries;*
 - 3) *No dilution or modification of the obligations, interests or rights of the Parties under conventions.*
 - 4) *No change of the functions and terms of reference of Secretariats and other bodies under the Conventions.*
 - 5) *No limitation on or interference in the power of or its execution by Conference(s) of Parties (COPs) to Conventions;*
 - 6) *Any matter in this connection, whether procedural or substantial, should be decided by their COPs separately, if it involves in an issue relating to two or more conventions.*

Actions at national level

6. *One of the most important steps in the ongoing process of integrity and synergy for the conventions concerned is promoting at national level a greater policy programme coherence through enhanced coordination among various governmental organizations and their cooperation with multilateral environmental bodies.*

7. *At the national level, the major goals of the process should focus on the concerns of the Parties related to the reduction of the burden of Governments in reporting under different conventions; assisting Governments in establishing priorities and allocating resources in an era of shrinking budgets; and supporting Governments, especially, those of developing countries, in coordinating preparations for implementation and its monitoring of decisions taken under various conventions and their operations. The process should hence take into account the possibility and different situation of countries, in particular, their legislation and administrative structures.*

8. *Coordination and cooperation at the national level in developing country Parties need to be encouraged and assisted financially and technologically, through international processes. The two approaches in this field - national and international - need to be harmonized.*

Liaison group

9. *Activities in this regard should be reported to and decided by top layers, COPs to conventions accordingly.*

10. *Through COPs and other channels available, Parties should be consulted by the liaison group, if necessary or requested, in the process.*

Possibility of a joint workshop before 18th session of the SBSTA

11. *Since the entry into force of the Kyoto Protocol and the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety is crucial to implementation of UNFCCC and CBD, and most necessary coordination at international level for FCCC and CBD should be conducted at the process or layer of programme which generate practically from the implementation of the protocols, it would be more feasible and efficient to convene the proposed workshop when both protocols are in force.*

PAPER NO 3: JAPAN

Submission by the Government of Japan

Views on Cooperation with relevant intergovernmental organizations

The relationship between UNFCCC and other convention should not restrict the activities under the UNFCCC as a result of the cooperation with relevant intergovernmental organizations. The UNFCCC's objective should be given the priority when implementing sink activities.

Japan, however, also believes it important for Parties to direct their views simultaneously to biodiversity and desertification in order to address the environmental issues including climate change because biodiversity and desertification are especially affected by climate, ecosystem and artificiality, which are closely linked with activities for removing greenhouse gases by sinks such as revegetation and forest management. Sink activities under the appropriate management contribute to enhancing the multifunctionality of forest, which includes not only mitigation of global warming but also conservation of environment, prevention of desertification, disaster prevention, headwater conservation, atmospheric purification and other benefits (education and recreation).

In this point of view, knowledge and experience obtained from three conventions (UNFCCC, CBD and UNCCD), Montreal process and organizations such as FAO and ITTO will be useful for achieving the mandate of each convention systematically. With regard to seeking the possibility of cooperation among the conventions, which is mentioned in paragraph 41 (n) of the SBSTA16 report (FCCC/SBSTA/2001/8), each convention should share the information of them before establishing the joint activities in order not to result in the restriction of the activities under the UNFCCC. It is, therefore, premature to establish the joint activities at this moment and that exchanging the information, including the knowledge and experience of each organization, will be the practical cooperation areas among the conventions supported by the joint liaison group. Japan proposes that the SBSTA should concentrate on the exchanging and sharing the information before moving on to establish joint activities.

PAPER NO 4: SAMOA
(ON BEHALF OF THE ALLIANCE OF SMALL ISLAND STATES)

COOPERATION WITH RELEVANT INTERNATIONAL ORGANISATIONS

Samoa, on behalf of the Alliance of Small Island States (AOSIS) welcomes this opportunity to submit its views and suggestions for specific actions towards strengthening cooperation between the UNFCCC and other relevant intergovernmental bodies, in particular the CBD and the CCD.

AOSIS would like to recall its earlier submission on this issue, contained in FCCC/SBSTA/2001/MISC.8/Add.2. In that submission AOSIS listed a number of concrete proposals for specific areas in which further cooperation is needed. These include, in no particular order of priority:

- a) The implementation of Joint Implementation and the Clean Development Mechanism;
- b) The implementation of Article 3.3 and 3.4 activities;
- c) The links between adaptation to the adverse effects of climate change and the response measures taken under the CCD and the CBD;
- d) The development and transfer of technologies;
- e) Capacity building in non-Annex I Parties; and
- f) The co-ordination of Enabling Activities.

In the discussion on cooperation with other international organizations, AOSIS would like to draw attention to issues of particular concern to Small Island Developing States (SIDS). These include the impact of climate change on coral reefs, wetlands, especially sea grass and mangrove ecosystems, and the need to adapt to these impacts. The vulnerability of SIDS, resulting from their high dependence on these ecosystems, requires an urgent response, which would benefit from a coordination of the efforts undertaken under the various conventions. There is also a concern in AOSIS regarding the administrative burden of seeking to access funds under the various enabling activities of the conventions.

AOSIS is very interested in the various initiatives to address the cooperation and coordination between international organizations that are ongoing. It welcomes the formation of the joint liaison group of the secretariats of the UNFCCC, CCD and CBD. AOSIS requests this group to report back to the subsidiary bodies at their 16th sessions on potential areas of cooperation and any potential conflicts between these conventions that it has identified. AOSIS is also closely following the work of the Ad Hoc Technical Experts Group on Biological Diversity and Climate Change, established under the CBD, the first meeting of which took place in Helsinki from 21-25 January 2002. Finally, AOSIS sees a link between these initiatives and the Open-ended Intergovernmental Group of Ministers on International Environmental Governance, and looks forward to discussing the outcome of these initiatives at the WSSD. AOSIS would, however, like to stress that each of these processes should be conducted in a transparent manner and that their results should be mutually reinforcing.

The range of initiatives addressing interlinkages between different conventions is a clear sign of the importance of this issue. AOSIS, however, strongly feels that the discussion of links between different conventions should not be confined to a series of isolated processes. It is essential that the objectives of the CBD for example are fully taken into account in the decisions under a number of items on the UNFCCC agenda, and vice versa. This is particularly important in the case of the current discussions on the development of definitions and modalities for including afforestation and reforestation project activities under the clean development mechanism in the first commitment period. AOSIS wishes to reemphasize its previous submission on the organization of a workshop, terms of reference and an agenda for work relating to afforestation and reforestation activities under the CDM, contained in FCCC/SBSTA/2002/MISC.1.

Furthermore, AOSIS stresses the important role of Parties in improving coordination and cooperation between different conventions at the national level. We do, however, wish to reaffirm the importance of adequate support, through capacity building initiatives at the national and regional level and the provision of sufficient resources through bilateral and multilateral initiatives in order to assist SIDS in this work, for national and regional co-ordination as well as for public education and awareness.

Finally, AOSIS supports the organization of a joint FCCC/CDB/CCD workshop, the possibility of which is being examined by the joint liaison group. This workshop should be held before the 18th session of the subsidiary bodies, and the report of the workshop should be made available at that session. The purpose of this workshop and the output that we seek should be to elaborate a joint work plan for further coordination and cooperation between these three instruments, based on the issues identified above. It will be important to ensure that the necessary expertise is made available at the workshop, and that organizations involved in cross-cutting issues of relevance to all three conventions are represented at the workshop, including the financial mechanism. This is matter of particular importance for SIDS, and AOSIS invites the Secretariat to give consideration to inviting regional and inter-regional experts from SIDS, their organizations and the international community. In this regard it will be important to ensure adequate support and representation of SIDS, their representatives and experts dealing with all three conventions, ranging from national focal points, national co-ordinators of regional projects (for example CPACC, PICCAP) and NGOs.

PAPER NO 5: SPAIN
(ON BEHALF OF THE EUROPEAN UNION)

SUBMISSION BY SPAIN ON BEHALF OF THE EUROPEAN UNION AND ITS MEMBER STATES ON FURTHER VIEWS INCLUDING SUGGESTIONS FOR SPECIFIC ACTIONS TOWARDS ACHIEVING CO-OPERATION WITH OTHER RELEVANT INTERGOVERNMENTAL BODIES, IN PARTICULAR THE UNFCCC, THE CBD AND THE CCD.

BRUSSELS, 15 MARCH 2002

**UNFCCC Subsidiary Body for Scientific and Technological Advice
16th Session, Co-operation between UNFCCC – CBD – CCD**

This submission aims to provide further ideas that would contribute to ensure the environmental integrity of the UNFCCC and its Kyoto Protocol. Earlier EU Submissions of 28 February (FCCC/SBSTA/20001/MISC.3), 18 July (FCCC/SBSTA/2001/MISC.3.Add.1) and 15 October 2001 (FCCC/SBSTA/2001/MISC.8.Add.1) outlined the EU general views on the co-operation between UNFCCC, CBD and CCD. We would especially like to recall that our suggestions for the work to be undertaken by the Joint Liaison Group between the Conventions (as contained in document FCCC/SBSTA/2001/MISC.8.Add.1) remain pertinent and need further attention.

The EU recalls the agreement in document FCCC/SBSTA/2001/L.14 and SBSTA Report (FCCC/SBSTA/2001/8) emphasising the importance of the co-operation between Climate Change, Biodiversity and Desertification Conventions.

In the light of the Marrakesh Accords and recent developments within the area of co-operations between these conventions, the EU:

- Notes the good start made by the Ad Hoc Technical Expert Group on Biological Diversity and Climate Change, including the meeting held in Helsinki (21-25 January 2002), in developing a good work programme to carry forward the work on linkages between climate change and biodiversity as requested by the CBD, and recognises that this expert group will provide advice on how to integrate Biodiversity consideration into the implementation of the UNFCCC and its Kyoto Protocol.
- Welcomes the progress made by the IPCC on the Technical Paper on Climate Change and Biodiversity, and asks SBSTA to take into consideration its results, as well as the work of the Ad Hoc Technical Expert Group on Biological Diversity and Climate Change, when developing definitions and modalities for including afforestation and reforestation projects under article 12 of the Kyoto Protocol (FCCC/2001/13/add.2, Decision 17/CP.7, para 10 b).
- Believes that the work of the IPCC and Ad Hoc Technical Expert Group on Biological Diversity and Climate Change should be taken into account by Parties when adopting, as appropriate, and reporting the national legislative arrangements and administrative procedures for implementation of activities under Articles 3.3 and 3.4 of the Kyoto Protocol, to ensure their contribution to the objectives of the CBD.

PAPER NO 6: UZBEKISTAN

**The views of Republic of Uzbekistan
to the document FCCC/SBSTA/2001/L14, para11
“Cooperation with relevant international organizations”**

In Uzbekistan and in all the Central Asian region a problems of dangerous changes in climate system closely adjoin to problems of preservation of a biodiversity and a combat to desertification.

In this connection, Uzbekistan counts that the strengthening of cooperation with other relevant intergovernmental bodies, in particular with UNFCCC, CBD and UNCCD is the important necessity. It will allow to avoid duplication of actions and efforts undertaken within the framework of these conventions for achievement of a general purpose: the maintenance a sustainable development.

As concrete actions on adjustment of such cooperation the Uzbekistan proposes to implement the experimental studies on interrelations between a climate change, a biodiversity and a desertification both on national and on regional level.

Such studies will be:

- to allow to improve coordination and implementation of these three conventions at a national level,
- to promote more wide exchange of the information about actions spent within the framework of each convention,
- to allow to strengthen processes of capacity building and transfer of technologies in the interconnected aspects of climate change, biodiversity and desertification,
- to promote more directed realization of the National Action Programmes and Adaptation Strategies at a local level.

This studies in Uzbekistan will be probable with scientific advisory assistance of IPCC and also technical and financial support of these ecological conventions.
