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COOPERATION WITH RELEVANT INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

Submission from a Party

Note by the secretariat

Addendum

In addition to the submissions included in document FCCC/SBSTA/2002/MISC.9, a submission from Norway has also been received.* In accordance with the procedure for miscellaneous documents, this submission is attached and is reproduced in the language in which it was received and without formal editing.

* This submission has been electronically imported in order to make it available on electronic systems, including the World Wide Web. The secretariat has made every effort to ensure the correct reproduction of the text as submitted.

FCCC/SBSTA/2002/MISC.9/Add.1

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SUBMISSION FROM NORWAY

Views on cooperation between the Framework Convention on Climate Change (FCCC), the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) and the Convention to Combat Desertification (CCD)

Norway welcomes the invitation to express further views on cooperation between global environmental conventions, particularly the Framework Convention on Climate Change (FCCC), the Convention for Biological Diversity (CBD) and the Convention to Combat Desertification (CCD). The invitation in FCCC/2001/SBSTA/8 asks for suggestions for specific action and refers to the ongoing work of the joint liaison group between the three conventions. In our view, the following environmental issues addressed by these conventions are particularly relevant:

- climate change has had, and will continue to have, impacts on biodiversity and desertification processes
- the protection and enhancement of sinks and reservoirs of greenhouse gases can simultaneously contribute to protecting biodiversity and/or reduce desertification
- impacts of climate change related mitigation activities on biodiversity and desertification can be positive or negative, depending on the circumstances
- adaptation activities for climate change can have both beneficial and adverse effects on biodiversity
- desertification and deforestation will reduce the sinks and reservoirs of greenhouse gases
- loss of biodiversity may increase the vulnerability to climate change

Massive loss of biodiversity, global climate change and desertification are in our view probably the most serious global environmental challenges. As there are multiple links between these issues, efficient cooperation between the three conventions in our view is necessary in order to achieve optimal progress on all three issues.

We believe that a coordinated approach to these issues will often necessitate cross-cutting considerations. Furthermore, that enhanced cooperation between the conventions is a way forward in finding operational solutions, and that further action should address the implementation of the conventions and their respective protocols.

The joint liaison group formed between the three conventions has an important task in providing relevant information on potential areas of cooperation and possible joint activities in the future work of the conventions, and also in clarifying potential conflicts between the conventions. Norway appreciates the efforts that go into this work.

There is also a need for cooperation between the conventions related to technical and scientific issues, and between IPCC, the CBD and CCD. In this respect, the ongoing work on IPCC's Technical Paper on Climate Change and Biodiversity, which was requested by the CBD, is a good example.

As stated above, it is possible to undertake mitigation and adaptation activities for climate change that also have beneficial effects on biodiversity and desertification. On the other hand, it is also possible that such activities have negative effects. Efforts should be made to identify what the critical factors are in achieving these joint benefits, and what actions could be taken in order to ensure that such positive synergies are realised and negative effects avoided.

With respect to the implementation of the UNFCCC and the Kyoto Protocol, we believe that areas of particular relevance are LULUCF activities in Annex I countries and CDM projects. LULUCF activities may include land use changes and modifications of forest ecosystems that affect patterns of biodiversity at both large and small scales, and also activities that may significantly reduce desertification. CDM projects of interest include reforestation and afforestation projects, but also energy projects with other impacts, such as large scale hydroelectricity projects. Some CDM projects are likely to be carried out in tropical areas with globally very high levels of biodiversity or areas prone to desertification. In considerations on forestry issues, work conducted by the international arrangement on forests; the United Nations Forum on Forests (UNFF) and the Collaborative Partnership on Forests (CPF), should be taken into account to ensure synergies and avoid duplication of work. The participation by the secretariats of FCCC, CBD and CCD in the CPF is important in this cooperation.

Generally, mitigation and adaptation activities are implemented at a local level, but subject to regional concerns, and national and international legislation. Our suggestions for further action are directed towards the national and international levels.

National level

At the national level, a prerequisite for being able to assess effects on biodiversity from climate change mitigation and adaptation activities is sufficient knowledge of the flora and fauna likely to be affected. Identification of areas of particular importance for biodiversity conservation will be helpful in order to design projects and activities in ways that can take biodiversity into account. This can be further developed into a decision making tool in the form of a biodiversity map, with possible classification of suitability for different types of climate change related projects.

Similarly, knowledge of the localization of areas vulnerable to desertification can be very useful in relation to the development of suitable climate change related projects such as reforestation or afforestation. The generation of such maps may require capacity building at the national level and an oversight of institutional needs. An assessment of suitability of areas as mentioned above can be instrumental in achieving mutual benefits between the conventions, where the role of conventions is to contribute to the exchange of knowledge and capacity building.

We suggest that the joint liaison group between the FCCC, the CBD and the CCD collects and compiles information on methods of mapping and classifying information on patterns of biological diversity. Furthermore, we suggest that this topic and the material collected by the joint liaison group is presented and discussed at a relevant workshop under the FCCC, for instance related to capacity building.

International level

At the international level, it is important to develop guidelines for and exchange information on climate related activities that may affect biodiversity or desertification processes. For instance with respect to reforestation, there may be mutual benefits for climate mitigation and biodiversity through restoration of former important and degenerated natural forest ecosystems as an alternative to for instance monoculture plantation. In general, we believe that implementation of reforestation and afforestation activities under the CDM is an area of concern where the development of international guidelines will be of importance.

Advice and possible guidelines for the initial planning and longer term monitoring of activities are areas where the conventions can work constructively. With respect to project planning, the development of common guidelines for minimizing negative project impacts on important elements of biological

diversity (for instance key species, rare species, species with important ecosystem functions) should be considered. Early discussion and consideration of long-term aims and consequences for biodiversity from potential projects may prevent unintended negative effects.

In particular, the present and past biodiversity of potential reforestation and afforestation areas as compared to the expected results of suggested activities should be included in such considerations.

Also, an assessment of dispersal abilities and documented dispersal of species of interest in reforestation or afforestation projects should be made. A number of species are used in plantations world-wide. These species might be non-native to many countries where reforestation and afforestation may be relevant climate mitigation projects, and thus there is a particular need to address the implications of species choice for such projects.

Assessment of longer term impacts of climate change and climate change mitigation or adaptation activities necessitates the use of common monitoring systems or indicators. This should be developed at the international level to allow comparability and evaluation across projects and with a view to avoid duplication of monitoring, assessments and reporting.

In our view the following topics are relevant for further consideration under SBSTA:

- development of guidelines for minimizing negative project impacts on biodiversity
- assessment of expected versus present and past biodiversity of potential reforestation and afforestation areas, including the potential for restoring former important and degenerated natural forest ecosystems through reforestation
- assessment of dispersal of non-native species in reforestation and afforestation projects
- the possible use of indicators for long-term monitoring
