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**OPTIONS FOR ENHANCED COOPERATION AMONG THE
BIODIVERSITY-RELATED CONVENTIONS***(Prepared by the Secretariat)*

The Executive Secretary is circulating herewith the annexed note on options for enhanced cooperation among the biodiversity-related conventions, which was prepared jointly by the secretariats of the Convention on Biological Diversity, the Convention on Conservation of Migratory Species, the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora, the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands and the World Heritage Convention.

OPTIONS FOR ENHANCED COOPERATION AMONG THE BIODIVERSITY-RELATED CONVENTIONS

Note by the secretariats of the Convention on Biological Diversity, the Convention on Conservation of Migratory Species, the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora, the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands and the World Heritage Convention

Introduction

1. Five international conventions—the Convention on Biological Diversity, the Convention on Conservation of Migratory Species, the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora, the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands and the World Heritage Convention—have biodiversity or some of its particular components as their primary concern. Each of the Biodiversity-related convention works to implement actions at the national, regional and international level in order to reach shared goals of conservation and sustainable use.
2. While each convention stands on its own—with its own specific objectives and commitments—inter-linkages between the issues each addresses, and potential complementarities in their monitoring and implementation processes, provide a rationale for cooperation. With the target of achieving by 2010 a significant reduction of the current rate of biodiversity loss, set by the Strategic Plan of the Convention on Biological Diversity, and later endorsed by the World Summit on Sustainable Development, the need to promote synergy among these conventions while reducing duplication of effort has become increasingly relevant.
3. This note has been prepared jointly by the Secretariats of the five biodiversity-related conventions and is being made available to appropriate intergovernmental bodies of each convention. It seeks to provide an overview of the current status of cooperation among the five conventions, and the options and scope for future enhanced cooperation, in order to promote further discussion on these issues. Section I of this document provides a brief summary of the biodiversity-related conventions, highlighting the areas of concern and instruments of each. Each convention's mandate for cooperation with the other biodiversity-related conventions, and examples of existing cooperative activities among these, are reviewed in sections II and III respectively. Section IV considers options for further enhancing cooperation, based on the recent third meeting of the Biodiversity Liaison Group, earlier meetings through other processes, and analysis of the contents of this note.

I. Overview of the biodiversity-related conventions

4. All five biodiversity-related conventions address to varying degrees issues of biodiversity conservation and sustainable use. In meeting their objectives, the conventions have developed a number of complementary approaches (site, species and/or ecosystem-based) and operational tools (e.g., programmes of work, trade permits and certificates, regional agreements, site listings, funds and gaps). The objectives, principal instruments and particular strengths of each convention are summarized in table 1, and discussed in greater detail in the annex.

Table 1. Summary of key characteristics of the biodiversity-related conventions

Convention	Year of entry into force	No. of Parties	Core concerns	Selected key instruments	Particular strengths
Convention on Biological Diversity	1993	188	For all aspects of biodiversity, objectives of conservation, sustainable use, and access and sharing of benefits from use of genetic resources.	Programmes of work; Standards, guidelines, tools NBSAPs Financial mechanism	Near universal membership Comprehensive (all aspects of biodiversity) Role in policy development
Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species	1975	167	Species threatened (now or potentially) by international wildlife trade	Appendices (I, II, III); Permits and certificates	Regulatory (powerful and specific trade controls) High-profile
Conservation of Migratory Species	1983	92 1/	Migratory species that cross international boundaries	Appendices (I, II); Agreements (Regional Agreements, MoUs, Action Plans)	International cooperation tailored to specific regions and species Small Grant Programme
Ramsar Convention on Wetlands of International Importance	1971	146	Wetland habitats and species (inland, coastal & nearshore marine)	Ramsar List; Article 3.2 Montreux Record	Wise Use Site-based (1456 sites) Close relations with NGOs (incl. for implementation)
World Heritage Convention	1972	180	Cultural and natural heritage sites of outstanding universal value	World Heritage List; World Heritage in Danger List; World Heritage Fund	Site-based (812 sites) 2/ Support to national management (capacity-building, financial)

5. The different approaches and instruments developed under each convention each came about to meet distinct needs, and their particular value must be maintained even while seeking to bring closer together the work of the different conventions. The goal of enhanced cooperation should be to add value to existing efforts, not to homogenize initiatives or focus only on collaborative approaches when specialization by a single convention might at times better serve biodiversity objectives. 3/

1/ 25 additional states are associated via the Regional Agreements.

2/ This number includes 160 natural, 24 mixed natural/cultural sites, and 628 cultural properties, in 137 States Parties.

3/ As per Pritchard, D.E. (2004). Review of cooperation between the Convention on Wetlands (Ramsar, Iran, 1971) and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO).

II. Mandate for cooperation

6. The respective Conferences of the Parties (COP) to the Biodiversity-related conventions have each recognized the need for enhanced cooperation among the Conventions.

7. The Strategic Plan of the Convention on Biological Diversity recognizes that enhanced cooperation will be needed to achieve the 2010 target. Goal One of the Strategic Plan “The Convention is fulfilling its leadership role in international biodiversity issues” has two objectives related to cooperation:

Objective 1.2: The Convention is promoting cooperation between all relevant international instruments and processes to enhance policy coherence.

Objective 1.3: Other international processes are actively supporting implementation of the Convention, in a manner consistent with their respective frameworks.

8. The mandate for establishing a liaison group among the five biodiversity-related conventions was set out by the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity, in February 2004. In decision VII/26, the Conference of the Parties urged further enhanced cooperation between the Convention on Biological Diversity and all relevant international conventions, organizations and bodies, strengthening and building on existing cooperative arrangements to enhance synergies and reduce inefficiencies in a manner consistent with their respective mandates, governance arrangements and agreed programs, within existing resources. In this context, the Conference of the Parties requested the Executive Secretary to invite the secretariats of the other four biodiversity conventions (CITES, Ramsar, CMS and WHC) to form a liaison group to enhance coherence and cooperation in their implementation, and to report on progress made to the eighth meeting of the Conference of the Parties. Other relevant recent decisions of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity are listed in the appendix.

9. Objective 5.1 of CITES Strategic Vision (2000-2005) is “to ensure an optimal working relationship with UNEP, as well as close coordination and synergy with CBD and other relevant multilateral environmental agreements”. The CITES COP, in Decision 13.2, asked its Standing Committee to consider the findings and recommendations of the Vilm report (‘Promoting CITES-CBD Cooperation and Synergy’; see paragraphs 27-28 of this note), taking into account the Secretariat’s conclusions, and any comments by the Parties, and identify possible priority actions to improve synergies between the two Conventions in areas of common concern in order to contribute to reaching the WSSD 2010 target.

10. The Strategic Plan for the Convention on Migratory Species 2000-2005, under Operational objective 4.4. (Linkages) calls for CMS to strengthen orderly institutional linkages with partner organizations, and to define the scope of their responsibility and the ways to improve, in the most efficient way, their tasks and to enhance their synergistic effect. The plan calls for this synergy to be developed within a global context, involving the main biodiversity related conventions, under the umbrella of the Convention on Biological Diversity. The Conference of the Parties to CMS, in Resolution 7.9, reaffirmed the interest of CMS to develop strong collaborative arrangements with other biodiversity-related instruments and international organizations, making specific reference to the Convention on Biological Diversity and CITES. In the draft Strategic Plan 2006-2011, to be considered by the next meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the CMS in November 2005, the importance of inter-agency collaboration is reiterated. In addition to target 4.3 (aiming at increasing cooperative activities in pursuit of shared targets with relevant MEAs), the strategic plan defines close cooperation with relevant MEAs and key partners and the capturing of synergies in pursuit of shared targets as an operational principle of the strategic plan, a principles that CMS endeavours to adhere to in all its programmes, projects and activities.

11. Ramsar, in its Strategic Plan (2003-2008) calls for stronger and formalized linkages between Ramsar and other international and/or regional environmental conventions and agencies, so as to advance the achievement of shared goals and objectives relating to wetland species or issues (Objective 7.2). Actions under this objective include collaboration with the Convention on Biological Diversity (in particular as regards inclusion of wetland concerns in national biodiversity strategies, and planning and execution of projects affecting wetlands), the WHC (especially as regards wetlands designated as World Heritage sites and/or Ramsar sites) and the CMS (on shared wetland species).

12. The Operational Guidelines of the World Heritage Convention carry provisions for strengthening of synergies with other agreements, including the other Biodiversity-related conventions.

13. Further support for cooperation stems from the adoption by the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity (decision VI/26), and subsequent endorsement by the World Summit on Sustainable Development, of the target “to achieve, by 2010, a significant reduction of the current rate of biodiversity loss at the global, regional and national level,” adopted by the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity in its Strategic Plan has been endorsed by the World Summit on Sustainable Development. This broad support for the 2010 target, at the highest levels, means that it can provide a unifying focus for cooperation among all relevant Conventions and organizations. Among the biodiversity-related conventions, besides the Convention on Biological Diversity, the 2010 target has been recognized by the Conference of the Parties of CITES in decision 13.2 (see above) as well as in its review of strategic planning in decision 13.1, and by the CMS Standing Committee in the draft Strategic Plan of CMS (2006 – 2011). The target is also due to be considered by the Conferences of the Parties of CMS, Ramsar and WHC during 2005.

III. Examples of existing cooperative activities and arrangements

14. The Biodiversity-related conventions have established a number of ‘bilateral’ Memoranda of Understanding or Cooperation and Joint Programmes of Work/Joint Work Plans with one another, as shown in table 2. To date, this form of cooperation is most developed between Ramsar and the CBD (see below).

Table 2. Formal cooperation agreements established or in development among the biodiversity-related conventions, where M = memoranda of cooperation/understanding, J = joint work programme/plan, and * = in development

	CBD	CMS	CITES	Ramsar	WHC
CBD		M J	M J	M J	M*
CMS	M J		M J	M J	M
CITES	M J	M J*			
Ramsar	M J	M J			M
WHC	M*	M		M	

A. Cooperation with the Convention on Biological Diversity

15. The Ramsar Convention on Wetlands has been recognized by the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity as a lead implementation partner for wetlands. The third joint work plan (2002-2006) between the Convention on Biological Diversity and the Ramsar Convention was endorsed by the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity in decision VI/20, and by the Conference of the Parties to the Ramsar Convention by resolution VIII/5. The JWP includes joint actions under each of the ecosystem themes of the Conference of the Parties and cross-cutting issues. As requested in decision VI/20 of the Convention on Biological Diversity, elements of the third joint work plan have been incorporated into the refined programme of work on inland water biological diversity of the Convention on Biological Diversity. At its eighth meeting, the Conference of the Parties to the Ramsar also urged its parties to make use of the guidelines for incorporating biodiversity related issues into environmental impact assessment legislation and/or processes and in strategic environmental assessment, developed under the Convention on Biological Diversity and adopted in decision VI/7 (Ramsar Resolution VIII/9).

16. Significant progress has been made regarding the implementation of joint CBD-Ramsar activities. For example, a joint paper has been prepared on criteria for achieving a more comprehensive coverage of components of biological diversity through the designation of Ramsar sites, and on guidelines for their

application. The Ramsar STRP will propose the revised set of criteria and an enhanced Strategic Framework (which provides guidelines on how the criteria should be applied and interpreted) to the ninth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Ramsar Convention (November 2005). Members of the STRP and Ramsar Secretariat have contributed to the development of the indicators of the Convention on Biological Diversity or assessing achievement of the 2010 biodiversity target, the development of the targets for the inland waters and coastal and marine programmes of work, and to the joint development of guidelines for the rapid assessment of inland water biological diversity, presented to the eighth meeting of the Subsidiary Body on Scientific Technical and Technological Advice and being considered for adoption by the ninth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Ramsar Convention, through participation in expert group meetings. The STRP has reviewed and is proposing to update definitions of the Convention's fundamental concepts of "Wise Use" and "ecological character", so as to also harmonize Ramsar definitions with the subsequently developed CBD ecosystem approach and sustainable use guidance. The River Basin Initiative is expected to become fully operational in the near future, complete with a website for information exchange on key issues.

17. The joint work programme between the Convention on Biological Diversity and the Convention on Migratory Species (CMS) was endorsed in Resolution 7.9 of the CMS COP and decision VI/20 by the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity. By the same decision, the Convention on Biological Diversity recognized CMS as the lead partner for migratory species. Following on decision VI/20, case-studies on migratory species and their habitats (as relevant to the thematic areas and cross-cutting issues under the Convention on Biological Diversity) were received and disseminated through the clearing-house mechanism. 4/ A joint synergy project is currently under development to provide guidance on how migratory species are (or can be) integrated into the framework of the national biodiversity strategies and action plans, and ongoing and future programmes of work, under the Convention on Biological Diversity. In addition, the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity endorsed a format for the third national reports that included questions on migratory species developed jointly with CMS (decision VII/25). The two Secretariats have also recently undertaken a revision of the Joint Work Programme, in order to update it and include relevant targets adopted by the respective Conference of the Parties.

18. Decision VI/9 of the Conference of the Parties identifies CITES as an important instrument for the implementation of the Global Strategy for Plant Conservation, especially in regards to target 11 ("No species of wild flora endangered by international trade", also equivalent to target 4.3 of the Strategic Plan adopted in decision VI/26). CITES invited the Convention on Biological Diversity to participate in the CITES Bushmeat Working Group, and participated in the liaison group of the Convention on Biological Diversity on non-timber forest products, contributing particular expertise on bushmeat. In addition, CITES participated in a workshop from the Convention on Biological Diversity on incentive measures in June 2003, and invited the Convention on Biological Diversity to participate in a technical workshop on economic incentives and wildlife trade policy. To explore additional options for synergy, the Secretariats of CITES and the Convention on Biological Diversity participated in a workshop on promoting synergy between the two conventions in April 2004. An extensive range of concrete proposals for cooperation were put forward, with the recommendations of the workshop made available to participants to the Working Group on Review of Implementation (UNEP/CBD/WG-RI/INF/9).

19. The Convention on Biological Diversity is developing joint activities with WHC and Ramsar within the context of the programme of work on protected areas, and has requested CMS to review the potential for linking protected area networks across international boundaries. A meeting in the second half of 2005 between the Convention on Biological Diversity and the WHC will serve to finalize the joint work plan. As well, representatives from the WHC and Ramsar secretariats have participated in the meetings of the Convention on Biological Diversity on protected areas.

4/ Available at <http://www.biodiv.org/other/cs.aspx>.

B. Cooperation among the other conventions

20. The joint work plan between the Ramsar Convention and CMS identifies five areas of cooperation: joint promotion; institutional cooperation; joint conservation action; data collection, storage and analysis; and new agreements on migratory species and species with unfavourable conservation status. Concrete results of such cooperation include co-ordinated work between Ramsar and the CMS's African-Eurasian Waterbird Agreement (AEWA).

21. The Ramsar Convention Secretariat cooperates closely with the World Heritage Centre, undertaking joint expert advisory missions to threatened sites that are both World Heritage and Ramsar sites. The two conventions have signed an MoU with a view to *inter alia* promote nominations of wetland sites under the two conventions; contribute to both conventions' training efforts and coordinate fundraising activities. Ramsar has had a programme of joint work with the UNESCO Man and the Biosphere Programme since 2002, focussing on site management planning, assessment and monitoring, and communication, education and public awareness activities.

22. Many of the species already listed, or proposed for listing, under CITES also appear in the Appendices to CMS, and a growing number are the subject of specific activities under both conventions. Accordingly, the two convention secretariats concluded an MoU that commits each to strengthen collaboration in such areas as policy compatibility, institutional cooperation, exchange of information and experience, and coordination of work programmes. A list of joint activities 2005-2007 was submitted in June 2005 to, and approved by, the 53rd meeting of the CITES Standing Committee.

23. The MoU between CMS and UNESCO (WHC and the Man and the Biosphere Programme) provides for the future development of joint activities, including inventories, assessments and monitoring of migratory species in biosphere reserves and natural world heritage sites, and *in situ* conservation and integrated ecosystem management in these sites, particularly in transboundary areas.

IV. Options for further enhancing cooperation

24. Cooperation among the biodiversity-related conventions may be further enhanced through a variety of mechanisms, and in a number of areas. This section summarizes options for enhancing cooperation identified by the Liaison Group of the Biodiversity-related Conventions at its most recent meeting, 5/ with additional options presented in sections B (based on discussions at other meetings) and C below (following from analysis of the contents of this note).

A. Options recently considered by the Biodiversity Liaison Group

25. At the third meeting of the Liaison Group of the Biodiversity-related Conventions (10 May 2005, Gland, Switzerland), the executive heads of the conventions, or their representatives, agreed on the following areas or actions for enhanced cooperation:

Enhanced contributions to achieve the 2010 targets

(a) The framework of goals and targets to evaluate progress towards the 2010 target (adopted by Decision VII/30 of the Convention on Biological Diversity) can be applied—the necessary changes having been made—to all five conventions. In addition to adapting and modifying targets already developed by the Convention on Biological Diversity, the four other conventions could also develop specific targets for theirs and the use of the Convention on Biological Diversity. In this way, a common, flexible framework would provide a further basis for enhanced cooperation and coherence among the biodiversity-related conventions, at both the international and national level, helping to achieve the 2010 target;

(b) To promote coherence among the conventions in policy and implementation, it would be useful for each Convention, as appropriate, to adopt indicators that are consistent with the Framework of goals and

5/ The final report of the third meeting of the Biodiversity Liaison Group is available to the Working Group on Review of Implementation as UNEP/CBD/WGRI/1/INF/7

targets. Many of the indicators developed for the Framework of the Convention on Biological Diversity — particularly those relating to biodiversity status and trends—are relevant to the other biodiversity-related conventions, or could be disaggregated to this end. For example, Red List Indicators specific to migratory species or to wetland species could be constructed.

Enhanced contributions to monitoring progress in achieving the 2010 target

26. There is a need to pool information available to the five conventions, for use in developing and monitoring framework indicators. For instance, CMS maintains several information systems useful for purposes of monitoring biodiversity. ^{6/}

Participation in a Global Biodiversity Partnership

27. The five conventions, together with a small number of other international organizations, could form the inner core-group of a Global Partnership for Biodiversity. Additional organizations might be engaged in the partnership through issue-specific networks, where the Biodiversity Liaison Group would facilitate the identification of issues to be addressed and potential partner organizations. ^{7/}

Harmonization of national reporting

28. There are a number of promising options for increasing harmonization among reporting processes, in order to reduce the reporting burden on Parties to the five conventions:

- (a) Development of a web-portal to facilitate access to reports and guidelines of each of the conventions (following the example of the Collaborative Portal on Forests);
- (b) Use of common reporting modules for certain themes (e.g. biodiversity of inland waters as a potential common element of the Ramsar and reports of the Convention on Biological Diversity);
- (c) Facilitating harmony in the gathering and management of common data at national level.
- (d) Exchange of information among members of the Liaison Group of proposed developments in national reporting under each of the conventions, with a view to aligning approaches where possible.
- (e) Informing the respective Conference of the Parties or other bodies of each convention of the results of the harmonization exercise undertaken at the UNEP-WCMC workshop in Haasrode, Belgium, held on 22-23 September 2004. ^{8/}

Other activities

29. The Liaison Group will have increased visibility at the Conferences of the Parties of its member conventions, and more widely, as follows:

- (a) In addition to the host secretariat, a representative of the Liaison Group will attend the Conferences of the Parties and, as appropriate, other meetings of the conventions;
- (b) BLG side events will be held at the Conferences of the Parties, including a “Halfway to 2010” event at the eighth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity;
- (c) A Liaison Group member might be nominated to represent the group at relevant meetings of other conventions and organizations;

^{6/} The Global Register of Migratory Species (GROMS) compiles a list of over 4000 migratory vertebrate species, including their threat status (by the 2000 IUCN Red List of Threatened Species) and protection status (by other conventions). Digital maps (of migrating routes and distribution) are also available for approximately 1000 species. Through the Information Management System (IMS) maintained by UNEP-WCMC, CMS also makes available additional data from various sources.

^{7/} These and other views put forward by the Liaison Group are reflected in UNEP/CBD/WG-RI/1/7/Add.3 and in the draft terms of reference for the Global Partnership for Biodiversity (annex 1 of UNEP/CBD/WG-RI/1/7).

^{8/} The workshop report is being made available to the CBD Working Group as UNEP/CBD/WG-RI/1/INF/6, and the workshop recommendations are summarized in UNEP/CBD/WG-RI/1/10).

- (d) The joint web-site will be further developed;
- (e) Joint activities may be developed in support of International Biodiversity Day.

30. All present at the meeting agreed that the BLG was a useful mechanism. It was further agreed that the Liaison Group would, in future, consider development of a joint strategic vision and joint work plan for the five conventions.

B. Options identified at earlier meetings

31. An expert workshop promoting CITES-CBD Cooperation and Synergy was convened by TRAFFIC, ResourceAfrica, IUCN and Flora and Fauna International, and held in Vilm, Germany, from 20-24 April 2004. Workshop participants proposed several cross-cutting mechanisms for enhancing cooperation between the two conventions, including the collection of case studies and of best practices for improving coherent implementation of the Convention on Biological Diversity and CITES (to be requested of Parties, IGOs, NGOs and other stakeholders at the next Conference of the Parties of each convention), and development of complementary CITES and the national legislation of the Convention on Biological Diversity.

32. In addition, participants put forward a number of specific measures and mechanisms to promote synergy were proposed as well, on the issues of sustainable use, access and benefit-sharing and linking site-based, thematic and species-based approaches. Additional options for synergy were suggested as relates to the Global Strategy for Plant Conservation, the ecosystem approach, invasive alien species, compliance and enforcement, taxonomy, incentives for research and monitoring, harmonisation of reporting, and financial strategies. A number of those options that could be made more broadly relevant to all five biodiversity conventions are considered in more detail in section C. The final report of the workshop was submitted to CITES COP-13 and is available to the Working Group of the Convention on Biological Diversity as UNEP/CBD/WG-RI/1/INF/9. 9/

33. In the context of the programmes of work of the Convention on Biological Diversity on dry and sub-humid lands and on agrobiodiversity, opportunities for synergy among the five biodiversity-related conventions were discussed at a regional workshop for Africa (Gaborone, 13-17 September 2004), and in an information document prepared for the meeting. 10/ Workshop participants considered that much effort and planning remained in order to promote synergy at the national level, beyond existing international and regional activities. Areas for synergy at the national level, and specific recommendations, were identified as related to institutional arrangements, information systems and reporting, planning, policy formulations, capacity-building and financing.

34. A 'Status report on activities promoting synergies and cooperation between Multilateral Environmental Agreements, in particular biodiversity-related conventions, and related mechanisms', prepared by UNEP-WCMC, provides further recommendations relevant to enhancing collaboration among the biodiversity conventions. 11/ Among these are suggestions relating to information systems, harmonization (of terminology, implementation, reporting, and site-based agreements), and cooperation among convention bodies (liaison groups, subsidiary scientific and/or technical bodies) and at the national level.

C. Additional scope for enhanced cooperation

35. Certain areas of overlap among the conventions are clear (e.g., wetlands and migratory species, protection of endangered migratory species from international exploitation), and are reflected in the bilateral Memoranda of Cooperation and Joint Work Programmes already developed between the five conventions. The scope for cooperation among the conventions is considerable, however, and many opportunities still remain to be explored. An initial (and far from exhaustive) indication of such opportunities is provided in this section, as a means to encourage further discussion. As noted above, any

9/ The full workshop proceedings are also available online at <http://www.bfn.de/09/skript116.pdf>.

10/ <http://www.biodiv.org/doc/meetings/agr/wsagdl-01/information/wsagdl-01-inf-03-en.doc>.

11/ <http://www.biodiv.org/doc/meetings/agr/wsagdl-01/information/wsagdl-01-inf-01-en.doc>.

new opportunity would need to be assessed for its potential to add-value to current initiatives, rather than over-burden the agenda for cooperation, and would need to be undertaken in such a way to respect the independent mandates and legal status of each convention.

36. *Learning from the CMS Regional Agreements.* CMS has particular expertise in catalysing, fostering and supporting international collaboration through its various operational tools. The CMS model of regional agreements could inform collaborative arrangements for the management of transboundary sites established under Ramsar and WHC, or the development of protected areas under the programme of work on Protected Areas of the Convention on Biological Diversity. Such coordinated, international agreements might also have lessons to offer countries seeking to control pathways of invasive alien species, for example, or to manage shared watersheds.

37. *Making use of the wider application of CITES.* The potential of CITES to promote sustainable use and wider ecosystem conservation could be more fully explored, particularly given the convention's relatively high political profile and reputation as a biodiversity-related convention "with teeth".

38. Under Article IV of the CITES Convention, Parties must demonstrate that export will not be detrimental to the survival of Appendix II species, providing an opportunity to improve monitoring and management of wild populations. Although CITES controls have been used to prohibit trade, opportunities exist to create economic incentives for sustainable use that would be further supported by CITES' strong regulatory framework and high political profile. Economic incentives could be developed in tandem with the work of the Convention on Biological Diversity in this area, and in support of species of particular interest to the biodiversity-related conventions (e.g., migratory species important to livelihoods).

39. *Multiple listings.* Species or sites protected under one convention may gain additional protection if considered under another. For example, vulnerable species—regardless of the principle threats confronting them—are eligible for listing under CITES Appendix II as long as it can be demonstrated that international trade would further contribute to their demise. In turn, Parties seeking to control trade in a species listed on CITES might be interested in developing or joining Regional Agreements under CMS addressing threats to the species in a wider context, or in having those species integrated into relevant programmes of work of the Convention on Biological Diversity. In the case of Ramsar and WHC, the listing of sites under both conventions has proven to be a useful strategy for taking advantage of the different legal, scientific, management and advocacy approaches of each. 12/

40. *Broader application of the ecosystem approach.* Developed under the Convention on Biological Diversity, the Ecosystem Approach is also of broad relevance to the remaining biodiversity-related conventions. For example, Article IV Paragraph 3 of CITES anticipates the ecosystem approach by requiring that exports must be monitored so as to ensure the role of the species in the ecosystem. As well, the WHC criteria for designating natural heritage sites are already consistent with the ecosystem approach, providing opportunities for the ecosystem approach to be formally integrated into management plans for heritage sites. Given that the Ecosystem Approach refers to any functioning unit at any scale, it is also applicable to management of sites located along species migratory routes (in the case of CMS) or important to preserving wetlands, regardless of sites' physical distance from one another.

41. *Sharing criteria, guidelines and definitions.* Explicitly integrating criteria and guidelines developed by one biodiversity-related convention into relevant instruments of the other conventions would be a way to further conservation and sustainable use goals in a coherent manner. For example, the CBD's Addis Ababa Principles and Guidelines on Sustainable Use could inform sustainable use activities under the other four conventions. In fact, Ramsar will present to its ninth meeting of the Conference of the Parties a conceptual framework for Wise Use that includes clarification of the relationships between the CBD's Addis Ababa Principles and Guidelines and its ecosystem approach in relation to the application of the Ramsar 'toolkit' of Wise Use Handbooks.

12/ Pritchard (2004), see note 1.

42. Furthermore, criteria used to decide priorities for site-based conservation could usefully include elements from several conventions (e.g., CITES Appendices listings together with Ramsar and WHC criteria). Agreeing on common definitions of key terms (e.g., migratory species, sustainable use), where possible, would further streamline cooperation.

43. *Addressing threats.* The conventions could develop common approaches for addressing major threats to biodiversity, in collaboration where appropriate with other conventions. The Millennium Ecosystem Assessment has identified climate change, land use change, invasive species, overexploitation and pollution as direct drivers of biodiversity loss, signalling the need to cooperate among the biodiversity-conventions and beyond (e.g., with UNFCCC, UNCCD, FAO, WTO) if these are to be fully addressed.

44. *Integrating biodiversity into the MDGs.* The biodiversity-related conventions need to increase their involvement in the implementation of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), and in the field of development more generally. The conventions could work together to promote more systematic consideration of biodiversity issues under MDG Goal 7 (‘Ensure environmental sustainability’), and for greater recognition of the importance of biodiversity to the remaining MDGs (in particular, Goal 1 on reducing poverty and hunger). Links between the 2010 target and the 2015 MDGs should be made more apparent and widely known.

45. *Enhancing scientific research.* Together, the biodiversity-related conventions can draw on a wealth of scientific expertise, through *inter alia* expert groups, outside consultants, reports submitted by Parties, and scientific committees, panels and subsidiary bodies. There are opportunities to make information gathered by each convention more widely accessible (e.g., through databases), and to optimize information gathering (e.g., by closer collaboration, including outsourcing of research work, among conventions’ subsidiary scientific bodies). If an inter-governmental scientific mechanism on biodiversity is established (as advocated by, for example, France), the Conventions could deploy their own scientific resources in support of such a mechanism, as well as benefiting from it individually (see next paragraph).

46. *Coordinating requests to scientific assessments.* The example of the Millennium Ecosystem Assessment, through which separate synthesis reports were prepared addressing specific requests for information from the Convention on Biological Diversity, CMS, Ramsar and UNCCD, demonstrates the usefulness of scientific assessments for advancing the work of international conventions. The biodiversity-related conventions could in future coordinate requests for information from independent scientific assessments, to reduce duplication of effort within assessment processes, but also to together identify priority issues and potential policy applications of assessment results. The Conventions might also coordinate their inputs to the international multi-stakeholder consultative process to assess the need for an international mechanism which would provide a critical assessment of the scientific information and policy options required for decision-making on biodiversity, in the follow up to the International Conference “Biodiversity: Science and Governance” in Paris, January 2005.

47. *Strengthening national implementation.* Improved coordination (and more interaction, information sharing and review of decisions) within countries among the National Focal Points for the different conventions and related mechanisms could be encouraged as a further means to enhance implementation. Parties could review national legislation arising from the biodiversity-related conventions in order to improve coherence and further facilitate implementation.

48. In many Contracting Parties to Ramsar, an “NGO constituency” has developed around the Convention to work with the government and to actively promote and implement the goals of the treaty. Such grass-roots activity is crucial to achieving implementation goals, and the Ramsar model should be studied for its potential application in support of the other biodiversity-related conventions. The Global Partnership for Plant Conservation—established by a number of international and national organizations to promote implementation of the Global Strategy for Plant Conservation—is another useful model for mobilizing action on the ground.

49. Finally, capacity-building activities undertaken by one convention could seek to integrate elements from other conventions, as appropriate (e.g., CITES workshops integrating the Ecosystem Approach and Sustainable Use principles).

50. *Increasing funding.* The limited financial assistance available to biodiversity conservation projects could perhaps be optimized through closer coordination between existing funds. For example, joint projects through the CMS Small Grants Programme and the World Heritage Fund may in turn attract matching funds from other donors. The experience of Ramsar in developing a Conservation Finance Alliance—involving the development assistance community in providing more resources for wetland-related projects—would be particularly helpful in developing new funding approaches. The biodiversity-related conventions may also wish to collaborate on integrated funding proposals to the Global Environment Facility.

51. *Increasing public awareness.* Biodiversity can be a challenging concept to explain, yet obtaining public support is crucial for meeting biodiversity conservation and sustainable use objectives. Rallying together in support of key themes and targets for biodiversity, notably the 2010 deadline set by WSSD/CBD, is a major opportunity for the conventions to raise public awareness of the vital role that biodiversity plays in maintaining the fabric of life. For instance, CMS have embraced the 2010 target by joining the IUCN-led “Countdown 2010” campaign in Europe, and are exploring opportunities to extend this initiative to Africa.

52. The biodiversity-related conventions could further develop a coordinated approach for public awareness, education and outreach, putting across common messages while taking advantage of each convention’s particular opportunities for engaging with the public. For example, Ramsar and WHC sites offer a means for people to experience biodiversity directly, and to perhaps view exhibits or participate in guided activities during site visits. In addition, Ramsar’s CEPA web-site offers a wealth of tools, experience and examples, many of which can be relevant to awareness-raising on biodiversity more generally. The CBD, through its clearing-house mechanism, can help to widely disseminate information on biodiversity.

53. *Gaining universal participation.* The Convention on Biological Diversity has the highest participation rate of any of the biodiversity-related conventions, followed closely by the WHC. Encouraging the Convention on Biological Diversity and/or WHC Parties to ratify the other conventions if they have not yet done so would significantly advance progress towards biodiversity goals.

V. CONCLUSION

54. As evidenced by the number of options identified in section IV, there remains great potential for enhanced cooperation among the biodiversity-related conventions, both in the areas of policy coherence and implementation. Such efforts are all the more important given increasing pressures on biodiversity, and the need for the biodiversity-related conventions to demonstrate their efficiency and relevance to a wide, cross-sectoral audience if objectives of conservation, sustainable use, and equitable access to biodiversity are to be achieved. Identifying cooperative activities that make best use of each convention’s expertise and mechanisms will be important, in order to add value to—and not dilute—existing efforts.