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Sustainable development: Protection of global climate for present and future generations of Humankind

Implementation of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in Those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, Particularly in Africa

Convention on Biological Diversity

Implementation of United Nations environmental conventions

Note by the Secretary-General

The Secretary-General has the honour to transmit to the General Assembly the reports submitted by the Secretariats of United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in Those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, Particularly in Africa and the Convention on Biological Diversity.

I. Report of the Executive Secretary of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change on the United Nations Climate Change Conference, Durban, South Africa, 2011

A. Introduction

1. The United Nations General Assembly, by its resolution 66/200, of 13 March 2012, invited the secretariat of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change¹ to report to it at its sixty-seventh session on the work of the Conference of the Parties. This report is submitted in response to that invitation.

B. Outcomes of the seventeenth session of the Conference of the Parties and the seventh session of the Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Kyoto Protocol

1. Summary

2. The United Nations Climate Change Conference was held in Durban, South Africa, from 28 November to 9 December 2011, and comprised the following sessions:

- (a) The seventeenth session of the Conference of the Parties;
- (b) The seventh session of the Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Kyoto Protocol;
- (c) The thirty-fifth session of the Subsidiary Body for Implementation (SBI);
- (d) The thirty-fifth session of the Subsidiary Body for Scientific and Technological Advice (SBSTA);
- (e) The fourth part of the fourteenth session of the Ad Hoc Working Group on Further Commitments for Annex I Parties under the Kyoto Protocol (AWG-KP);
- (f) The fourth part of the sixteenth session of the Ad Hoc Working Group on Long-term Cooperative Action under the Convention (AWG-LCA).

3. The Durban Conference had a high level of participation, and was attended by nine Heads of State and Government, 5,400 government delegates, 5,800 observers and 1,200 media representatives. The Conference of the Parties adopted 19 decisions and the Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Kyoto Protocol adopted 17 decisions. The outcomes include critically important decisions which have the following three key elements:

- (a) A second commitment period under the Kyoto Protocol, to start January 2013;

¹ United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 1771, No. 30822.

(b) Affirmation of the mitigation pledges under the Convention covering the time period from now until 2020 made by 89 countries, both industrialized and developing, and which cover 80% of global emissions. Additionally, agreement was reached on how and by when both developed and developing countries will report on these mitigation efforts, as well as on the details of verifying these efforts; and,

(c) Governments identified the path toward the future legal climate framework that will be applicable to all. Countries set a deadline of 2015 for the conclusion of these negotiations, and a deadline of 2020 for the entry into force of this new agreement.

4. At the conference, the infrastructure needed to support developing countries in a fully functioning climate regime evolved significantly. The Conference of the Parties adopted decisions on three key issues: the governing instrument of the Green Climate Fund, the terms of reference of the Climate Technology Center and Network, which is the implementing arm of the Technology Mechanism, and the launch of the Adaptation Committee, which will coordinate and guide adaptation action.

5. During the present year, governments continue the work on each of these issues by developing the policies, processes and guidelines of the Green Climate Fund, identifying a host for the Climate Technology Center and Network, and holding the initial meetings of the Adaptation Committee.

6. Parties also reached agreement on the need to increase the level of ambition, informed by the review of the adequacy of the global temperature goal of 2 degrees Celsius to be carried out 2013-2015, as well as by the next assessment report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change.

2. High-level segment

7. The joint high-level segment of the seventeenth session of the Conference of the Parties and the seventh session of the Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Kyoto Protocol was opened by the COP President, the Minister of International Relations and Cooperation of South Africa, and was preceded by a welcoming ceremony attended by the President of South Africa, the Secretary-General and other dignitaries.

8. The Secretary-General delivered a statement on behalf of the United Nations system, recognizing the challenges and emphasizing the need for making progress and moving forward on key issues. He asked Parties to work towards implementing the Cancun Agreements, to demonstrate tangible progress on short- and long-term financing, to work towards a second commitment period under the Kyoto Protocol, and not to forsake the collective vision of a comprehensive legally binding climate change agreement that is both, effective and fair to all.

9. At the high-level segment, statements were made by 156 Parties, of which nine were given by Heads of State or Government, five were given by either Vice-Presidents or Deputy Prime Ministers, 91 were given by ministers and 44 were given by Party representatives.

3. Outcomes of the seventeenth session of the Conference of the Parties

Establishment of the Ad Hoc Working Group on the Durban Platform

10. The Durban Conference achieved a critically important decision in which governments decided to launch a process to develop a protocol, another legal instrument or an agreed outcome with legal force under the Convention applicable to all Parties, through the Ad Hoc Working Group on the Durban Platform (ADP). Countries have set a deadline of 2015 for the conclusion of these negotiations, and have also set the deadline of 2020 for the entry into force of this new agreement.

11. The ADP launched its work at its first meeting held on 17-25 May 2012, with the election of officers and adoption of the agenda. The agenda of the ADP will guarantee that attention is given both to the agreement to be reached by 2015, as well as to efforts to raise ambition to curb greenhouse gases up to 2020.

12. Furthermore, the Conference of the Parties decided that the UNFCCC process shall raise the level of ambition, informed by the Fifth Assessment Report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, the outcomes of the 2013-2015 review of the long-term global goal and the work of the subsidiary bodies.

Outcomes on the implementation of the Bali Action Plan and the Cancun Agreements

13. The Conference of the Parties adopted a decision on the outcome of the AWG-LCA, encompassing all areas of work under the Bali Action Plan and the Cancun Agreements: shared vision for long-term cooperative action, enhanced action on mitigation, enhanced action on adaptation, finance, technology development and transfer, capacity-building and the review of the adequacy of the long-term global goal.

14. In this context, the Conference agreed to continue working towards identifying a global goal for reducing global emissions by 2050, identifying time-frame for the global peaking of emissions and it requested the AWG-LCA to consider the issue of equitable access to sustainable development.

15. Additionally, Parties adopted guidelines for the preparation of biennial reports by developed country Parties, the first of which shall be submitted to the UNFCCC secretariat by January 2014, with subsequent biennial reports to be submitted two years after the due date of national communications. The Conference also adopted modalities and procedures for the international assessment and review of emissions and removals of greenhouse gas emissions of developed country Parties.

16. In regards to mitigation by developing country Parties, the Conference encouraged these Parties to develop low-emission development strategies and adopted guidelines for the preparation of biennial update reports by Parties not included in Annex I to the Convention (non-Annex I Parties) to start in December 2014. Modalities and guidelines for international

consultation and analysis of biennial update reports of non-Annex I Parties were also adopted in Durban.

17. Guidance was also given in relation to the registry, which can facilitate the matching of actions seeking international support with support available by providing and directing information to Parties that submitted information on nationally appropriate mitigation actions seeking support, and Parties and entities that have submitted information on the support available. The UNFCCC secretariat is currently developing a prototype of this registry with a view to finalize it at COP-18.

18. The Conference also adopted a decision on the sources of results-based finance for activities related to REDD-plus², and requested the SBSTA to consider issues related to agriculture with a view to adopting a decision on this matter at COP-18.

19. The AWG-LCA was also requested by the Conference to conduct a work programme to consider a framework for various approaches, including opportunities for using markets, to enhance the cost effectiveness of, and to promote, mitigation actions and to conduct a work programme to elaborate modalities and procedures for a new market-based mechanism.

20. The Conference of the Parties provided guidance to the Adaptation Committee, including on the modalities in exercising its functions, the reporting on its activities to the COP, its composition, decision-making and on other relevant modalities of work. Guidance in regards to national adaptation plans (NAPs) was provided by the Conference of the Parties through the agreement of a process to enable least developed countries to formulate and implement NAPs, an invitation to developing countries that are not least developed countries to employ the modalities for NAPs, and the agreement on reporting, monitoring and evaluation of the NAPs process.

21. The Durban Conference also made a step forward in climate finance through the adoption of the governing instrument of the Green Climate Fund, which includes provisions on the Fund's objective and guiding principles, governance and institutional arrangements, rules of procedure of its Board and establishing an independent secretariat for the Fund, among others. The Conference of the Parties requested the Board of the Green Climate Fund to select a trustee and to conduct a process for selecting a host country for the Fund by COP 18.

22. Guidance was also provided by the Conference of the Parties to the Standing Committee on finance, including on its composition and working modalities, and deciding that the Standing Committee shall report, make recommendations and assist the Conference of the Parties in exercising its function with respect to the financial mechanism of the Convention. This shall contribute to improving the coherence and coordination in the delivery of climate change financing.

² REDD-plus is short for policy approaches and positive incentives on issue relating to reducing emission from deforestation and forest degradation in developing countries; and the role of conservation, sustainable management of forest and enhancement of forest carbon stocks in developing countries.

23. The outcome of the AWG-LCA also included arrangements to fully operationalize the Technology Mechanism, including the adoption of the terms of reference of the Climate Technology Centre and Network, which outlined its missions, functions, architecture, roles and responsibilities, governance, structure and on its reporting and review. The criteria to evaluate and select the host of this centre and network were also agreed by Parties, allowing the prompt launch of the selection process in this regard.

24. The Conference adopted the modalities and procedures of the Technology Executive Committee, which was established by the Cancun Agreements at COP 16. The modalities adopted relate to definitions, policy recommendations, linkage with other institutional arrangements, engagement of stakeholders, and information and knowledge sharing. This Committee met earlier this year and developed its rolling workplan for the period 2012-2013.

25. The Durban Forum on capacity-building was established with the purpose of having annual in-depth discussions on this issue with the participation of parties, relevant bodies under the Convention, as well as experts and practitioners. The Durban Forum on capacity-building was held during the thirty-sixth session of the SBI earlier this year. Parties also worked on the further definition of the scope of the review of the global goal as established by the Cancun Agreements³ and on the development of its modalities.

Other decisions adopted by the Conference of the Parties

26. The Nairobi work programme on impacts, vulnerability and adaptation to climate change has been recognized as a process that is to inform the organization of potential future areas of work that could also support the scientific and technical work under the Cancun Adaptation Framework. In this context, the Conference of the Parties requested the secretariat of the UNFCCC to organize a series of workshops, to prepare a compilation of case studies and to make better use of knowledge products and information generated under the Nairobi work programme for the benefit of Parties.

27. In 2011, the work programme on approaches to address loss and damage associated with climate change impacts in developing countries that are particularly vulnerable to the adverse effects of climate change, was initiated under the SBI, which to make recommendations on loss and damage to the Conference of the Parties. Additionally, the SBI has been requested by the Conference of the Parties to take into account a series of questions that are intended to serve as guidance for the further implementation of this work programme.

28. The Conference of the Parties also adopted a work programme on the impact of the implementation of response measures under the subsidiary bodies, with the objective of improving the understanding of the impact of the implementation of response measures in areas such as cooperation on response strategies, assessment and analysis of impacts and exchanging experience and discussion of opportunities for economic diversification and transformation, among others. Furthermore, a forum on the impact of the implementation of response measures

³ Decision 1/CP.16, paragraphs 4 and 138-140.

was established by the Conference to implement the work programme and to provide a platform allowing Parties to share information, experiences, case studies, best practices and views on this issue.

29. The Global Environment Facility (GEF), as the operating entity of the financial mechanism of the Convention reported to the Conference of the Parties on the steps it has taken to implement the guidance of the Conference from previous years and on the support it has provided to Parties as it relates to climate change. The Conference also requested the GEF to continue working with its implementing agencies to further simplify and improve its processes, to continue enhancing the transparency of the project review process, to clarify the concept of additional costs as applied to adaptation projects and to continue to provide resources for systematic observation and monitoring networks. The GEF was also invited to continue to provide support to non-Annex I Parties on their technology needs assessments.

30. The Conference also agreed on guidance on systems for providing information on how safeguards for activities on REDD-plus, as agreed to in appendix I of decision 1/CP.16, are addressed and respected, and agreed that developing country Parties undertaking activities on REDD-plus should provide information on this issue. The Conference also reached agreement on modalities for forest reference emission levels and forest reference levels, including guidelines for submissions of information on these reference levels.

31. After the consideration of relevant recommendations of the SBSTA, the Conference of the Parties adopted the revised UNFCCC reporting guidelines on annual inventories for Parties included in Annex I to the Convention (Annex I Parties) for trial use. In 2013, the SBSTA shall start considering information provided by Annex I Parties on their views and experience in using these guidelines, as well as their experience in using common reporting format reporter software that has been recently upgraded.

4. Outcomes of the seventh session of the Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Kyoto Protocol

32. At its seventh session, the Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Kyoto Protocol agreed that the second commitment period under the Kyoto Protocol is to begin on 1 January 2013, and is to last for a period of 5 or 8 years, the latter of which is to be decided during the present year. Countries that will participate in the second commitment period under the Kyoto Protocol, will convert their emission reduction targets into quantified emission limitation and reduction objectives, in order to ensure that reductions can be measured and assessed as per the Kyoto Protocol rules and regulations. Furthermore, under the AWG-KP, Parties reached agreements in the following areas:

(a) Land use, land-use change and forestry: The Conference adopted definitions, modalities, rules and guidelines relating to activities on this issue under the Kyoto Protocol for application in the second commitment period. Additionally the Conference requested the SBSTA to initiate a series of work programmes relevant to this issue.

(b) Emissions trading and the project-based mechanisms: The Conference reconfirmed the use of the mechanisms under the Kyoto Protocol as supplemental to domestic action of Annex I Parties. The Conference also decided to review and revise the design of the commitment period reserve for the subsequent commitment period to support the effective operation of emissions trading.

(c) Greenhouse gases, sectors and source categories, common metrics to calculate the carbon dioxide equivalence of anthropogenic emissions by sources and removals by sinks, and other methodological issues.

(d) The consideration of information on potential environmental, economic and social consequences, including spillover effects, of tools, policies, measures and methodologies available to Annex I Parties. The Conference recognized the need to deepen understanding of this issue and recognized the establishment of a forum relevant to this issue under the Conference of the Parties (see paragraph 28 above).

33. The Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Kyoto Protocol took note with appreciation of the efforts of the Adaptation Fund Board to promote the accreditation of national implementing entities and the direct access to the Adaptation Fund resources, requested the SBI to consider the initial review of the Adaptation Fund with a view to recommending a draft decision and decided to complete, at its eight session, such initial review of the Adaptation Fund.

34. The Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Kyoto Protocol, at its seventh session, provided further guidance on the Clean Development Mechanism (CDM), including general guidance and guidance with regard to governance, baseline and monitoring methodologies and additionality, registration of project activities, issuance of certified emission reductions, regional and subregional distribution of project activities and on capacity-building.

35. The concept of materiality under the CDM was defined by the Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Kyoto Protocol, which also decided on the initial scope of material information under the CDM. The Conference also requested the Executive Board of the CDM to implement the concept of materiality and report on the experience in its implementation, and to increase its interaction with designated operational entities in order to facilitate a uniform interpretation and application of this concept.

36. Guidance was also provided by the Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Kyoto Protocol at its seventh session on the implementation of Article 6 of the Kyoto Protocol (on joint implementation), including in relation to its governance and on the resources for the work on joint implementation.

37. Parties were also encouraged to further improve the implementation of capacity-building activities related to the implementation of the Kyoto Protocol. The Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Kyoto Protocol also decided that the further

implementation of the framework for capacity-building in developing countries should be improved at the systemic, institutional and individual levels, including by consultations with stakeholders, enhancing the integration of capacity-building needs related to the Kyoto Protocol into national development strategies and plans, increasing country-driven coordination and strengthening networking and information sharing among developing countries.

5. Conclusions and recommendations

38. The United Nations General Assembly may wish to, inter alia:

(a) Take note of the report of the Executive Secretary of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, as transmitted by the Secretary-General;

(b) Note the outcomes of the seventeenth session of the Conference of the Parties and the seventh session of the Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Kyoto Protocol, hosted by the Government of South Africa from 28 November to 9 December 2011;

(c) Urge the finalization and closure of the negotiating processes under the Bali Road Map;

(d) Pledge its support towards the full and prompt implementation of the Cancun Agreements and to the negotiating process under the Durban Platform;

(e) Invite the Executive Secretary to continue to report to it on the work of the Conference.

II. Report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of resolution 66/201 and the implementation of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, particularly in Africa

A. Introduction

1. In its resolution 66/201 of 22 December 2011, the General Assembly of the United Nations requested the Secretary-General to report to it, at its 67th session, on the implementation of that resolution. The present report constitutes an update to the General Assembly on the principal activities that have been undertaken in this respect.

B. Implementation of resolution 66/201 of 22 December 2011

1. Background

2. In its resolution 66/201, the General Assembly welcomed the outcomes of the tenth session of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention (COP 10), including the effort by the Conference of the Parties (COP) to find lasting solutions with respect to the governance and institutional arrangements of the Global Mechanism. The continuing need to strengthen the scientific basis of the Convention was noted by the General Assembly, particularly the decision of the COP to establish an ad hoc working group, taking into consideration regional balance, to further discuss options for the provision of scientific advice focusing on desertification, land degradation and drought (DLDD) issues. In this respect, the General Assembly noted the efforts under way to develop and implement scientifically-based and sound methods for monitoring and assessing desertification.

2. High-level meeting of the General Assembly

3. On 20 September 2011, the General Assembly convened a high-level meeting focusing on core issues of the Convention with the theme: “Addressing desertification, land degradation and drought in the context of sustainable development and poverty eradication”.

4. The meeting was divided into four main events: the opening session, two meetings in the form of panel discussions and a closing plenary session. The morning panel was co-chaired by the President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria and the Deputy Prime Minister of Luxemburg, and the afternoon panel was co-chaired by the President of Austria and the Prime Minister of Fiji.

5. At the closing ceremony, the President of the General Assembly presented a summary of the discussions. Salient elements of the President’s summary included the call by many world leaders for a strengthening of the scientific base of the Convention for a better understanding of DLDD, for the enhancement of the implementation of the United Nations Convention to

Combat Desertification (UNCCD) as a global policy and monitoring framework for addressing issues of land and soil degradation in all ecosystems affected by land degradation, and for the setting up of a measurable sustainable development goal and targets, in order to enable the international community to move towards a land degradation neutral world.

6. As mandated by General Assembly resolution 65/160, the President of the General Assembly also presented to COP 10 a summary of the deliberations of the high-level meeting of the General Assembly.

3. Tenth session of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention

7. COP 10 took place in Changwon City, Republic of Korea from 10–21 October 2011. The conference was attended by six thousand people, including over 80 ministers, civil society representatives and nearly 100 business representatives. The opening session featured the participation of H.E. Mr. Kim Hwang-sik, the Prime Minister of the Republic of Korea and the President of the 66th session of the General Assembly.

8. The United Nations Secretary-General Mr. Ban Ki-moon and His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales addressed the COP by video link. Under-Secretary-General Mr. Sha Zukang participated in his capacity as the Secretary-General of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio+20).

9. The Conference adopted 39 decisions on the implementation of the Convention, including those relating to science, technology and knowledge, with a view to making the UNCCD a global authority on scientific and technical knowledge pertaining to DLDD. Other decisions concerned the review of the implementation of the Convention and the mid-term evaluation of the 10-year strategic plan and framework to enhance the implementation of the Convention (2008–2018) (The Strategy), the governance and institutional arrangements of the Global Mechanism, collaboration with the Global Environment Facility, the General Assembly High-level Meeting to address DLDD, and the preparation for Rio+20.

10. During the high-level segment of COP 10, three interactive round tables were organized around topical, relevant themes which attracted high-level participation. The first round table discussed the theme: “DLDD and food security: Preserving the resource base for our food security”; the second round table took up the theme “UNCCD in the context of Rio+20: Addressing DLDD as a cornerstone of the Green Economy”, while the final round table addressed the theme: “Harnessing science and knowledge for combating DLDD: The path to improvement”.

11. A major innovation in the UNCCD process was the submission, by the Republic of Korea, of the “Changwon initiative” aimed at furthering the implementation of the Convention and The Strategy. The COP welcomed the efforts of the Government of the Republic of Korea in submitting this initiative and noted its potential to enhance efforts being made by country Parties through action programmes to address DLDD.

4. Consideration of desertification, land degradation and drought by the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development

12. Rio+20 devoted a great deal of attention to desertification, land degradation and drought. In its outcome document titled “the future we want”, Heads of State and Government and high-level representatives attending the Conference recognized the economic and social significance of good land management, including soil, and particularly its contribution to economic growth, biodiversity, sustainable agriculture and food security, eradicating poverty, women’s empowerment, addressing climate change and improving water availability.

13. Stressing the global dimension of DLDD challenges, they recognized the need for urgent action to reverse land degradation. In view of this, world leaders undertook to strive to achieve a land degradation neutral world in the context of sustainable development. Further, they reaffirmed their resolve under the UNCCD to take coordinated action nationally, regionally and internationally to monitor land degradation globally. They also undertook to restore degraded lands in arid, semi-arid and dry sub-humid areas.

14. They resolved to support and strengthen implementation of the UNCCD and The Strategy, including through mobilizing adequate, predictable and timely financial resources. The Conference noted the importance of mitigating the effects of DLDD in order to contribute to sustainable development and poverty eradication, including by preserving and developing oases, restoring degraded lands, improving soil quality and improving water management. In this regard, the Conference encouraged and recognized the importance of partnerships and initiatives for the safeguarding of land resources. It also encouraged capacity-building, extension training programmes and scientific studies and initiatives aimed at deepening understanding and raising awareness of the economic, social and environmental benefits of sustainable land management policies and practices.

15. With regard to the science and policy interface, the Conference took note of the decision of COP 10 to establish an ad hoc working group, taking into account regional balance, to discuss specific options for the provision of scientific advice to its Parties.

16. 16. Expressing deep concern regarding the devastating consequences of cyclical drought and famine in Africa, in particular in the Horn of Africa and the Sahel region, the Conference called for urgent action through short, medium and long-term measures at all levels, and reiterated the need for cooperation through the sharing of information at the global, regional and subregional levels regarding climate and weather as well as regarding forecasting and early-warning systems relating to DLDD and to dust storms and sandstorms. In this regard, the Conference invited States and relevant organizations to cooperate in the sharing of related information and forecasting and early-warning systems.

5. Towards synergistic action on the ground to achieve global goals in preserving biodiversity, combating desertification/land degradation and addressing climate change

17. In the context of Rio+20, the Executive Secretaries of the three Rio Conventions and the current Presidents of the respective Conferences of the Parties held a breakfast round table to discuss ways and means of generating synergies in national implementation and in support of sustainable development. In a joint statement, the top officials of the three Conventions emphasized the need for concrete, concerted, simple and attainable solutions in order to achieve a truly sustainable future. They called on countries and Governments to set sustainable development goals, including achievable targets with regard to land sustainability, maintaining biodiversity and tackling climate change. They urged world leaders to move towards a land degradation and carbon neutral world and to stop the loss of biodiversity.

18. The Government of Brazil also hosted, at the end of the third preparatory committee meeting for Rio+20, a special commemorative event to celebrate the twentieth anniversary of the three Rio Conventions. The ceremony featured the Brazilian Government, the Secretary-Generals of the 1992 United Nations Conference on Environment and Development and Rio+20, the Executive Secretaries and representatives of the three Rio Conventions, and several other dignitaries.

6. Global observance of the 2012 World Day to Combat Desertification

19. In its resolution 49/115, the General Assembly proclaimed 17 June World Day to Combat Desertification and Drought. It invited all States to devote the World Day to promoting public awareness of desertification and the effects of drought and awareness of the implementation of the Convention. This year, 32 governmental, intergovernmental and civil society organizations sent observance event reports to the secretariat.

20. In his message on that occasion the United Nations Secretary-General stressed that global efforts to halt and reverse land degradation were integral to creating “the future we want”. He pointed out that sustainable land use was a prerequisite for lifting billions from poverty, enabling food and nutrition security and safeguarding water supplies and, indeed, constituted a cornerstone of sustainable development. Emphasizing that the people who live in the world’s arid lands, which occupy more than 40 per cent of our planet’s land area, are among the poorest and most vulnerable to hunger, he indicated that the Millennium Development Goals could not be achieved by 2015 without preserving the soils on which these people’s subsistence depends. Without healthy soil, he pointed out, life on Earth will be unsustainable.

21. The global observance of the World Day was held at the Rio Conventions Pavilion in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, to coincide with Rio+20. The one-day event received partnership support from United Nations agencies, regional entities, Governments, civil society organizations and the private sector, which was indispensable not only for the organization of the event but also for awareness-raising publicity.

22. The high-level round table deliberations by heads of agencies was particularly attractive to the audience, as the spontaneous debate among the panellists on the theme, “What

sustainable land and soil management can do to achieve the Millennium Development Goals” triggered further substantive interactions between the panellists and the audience following the round table discussions.

23. The announcement of the Land for Life Award winners was made during the evening reception.

7. Land for Life Award

24. The UNCCD inaugural Land for Life Award, an initiative to recognize achievement in sustainable land management, was launched at COP 10 in Changwon, the Republic of Korea, by the secretariat and partners. The application process generated 110 submissions from all over the world and in all six United Nations languages. The applications were screened with assistance from expert volunteers associated with the International Union for the Conservation of Nature, and 15 semi-finalists were selected. A jury of eminent leaders in sustainable land management chose three winners, whose names were announced on 17 June in Rio de Janeiro at events marking World Day to Combat Desertification. The first prize was awarded to Sustainable Organic Integrated Livelihoods (SOIL) in Haiti, which will receive US\$ 40,000. Two second place winners will each receive US\$ 30,000: the Turkish Foundation for Combating Soil Erosion (TEMA) in Turkey, and Conservation Efforts for Community Development (CECOD) in Uganda. A recognition gala for the winners will take place in Doha, Qatar, in December 2012. The award cycle for 2013 will open in October 2012.

8. United Nations Decade for Deserts and the Fight against Desertification (2010–2020)

25. The 64th session of the United Nations General Assembly, by its resolution A/64/201, declared the decade 2010–2020 as the United Nations Decade for Deserts and the Fight against Desertification (UNDDD) and designated the UNCCD secretariat as the focal point of the Decade, in collaboration with the United Nations Environment Programme, the United Nations Development Programme, the International Fund for Agricultural Development and other relevant United Nations bodies, including the Department of Public Information of the United Nations Secretariat.

26. During this reporting period, the UNDDD Inter-Agency Task Force (IATF) for the preparation of activities to observe UNDDD was further expanded to 13 entities. IATF organized a global observance event in Tinerkouk, Algeria, hosted by the Government of Algeria (15–16 December 2011). Other observance events were held in Havana (4 July 2011), Addis Ababa (22 July 2011), Changwon, the Republic of Korea (18 October 2011), Paris (9 November 2011), and Las Cruces, the United States of America (12 July 2012). The events in Havana, Addis Ababa and Paris were held in conjunction with the regional launch of the United Nations Decade on Biodiversity. In addition to the above, two side events were organized by IATF on the margins of COP 10 in Changwon, the Republic of Korea, and the 17th session of

the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) in Durban, South Africa.

27. COP 10 took the decision to advance and strengthen existing initiatives under UNDDD by, among other activities, collating “a list of events, actions and activities and from these to develop a programme in support of the United Nations Decade for Deserts and the Fight against Desertification” (paragraph 1, decision 31/COP.10).

9. Land Day 5

28. “Land Day” aims to heighten the attention of policy makers to land issues of relevance to the UNCCD. It is designed as a one-day event held in parallel with strategic intergovernmental multilateral environmental meetings, and is organized jointly by the UNCCD and partner organizations. Land Day 5 was held on 6 December 2011 during the 17th session of the Conference of the Parties of the UNFCCC in Durban, South Africa, in partnership with the Department of Environmental Affairs, Republic of South Africa.

29. Building on the momentum of global political attention for efforts to combat DLDD generated by the United Nations General Assembly High-level Meeting on desertification, as well as on the outcomes of COP 10 held in Changwon, Republic of Korea, where Parties for the first time discussed the possibility of a global target of zero net land degradation, Land Day 5 advocated that bold action on land and soil, at the global scale, should be endorsed by Rio+20.

30. Land Day 5 received cabinet level approval as an official South African governmental event during the 17th session of the Conference of the Parties of the UNFCCC. The Deputy President of South Africa, H.E. Mr. Kgalema Motlanthe, delivered the keynote address at the opening.

31. The event also marked the start of a campaign to engage the public in the Rio+20 agenda on moving to a land degradation neutral world.

10. The High-level Meeting on National Drought Policies

32. Drought is widely recognized as a slow creeping natural hazard that occurs as a consequence of natural climatic variability. In recent years, concern has grown worldwide that droughts may be increasing in frequency and severity given changing climatic conditions. The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change Fourth Assessment Report (IPCC, 2007) stated that the world has indeed been more drought-prone during the past 25 years. Responses to drought in most parts of the world are generally reactive in terms of crisis management and are known to be slow, poorly coordinated and not well integrated with overall socio-economic and environmental policies. Consequently, the economic, social and environmental impacts of drought have increased significantly worldwide. Because of their long-term socio-economic impacts, droughts are by far the most damaging of all natural disasters.

33. In order to address the issue of drought, the secretariats of the UNCCD and the World Meteorological Organization, in collaboration with a number of United Nations agencies and relevant United Nations offices, international and regional organizations and key national agencies, plan to organize and hold a “High-level Meeting on National Drought Policy (HMNDP)” in Geneva in March 2013. It is envisaged that HMNDP will provide practical insight into useful science-based actions for addressing the key drought issues being considered by Governments and the private sector under the UNCCD and the various strategies to cope with drought as a platform towards the development of National Drought Management Policies (NDMP). It is further expected that national governments will develop and adopt NDMP that engender cooperation and coordination at all levels of government and increase the capacity needed to cope with extended periods of water scarcity in the event of drought.

C. Observations and possible General Assembly action

34. Since the General Assembly convened on 20 September 2011 for the High-level meeting on the theme: “Addressing desertification, land degradation and drought in the context of sustainable development and poverty eradication” and the consideration of these core issues by the recently concluded Rio+20, the international community has increased the attention it pays to issues which had previously been given a lower profile, including in the current debate on global sustainability. This change in emphasis is key to addressing global policy challenges.

35. In fact, by 2030 the demand for food is likely to increase by 50 per cent, for energy by 45 per cent and for water by 30 per cent. Each of these demands will claim more land. This will lead to more deforestation and environmental degradation unless we commit to restoring degraded land. Avoiding land degradation while restoring degraded land is crucial in order for the rural poor to achieve energy, food and water security.

36. In Rio de Janeiro, world leaders recognized the need for urgent action to reverse land degradation. They agreed to strive to achieve a land degradation neutral world in the context of sustainable development and resolved to take coordinated action nationally, regionally and internationally to monitor land degradation globally. They also undertook to restore degraded lands in arid, semi-arid and dry sub-humid areas. These policy developments are unprecedented. They require concerted action if they are to be made operational.

37. In this respect, the General Assembly may wish to endorse these commitments and to invite member States and the United Nations system to implement them as a matter of priority, with a view to accelerating the pace and scale of sustainable development.

III. Report of the Executive Secretary of the Convention on Biological Diversity

A. Introduction

1. In its resolution 66/202 of 22 December 2011, the United Nations General Assembly invited the Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) to report to the General Assembly, at its sixty-seventh session, on the work of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention. The present report is submitted in response to that invitation, with a focus on issues of relevance and interest to the General Assembly.

B. Preparation for the eleventh meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity, to be held in Hyderabad, India, from 8 to 19 October 2012

2. Since the last report to the General Assembly in July 2011, three meetings of the Bureau of the tenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity were held in Montreal, on 30 October 2011, 5 April 2012 and 6 May 2012.

3. To prepare for the eleventh meeting of the Conference of the Parties (COP 11), scheduled to be held in Hyderabad, India, from 8 to 19 October 2012, a number of meetings, including of the subsidiary bodies of the Convention, have taken place.

4. The seventh meeting of the Ad Hoc Open-ended Inter-Sessional Working Group on Article 8(j) (traditional knowledge) was held from 31 October to 4 November 2011 in Montreal. Approximately 250 participants attended, including representatives from governments, intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations, indigenous and local communities, business and academia. The Working Group adopted eight recommendations, inter alia on progress in implementation of Article 8(j) and related provisions; benefit-sharing from, and unlawful appropriation of, traditional knowledge; development of elements of sui generis systems for the protection of traditional knowledge; mechanisms to promote the effective participation of indigenous and local communities (ILCs) in the work of the Convention; customary sustainable use as a new major component of the Article 8(j) work programme; development of indicators relevant for traditional knowledge and customary sustainable use; recommendations from the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues (UNPFII) and terms of reference for the development of guidelines on repatriation. These will be forwarded to COP 11 for decision.

5. The fifteenth meeting of the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice (SBSTTA) of the Convention on Biological Diversity took place from 7 to 11 November 2011, in Montreal. Over 400 representatives from governments, intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations, indigenous and local communities, business and academia attended the meeting. SBSTTA 15 adopted eight recommendations that

will be submitted for decision to COP 11. The recommendations addressed, inter alia, a capacity-building strategy for the Global Taxonomy Initiative (GTI); indicators and other tools for assessing progress in implementing the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020; ecosystem restoration; proposals to address gaps in international standards regarding invasive alien species (IAS); implications of changes in the water cycle and freshwater resources for the implementation of the work programmes on inland water biodiversity; the sustainable use of biodiversity; Arctic biodiversity; and ways and means to improve SBSTTA effectiveness.

6. The sixteenth meeting of the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological took place from 30 April to 5 May 2012, in Montreal. Almost 500 representatives from governments, intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations, indigenous and local communities, business and academia attended the meeting. SBSTTA 16 adopted 15 recommendations that will be submitted for decision to COP 11. The recommendations addressed, inter alia, ways and means to improve the effectiveness of SBSTTA and options for collaboration with the Intergovernmental science-policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES); the preparation of the fourth edition of the Global Biodiversity Outlook; island biodiversity; marine and coastal biodiversity; REDD+ safeguards for biodiversity; biodiversity and climate change; geoengineering; the Global Strategy for Plant Conservation; the Global Taxonomy Initiative; new and emerging issues relating to the conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity; biofuels and biodiversity; incentive measures; and collaborative work on biodiversity and agriculture, forests, and biodiversity and health.

7. The fourth meeting of the Working Group on Review of Implementation of the Convention (WGRI 4) was held from 7 to 11 May 2012 in Montreal. It adopted eight recommendations which will be submitted to COP 11. The recommendations addressed, inter alia, the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 and the Aichi Biodiversity Targets; the Strategy for Resource Mobilization; the Financial Mechanism (Global Environment Facility, GEF); a message to the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio+20); cooperation with other conventions; biodiversity for poverty eradication and development; engagement of business; and South-South cooperation. WGRI-4 specifically discussed ways to achieve on the necessary conditions, i.e. robust baselines and effective reporting framework in order to provide the Conference of the Parties with the appropriate and adequate information/data as a basis for setting targets to mobilize resources for achieving the 2020 Aichi Biodiversity Targets.

8. The Nagoya Protocol on Access to Genetic Resources and the Fair and Equitable Sharing of Benefits Arising from their Utilization (Nagoya Protocol), which was adopted at the tenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties (COP 10) in Nagoya, Japan, was open for signature from 2 February 2011 to 1 February 2012. By the closing date the Nagoya Protocol had received 92 signatures. It will enter into force 90 days after the deposit of the fiftieth instrument of ratification, acceptance, approval or accession. As of 12 July 2012, the following five Parties had ratified the Protocol: Gabon, Jordan, Mexico, Rwanda, and the Seychelles.

9. An Open-ended Ad Hoc Intergovernmental Committee for the Nagoya Protocol was established by COP 10 to prepare for the first meeting of the Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Protocol. The first meeting of the Committee was held from 6 to 10 June 2011, while the second meeting was held from 2 to 6 July 2012.

10. The first meeting of the Committee considered, inter alia, the following issues: modalities of operation of the Access and Benefit-sharing (ABS) Clearing-House; capacity-building and development related to the implementation of the Nagoya Protocol; measures to raise awareness of the importance of genetic resources and traditional knowledge associated with genetic resources; and cooperative procedures and institutional mechanisms to promote compliance with the Protocol and to address cases of non-compliance.

11. Since the first meeting of the Parties to the Nagoya Protocol would not be held concurrently with COP 11, in view of the fact that the Nagoya Protocol has not yet entered into force, the Committee also recommended that COP reconvene the Committee for a third meeting to address outstanding issues of its work plan in preparation for the first meeting of the Parties to the Protocol. The Committee also made additional recommendations to COP, inter alia on guidance to GEF regarding programme priorities for the sixth replenishment period, the Nagoya Protocol Implementation Fund and support for activities prior to the entry into force of the Nagoya Protocol; resource mobilization, for the implementation of the Nagoya Protocol, as part of the review of the implementation of the Strategy for Resource Mobilization, including the establishment of targets; capacity-building and development initiatives as well as awareness-raising activities to support ratification, early entry into force and implementation of the Nagoya Protocol; intersessional activities to be carried out in preparation for the first meeting of the Parties to the Protocol to address outstanding issues related to the need for and modalities of a global, multilateral, benefit-sharing mechanism; the establishment of the pilot phase of the ABS Clearing-House; and the development of a strategic framework for capacity-building and development under the Nagoya Protocol.

12. In addition, at COP 11, Parties will be invited to take stock of progress made towards ratification of the Nagoya Protocol. Outcomes of the Committee also included direct recommendations to the first meeting of the Parties to the Protocol calling for adoption of an awareness-raising strategy for the Nagoya Protocol.

13. The Secretariat has also been carrying out a series of awareness-raising and capacity-building activities to support the early ratification and entry into force of the Nagoya Protocol, with support provided by GEF and the Japan Biodiversity Fund. A GEF medium-sized project of US\$ 1 million is being executed by the Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity. The Japan Fund is providing co-financing for this GEF project. The objective of the project is to assist GEF-eligible CBD Parties to prepare for the ratification and the early entry into force of the Nagoya Protocol through targeted awareness raising and capacity-building activities. The project will run until end of March 2013. Activities carried out under this project have included the following: capacity-building workshops; the development of awareness-raising material; targeted briefings for Parliamentarians, decision makers and

other stakeholders; the inclusion of components to raise awareness on the Nagoya Protocol workshops on national biodiversity strategies and action plans (NBSAPs).

C. Preparation for the sixth meeting of the Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety, to be held in Hyderabad, India, from 1 to 5 October 2012

14. As of 11 July 2011, 163 Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity were also Parties to the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety. The Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Protocol, the governing body of the Protocol, will hold its sixth meeting (COP-MOP 6) from 1 to 5 October 2012 in Hyderabad, India, back-to-back with the eleventh meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention.

15. COP-MOP 6 will consider, *inter alia*, the progress made to date in the implementation of the Protocol, based on information received through national reports and recommendations of an ad hoc technical expert group meeting that was held in May 2012, which reviewed the status of implementation of the core elements of the Protocol. By the end of 2011, 143 Parties to the Protocol had submitted their second national report on the implementation of their obligations under the Protocol.

16. COP-MOP 6 will also consider the status of signature and ratification of the Nagoya – Kuala Lumpur Supplementary Protocol on Liability and Redress to the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety. The Supplementary Protocol, which provides international rules and procedures in the field of liability and redress relating to damage resulting from transboundary movements of living modified organisms, was opened for signature by the Secretary-General, the Depository, from 7 March 2011 to 6 March 2012. By the closing date, the Supplementary Protocol had received 51 signatures. As of 11 July 2012, two Parties to the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety had deposited their instruments of ratification of the Supplementary Protocol. The Supplementary Protocol will enter into force on the ninetieth day after the date of deposit of the fortieth instrument of ratification, acceptance, approval or accession.

17. COP-MOP 6 will further consider the work undertaken in the area of risk assessment and risk management of living modified organisms. In that regard, it will consider the “Guidance on Risk Assessment of Living Modified Organisms”, as well as the revised training manual, “Risk Assessment of Living Modified Organisms”, which have been finalized by the Ad Hoc Technical Expert Group on Risk Assessment and Risk Management.

18. COP-MOP 6 will have before it recommendations from the Compliance Committee on how to promote Compliance under the Protocol. It will review the conclusions and recommendations of the workshop that was conducted in November 2011, to look into issues pertaining to socio-economic considerations that Parties may take into account when importing living modified organisms. COP-MOP 6 will also review the activities that have been undertaken during the reporting period and the outcomes in the areas of information exchange through the Biosafety Clearing-House, public awareness, education and participation, capacity-

building, financial mechanism and resources, and cooperation with other organizations, conventions and initiatives.

D. International Day for Biodiversity and United Nations Decade on Biodiversity

19. The International Day for Biological Diversity was commemorated on 22 May 2012 in more than 55 countries. The global observance took place in Chennai, India on the theme of marine biodiversity. In his message on the occasion, the Secretary-General of the United Nations highlighted the fact that oceans covered almost three quarters of the surface area of the globe and supported a rich tapestry of life on which human communities relied. Yet, despite its importance, marine biodiversity was threatened by habitat loss, pollution, overfishing, the impacts of climate change, ocean acidification and other factors. The Secretary-General called for action to improve the management and conservation of oceans through initiatives taken by the United Nations, Governments and other partners to curb overfishing, expand marine protected areas and reduce ocean pollution and the impact of climate change so as to achieve the Aichi Biodiversity Target of conserving 10 per cent of marine and coastal areas by 2020 – a crucial step in protecting marine biodiversity for “the future we want”. The Executive Secretary, in his statement, highlighted initiatives such the Sustainable Ocean Initiative and the Green Wave initiative. The latter is designed to raise awareness and encourage the involvement of children and youth in action for biodiversity by planting a tree at 10 a.m. local time, creating a “green wave” starting in the Far East and travelling west around the world. Over 4000 groups involving tens of thousands of children and youth from over 70 countries have participated in the initiative since 2008.

20. The global launch of the United Nations Decade on Biodiversity was organized in Japan from 17 to 19 December 2011. A number of regional launches were also organized, including several in conjunction with the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification, since the United Nations Decade to Combat Desertification runs in parallel with the United Nations Decade on Biodiversity. These included the regional launches for both decades for the Caribbean, organized in Cuba (July 2011), and for the African region, in Ethiopia (July 2011). The regional launch for the United Nations Decade on Biodiversity in Europe was organized in Geneva (August 2011). A number of national launch events were also organized in Ecuador (July 2011), India (May 2011), Dominican Republic (August 2011), Philippines (May 2011), Fiji (October 2011), Republic of Korea (October 2011), Norway (November 2011), South Africa (December 2011), and Ghana (March 2012).

21. A memorandum of cooperation was also signed, on 20 September 2011, with 27 international agencies, organizations and multilateral environmental conventions, for activities to be organized under the aegis of the United Nations Decade on Biodiversity (Decade) in support of the achievement of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 and its Aichi Biodiversity Targets. Several agencies have organized events under the Decade, including UNESCO, which organized an event on the margins of the UNESCO General Conference (November 2011) to mark their new biodiversity strategy and its contribution to the Decade.

Other joint activities with partners included joint interviews and webcasts on the Decade in partnership with GEF.

22. A number of tools and platforms have also been put in place for outreach and advocacy on the United Nations Decade on Biodiversity. These include a Facebook page, a Twitter feed and a YouTube channel.⁴

E. Participation in and contribution to the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (UNCSD)

23. The Executive Secretary participated in the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio+20) and addressed the Round Table held on 21 June 2012 on “Looking at the way forward in implementing the expected outcomes of the Conference”. In his statement he drew attention to the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 (endorsed in the UNCSD outcome), and stressed that its implementation would contribute to effective follow-up of the UNCSD outcomes in a range of areas including oceans, food security, and adaptation to unavoidable climate change. In this context, he stressed the centrality of biodiversity to the development of Sustainable Development Indicators, since it was an important element underpinning all three dimensions of sustainable development, and a truly green economy.

24. A special event to commemorate the twentieth anniversary of the 1992 Earth Summit, that recognized the contribution of the Rio Conventions, was held on conclusion of the third preparatory committee meeting of UNCSD on 15 June 2012. In his statement, the Executive Secretary stressed that the establishment of the CBD at the Earth Summit in 1992, arose from recognition that the Earth’s biological diversity, and the essential ecosystem services that it provided, formed the basis of the health, food security, cultures, wealth, and well-being of human society and that its maintenance was central to the achievement of sustainable development. Considerable progress had been made with the development of programmes of work to address the management of biodiversity in all the Earth’s biomes, including through national biodiversity strategies and action plans. Several Protocols had also been evolved, including the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety and the Nagoya Protocol, the latter adopted to give effect to the Convention’s third objective. He emphasized that a number of practical measures had also been taken whereby protected areas had been extended to cover over 13 per cent of the Earth’s terrestrial area. Nevertheless, for biodiversity to be safeguarded it was imperative that the Strategic Plan and the Aichi Targets were implemented on an urgent basis.

25. The outcome of UNCSD also recognized the crucial role of biodiversity in ensuring sustainable development and called for greater efforts to implement the Convention on Biological Diversity. It reiterated the international commitment to the achievement of the three objectives of the Convention on Biological Diversity and affirmed the importance of implementing the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020, and its twenty Aichi targets.

⁴ www.facebook.com/UNBiodiversity, www.twitter.com/UNBiodiversity, www.youtube.com/UNBiodiversity.

Noting the adoption of a new legal instrument on access and benefit-sharing for genetic resources, the Nagoya Protocol, Parties to the Convention were invited to ratify or accede to the Protocol, so as to ensure its entry into force at the earliest possible opportunity. UNCSD outcomes also recognized the need for resources and therefore welcomed the strategy for resource mobilization in support of the achievement of the three objectives of the Convention on Biological Diversity.

26. Collaboration with the other Rio Conventions was strengthened through organization of the Rio Conventions Pavilion for the duration of the third preparatory committee meeting and UNCSD. Significant joint activities undertaken in the Pavilion included a full day of commemorative activities to mark the twentieth anniversary of the Rio Conventions. A joint statement was issued on the occasion in which the Executive Secretaries of the three Rio Conventions committed their secretariats to tackle sustainable development challenges through prioritized cross-cutting themes.

27. Collaboration with other United Nations agencies and entities was also strengthened through participation in and showcasing of joint activities with the objective of contributing to UNCSD. Particularly notable was the release of a discussion paper entitled “Our Planet, Our Health, Our Future”, produced jointly by the World Health Organization (WHO) and the secretariats of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD). The discussion paper was launched with the participation of the Director-General of WHO and the Executive Secretary of CBD.

F. Partnerships and outreach

28. Outreach to and engagement of major groups and stakeholders continued during the period under consideration. Building on decisions of COP 10, the first meeting of the Global Partnership for Business and Biodiversity took place in Tokyo on 15-16 December 2011. The full online Global Platform for Business and Biodiversity website was launched at the meeting. Considerable work has also been undertaken to evaluate various standards so as to ascertain where gaps and other inconsistencies may exist. Preparations are also currently under way for a number of activities envisaged for engagement of business at COP 11, including a High-Level Business/Ministerial Event, the second meeting of the Global Partnership and a Sustainability Solutions Marketplace.

G. Recommendations

29. The General Assembly, at its sixty-seventh session, may wish, inter alia, to:

(a) Stress the importance of the eleventh meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity, to be held in Hyderabad, India from 8 to 19 October 2012, including its high-level segment scheduled for 17 to 19 October

2012, since this provides a unique opportunity to assess the progress achieved in the implementation of the Nagoya biodiversity outcomes;

(b) Call on all United Nations departments, agencies, funds and programmes and regional commissions to fully support and implement the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020, as appropriate;

(c) Call on donors to finance the implementation of decisions adopted at the tenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity and at the fifth meeting of the Parties to the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety;

(d) Invite all relevant United Nations departments, agencies, funds and programmes and regional commissions to contribute to the achievement of the objectives of the United Nations Decade on Biodiversity for 2011-2020;

(e) Encourage governments and all relevant stakeholders to contribute to and support the achievement of the objectives of the United Nations Decade on Biodiversity 2011-2020;

(f) Urge States that have not yet done so, to ratify or accede to the Convention and thereby make participation universal;

(g) Urge Parties to the Convention to ratify or accede to the Nagoya Protocol on Access to Genetic Resources and the Fair and Equitable Sharing of Benefits Arising from their Utilization at the earliest opportunity so as to ensure its early entry into force and its implementation;

(h) Call upon Governments to continue to contribute to the conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity by supporting the objective of the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety and promoting safety in the development and application of modern biotechnology;

(i) Urge Parties to the Convention that have not yet ratified or acceded to the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety to do so as soon as possible;

(j) Urge Parties to the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety to ratify or accede to the Nagoya – Kuala Lumpur Supplementary Protocol on Liability and Redress in order to ensure its early entry into force and its implementation.
