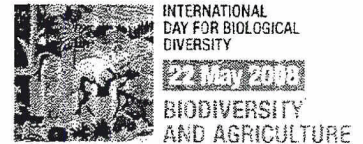




Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity



Ref.: SCBD/STTM/JL/61326

31 March 2008

Dear Mr. Mikulka,

Reference is made to the letter of Mr. Nicolas Michel, Under-Secretary-General for Legal Affairs, dated 17 January 2008, inviting the Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity to provide additional information to the Secretary-General's report on oceans and the law of the sea, to be presented to the General Assembly at its sixty-third session. Additional information request is concerned with *"the availability of assistance to and measures that may be taken by developing States, as well as coastal African States, to realize the benefits of sustainable and effective development of marine resources and uses of the oceans within the limits of national jurisdiction"*.

I would like to refer to our previous contribution sent on 17 January, in response to the letter of Mr. Michel dated 11 December 2007. In this contribution, we indicated the following activities and outputs of the Secretariat:

- Options for preventing and mitigating the impacts of some activities to selected seabed habitats;
- Synthesis and review of the best available scientific studies on priority areas for biodiversity conservation in marine areas beyond national jurisdiction;
- Development of an interactive Map and review of spatial database containing information on marine areas beyond the limits of national jurisdiction; and
- Ecological criteria and biogeographic classification systems for marine areas in need of protection.

Please be advised that the above activities and outputs were undertaken in order to address the decision of the Conference of Parties VIII/21, paragraph 9, in which the Parties emphasized the urgent need, especially in developing countries, to build capacities relating to deep seabed biodiversity, including taxonomic capacity; to promote scientific and technical cooperation and technology transfer; and to exchange information regarding activities undertaken within the deep seabed beyond the limits of national jurisdiction, and thereby are relevant to the subject matter.

In addition to the previous contribution, I am pleased to send you, in attachment, further information on the subject matter.

Yours sincerely,

Ahmed Djoghlaif
Executive Secretary

Attachment

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Additional Contribution of the Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity to the Secretary-General's report on oceans and the law of the sea

The following refers specifically to the subject matters requested in the letter dated 17 January 2008:

Information on research activities related to deep-seabed genetic resources beyond the limits of national jurisdiction

1. In paragraph 4 of decision VIII/21, the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity invited Parties, other Governments, research institutions and other relevant organizations to make available information on research activities related to deep seabed genetic resources beyond the limits of national jurisdiction and to ensure that the results of such marine scientific research and analysis, when available, are effectively disseminated through international channels, as appropriate, in accordance with international law, including the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea. In this decision, the Conference of the Parties requested the Executive Secretary, in collaboration with relevant organizations, to compile and further disseminate such information through the clearing-house mechanism.

2. In response, Parties, other Governments, relevant research institutions and other relevant organizations were invited (by Notification 2006-069, dispatched on 23 June 2006) to provide information on their research activities for posting on the website of the Convention on Biological Diversity. Responses have been received to date from the following Parties, other Governments and organizations: Poland, Thailand, European Union, United States of America and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO). Compiled information has been posted on the website of the Convention on Biological Diversity (see <http://www.cbd.int/marine/seabed.shtml>). A second call for the submission of information was made on 21 December 2007 by Notification 2007-166, and the website will continue to be updated as further information is collected.

Programme of Work on Island Biological Diversity

3. At its eighth meeting held in Curitiba, Brazil, from 20 to 31 March 2006, the Conference of the Parties adopted the island biodiversity programme of work (decision VIII/1, annex). Section C of the programme of work on "supporting activities of the Secretariat" refers to (a) the development by the Secretariat of a list of partners for the



implementation of the programme of work, (b) disseminate information, (c) encourage capacity-building, (d) liaise with relevant conventions and organizations, and (e) set up a web portal on island biodiversity. An initial islands web portal was created in 2007 (<http://www.cbd.int/island/>), including public information, case-studies and other resources. A list of potential partners for each of the goals of the programme of work was compiled in early 2007.

4. In paragraph 22 of decision VIII/1, the Conference of the Parties requested the Parties to regularly monitor progress in implementing this programme of work and in meeting the global targets and report to the Conference of the Parties, taking into account the special capacity constraints of small island developing States. The programme of work in the annex of decision VIII/1 indicates that national biodiversity strategies and action plans (NBSAPs) incorporating the island biodiversity programme of work should take into account the ecosystem approach as the logical planning and management tool for integral island policies.

5. On 19 October 2007, the Secretariats of the Convention on Biological Diversity and the Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP) co-organized a preliminary meeting in Alotau, Papua New Guinea, to discuss a joint regional capacity-building workshop on implementing NBSAPs and mainstreaming biodiversity in Pacific islands and island States.

6. Furthermore, in response to section C of the programme of work, the Secretariat organized the Workshop on the Ecosystem Approach and Customary Practice in Protected Areas in Small Islands in Bangkok, Thailand, from 12 to 16 December 2006. The workshop was developed jointly with the United Nations University Institute of Advanced Studies (UNU-IAS) and the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN). The Workshop was hosted by the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment of the Government of Thailand and made possible through the generous financial support of the Government of the Netherlands and the Christensen Fund. The workshop report can be found at: <http://www.cbd.int/doc/meeting.aspx?mtg=WSEAPASI-01>.
