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Item 12 (c) of the provisional agenda

Cooperation with relevant international organizations

Cooperation with other conventions, scientific organizations and United Nations bodies

Views on the paper on options for enhanced cooperation among the three Rio Conventions

Submissions from Parties

1. The Subsidiary Body for Scientific and Technological Advice, at its twenty-third session, took note of the oral report by the secretariat on the outcome of the consideration by the Joint Liaison Group (JLG) of the paper on options for enhanced cooperation among the three Rio Conventions contained in document FCCC/SBSTA/2004/INF.19. It recalled that, in line with its conclusions at its twenty-first session, Parties are invited to submit to the secretariat, by 13 February 2006, their views on the options paper and on its consideration by the JLG, and requested the secretariat to compile those views into a miscellaneous document for consideration by the SBSTA at its twenty-fourth session (FCCC/SBSTA/2005/10, para. 106).

2. The secretariat has received seven such submissions. In accordance with the procedure for miscellaneous documents, these submissions are attached and reproduced* in the language in which they were received and without formal editing.

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

FCCC/SBSTA/2006/MISC.4

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* This submission is supported by Bulgaria, Romania, Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, and Serbia and Montenegro.

PAPER NO. 1: AUSTRALIA

Submission by Australia

**Options for enhanced cooperation among the three Rio Conventions
(FCCC/SBSTA/2005/L.26, FCCC/SBSTA/2004/INF.19)**

1. Australia welcomes the opportunity to comment on options for enhanced cooperation between the Rio Conventions and thanks the Secretariat for the useful discussion paper.

Principles for Effective Cooperation

2. Australia suggests the following as key guiding principles for greater cooperation between conventions:

- . Cooperation between conventions should focus on improving the efficiency of the work of convention bodies, secretariats and parties
 - it should streamline secretariat and meeting processes, including, as appropriate, by holding workshops back to back
 - the Joint Liaison Group has a useful role in promoting best practice secretariat processes, rationalisation of support services, acting as an information clearing house, and supporting outreach activities.
- . Enhanced cooperation between conventions should deliver savings, or at the least, aim to incur no additional costs
 - it should aim to not place extra time / travel burdens on secretariats, parties and national negotiating teams.
- . All cooperation must respect the individual mandates and independent legal status of each convention.
- . National level cooperation will often allow for the most efficient and effective coordination on implementation of commitments under each convention.

3. Following are comments, drawing on the above principles, on some of the specific options for cooperation discussed in FCCC/SBSTA/2004/INF.19.

Encouraging collaboration among national focal points

4. Australia endorses the suggestions for practical national level cooperation in paragraph 23 and 24.

5. The most efficient and effective cooperation on issues covered by the Rio Conventions is at the national implementation level. Cooperation at the national level allows parties to direct work programmes according to their national circumstances and reduces the danger of duplication of effort. National level coordination also ensures that the broader international mandates of the Rio Conventions are respected. Ideally cooperation at a national level should be through a needs driven bottom-up process rather than through any convention-based imposed process.

6. Australia is happy to share its experiences in practical national level work across Rio Conventions. This has included developing a National Climate Change and Biodiversity Action Plan (www.deh.gov.au/biodiversity/publications/nbccap/). By developing this locally we have been able to ensure it is tailored to Australia's specific needs and has appropriate implementation procedures.

Collaboration at the level of the convention bodies and secretariats

7. The Rio Conventions have clear and distinct mandates and varied membership. Paragraph 29 correctly identifies that any proposals for greater collaboration at the level of convention bodies would need to be pursued while respecting the individual mandates and the independent legal status of each convention. Australia considers existing mechanisms for cooperation between conventions work well. There are no clear gaps in cross-convention coordination. Expanding linkages at convention or secretariat level would increase bureaucracy and duplicate effort. Collaboration at convention level should not serve as a proxy for better national coordination by parties.

8. Paragraph 27 provides examples of cooperation to date at the convention body level. Australia supports the cooperation that has already occurred through the provision of expertise by one convention for the preparation of reports by others, and notes that the IPCC has previously prepared a report for the CBD. However, cooperation such as described in paragraph 27 (b) "consideration of the product of one convention by the scientific subsidiary of another" should only continue to be pursued as mandated by the parties of the relevant conventions. Consideration of products of one convention by another has the potential to undermine the mandate of the originating convention.

9. Australia considers that the recommendation at paragraph 28 (a) for "more systematic cross-participation, including through peer review" would need to be carefully considered to ensure any such moves would add value, not increase the burden on secretariats and national negotiating teams, and not call into question the independent mandates of the Rio Conventions.

10. Australia does not consider that joint thematic workshops with participation of representatives of all Rio Conventions as suggested at 28 (b) would necessarily contribute to the independent work of conventions or would be an appropriate use of resources. It is also unclear how conventions would be represented at such meetings and what form of mandate these representatives would hold. However, Australia believes meeting processes could be streamlined, including as appropriate pursuing organisational synergies by holding related workshops back to back to reduce secretariat and meeting costs and the travel burden on experts and Parties.

11. Australia considers that the current mechanisms for seeking scientific advice are working well. The IPCC serves the UNFCCC well and as appropriate has contributed advice to other conventions (such as the IPCC report on Biodiversity and Climate Change). As such Australia considers the recommendation at 28 (c) of coordinated requests for scientific advice for external bodies as unnecessary. Coordinated requests would be hard to develop, particularly in regard to prioritising requests. There is also a potential for a "lowest common denominator" effect with broad unfocussed requests, covering the diverse work of the Rio Conventions, draining limited resources.

Work of the Joint Liaison Group

12. The Joint Liaison Group has a key role in fostering appropriate cooperation between the secretariats of the conventions. This could include streamlining meeting processes, such as holding meetings back-to-back, to reduce meeting costs and travel burdens. The Joint Liaison Group could also serve as a practical information sharing clearing house on best practice approaches across Rio

Conventions. It also has a role to promote, as suggested in paragraph 38, improved information exchange and public outreach.

Cooperation on issues addressing climate change impacts, adaptation, mitigation, land degradation and the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity

13. Australia supports the recommendation in paragraph 32 for ensuring complementarity in the elaboration and implementation of the NBSAPS, NAPS, national communications and NAPAs, but only if efforts to promote complementarity do not delay national efforts under individual conventions. Promoting complementarity must be pursued only in the context of streamlining processes and reducing burdens on parties.

14. Australia is somewhat concerned about the tools suggested for pursuing synergy in paragraph 33. Given the varied membership, mandates, focuses and work programmes of the Rio Conventions a one size fits all approach would be both undesirable and difficult to implement. It is unclear how the ecosystem approach could apply across all Rio Conventions. Parties may however chose to use such approaches at the national implementation level if appropriate for their national circumstances. Other recommendations in paragraph 33 would seem to also be most appropriately pursued at the national level where parties are able to drive projects according to their national circumstances and promote coordination across national focal points without drawing into question the international mandates of the Rio Conventions. The CBD and the UNCCD do not have a legitimate role in greenhouse gas mitigation, which is clearly the work of the UNFCCC, and should focus any policy level cooperation with the UNFCCC only on adaptation to potential relevant impacts of climate change.

Options for further collaboration in specific cross-cutting areas

Capacity Building

15. Australia supports sharing capacity building experiences through the Joint Liaison Group and appropriate revenue neutral side events to promote best practice. Identifying opportunities for synergy at the national level would be best achieved through national level coordination as driven by national circumstances rather than imposed international bureaucratic processes.

Technology Transfer

16. Australia supports sharing information on technology transfer experiences to promote best practice procedures across the Rio Conventions. It is unclear what the benefit of “cooperation in the identification of technology of joint interest and relevance” would be, how this would be achieved, and how such work would be resourced.

Research and Monitoring/Systematic observation

17. Given the broad needs of the Rio Conventions Australia considers it would be difficult to harmonise observation needs and the provision of data across conventions. The suggestion at paragraph 37 (c) would appear to be a matter for GEOSS and its members, not the Rio Conventions.

Information exchange and outreach

18. Australia supports increased information exchange and cooperation on outreach activities, including improving the accessibility of internet based information. The Joint Liaison Group has an important role in promoting and managing this work.

Reporting

19. Australia supports common reporting guidelines, but only in the context of streamlining processes and reducing burdens on parties. Australia does not support the imposition of any additional unmandated reporting requirements on Parties. Australia notes that given the varied membership, mandates, focuses and work programmes of the Rio Conventions, a one size fits all approach would be difficult to implement. As such, the adoption of common terms and definitions across conventions would be difficult and perhaps counterproductive.

Financial resources

20. Prioritisation of GEF funding is a matter for the GEF and its members. With regard to climate change the current GEF focus on supporting the work of the UNFCCC should continue to take priority over daughter protocols and other conventions.

PAPER NO. 2: AUSTRIA ON BEHALF OF THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITY
AND ITS MEMBER STATES

**SUBMISSION BY AUSTRIA ON BEHALF OF THE EUROPEAN
COMMUNITY AND ITS MEMBER STATES**

This submission is supported by Bulgaria, Romania, Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Serbia and Montenegro

Vienna, 15 February 2006

Subject: Cooperation with other Conventions, scientific organisations and United Nations bodies
Views on the paper on options for enhanced cooperation among the three Rio Conventions contained in document FCCC/SBSTA/2004/INF.19 and on its consideration by the Joint Liaison Group

1. Introduction

Austria, on behalf of the European Community and its Member States welcomes the opportunity to submit, as requested by SBSTA 23 (FCCC/SBSTA/2005/L.26), views on the options paper for enhanced cooperation among the three Rio Conventions, presented in document FCCC/SBSTA/2004/INF.19.

The EU would like to reiterate its thanks to the government of Canada for facilitating an informal joint meeting between the SBSTTA of CBD and the SBSTA of UNFCCC, during the 23rd meeting of the SBSTA of UNFCCC in Montreal on 30th November 2005. The EU looks forward to future cooperation between the Convention Bodies to maximise mutual effectiveness and synergies.

As previously expressed in former submissions, it is important to the EU that cooperation between the UNFCCC, CBD and UNCCD is enhanced and we fully support the efforts being made to achieve this, in particular, through the work of the Joint Liaison Group.

The EU is of the view that regular and meaningful collaboration and efficient communication between the national focal points – both in Annex I and non-Annex I countries – is important to underpin effective cooperation at national and international level.

The options paper identifies three main areas for enhanced cooperation:

- options at national and international levels;
- options for specific thematic issues, e.g. adaptation, mitigation, sustainable use of bioenergy and;
- options for cross-cutting issues, such as capacity building, technology transfer, research, monitoring and observation, information exchange and outreach, reporting and financial resources.

2. View on options for enhanced cooperation among the three Rio Conventions

It is important that enhanced cooperation among the three Rio Conventions is achieved through an approach which identifies and builds upon existing activity, while recognising the many areas of interlinkages between the issues covered by these Conventions. Despite the clear importance of each of the proposed options, countries, convention bodies and secretariats may be forced to prioritise due to time, manpower and financial resources constraints. As a result, the EU believes that efforts to improve cooperation could focus initially on options relating to challenges at national and local levels, in addition to cross-cutting issues, as listed under section III C in the Annex of the options paper.

Cooperation at national and international level

Enhanced information exchange and communication at a national level (e.g. between national focal points) would provide an important basis for improving cooperation between the Conventions. In this respect, for some countries it might be useful to have methods and tools (checklists) for guiding their focal points. The aim is to achieve complementary outcomes during project and policy planning, implementation and monitoring, and to reduce overlapping work.

At the level of the Convention bodies and secretariats, enhanced cooperation could be promoted by reflecting the regular exchange of information between the secretariats – as referred to in Paragraph 26 of the option paper – more explicitly in the annotated agendas of the meetings of the Convention Bodies. Furthermore it could be useful to provide information of substantive interlinkages in the annotated agendas.

Elaboration of joint case studies and tools for impacts and risk assessments – as laid down in Paragraph 33 – and organisation of joint workshops with participation of representatives from the three Rio Conventions could facilitate the development of activities for the Five-year programme of work of the SBSTA on impacts, vulnerability and adaptation to climate change.

Collaboration in specific cross-cutting areas

Capacity-building

The EU recognises that terms used under the three Conventions are often literally the same but do not always have the same meaning or connotation. Furthermore, the processes and procedures under the three Conventions differ. The creation of a common glossary could help to enhance mutual knowledge about the three Conventions and facilitate their cooperation. In addition, a flow chart could be prepared to show how to set up, phrase and channel a request to another Convention.

The informal meeting between the SBSTTA of CBD and the SBSTA of UNFCCC, participants provided a well recognized platform to learn more about the work of the *Ad Hoc* Technical Expert Group (AHTEG) on Biodiversity and Adaptation to Climate Change. It could be useful to discuss the advice on the integration of biodiversity considerations in the implementation of adaptation activities to climate change after it has been published in the CBD Technical Series during the workshops envisaged under the Five-year programme of work of the SBSTA on

impacts, vulnerability and adaptation to climate change, or during a side event at a meeting of the SBSTA of UNFCCC.

Technology transfer

In future sessions of the COP and the SBSTA of UNFCCC technology transfer and technology will play an important role. The EU believes that collaboration in this field – as proposed in Paragraph 36 of the options paper – should be introduced in future discussions related to this topic.

Research and Monitoring/Systematic observation

The EU supports the suggestions in the options paper and would like to better explore them, in particular ensuring that future systems are linked and responsive to the needs of the Rio Conventions.

Information exchange and outreach

The EU supports the suggestions in Paragraph 38 of the options paper to develop certain data standards and protocols, and would like to discuss how to proceed with this.

Reporting

The EU believes that streamlining of reporting could contribute considerably to enhanced cooperation by reducing the work load of each Party. An example of important area in cooperation is the support given to the development of “Rio markers” to assist in the reporting of financial assistance to Developing Countries, as mentioned in Paragraph 20 of the options paper.

Nevertheless, taking into account the diversity of goals, schedules and guidelines related to the national reporting procedure within the different Conventions, the JLG should assess how this could be achieved.

The EU believes that the most promising areas of enhancing cooperation are

- to identify common areas of reporting, including possible overlaps of information and data,
- to encourage the use of common terms and definitions and
- to facilitate coordinated reporting to the three Conventions at the national level.

The EU is open to discuss the implementing procedures of the respective options and is willing to work actively with Parties, the JLG and other related bodies.

PAPER NO. 3: MEXICO

Cooperation with other Conventions, scientific organizations and United Nations bodies.

Submission by Mexico

Views on the paper on options for enhanced cooperation among the three Rio Conventions and on its consideration by the Joint Liaison Group

I. Mandate

The Subsidiary Body for Scientific and Technological Advice (SBSTA) at its twenty-first session, invited Parties to submit to the secretariat, by 13 February 2006, their views on the options paper and on its consideration by the JLG, and requested the secretariat to compile those views into a miscellaneous document for consideration by the SBSTA at its twenty-fourth session (May 2006).

II. Views on the paper on options for enhanced cooperation among the three Rio Conventions and on its consideration by the Joint Liaison Group

Since cooperation at the local level has been highlighted as being particularly relevant for fostering synergy among the conventions, because it is at this level that implementation of the conventions occurs, and as a result of the National Capacity Self-Assessment (NCSA) project-Mexico, we welcome this opportunity to provide views and submit the following inputs on the issue.

Adaptation, capacity building, and technology transfer have been identified as cross-cutting topics of relevance to the three Conventions by the Joint Liaison Group (JLG). However, Mexico considers that vulnerability and mitigation should also be considered as important axes of interconnection among the three Conventions, provided that:

- Vulnerability as “the degree to which a system is susceptible to, or unable to cope with, adverse effects of climate change, including climate variability and extremes” (IPCC Glossary, 2001), is a factor of different variables that include the biosphere and the geosphere interactions. At the same time, climate vulnerability has direct implications on land and biodiversity.
- Mitigation is the backbone of the GHG reduction and sequestration scheme proposed by the Kyoto Protocol. GHG reduction and sequestration activities are intimately linked to land use, land use-change and the functions of biodiversity. In this regard, it is proposed to take into account biodiversity and land degradation as assessment criteria to determine the sustainable development component of GHG emission reduction and sequestration projects.

Mexico recommends to strengthen the Joint Liaison Group, on each of the cross-cutting topics of relevance to the three Conventions, by establishing adequate channels for information transfer, facilitating the creation of joint work programs or plans, and addressing all relevant sides of each subject.

A number of elements and modalities for cooperation have been identified by the COPs and their subsidiary bodies of the Rio Conventions. These elements include the promotion of collaboration actions among the scientific subsidiary bodies to the Conventions (whose Officers are part of the JLG) and among the national focal points. Nevertheless, Mexico identifies the need to enhance communication between the Joint Liaison Group (JLG) and the national focal points. The creation of an *ad hoc* mechanism would strengthen current communication. In the same sense, subject to financial resources availability, the creation of a JLG website would help achieving better communication and outreach.

We echo the proposal of "Exchanging experience and lessons learned from the national capacity self-assessments". Such exchange of information could be facilitated through the deployment of a portal on the subject within the proposed JLG website.

Based on the NCSA-Mexico project results to date, emphasis should be made in aligning the implementation of the three Conventions with the fulfillment of the Millennium Development Goals. This will serve as a general structure to foster the simultaneous achievement of common objectives towards sustainability.

Actions at the local level require the integration of gender, civil society and indigenous groups as central actors in the implementation of joint strategies resulting from the three Conventions.

Mexico fully agrees with the options for further collaboration in specific cross-cutting areas of the report provided by the JLG. Following the results of the NCSA-Mexico we have identified some specific actions to foster synergy between the Rio Conventions at the local level in line with those provided by the JLG: joint establishment/harmonization of early warning and preparedness systems/actions, joint development of adaptation plans, harmonization of measuring criteria, joint creation/exchange of expert lists, statistics and information, shared use of common physical infrastructure.

PAPER NO. 4: NEW ZEALAND

New Zealand views on the options paper¹ for enhanced cooperation among the three Rio Conventions and its consideration by the Joint Liaison Group

General views

New Zealand is Party to all three of the Rio Conventions.

We support close coordination between those conventions, particularly where it leads to reduced duplication, increased efficiency and the best use of scarce resources.

New Zealand also supports the need to maintain the integrity of the individual Rio Conventions. That integrity should not be compromised through co-operation initiatives, for example through extending discussion into areas not covered in the initial mandate of a convention. Nor do we support importing mandates, initiatives, agreed decisions or guidelines from one convention to another.

New Zealand also strongly supports Parties' rights to set priorities between the conventions for themselves based on their national circumstances and their aspirations for sustainable development. In this regard we would not support a framework being developed at the international level and imposed on national governments.

General comments on the options paper

New Zealand welcomes the three secretariats' prepared paper on options for enhanced cooperation among the three Rio Conventions, in particular the transparency that the paper brings to consideration of this matter.

We endorse the papers acknowledgement of the distinct mandates and independent status of each of the Rio Conventions, and the paper's recognition of the need to avoid duplication of effort and to use resources more efficiently.

We note that the paper provides examples to date of cooperation, but does not provide an assessment of the success or otherwise of that cooperation, the lessons learned or suggestions for improvements in those existing areas of cooperation.

We further note that the paper identifies an extensive range of possibilities and that the resource implications for implementing any of the options presented were not assessed.

In considering the way forward, we are particularly mindful of the following:

- The resource implications that further consideration of the identified possibilities would imply.
- The wish to reduce duplication, increase efficiency and encourage the best use of scarce resources.
- The need to maintain the integrity of the individual Rio Conventions.
- The need to recognise that there are different sets of Parties to the individual Rio Conventions.
- The need for Parties to be able to set their own priorities between the conventions, based on national circumstances, and not have guidelines imposed from the international level.

¹ FCCC/SBSTA/2004/INF.19

New Zealand therefore considers that any further work should focus on discrete areas of practical cooperation on which all Parties can agree, and with the greatest likelihood of delivering quick gains in efficiency and reduced duplication.

Specific comments on the options paper

“Options for cooperation at the national and international levels”

“Encouraging collaboration among national focal points”

New Zealand supports cooperation among national focal points to the three conventions, using existing policy and planning mechanisms found at the national level. The responsibility for developing tools for cooperation should rest with national focal points, and not be developed by subsidiary bodies of the conventions.

“Collaboration at the level of the convention bodies and secretariats”

We note that the paper recognises cooperation at the level of the secretariats is already well developed.

New Zealand supports continued cooperation at an experts level, for example provision of expertise relating to one convention in the preparation of reports for another and the sharing of expertise through workshops.

However, we do not support the consideration of one convention’s products by another convention, nor the establishment of any formal peer review processes. Rather, we would encourage Parties, according to their own national priorities, to be mindful of their commitments to other conventions when working in one convention.

“Options for cooperation on issues addressing climate change impacts, adaptation, mitigation, land degradation and the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity”

New Zealand would encourage Parties, according to their national circumstances, to formulate the relevant plans and reporting frameworks under the Rio Conventions with an eye to complementarities between those products. We consider it is up to Parties themselves to decide which tools they wish to adopt to achieve this.

“Options for further collaboration in specific cross-cutting areas”

New Zealand would be comfortable with further consideration of the possibilities for further cooperation, as outlined in the paper, in capacity building, information exchange and outreach, and financial resources.

We support the sharing of experiences gained and lessons learned, where relevant, in relation to technology transfer, namely the UNFCCC’s TT:Clear and the CBD’s clearing house mechanism.

Collaboration in the area of research and monitoring/systematic observation should be considered on a case-by-case basis.

Where there is a strong likelihood of increased efficiency and avoided duplication, New Zealand encourages the streamlining of reporting requirements. We do not consider it would be productive to try and identify common terms and definitions.

PAPER NO. 5: SWITZERLAND

SBSTA 24

Cooperation with other conventions, scientific organizations and United Nations bodies

1. In our view, there are several levels for the cooperation with other conventions, scientific organisations and other UN bodies :
 - Science and knowledge of environmental processes and monitoring
 - Implementation of the conventions
 - Financing the implementation of the conventions
 - Institutional arrangements.

2. Scientific tools for the environment address links and interactions between the fields of application of our conventions : climate change, biodiversity, desertification, ozone, waters, soils, etc.. The work of the IPCC demonstrates the interactions between the various environmental components. This work is useful to other conventions in addition to the UNFCCC. We propose :
 - To establish similar scientific bodies such as the IPCC under other conventions
 - To extend the list of monitored indicators to obtain a synergetic environmental picture in cooperation with GEO/GEOSS.

3. At the implementation level, areas in which synergies with other conventions and where cooperative opportunities may be found are :

Mitigation

- To avoid or minimise adverse effects to the objectives of other conventions of mitigation measures to reduce the GHG emissions.
- To enhance cooperation between experts from various conventions when dealing with sectoral issues such the use of forests as carbon sinks, synthetic gases such as HFC and PFC, etc..

Adaptation

- To assess the vulnerability of ecosystems
- To identify win-win measures.

Technology transfer

- To identify facilitating mechanisms, including financing mechanisms, for transferring technology
- To exchange experiences on technology transfer

Capacity building

- To replicate of successful mechanisms
- To exchange experiences on technology transfer

Reporting

- To establish databases with data useful for the various conventions
 - To use comparable common reporting format for the various conventions
 - To replicate successful mechanisms for reviewing the information provided by Parties.
4. Financing the implementation of the conventions offers also opportunities to benefit from synergies. These synergies may be found in projects, enabling activities, technology transfer, capacity building and reporting. They may exist at the national, bilateral and multilateral level.
5. Appropriate institutional arrangements should be considered in order to facilitate cooperation between the conventions :
- Contacts at various levels : secretariats, subsidiary bodies, COP, JLG
 - Exchange of information
 - At the experts' level through the involvement of experts from other conventions when themes of common interests are dealt with.

PAPER NO. 6: UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

**Submission of the United States
FCCC/SBSTA/2005/L.26
Views on Options for enhanced cooperation among the three Rio Conventions
February 27, 2006**

The Twenty-third Session of the Subsidiary Body for Scientific and Technical Advice in November 2005 (SBSTA-23) invited Parties to submit their views on document (FCCC/SBSTA/2004/INF.19), a report prepared jointly by the secretariats of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) and the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) on options for enhanced cooperation among the three Rio Conventions as presented by the secretariat of SBSTA. The United States welcomes the opportunity to provide its views on this issue.

We would like to thank the Joint Liaison Group (JLG) of the three Conventions for the report on the fifth meeting of the JLG held on January 30, 2004 in Bonn, Germany. We appreciate the efforts of the JLG to identify potential areas of cooperation among the Rio Conventions.

The United States recognizes that there are important overlaps between the goals of the three conventions. We consider that these overlaps are similar to other environmental, social and economic goals that intersect with climate objectives. Governments and other implementing entities are accustomed to addressing such overlaps in their domestic policy making processes as a matter of routine. Generally, it is the responsibility of individual governments to ensure coordination among entities with an interest in deliberations under any specific convention, whether it is a Rio Convention or otherwise.

The United States considers that the Secretariat's paper does a useful service in exploring areas of potential overlap in quite a comprehensive manner. The implicit question raised by the paper is whether there are areas that warrant special attention above and beyond the manner in which such issues are dealt with in the normal course of UNFCCC agenda items.

In our view, the paper clarifies that from the UNFCCC perspective, it is not only possible but preferable to deal with biodiversity and desertification issues within the normal agenda items of the UNFCCC. The manner in which these issues are dealt with in any agenda item is highly dependent on its overall context, which in turn relates to particular elements of the UNFCCC. We do not see a compelling case that creating separate processes for these particular overlaps, or that combining efforts among Conventions will enhance the effectiveness of UNFCCC implementation. Indeed, we see duplication as a more likely outcome of any such efforts. We note as well that Conventions have a distinct legal character, mandate and membership, and a number of the proposals raise issues for us in this context as well.

We continue to support efforts to better integrate overlapping considerations in implementation at the national level, through such activities as the National Capacity Needs Self-Assessments and other relevant implementing agency programs. Such coordination mechanisms, if thoughtfully structured, can be helpful in promoting efficiency at the national level.

This particular agenda item has largely focused on process issues relating to potential means of addressing overlaps. In the meantime, the UNFCCC has continued to address a number of substantive issues with overlapping considerations as they arise. It is our view that such ongoing deliberations under relevant UNFCCC items have effectively dealt with these overlapping considerations. In our experience, Parties have been effective in raising and debating issues relating to biodiversity and desertification in UNFCCC agenda items where they are salient. We note in this regard that focal points of different conventions have participated in workshops or other deliberations under the UNFCCC where overlapping

issues became salient, and this has been the case in other conventions as well. This approach has worked in fostering coordination in a manner that is in keeping with the distinct legal character of each convention.

The Joint Liaison Group has been helpful in enhancing this kind of coordination through the provision and exchange of information to Parties, and we look to them to continue to make Parties aware of these opportunities and issues.

Opinion of the Republic of Uzbekistan on the report on the options of the cooperation strengthening between three Rio Conventions presented in FCCC/SBSTA/21004/INF.19 document

The Republic of Uzbekistan seconds the efforts of Secretariat in strengthening the cooperation between three Rio Conventions.

The options of strengthening the cooperation between three Rio Conventions presented in FCCC/SBSTA/21004/INF.19 document reveal their synergism rather comprehensively. This is manifested especially definitely in the implementation of such interrelated issues as the studies and monitoring, technology transfer, capacity strengthening, financial sources, social awareness. Joint efforts will contribute to eliminate the errors duplication and to use the available resources more effectively.

We welcome the proposed idea of holding the joint workshops on cooperation strengthening in information exchange, transfer of the ecologically sound technologies, education, studies and systematic observations, climate change effects and adaptation to these changes.

We uphold the holding the meetings at the national and regional levels which will promote the progress in propagation of new technologies, methods and instruments, the development of scientific principles of researches and observations and overcoming the faced difficulties.

We welcome the possibility of cooperation of the three Rio Conventions with the Convention on the water-and-marshy areas as the synergism is evident.

The developing countries and countries with the economy in transfer need the financial and technical support for the implementation of the projects on adaptation to climate change, and with rendering such support by GEF the success in realization of such projects will be facilitated.
