

# Towards a BioTrade-CBD programme of work following COP8

prepared by Francis Vorhies  
for the UNCTAD BioTrade Initiative

## 1. Introduction

The Eighth Conference of the Parties (CBD8) of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) highlighted a number of opportunities for the objectives and work programme of the CBD to be implemented through the UNCTAD BioTrade Initiative.

This paper highlights these opportunities by focusing on specific references to BioTrade in COP8 decisions.

## 2. Specific references to BioTrade in COP8 decisions

Regarding specific references to BioTrade in COP8 decisions, these can be found in the following decisions:

- Decision 8/17 – Private sector engagement
- Decision 8/23 – Agricultural biodiversity
- Decision 8/26 – Incentive measures

In the context of these specific references, direct opportunities arising from the substance overall decision are noted.

### 2.1. Decision 8/17 – Private sector engagement

Decision 8/17 is the first CBD COP decision to focus exclusively on private sector engagement. Other COP decisions have focused on various business sectors such agriculture, fisheries, forestry, mining and tourism. The preambular text of this decision includes an explicit recognition of the work of the UNCTAD BioTrade Initiative:

*“Noting that further work on ways and means of supporting small and medium-sized enterprises with environmentally sound products, such as that developed by the UNCTAD BioTrade Initiative, would help to promote good biodiversity practice among business and industry ...”*

Relevant sections of the preambular text include the following:

*“Emphasizing* the need to involve all stakeholders in the implementation of the Convention ...”

*“Noting* the need to enhance voluntary commitments of the private sector to ... the objectives of the Convention ...”

*“Noting* that ... the daily activities of business and industry have major impacts on biodiversity ...; individual companies and industry associations ... have the potential to raise the profile of biodiversity ...; the private sector possesses biodiversity-relevant knowledge and technological resources, as well as more general management, research and communication skills, which, if mobilized, could facilitate the implementation of the Convention ...”

*Noting* that the following types of tools and mechanisms may be of use in facilitating contributions from business and industry ...

- (a) Awareness-raising materials and training workshops on business and biodiversity issues;
- (b) Guidance on the integration of biodiversity considerations into existing voluntary or mandatory reporting and performance standards ...
- (c) Certification schemes reflecting the full range of biodiversity-related issues ...
- (d) Internationally agreed standards on activities that impact biodiversity;
- (e) Guidance and tools to assist companies in implementing good practice with regard to biodiversity;
- (f) Biodiversity policies and action plans to define and operationalize companies' biodiversity commitments;
- (g) Biodiversity benchmarks to guide and assess companies' biodiversity management practices;
- (h) Guidelines for incorporating biodiversity-related issues into existing environmental impact assessment procedures ...;
- (j) Partnerships to facilitate knowledge-sharing ...;
- (k) Public-private partnerships”

*“Noting* that contributions from business and industry towards the implementation of the Convention ... could be facilitated by further work under the Convention to develop:

- (a) Tools, guidance and standards on biodiversity-related issues relevant to the private sector ...;

- (d) Guidance on integrating biodiversity into industry standards, certification schemes and guidelines;
- (e) A guide to the Convention for the private sector;
- (f) Guidance for Parties on how to engage the private sector, in accordance with national needs and circumstances,”

Relevant sections of the decision text include the following:

“1. *Urges* national focal points, working with relevant government departments, to communicate the importance of biodiversity to companies ... including ... small and medium enterprises, to engage such companies in the development of national biodiversity strategies and action plans, and to encourage such companies to adopt practices that support the implementation of ... the Convention;

2. *Encourages* national focal points, where appropriate, to include private sector representatives on national delegations to [CBD-related] meetings ... and nominate them to participate in technical expert groups;

3. *Requests* the Executive Secretary to compile information on the business case for biodiversity and good biodiversity practice ... ;

5. *Invites* businesses and relevant organizations and partnerships ... to develop and promote the business case for biodiversity, to develop and promote the wider use of good practice guidelines, benchmarks, certification schemes and reporting guidelines and standards ...;

6. *Invites* businesses to align their policies and practices more explicitly with the three objectives of the Convention and its goals and targets;

7. *Encourages* business representatives to participate in [CBD-related meetings] ...;

8. *Decides* to consider, at its ninth meeting, further ways and means to promote business engagement in the implementation of the Convention ...”

Following the guidance of the private sector focal point of the CBD Secretariat, Nick Betrand, one way to approach Decision 8/17 would be to think of the following areas of engagement:

Parties engage business in the implementation of the CBD.  
Business participates in CBD processes.  
The business case for biodiversity is articulated and communicated.  
Tools, guidance and standards facilitate the contribution of business towards the implementation of the CBD.  
Business contributes to the 2010 target.

In this context, elements of a BioTrade/CBD programme of work could include the following:

Focus on small & medium enterprises  
Focus on business sectors specifically working with native biodiversity resources  
Development of national and regional biodiversity and business programmes, building in particular on the experiences of the BioTrade National and Regional Programmes  
Development of biodiversity standards and certification schemes for business, building in particular on the BioTrade Principles and Criteria  
Development of guidance to businesses on biodiversity best practice  
Input in CBD-related meetings and processes based on the experiences and lessons-learned of the BioTrade Initiative

In particular, following informal guidance from the CBD Secretariat, the UNCTAD BioTrade Initiative could:

Support the efforts of Parties to better engage with business by developing guidance, tools, training materials.  
Provide input into a planned guide to CBD for the private sector.  
Inventory ongoing initiatives to support SMEs producing biodiversity-friendly goods and services.  
Co-organise SME platforms at the different CBD-related events, such as the follow-up to the London and Sao Paulo meetings, SBSTTA13 with its focus on agriculture, and COP9.  
Submit evidence on the business case for biodiversity to the CBD Secretariat in support of their forthcoming annotated bibliography and 'typology' of commonly cited drivers.  
Draft a short, succinct publication on the business case for biodiversity targeted specifically at SMEs.  
Submit relevant tools, guidance, and standards, such as the BioTrade Principles and Criteria to the CBD Secretariat.  
Undertake analyses of existing biodiversity-related tools, guidance and standards in particular sectors, markets or supply chains; and produce fact sheets highlighting strengths as well as gaps.

Propose ways for further engaging business in CBD implementation after COP9.

In particular, encourage and facilitate the development of supply chains for placing biodiversity-friendly products on national or international markets.

## **2.2. Decision 8/23 – Agricultural biodiversity**

Decision 8/23 is the latest decision by the COP on agriculture and biodiversity. The UNCTAD BioTrade Initiative is explicitly mentioned in the section on “ways and means” under “element 3” on “conserving and promoting wider use of biodiversity for food and nutrition” of a “proposed framework for a cross-cutting initiative on biodiversity for food and nutrition.” It reads:

“In addition, there are opportunities for cooperation with the BioTrade Initiative of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) to, inter alia, provide technical assistance and create an enabling policy environment.”

Regarding the two areas for cooperation – providing technical assistance and creating an enabling policy environment – key relevant activities under element 3 include the following:

“3.1 Conservation and sustainable use of crop and livestock genetic diversity, including wild relatives of domesticated animals and plants.

3.2 Identification and promotion of species currently underutilized or of potential value to human food and nutrition ...

3.3 Promotion of genetically diverse and species-rich home gardens, agroforestry and other production systems ...

3.4 Conservation and sustainable use of wild resources, including those that support bushmeat and fisheries, including maintaining viable stocks of wild species for sustainable consumption by local and indigenous communities.

3.5 Promotion, conservation and sustainable use of important biodiversity, at all levels associated with agricultural, forestry and aquaculture systems.

3.6 Conservation and sustainable use of medicinal species relevant for food and nutrition.

3.7 Support all forms of food production of indigenous and local communities ...

3.8 Identifying and promoting crop diversification for biodiverse food crops to be used for food and nutrition.

3.9 Protection and promotion of biodiversity friendly markets by addressing regulatory issues.

3.10 Promotion of technology transfer to improve technical capacities of developing countries and countries with economies in transition, for the conservation and sustainable use of important species, wild relatives, neglected and under-utilized species.

3.11 Research and conservation of native plants or animals, local races, wild relatives of cultivated or domesticated species in order to improve the knowledge on their genetic variability, regarding important traits for agriculture such as: biotic/abiotic resistance, yield and nutritional value.

3.12 Use of biodiversity to broaden the genetic base of cultivated crops to, increase food production and improve the nutritional value of food while taking into account the environmental impact of agriculture.

3.13 Support to the study and development of production and commercialization of non-conventional biodiversity-based products, including processing of non conventional biodiversity-based food ...

3.16 Integration of benefit-sharing objectives into national and international frameworks dealing with biodiversity for food and nutrition ...”

The other topics covered by Decision 8/23 include an “international initiative for the conservation and sustainable use of soil biodiversity,” “Genetic use restriction technologies,” and an “in-depth review of the programme of work on agricultural biological diversity.” Though of importance to the implementation of the CBD, the UNCTAD BioTrade Initiative is probably not an appropriate partner for moving forward in these areas. The one exception is that UNCTAD may want to provide a note for the in-depth review based on the experiences and lessons learned of the BioTrade Initiative. Interest in this was confirmed by the agricultural focal point of the CBD Secretariat, Ryo Kohsaka. He stated that “we would appreciate if you could share your experiences at

UNCTAD and the initiative, with views to contributing to the in-depth-review of programme of work.”

In this context, elements of a BioTrade/CBD programme of work could include the following:

Providing technological assistance with respect to native biodiversity-based commercial harvesting, production and marketing processes, in particular through trade facilitation

Creating enabling policy environments with respect to regulatory issues, standard setting and certification schemes for the marketing and trade of native biodiversity-based products

### **2.3. Decision 8/26 - Incentive measures: preparation for the in-depth review of the programme of work on incentive measures**

Decision 8/26 is the latest decision by the COP on the complex topic of economic and social incentive measures for the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity. It calls for “a structured, transparent and inclusive preparatory process for the in-depth review of work on incentive measures.” The UNCTAD BioTrade Initiative is explicitly reference in the paragraph 9 of the decision text as follows:

*“Invites the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, through its initiatives, inter alia, Biotrade, to continue supporting the programme of work on incentive measures of the Convention.”*

From the preambular text of this decision, the key area in which the BioTrade Initiative could support the work on incentives is as follows:

*“Noting that the work on incentive measures under the Convention is scheduled for in-depth review by the ninth meeting of the Conference of the Parties ...”*

Relevant sections of the decision text include the following:

*“1. Decides to initiate a structured, transparent and inclusive preparatory process for the in-depth review of work on incentive measures with a view to identify, for consideration by the Conference of the Parties at its ninth meeting, the further outcomes that would be required from a revised programme of work on incentive ...*

*3. Invites Parties, other Governments, international organizations and stakeholders to communicate to the Executive Secretary their*

experiences in the implementation of the programme of work on incentive measures contained in decisions V/15, VI/15 and VII/18 and provide views on elements such as:

- (a) Lessons learned and key challenges in implementing the existing programme of work, based on practical examples and case-studies from national implementation, where available, including whether the measures initiated or adopted by Parties have maintained or improved the conservation and sustainable use of components of biodiversity;
- (b) Options to address the challenges identified;
- (c) Priorities for a future programme of work including requirements for effective national implementation, including financial and institutional support and capacity-building;
- (d) Key gaps in the work to date, and gaps and obstacles in the existing programme of work that are impeding its implementation at the national level;
- (e) Interface with other international initiatives and instruments in this area;
- (f) Linkages to other programmes of work under the Convention;

5. *Encourages* relevant national, regional and international organizations and initiatives to strengthen mechanisms that build capacity and extend research and training on the design, implementation and review of positive incentive measures for the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity, in accordance with domestic needs and priorities, taking into account the need to understand the risks of perverse effects on livelihoods, sustainable development or the biodiversity of third parties;

6. *Encourages* relevant national, regional and international institutions and organizations ... as well as representatives of indigenous and local communities and relevant stakeholders, to strengthen research activities, including research cooperation and exchange at national, regional and international levels, on, as appropriate:

- (a) Further assessment of positive incentive measures ...
- (b) Comparative analyses of the effectiveness and cost-efficiency of individual positive incentive measures ...
- (c) The development of innovative positive incentive measures;
- (d) The development of mechanisms, including policy, legal and institutional measures in full consultation with representatives of indigenous and local communities that ensure the fair and equitable sharing of benefits arising from positive incentive measures;

(e) The analysis and evaluation of the relevant economic, social and cultural impacts of individual positive incentive measures at different levels and scales ...”

In this context and with informal guidance from the incentives focal point at the CBD Secretariat, Marcus Lehmann, elements of a BioTrade/CBD programme of work could include the following:

Development of case studies of BioTrade experiences at the national and regional levels

Assessment of the lessons learned from the implementation of the BioTrade Initiative and, in particular, its BioTrade Facilitation Programme

Identification of key gaps in the work-to-date of the BioTrade Initiative  
Identification of opportunities for partnership and sponsorship of future work in support of BioTrade

Review of the impact of the positive incentive measures developed and implemented under the BioTrade Initiative

Communicate the outcomes of this work to the CBD Secretariat so that UNCTAD's input would become part of the preparatory process for in-depth review