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REPORT BY THE DIRECTOR-GENERAL ON UNESCO'S PARTICIPATION IN AND CONTRIBUTION TO THE INTERNATIONAL YEAR OF BIODIVERSITY (2010)

SUMMARY

With reference to resolution 61/203 of the United Nations General Assembly on the International Year of Biodiversity (2010), the Director-General presents UNESCO's plans in relation to the Organization's participation in and contribution to the Year. The proposed activities fall within the scope of draft document 35 C/5 and therefore have no direct additional financial or administrative implications.

Action expected of the Executive Board: decision in paragraph 12.

1. At its 61st session, the United Nations General Assembly, in Resolution 61/203, declared 2010 as the International Year of Biodiversity (hereinafter referred to as IYB). In the Resolution, the General Assembly expressed its concern over the continued loss of biological diversity and acknowledged that an unprecedented effort would be needed to achieve, by 2010, a significant reduction in its rate of loss. The General Assembly also expressed its deep concern for the social, economic, environmental and cultural implications of the loss of biodiversity, including negative impacts on the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals, and stressed the necessity of adopting concrete measures in order to reverse this loss, including the need for effective education to raise public awareness for achieving the threefold objective of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) and the 2010 biodiversity target. Hence, the objective of IYB will be to increase awareness of the importance of biodiversity by promoting actions at the local, regional and international levels.
2. The General Assembly designated the Secretariat of the CBD as the focal point for the Year and invited the Secretariat to cooperate with other relevant United Nations bodies, multilateral environmental agreements, international organizations and other stakeholders, to bring greater international attention to the continued loss of biodiversity.
3. The General Assembly encouraged Member States and other stakeholders to take advantage of the Year to increase awareness of the importance of biodiversity by promoting actions at the local, regional and international levels. It invited Member States to consider establishing national committees for the Year, and invited Member States and relevant international organizations to support the activities to be organized by developing countries –

especially least developed countries, landlocked developing countries and small island developing States – and countries with economies in transition.

4. In the context of the long-standing and fruitful cooperation between UNESCO and the CBD, discussions were held between the senior management of UNESCO and the Executive Secretary of the CBD on future possible collaboration on the Year. These discussions led to the conclusions that UNESCO has much to contribute in support of the implementation of IYB; and that UNESCO's IYB activities shall be included in the official IYB Implementation Strategy.

5. The IYB Implementation Strategy refers to UNESCO as a central partner for IYB. As an agency that can integrate biodiversity considerations into scientific research, education and culture, UNESCO is recognized as an agency that can provide access to a broad variety of actors involved in IYB.

6. The UNESCO Secretariat has developed extensive plans for the celebration of the Year:

- (a) UNESCO will inaugurate the year 2010 with a high-level event on 21 and 22 January 2010 in Paris, launching its new exhibition on biodiversity. The exhibition will travel the world during the Year. A concept note has been developed, and plans for synergistic partnerships and fundraising are under way.
- (b) Following the launch of the exhibition, UNESCO will also hold a scientific conference from 25 to 29 January 2010. This conference will focus on a number of topics which were identified by the Conference of the Parties (COP) to the CBD as requiring further scientific work. The Conference will be closely coordinated with the conference of the Inter-Academy Panel scheduled to take place from 10 to 12 January 2010 in London as well as with the Trondheim Biodiversity Conference in February 2010.
- (c) UNESCO is also a channel through which to integrate the ideas of the IYB into the United Nations Decade of Education for Sustainable Development. An educational kit on biodiversity will be produced, similar to that produced for the International Year of Deserts and Desertification. This kit is intended to be distributed officially to all CBD Parties in the course of the 10th meeting of the CBD COP which will take place in Nagoya, Japan in October 2010.
- (d) A conference on the relationship between biological and cultural diversity will take place in July 2010, in Montreal: it will reflect the developments at UNESCO towards a programme of work on cultural diversity and biodiversity with the CBD, on the basis of their respective mandates. The conference will be the basis for this future programme of work.
- (e) UNESCO will also endeavour to organize a number of ancillary activities that integrate biodiversity into other cross-cutting issues, such as a round table on biodiversity and gender.

7. UNESCO will work in partnership with other relevant international and national actors within the framework of IYB. Partnerships with Member States, the COP 9 (Germany) and COP 10 (Japan) presidencies, members of the Biodiversity Liaison Group, UNEP, the CBD Secretariat, a number of international organizations involved in biodiversity science and education and other partnerships will be considered. Internally, UNESCO will work in an intersectoral manner, notably organizing joint activities between the Natural Sciences Sector and the Bureau of Strategic Planning on biodiversity and gender, the Natural Sciences Sector and the Culture Sector on biological and cultural diversity, the Natural Sciences Sector and the Social and Human Sciences Sector on issues related to equity of access and sharing of benefits and UNESCO-MAB and IOC on marine and coastal biodiversity.

8. At its sixty-third session, the United Nations General Assembly also decided to convene, as a contribution to the International Year of Biodiversity in 2010, a one-day high-level meeting of the General Assembly, with participation of heads of State, governments and delegations. The General Assembly requested the Secretariat of the Convention “to report to the sixty-fourth session through the Secretary-General on the work of the Convention and include in the report information on the preparation of the high-level meeting of the General Assembly”.

9. The UNESCO Secretariat has been informed by the CBD Secretariat on preparations for the high-level meeting, which is tentatively scheduled to take place on 20 September 2010. It is foreseen that the one-day high-level meeting of the General Assembly will be structured in the form of six panels:

- (a) Panel I. The 2010 biodiversity target: “Progress, constraints and future action for conserving the services provided by nature”;
- (b) Panel II. Climate change and biological diversity: “The role of biodiversity in mitigation and adaptation measures”;
- (c) Panel III. Access to genetic resources and the equitable sharing of the benefits arising from their use: “Taking responsibility for our common natural heritage”;
- (d) Panel IV. Biodiversity for development and poverty alleviation: “Deriving benefits from the sustainable use of natural resources”;
- (e) Panel V. Financing for biodiversity: “Investing in the future”; and
- (f) Panel VI. Engaging major stakeholders: “Getting the key actors on board”.

10. It is suggested that UNESCO collaborate with the CBD Secretariat in the organization of the high-level meeting of the General Assembly, by making available the outcomes of UNESCO’s IYB activities for the purpose of informing the foreseen panels, and participate actively in the high-level meeting.

11. The annex to the present document presents a preliminary list of key events related to IYB which are planned for 2010.

Action expected of the Executive Board

12. The Executive Board may wish to adopt a decision along the following lines:

The Executive Board,

1. Recalling Resolution 61/203 of the United Nations General Assembly proclaiming 2010 the International Year of Biodiversity,
2. Having examined document 182 EX/13 on UNESCO’s participation in and contribution to 2010, the International Year of Biodiversity,
3. Recognizing the mutually supportive, excellent and long-standing cooperation of UNESCO and the Convention on Biological Diversity, whose Secretariat will coordinate activities related to the 2010 International Year of Biodiversity,
4. Expresses its support for the 2010 International Year of Biodiversity;
5. Recommends that UNESCO plays an active role in its implementation;

6. Approves UNESCO's International Year of Biodiversity plans as presented in document 182 EX/13 and its Annex;
7. Encourages Member States to interact with the UNESCO Secretariat in identifying those activities related to the Year for which Member States may benefit the most, as well as to support the implementation of UNESCO's 2010 International Year of Biodiversity activities through the provision of extrabudgetary funds;
8. Encourages the Director-General to ensure the active participation of UNESCO in the high-level meeting of the United Nations General Assembly on the 2010 International Year of Biodiversity at its sixty-third session in 2010;
9. Requests the Director-General to produce a report on UNESCO's participation in and contribution to the 2010 International Year of Biodiversity for consideration by the Executive Board at its 186th session.

ANNEX

Date	Place and event	Details	Partners
January			
tbd	<i>Berlin, Germany</i> Launch of IYB by COP 9 President	A high-level launch of the Year, sponsored by the German Presidency. Details will be finalized over the second quarter of 2009.	Government of Germany
11-12 (tbc)	<i>Madrid, Spain</i> European Conference on Protected Areas	The first Europe-wide event for the IYB.	European Union, others
13-15	<i>London, United Kingdom</i> The Royal Society's 350th anniversary IAP General Assembly meeting and scientific conference	The conference will address themes related to biodiversity and the 2010 Target. A concept note is to be developed, but it could look at the relationship between ecosystem services, biodiversity and human well-being.	The Royal Society
21-22	<i>Paris, France</i> Opening of IYB, launch of the UNESCO exhibition	A high-level event that will include high-level representation of heads of States. It will have a series of presentations around flagship themes concerning the contribution of biodiversity to development and human well-being. The UNESCO travelling exhibition will be launched. The event will close with a social gathering including a high-level cocktail and a concert by renowned performers.	UNESCO
25-29	<i>Paris, France</i> UNESCO Scientific Conference	A week-long conference, which has as its goal, to provide further evidence and additional backstopping to the work of the Convention in the post-2010 period. Among the issues identified are: climate change, the new generation of taxonomy and systematics and financing for biodiversity.	UNESCO
February			
1-5	<i>Trondheim, Norway</i> The Trondheim Biodiversity Conference on the 2010 Biodiversity Target	The Trondheim Biodiversity Conference will represent the main substantive event to discuss follow-up on the 2010 Biodiversity Target.	Norway
12-28 (tbc)	<i>Delhi, India</i> Delhi Sustainable Development Summit	At this event, it is imagined that a high-level panel on Biodiversity for Development and a policy dialogue will take place.	DSDS
16-20	tbd Global Ministerial Environment Forum	The themes and activities will be determined in collaboration with UNEP, but will seek high-level engagement on the biodiversity agenda.	UNEP
tbd	<i>Uruguay</i> Fourth Assembly of the Global Environment Facility (GEF)	IYB to be celebrated and marked during the assembly.	GEF
March			
16-24	<i>Cartagena, Colombia</i> Event at the ABS talks	- "2010 success stories" event – focusing on activities in Colombia/Latin America - WG-ABS 9 – Informal consultations (16-17) - Meeting of the COP Bureau (17) - WG-ABS 9 (18-24)	Colombia, United Nations Secretariat, CSD
21-23	<i>Doha, Qatar</i> COP 15 CITES	In collaboration with the Secretariat of CITES and the Minister of the Environment, a high-level event is envisaged.	CITES
April			
tbd	<i>Libreville, Gabon</i> Meeting with UNIDO on extractive industry and biodiversity	Details to be determined	UNIDO

Date	Place and event	Details	Partners
May			
1-31	<i>Shanghai, China</i> Shanghai World Exposition	The CBD Secretariat will participate as part of the United Nations pavilion and will partner with UNESCO and others to deliver activities on the theme of the conference.	Bureau of the Shanghai World Expo Coordination
13-15	<i>New York, USA</i> High-level Segment of CSD-18	A high-level panel and other activities will link biodiversity considerations with the agenda of CSD.	CSD, United Nations Secretariat
13-28	<i>Nairobi, Kenya</i> SBSTTA 14 WGRI 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Launch of GBO-3 at SBSTTA 14 - Panel of scientists on biodiversity science - Youth Event Launch the scientific study upon which IYB messaging is based; link its results to the TEEB report; further reinforce the role of science in future work; encourage parties to begin thinking of the next steps for the Convention in advance of COP-10.	Germany, UNEP
tbd	<i>Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire</i> Annual Meeting of the African Development Bank	tbd	tbd
21-22	<i>New York, USA</i> Celebration of the International Day for Biodiversity at the Permanent Forum for Indigenous Issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - photographic exhibition: "ILCs: Custodians of Biodiversity" - Special Segment Highlight the important role of indigenous and local communities; gain support for the CBD and a post-2010 Target from the Forum.	United Nations Secretariat
22	<i>Various countries</i> International Day for Biological Diversity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - IYB celebrations, with a focus on 2010 success stories - Announcement of latest contributions to the Green Wave Encourage countries to demonstrate and support the actions taking place nationally in support of IYB; facilitate national dialogues on the role of biodiversity in development; encourage countries to launch/update/implement their NBSAPs; show the momentum generated by the Green Wave.	CBD Parties
June			
5	<i>UNEP Regional Offices</i> World Environment Day	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Announcement of results of painting competition and photo competition - Statements by UNSG, UNEP ED, and others. 	Germany, UNEP
17	World Day to Combat Desertification	Explore the linkages between the fight against land degradation and biodiversity conservation.	UNCCD
July			
tbd	<i>Canada</i> Launch of the two-year expedition on biodiversity by Jean Lemire	Based on the extremely successful "Mission Antarctique" of 2007, Mr Lemire will start a two-year sailing voyage to biodiversity hotspots around the world. The voyage will be filmed and an interactive website will allow people around the world to interact with the crew.	Jean Lemire
tbd	<i>New York, USA (tentative)</i> High-level segment of ECOSOC	Demonstrate the importance of biodiversity and the CBD to the achievement of the MDGs; introduce the parameters for a post-2010 Target and initiate a dialogue on the relationship between development and biodiversity.	United Nations Secretariat, President of ECOSOC
tbd	<i>Montreal, Canada</i> UNESCO Conference on Biological and Cultural Diversity	A conference that explores the relationship between biological and cultural diversity and its contribution to sustainable development. The conference seeks to provide policy linkages between the two fields.	UNESCO, University of Montreal, CBD
August			
tbd			

Date	Place and event	Details	Partners
September			
20 (tbc)	<i>New York, USA</i> United Nations General Assembly	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - High-Level Segment on Biodiversity for Development - Presentation of findings of GBO-3, with key personalities - UNESCO Exhibition Encourage discussion of the integration of biodiversity considerations into the MDGs and set the next round of targets.	United Nations Secretariat, UNESCO, UNDP
October			
8-9	<i>Nagoya, Japan</i> Joint CBD-Aarhus Convention workshop	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - “2010 success stories” event – focusing on activities under the Protocol on Biosafety and the Aarhus Convention - Public awareness, education and participation concerning living modified organisms Offer an opportunity to highlight the contribution of biosafety, access to information and public participation of GMOs in achieving the 2010 Target by reviewing case studies on experiences and lessons learned in implementation of Article 23 of the Protocol and Almaty Amendment to the Aarhus Convention.	United Nations Secretariat, Aarhus Convention
11-29 27 (tbc)	<i>Nagoya, Japan</i> Conference of the Parties Celebration of IYB at the High-level Segment	To be discussed with the Government of Japan, but elements to be considered include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - High Level segment linked to IYB - UNESCO exhibition displayed - Equator Initiative Prize handed out - Youth Event - A special IYB fair should be held – on 2010 success stories. Link this to the CEPA fair. Encourage all parties to show their 2010 successes and identify best practices; seek to gain a commitment for a timetable for the post-2010 Target, including a commitment from both COP presidencies; showcase the ABS regime as a sign of success.	Japan, Germany, UNDP, UNESCO
November			
tbd			
December			
10 (tbc)	<i>Kanazawa, Japan</i> Closing of the IYB and launch of the International Year of Forests <i>(tentative)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Closure of IYB - Contribution of the SCBD to the launch of the International Year of Forests in 2011 	Japan and SCBD <i>(tentative)</i>
21-22 (tbc)	<i>Montreal, Canada</i> <i>New York, USA</i> Meeting with the media on “Keeping the 2010 IYB momentum alive”	tbd	SCBD