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INFORMATION NOTE

from: General Secretariat

to: Delegations

Subject: Sixth meeting of the Conference of the Parties serving as the Meeting of the Parties to the Cartagena Protocol to Biosafety (COP MOP 6)
(Hyderabad, India, 1 to 5 October 2012)

- Compilation of statements from the European Union and its Member States

Delegations will find, for information, in the Annex a compilation of statements from the EU and its Member States as delivered during COP MOP 6.

Sixth meeting of the Conference of the Parties serving as the Meeting of the Parties to the
Cartagena Protocol to Biosafety (COP MOP 6)

(Hyderabad, India, 1 to 5 October 2012)

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Opening Statement and item 7 Cooperation with other organizations, conventions and initiatives

1. Mr Chairman, during the course of this meeting, I will be speaking on behalf of the European Union and its 27 Member States. Croatia as an acceding country, associates itself with all our statements at this Conference, including this one.
2. Before moving on to the issue of cooperation with other organizations, conventions and initiatives, please allow us a few brief words of introduction.
3. First of all, we would like to thank the Executive Secretary and the Secretariat for the excellent and extensive work undertaken in the past biennium. We highly appreciate your hard work in supporting the implementation of decisions taken at previous meetings of the Parties. We would also like to express our sincere appreciation for the leadership of Japan as President of COP-MOP 5 which facilitated the level of activity of the past two years.
4. And to India: we warmly welcome you as the incoming Presidency of the COP-MOP 6. We look forward to working together with you and thank you for the great hospitality that we have all witnessed since arriving in what is truly *Incredible India*.
5. I should now like to move on to the important issue of cooperation with other organizations, conventions and initiatives. We find that the activities undertaken in this regard are adequate for the purposes of taking our work forward to implement and to achieve the objectives of the Protocol.
6. We believe that cooperation is an important means to ensure common understanding amongst the parties and promote synergy in all biosafety-related programmes. Hand in hand with this, it is important that Parties also ensure coordination and cooperation between policies and initiatives also takes place at the national level.
7. Mr. Chairman, please note that we attend this meeting with an overriding spirit to ensure that this COP-MOP should take us all forward bringing the Cartagena Protocol to life. This being said, we must remain mindful to the difficult economic situation. In our view, it is crucial that we in all of our work, be it here relation to our support and collaboration with relevant international organizations, but also in other areas, is conscious of the limited funds at our disposal. And in this sense, we would like to stress that both as a matter of principle and for reasons of consistency, budgetary matters should be confined to the budget decisions. This would allow us to work in one place on agreeing on a realistic budget that is consistent with the agreed strategic priorities functions, and programme of work for the effective implementation of the Cartagena Protocol.
8. With this in mind, we believe that our work at this COP-MOP needs to be prioritised and, as far as cooperation is concerned, we would like to highlight cooperation on capacity-building and on handling, transport, packaging and identification as key areas for us.

9. In conclusion, Mr. Chairman, we would like to underline, that the European Union and its Member States, will work constructively with all Parties toward making this meeting a success. It is our firm belief that through cooperation and mutual understanding the Parties at this meeting will be able to reach agreement on decisions that will bring us forward in our efforts to ensure an adequate level of protection of the transfer, handling and use of living modified organisms and thereby provide global protection to the biodiversity and human health.
10. The European Union and its Member States can support the suggested draft decision (a) with the precision that such activities are subject to the availability of funds and suggest the deletion of draft decision (b) which seems to call specifically for additional resources for the Secretariat. We will provide these text proposals to the Secretariat.
11. Thank you, Mr Chairman.

Item 4 – Report of the Compliance Committee

1. Thank you Madam Chair. Allow me to congratulate you with your election as chair of this working group. We look forward to working constructively under your skilled guidance.
2. I am speaking on behalf of the European Union and its 27 Member States.
3. We welcome the report of the Compliance Committee on its work since COPMOP/5 and the recommendations of the Committee to COP/MOP6.
4. In general, we can support the Committee's recommendations and believe they should be well incorporated in the decisions to be taken by this meeting.
5. Allow me, Madam Chair, to highlight a few issues from the report that we find of particular importance.
6. As Parties may remember, we have in the past expressed concern about a number of general issues of Compliance. This includes the low level of reporting by Parties.
7. In this regard, we warmly welcome the vast improvement in the reporting rate in the second round of national reporting.
8. In particular, we would like to commend the African region for attaining a reporting rate of 100 percent, which sets an example for all Parties.
9. However, a number of Parties have still not fulfilled their reporting obligations. Therefore, while the improved reporting rate gives reason for optimism, there is still much work to be done.
10. In this regard, we welcome the Compliance Committee's active engagement, in accordance with decision BS/V/1, with those Parties that have never submitted a report on national implementation of the Protocol, to help them overcome any barriers to reporting.
11. Madam Chair, we are concerned to note that from the national reports, it becomes clear that a number of general issues of compliance is still unresolved.
12. Such issues include the development of national biosafety frameworks and the provision of information to the Biosafety Clearing House.
13. In this regard, we support the recommendation of the Compliance Committee to identify as a top priority the development of national biosafety frameworks.
14. We welcome the fact that this will mean that the Compliance Committee, in accordance with its organization of work, will consider this issue more in depth in the next intersessional period through more detailed examination of the national reports, with a view to providing facilitative assistance to those parties that request it.

15. We further believe that, given its vital role, the functioning of the Biosafety Clearing House should also be of high priority. We note with appreciation that the Compliance Committee will also be looking into this issue as part of its program of work in the next intersessional period.
16. We would also like to encourage those Parties that are experiencing problems with their reporting obligations or other obligations, to work closely and actively with the Compliance Committee and the Secretariat to find solutions.
17. If faced with continued problems, Parties should consider making a submission to the compliance committee with regard to their own compliance. In this way Parties can make full use of the supportive role of the Compliance Committee and overcome their difficulties by taking advantage of the facilitative assistance the Committee is able to offer.
18. We note that in the document on financial mechanism, it is proposed that, under certain circumstances, GEF funding can be made available to Parties upon recommendation by the compliance committee, subsequent to a Party bringing its compliance issues before the committee.
19. Madame Chair, in closing, we would like to encourage the Compliance Committee to continue its proactive and constructive work, in accordance with decision BS/V/1, to help Parties in achieving full compliance.

Thank you, Madam Chair.

Item 5 – Operation and Activities of the Biosafety Clearing-House

1. Mr Chairman, I am speaking on behalf of the European Union and its 27 Member States.
2. The BCH is an essential tool for the implementation of the Protocol, by promoting transparency and easy access to biosafety related information, not only by Parties and other Governments but also by the public, civil-society and scientific institutions. We are therefore determined to encourage its further use and development.
3. We welcome all the improvements made to the BCH Central Portal during the past two years and would like to thank the Secretariat for its work. We also welcome all the initiatives which have taken place during the intersessional period regarding capacity-building. We support the continuation of such improvements and initiatives aiming at contributing to the proper implementation of the Protocol and to promote the use of the BCH, taking into account, however, that resources are limited.
4. We support the proposal to continue collecting feedback from Parties, other Governments and relevant organizations on their experience accessing the BCH as well as with submissions and retrieval of data. We are of the opinion that this could be done using tools that are already available, such as, regular exchange of information between BCH national focal points, on-line discussions or information extracted from the National Reports.
5. We would also like to welcome the increase in submissions of information by countries to the BCH. This is a very important step forward, although we note that there is still some progress to be made for instance on risk assessment summaries that need to be submitted to the BCH.
6. Therefore we encourage the Secretariat to continue working with Parties in order to find solutions for identified obstacles that hinder the adequate use of the BCH Central Portal or the easy submission or retrieval of information, and to remind Parties of their responsibility for ensuring that relevant information is provided on time with the requested completeness and accuracy.
7. Online forums and real-time online conferences on topics relevant to biosafety are important tools for the implementation of the Protocol. We are of the opinion that they should be continued and that participation of all relevant stakeholders should be encouraged.
8. We also note in the draft decision that the GEF is asked to extend without further delay support under the BCH-II project to all the remaining eligible parties, using resources under the biodiversity focal area, outside the national STAR allocation. We would like the GEF to conduct an expedient evaluation of the BCH-II project before extending the support for the BCH-II project to all eligible parties, as GEF has indicated in their response to the guidance from the last COP-MOP.

9. Let me close this statement, Mr Chairman, by informing you that we support the basic principles in the suggested elements for a draft decision. We have nevertheless some drafting suggestions reflecting our views and we will hand them-over in writing to the Secretariat.
10. Thank you, Mr Chairman.

Item 6 – Matters related to the Financial Mechanism and Resources

1. Mr Chairman, I am speaking on behalf of the European Union and its 27 Member States.
2. First of all, we would like to welcome the document on Matters related to the Financial Mechanism and resources and the report on the status of implementation of the previous guidance provided to the financial mechanism with respect to biosafety.
3. We would also like to welcome the proposed guidance to the financial mechanism to which we have the following comments:
4. We are highly committed to the realization of the goals of the Cartagena Protocol. But we have to take into account the tight financial situation and in particular the very low utilization of the available funds to date. In this light the development in the allocation frame for biosafety in GEF 6 should follow the general development of the biodiversity focal area. To us the proposal for an allocation of \$ 102 million seems excessive, when only 7% of the GEF-5 allocation of \$ 40 million have been used to date.
5. It is proposed that a new Strategy for Financing Biosafety is developed. We would prefer that GEF financing should be requested to follow the priorities of the Strategic Plan for the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety (2011-2020) during the revision of the Strategy for the Biodiversity Focal Area.
6. We agree with the aim of increasing the use of funds within the Biosafety area. But we also believe that it is important to maintain a demand driven approach shaped by country priorities, and we are therefore not in favour of the idea of national quotas for Biosafety within the overall Biodiversity envelope.
7. We note that in the draft decision, the GEF is asked to put aside guidance that, under certain circumstances, allows for GEF funding for countries that are not yet parties to the Protocol. We would prefer to keep the door open for financing non-party projects as this can pave the way for full-membership.
8. We also note in the draft decision that the GEF is asked to extend without further delay support under the BCH II project to all the remaining eligible parties, using resources under the biodiversity focal area, outside the national STAR allocation. We would like the GEF to conduct an expedient evaluation of the BCH-II project before extending the support for the BCH-II project to all eligible parties, as GEF has indicated in their response to the guidance from the last COP-MOP.
9. We find the recommendations under “Mobilization of additional resources” important, while recognizing that the use of resources is a national policy choice.

10. Let me close this statement, Mr Chairman, by informing you that we can accept most of the elements for the draft COP-MOP decision, but have comments and suggested amendments to draft decisions a, c, e, f, g, j and l reflecting our views. We will hand them over in writing to the Secretariat.
11. Thank you, Mr Chairman.

Item 9 – Status of capacity-building activities and the use of the roster of biosafety experts

1. Thank you Mr Chairman. On behalf of the EU and its Member States I would like to thank the Executive Secretary and the Secretariat for the extensive documentation on the issue of capacity building and the use of the roster of biosafety experts. We would like to state our renewed commitment to capacity building.
2. We are very aware of the fact that sufficient capacity in all countries is crucial for the effective implementation of the Protocol. Still, we need to acknowledge that resources are limited, especially now, in the context of the global economic crisis. GEF funding offers opportunities to meet capacity building challenges. However, requests for biosafety projects are currently limited, despite the documentation showing the need for more capacity building. We find that measures should be taken to change this situation, and while we have a proposal ourselves, we look forward to discussing with others how barriers can be removed.
3. We have thoroughly studied the draft decisions. While we can generally support the decisions under this agenda item, we find that there are elements that need to be changed.
4. This is particularly the case regarding the proposed draft Framework and Action Plan. It is our view that a new Framework and Action Plan for Capacity-Building must be aligned with the Strategic Plan and the link between the two explained. We also support a review of a new Framework and Action Plan, if adopted, but it should be done in conjunction with the mid-term review of the Strategic Plan.
5. We prefer gathering experience with the existing indicators and assessing whether they are useful in measuring the status of capacity-building before we consider introducing new indicators or changing the current ones. Until then, we find that the indicators of a new Plan must be identical to those of the Strategic Plan. After the review, which should be carried out in conjunction with the mid-term review of the Strategic Plan, we can consider changes.
6. We see a lot of merit in the proposed “strategic approaches to capacity building” and support them. We agree that more emphasis should be placed on focused technical and professional capacity and institutional elements that are key for putting in place National Biosafety Frameworks. However, repeating the strategic approaches listed in the Framework and Action Plan in the draft decision can lead to confusion, especially given that different wording is used. We prefer them to be listed only in the Framework and Action Plan.
7. We strongly support the section on sustainability of the capabilities obtained, section 3.7 of the draft Framework and Action Plan. We specifically find the issue of mainstreaming of biosafety into broader development plans and relevant sector policies crucial for ensuring long term results.
8. Regarding the Coordination Mechanism; we support a decision to restructure and streamline the Mechanism as proposed, but we find an element missing, namely the Coordination Meetings. We think it is important to provide for interaction between Parties and donors by maintaining Coordination Meetings as part of the restructured Coordination Mechanism, in a manner which is in accordance with the original mandate, as outlined in decision BS-1/5.

9. We have a number of drafting suggestions reflecting the above points, which we will submit to you in writing.
10. Thank you Mr Chairman.

Item 10 – Handling, Transport, Packaging and Identification

1. Madam Chair, I am speaking on behalf of the European Union and its 27 Member States.
2. First of all, we would like to welcome the results of the second national reports regarding the questions on handling, transport, packaging and identification, as well as the study commissioned by the Secretariat on this issue.

On article 18.2 b) and c)

3. On the documentation requirements accompanying LMOs that are destined for contained use or for intentional introduction in the environment, we welcome the call to Parties to expedite the implementation of their biosafety regulatory framework.
4. We would like to recall that Parties experiencing difficulties in implementing the obligations under the Protocol with regard to the establishment of documentation requirements, can seek assistance in this regard from the Compliance Committee.
5. We also recognize the need for cooperation and capacity building in implementing identification requirements and will continue to support Parties in this matter through, amongst other thing, the electronic network of laboratories that was established through the BCH.
6. Furthermore, we further agree with the last paragraph of the draft decision.

On article 18.3

7. Insofar as the need to develop standards with regard to handling, transport, packaging and identification is concerned, we broadly appreciate the study and its finding that the existing international standards, guidance and methods are sufficient to allow Parties to the Protocol to effectively achieve the Protocol's objectives.
8. We consider that the study provides sufficient tools to guide Parties on how to use the existing international regulations and standards for the purpose of handling, transport, packaging and identification of LMOs.
9. We welcome collaboration with other standard setting bodies in order to avoid any duplication of efforts.
10. We also note the proposal to develop new custom codes for LMOs. However, we do not see the usefulness of such an exercise to achieve the purposes of the Protocol, nor do we believe that the Executive Secretary is best placed to take this work forward. We rather believe that work in the field of customs should be left to those fora where well established cooperation with custom authorities already exist, such as within the Green-Customs Initiative.

11. We also believe that while the question of recognition of the Cartagena Protocol standards by other international fora is an important one, it is also a complex one that requires additional consideration. We would therefore request the Executive Secretary to examine this matter in more detail under the agenda item dealing with cooperation with other organizations and report back to the COP-MOP before any action is taken.
12. Lastly, and referring to paragraph f) of the draft decision, we believe that any decision on LMOs that may have adverse effects should only be taken if and when such an LMO would be identified.
13. We will provide some text proposals to the Secretariat to reflect our suggestions and look forward to discussing this further.
14. Thank you, Madam Chair.

Item 11 – Notification Requirements

1. Madam Chair, I am speaking on behalf of the European Union and its 27 Member States.
2. First of all, we would like to thank the Secretariat for the note prepared on this item.
3. In particular, we would like to welcome the synthesis of the second national report and the results regarding the questions on notifications requirements.
4. We note that there are still a significant number of Parties that have not established notification requirements for exporters under their jurisdiction.
5. If Parties continue to experience difficulties with their notification requirements they may submit information on the difficulties to the Secretariat and as appropriate to Compliance Committee.
6. We note that currently no Parties have provided any details on experiences with the implementation of article 8 nor have raised any concern on this requirement.
7. Based on those facts, we believe that a possible further review of this item should only take place if and when there is a substantial and documented need provided by Parties.
8. Let me close this statement, Mr Chairman/Madam Chair, by informing you that we support the basic principles in the suggested elements for a draft decision, we do, however, have some drafting suggestions to the draft COP-MOP decision reflecting our views and we will hand them in writing to the Secretariat.
9. Thank you, Madam Chair.

Item 12 – Liability and Redress

1. Madame Chair, I will be speaking on behalf of the European Union and its 27 Member States.
2. On behalf of the EU and its Member States, I would like to thank the Secretariat for the document on Liability and Redress and the suggested elements for a draft decision.
3. The EU and its Member States welcome the adoption in 2010 of the Nagoya—Kuala Lumpur Supplementary Protocol, and support concrete steps for its ratification and implementation.
4. We are in the process of ratifying this new Treaty. Two EU Member States have already ratified. The remaining Member States as well as the European Union are also engaging in their internal procedures to enable ratification.
5. We note the activities carried out aiming at raising awareness and understanding of the objective and requirements of the Supplementary Protocol and in this regard we welcome the financial contribution made by the Government of Japan. We are supportive of the Secretariat’s efforts to conduct briefing sessions and regional workshops with a view to promoting ratification and early entry into force of the Supplementary Protocol.
6. However, we find that future activities might be better aligned with identified priorities, and we think that it will be very important for countries to define their own capacity building needs and establish national priorities.
7. We therefore propose that MOP 6 takes note of the outcome of work undertaken on capacity needs and invites Parties to define capacity building needs and establish national priorities in order to be able to effectively implement and apply the provisions of the supplementary Protocol, to expedite entry into force of the Supplementary Protocol and generally engage towards ratification and effective implementation.
8. Madame Chair: This could be done by inserting a new paragraph in the draft decision proposed by the Secretariat. We can provide text in writing to the Secretariat or present it here orally or at a later stage, whichever you would prefer.

(For presenting orally if asked to by the Chair:

- “(c) Note the outcome of the inter-regional workshop on capacity needs for the implementation of the Supplementary Protocol (document UNE/CBD/BS/L&R/IRW/1/2) and invite Parties to define capacity building needs and establish national priorities in order to be able to effectively implement and apply the provisions of the supplementary Protocol.”)
9. Thank you Madame Chair.

Item 13 – Unintentional transboundary movements and emergency measures

1. Madam Chair, I am speaking on behalf of the European Union and its 27 Member States.
2. We would like to thank the Secretariat for their work in compiling information from the second national reports and for their suggestions on unintentional transboundary movements of LMOs.
3. We acknowledge the importance of the implementation of Article 17 of the Protocol, and are willing to cooperate in building the capacities necessary for detecting occurrences that lead, or may lead, to an unintentional transboundary movement of LMO's.
4. We support the Secretariat's view that existing elements under the Protocol may already help and guide Parties in taking appropriate responses to unintentional transboundary movements and to initiate the necessary actions, including emergency measures where relevant.
5. We are also of the opinion that we need a better understanding of the difficulties and barriers encountered by Parties to implement the requirements under Article 17 of the Protocol in order to allow us to assess whether there is a need for developing further tools and guidance.
6. Therefore, we agree with the suggestion of the Secretariat to further compile information on this issue. We suggest that this compilation of information should focus on the experiences of the Parties in implementing the requirements under Article 17 of the Protocol. However, we think that the gathered information should be reconsidered by the next COP-MOP rather than an AHTEG, so COP-MOP can determine on the basis of the information available which further steps are appropriate.
7. We will provide some textual proposals to the Secretariat to reflect our suggestions and look forward to discussing this matter further.
8. Thank you, Madam Chair.

Item 14 – Risk Assessment & Risk Management

1. Mr Chairman, I am speaking on behalf of the European Union and its 27 Member States.
2. First of all, we would like to thank the Secretariat and all the experts from Parties, non-Parties and international organizations who have actively contributed to the various intersessional activities that have taken place since COP-MOP 5.
3. In particular, we would like to congratulate the members of the AHTEG and the open-ended online forum on the successful completion of their activities. We would also like to welcome the revised version of the Training Manual and the development of an e-training tool. The revision of “the Guidance on Risk Assessment of LMOs”, the development of guidance on specific topics, the revision of the Training Manual as well as the development of an e-training tool are major achievements to support the risk assessment of living modified organisms in accordance with Annex III of the Cartagena Protocol.

Regarding the Guidance on Risk Assessment of Living Modified Organisms / Regarding capacity-building in risk assessment

4. We accept the endorsement of “the Guidance on Risk Assessment of LMOs” with the clear understanding that it will be tested through practical use to further improve it. We believe that in the course of this process, areas for improvement, such as elements of the scope of the Guidance, may be identified. The testing should be based on a mechanism for sharing experience and providing feed-back. It should be transparent, efficient, based on real cases of risk assessment, and have an agreed time frame. The testing should also include the training manual.
5. We endorse the mechanism for updating background documents as recommended by the AHTEG.

Regarding the development of additional guidance on specific topics of risk assessment and risk management

6. We consider that testing through practical use and further improvement of the current “Guidance on Risk Assessment of LMOs” should take priority over the development of new guidance on specific topics, while stressing the importance of establishing priorities on new developments.
7. We recommend that the Open-ended Online Forum continues, and will be used to enhance the transparency of intersessional processes on risk assessment and risk management. Our position on the extension of the AHTEG will depend on its suggested mandate and terms of reference.

Regarding the identification of living modified organisms or specific traits that (i) may have or (ii) are not likely to have adverse effects on the conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity, taking also into account risks to human health

8. As regards the issue on the identification of LMOs or specific traits that are not likely to have adverse effects on the conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity, taking also into account risks to human health, we cannot come to the unambiguous conclusion from the existing evidence that in any environment and under any condition a certain LMO will have no adverse effects (direct or indirect), leading to full exclusion from the scope of the Advanced Informed Agreement procedure.
9. This being said, we recognize the suggestion from the SCBD to urge Parties to provide the Secretariat with scientific information that may assist in the identification of living modified organisms or specific traits that may have or that are not likely to have adverse effects on the conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity, taking also into account risks to human health.

Regarding the status of implementation of risk assessment and risk management provisions

10. We welcome the request to the Executive Secretary to conduct an online survey on the status of the implementation of the operational objectives of the Strategic Plan where data is missing or cannot be retrieved, with a view to establishing baselines and collecting data on the indicators concerned.
11. Let me close this statement, Mr Chairman, by informing you that we have some drafting suggestions to the draft COP-MOP decision reflecting our views, and we will hand them over in writing to the Secretariat.
12. Thank you, Mr Chairman.

Item 15 – Subsidiary Bodies

1. Madam Chair, I am speaking on behalf of the European Union and its 27 Member States.
2. First of all, we would like to thank the Secretariat for the excellent note on this item analysing the experience and lessons learned from the ad hoc technical expert groups and the need for establishing an open-ended subsidiary body for scientific and technical advice under the Protocol.
3. We are of the opinion that the case for a permanent subsidiary body to provide scientific and technical advice to the Parties to the Protocol has yet to be made, and therefore we do not support the establishment of such a body.
4. We can, however, agree to reconsider at COP-MOP 8 the need to establish such a body in the light of the information that will then be available from the third assessment and review of the effectiveness of the Protocol and the mid-term evaluation of the Strategic Plan of the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety. Given that so much information will be available and that all Parties will have a possibility to express views on this topic at this meeting, we do not believe that there is a need to collect views specifically on the issue of subsidiary bodies prior to COPMOP-8.
5. We believe that it is better to focus on specific issues, and to set up ad hoc technical expert groups with specific mandates, to provide advice on one or more scientific and technical.
6. When setting up ad hoc technical expert groups in the future we believe it is important to take into account the experience and lessons learned from previous ad hoc technical expert groups, and we would like to stress the importance of ensuring that any newly established advisory or technical bodies do not duplicate or encroach on the work of already existing bodies.
7. Let me close this statement, Madam Chair, by informing you that we support the basic principles in the suggested elements for a draft decision. We do, however, have some drafting suggestions to the draft COP-MOP decision reflecting our views and we will hand them over in writing to the Secretariat.
8. Thank you, Madam Chair.

Item 16 – Socio-economic considerations

1. Madame Chair, I will be speaking on behalf of the European Union and its 27 Member States.
2. We would like to thank the Secretariat for their extensive work with the online-discussion fora, the regional online conferences, and in particular the organisation of the Workshop in India in November 2011. We would also like to thank Norway for their generosity in funding the workshop and India for hosting it.
3. We are of the view that the draft decision prepared by the Secretariat in document UNEP/CBD/BS/COP-MOP/6/15 captures well the outcomes of the inter-sessional activities which have been conducted since the last COP-MOP.
4. We believe it is crucial that we move forward in the right order and in our view the *next* steps in implementing paragraph 1 of Article 26 of the Protocol should be, with regard to the Strategic Plan, focussing on development of conceptual clarity on socio-economic considerations and a structured exchange of information.
5. We support the Secretariats proposal to undertake a stock taking exercise and to encourage Parties, other Governments and relevant organisations to continue to exchange information and undertaking research on this issue, as this would be the best way forward. It is important that this exercise is well structured, uses appropriate means and is mindful of the financial aspects as well as of other priorities.
6. We believe that at this stage it would be premature to already start developing guidelines on socio-economic considerations. We are convinced that the development of guidelines in the context of operational objective 1.7 of the Strategic Plan needs to be based on the evaluation of the information gathered and can only start after conceptual clarity has been reached.
7. In this context, while we note that an *ad hoc* technical expert group is suggested, we are ready to discuss either this or other ways forward, subject to the availability of funds, at the appropriate stage.
8. We will provide text proposals as regards possible amendments to the draft COP-MOP decision to the Secretariat to reflect our suggestions and look forward to discussing this further.
9. Thank you, Madam Chair.

Item 17 – Monitoring and reporting

1. Mr Chairman, I am speaking on behalf of the European Union and its 27 Member States.
2. We would like to thank the Secretariat for the excellent work on the second national report and for preparing the note analysing the information and trends contained in the national reports.
3. We welcome the wide participation in the second national reporting, and recognise the positive effect of the GEF funding and of the new reporting format on the completion of the second national reports. We believe that both aspects have made a substantial contribution to the high reporting rate.
4. We believe that national reporting along with the BCH should be the main instruments for data collection and reporting for all initiatives and objectives in the context of implementing the protocol.
5. The second national reports give in our opinion a good overview of the current state of implementation of the Protocol and these reports provide important baseline data for subsequent assessment and review process of the effectiveness of the Protocol and for evaluating progress in the implementation of its Strategic Plan.
6. We consider that the process and objectives of monitoring and reporting should be kept under review, and agree that the format should be adjusted accordingly based on experiences gained with the completion of the reports and through the analysis of the second national reports. At the same time we need to ensure continuity and comparability.
7. We also agree with the recommendations of the Compliance Committee on monitoring and reporting and support the incorporation of them into the draft decision. We in particular support the recommendation that all Parties should complete the reporting format of the second national report before using any simplified report that might be adopted in the future.
8. We welcome the suggestion by the Secretariat to update the format in accordance with decision BS-V/14, which in our view ensures that subsequent reporting should be limited to questions that require regular updating and questions related to priority areas applicable to the reporting period as indicated in the Strategic plan and programme of work.
9. In our view it would benefit all if the reporting requirements were adaptable to the information requirements related to the implementation status for each party in order to avoid repeated reporting by Parties of the same, static information.
10. In general we support the decision proposed by the Executive Secretary, but we do have some minor suggestions to paragraph 8 on the adjustment of the reporting format. We will hand over our suggestions in writing to the Secretariat.
11. Thank you, Mr Chairman.

Item 18 – Assessment and review

1. Mr Chairman, I am speaking on behalf of the European Union and its 27 Member States.
2. We would like to thank the Secretariat for all the work undertaken in the preparation of the second assessment and review and for the organisation of the meeting of the *ad hoc* technical expert group in Vienna, Austria in May of this year. Also, we would like to express our gratitude to the Government of Japan for their generous financial support and to Austria for hosting the meeting.
3. Furthermore, we would like to thank the members of the *Ad Hoc* Technical Expert Group on the second assessment and review for their efforts and work and we take note of their recommendations. Most of their recommendations have been incorporated into the various draft decisions and are considered under those respective agenda items of the agenda.
4. On the draft decision before us, we endorse the recommendations of the Compliance Committee as contained in paragraph 7 of the draft decision.
5. As regards the further elements of the draft decision, it seems important to us to maintain that the 3rd assessment and review and the mid-term evaluation of the Strategic Plan do indeed serve two different objectives. The mid-term evaluation of the Strategic Plan is primarily focussing on the domestic measures taken by the Parties in response to the Plan. In this regard, the evaluation of the Strategic Plan should build on and indeed must avoid duplicating the role given to the Compliance Committee in evaluating the national reports of Parties. The 3rd assessment and review of the Protocol, in contrast, is primarily focussing on the effectiveness of the Protocol and its procedures and annexes. This means on the effectiveness of the international framework set up by the Cartagena Protocol. The changes to the draft decision proposed by us reflect this basic understanding.
6. We support the proposal by the Secretariat to undertake a dedicated survey to gather the necessary information relating to the remaining indicators of the Strategic Plan, with the understanding that all existing available data sources should be fully utilised before requesting new data from Parties.
7. We also agree with the Secretariat that the scope of and the process for the third assessment and review should be determined by COP-MOP 7. To prepare this decision, we propose that the Executive Secretary is requested to develop a sound methodological approach for undertaking the third assessment and review for consideration by COP-MOP 7.
8. We believe that the Secretariat is best placed to undertake a dedicated survey in support of the mid-term review of the Strategic Plan and to develop a sound methodology for the third assessment and review. We therefore do not consider it necessary to set up an AHTEG.
9. Additionally, several of the tasks proposed for the AHTEG relating to the development of the format of the third national report are already adequately addressed under the issue of monitoring and reporting.

10. In consequence, we suggest deleting annex II of the draft decision, but suggest lifting some tasks from the annex into the draft decision itself. We will provide textual proposals as regards possible amendments to the draft COP-MOP decision to the Secretariat to reflect our suggestions and look forward to discussing this further.
11. Thank you, Mr Chairman.

Closing Statement

1. Mr. President, Executive secretary, Mr Chairman, distinguished delegates,
2. On behalf of the European Union and its Member States, I would first of all, like to extend our sincere gratitude to the Government of India for its generous hospitality in hosting this event. You have created the perfect frames for this conference and we have at all times felt comfortable in your caring - and attentive - hands.
3. Mr. President, we would like to thank you and the co-chairs of the working groups, Mrs. Ines Verley, and Mr. Spencer Thomas, as well as the chairs and co-chairs of the contacts groups, Mr. Helmuth Gaugitsch, Mrs. Eliana Fontes, Mr. Ruben Dekker, Mr. Gurdial Singh Nijar and Ambassador Conrod Hunte for their excellent work in guiding us through this weeks deliberations.
4. We also thank the Executive Secretary and the Secretariat for all the hard work and support to the delegations and deliberations. And last but not least we thank all the distinguished delegates for the constructive spirit in which our work has been conducted.
5. Today, we can look back at an eventful week where opinions have been exchanged, views expressed and compromises reached. We believe, that the results we have before us reflect the hard work of everybody involved, and we have witnessed how unity can be our strength and diversity our wealth. Through mutual understanding and cooperation we have, in our view, made decisions on many issues which will bring us ever closer to our final objective - an effective implementation of the Protocol.
6. Finally, to the Government of India and the Ministry of Environment and Forests, allow us once again to extend our warmest thanks for hosting the conference. We wish you all the best of luck in your new role as the President of the COP-MOP and we look forward to the activities following, with confidence in your leadership towards COP-MOP 7 in South Korea.
7. Thank you, Mr Chairman.
