



Statement of the

## 15<sup>th</sup> Global Biodiversity Forum

to the 5th meeting of the Conference of the Parties to  
the Convention on Biological Diversity

### Workshops:

Biodiversity for poverty alleviation  
Instruments for Access and Benefit-Sharing from Genetic Resources  
Agricultural Biodiversity and Sustainable Livelihoods: the Case of Dryland Ecosystems

### Convenors:

African Centre for Technology Studies (ACTS)  
Asociación para la Defensa de los Derechos Naturales (ADN)  
Biodiversity Action Network (BIONET)  
CARE International  
Environment Liaison Center International (ELCI)  
Global Environment Facility (GEF)  
Indigenous Peoples Biodiversity Network (IPBN)  
The Indonesian Biodiversity Forum (Kehati)  
The Indonesian Indigenous Peoples National Organization (AMAN)  
Intermediate Technology Development Group (ITDG)  
International Plant Genetic Resources Institute (IPGRI)  
IUCN - The World Conservation Union  
Kalpavriksh, India  
Kechua-Aymara Association for Sustainable Livelihoods (ANDES)  
Peruvian Society for Environmental Law (SPDA)  
RIOD - International NGO Network on Desertification  
The Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew  
the Secretariat to the Convention on Biological Diversity (SCBD)  
Sobrevivencia, Paraguay  
Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC)  
United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)  
United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP)  
World Resources Institute (WRI)  
World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF)

12-14 May 2000  
Nairobi, Kenya

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## 15<sup>th</sup> Global Biodiversity Forum

to the 5<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity

*Mr Chairperson, Distinguished Delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen,*

*The Global Biodiversity Forum – or GBF -- is a meeting place where a diverse spectrum of people from different sectors and regions, including both governments and civil society, can participate in the discussions on biodiversity. Over the past 8 years, 21 global and regional sessions of the GBF have been held, bringing together over 7000 people. The 15th session of the Global Biodiversity Forum met this past week-end to address three key themes on the implementation of the CBD: Biodiversity for Poverty Alleviation, Instruments for Access and Benefit-Sharing from Genetic Resources and Related Traditional Knowledge Issues, and Agricultural Biodiversity and Sustainable Livelihoods: the Case of Dryland Ecosystems. Some 200 participants from 46 countries attended. Major highlights from the highly connected and integrated workshops are:*

*Participants from the **Biodiversity for Poverty Alleviation** workshop emphasized, among others, the following:*

*Poverty eradication should form "the first and overriding priority"<sup>1</sup> of humanity. It should be emphasized that poverty does not include only monetary poverty - it also includes hunger, malnutrition, social and political exclusion, discrimination and violence, and loss of cultural and spiritual values. The eradication of poverty must ensure security of access to adequate food, livelihoods and conditions of health and well-being.*

*Many conventional approaches to poverty eradication and biodiversity conservation, including lack of interdepartmental coordination, have lead to further impoverishment and the destruction of the biodiversity upon which the poor depend.*

- 1. The conservation, sustainable use and, in particular, the fair and equitable sharing of the benefits of biodiversity should form an essential element of effective poverty eradication strategies. The CBD COP should recommend to governments, the donor community, the private sector, poverty alleviation institutions and other intergovernmental and private processes, the full integration of the many monetary and non-monetary goods and services of the biodiversity upon which the poor depend, into poverty eradication strategies. Practical implications should include a ban on large-scale logging operations in primary forests.*
- 2. National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans and the agenda items of the CBD COP, (in particular on sustainable use, ecosystem approach, financial resources, incentives and benefit*

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<sup>1</sup> *Convention on Biodiversity preamble and article 24*

sharing), should fully take into account the rights and needs of the poor, including the rights and needs of women, Indigenous Peoples, and other local communities. NBSAPs and the CBD COP agenda, and other processes should also address unsustainable consumption and production patterns, which form the main underlying cause of impoverishment and biodiversity destruction.

3. *Effective poverty eradication and biodiversity strategies, including agricultural biodiversity and benefit sharing strategies, should go beyond "participation" and promote the empowerment and self-development of people, in particular women, farmers, Indigenous Peoples and other local communities. The CBD COP should recommend to its own financial mechanisms and other financial institutions, the establishment and/or strengthening of effective incentive schemes and small grants and micro-credit facilities, which promote community-driven biodiversity conservation and poverty eradication initiatives.*

*In the workshop on Instruments for **Access and Benefit-Sharing (ABS) from Genetic Resources and Related Traditional Knowledge Issues**, participants wished to bring three main issues to your attention:*

1. **ABS-8(j) linkages and need for participation in related processes.** *For Indigenous Peoples, biodiversity, including access to genetic resources, is a matter of basic rights and cultural survival. Thus, COP must ensure the full and effective participation of Indigenous Peoples in CBD's work on ABS to ensure the incorporation of Indigenous Peoples' values. Recognising the direct linkage between Access and Benefit Sharing and the provisions of Article 8(j), the COP should establish an Indigenous Expert Panel on Access and Benefit Sharing. Until appropriate mechanisms for the protection of traditional knowledge are ensured, the Forum recommends that Parties pay attention to calls from Indigenous Peoples to impose a moratorium on all bioprospecting in their territories.*
2. **Implementation considerations: Access legislation, user measures, integration.** *To date the burden for meeting the CBD's objectives on Access and Benefit-Sharing has been borne almost exclusively by countries providing genetic resources. There is now a clear obligation upon countries in which genetic resources are used to adopt complementary measures in conformity with the rights of providers. However, this goes hand in hand with the need for flexibility and simplicity of access legislation. Effective implementation of the CBD's provisions on ABS is crucially dependent upon the rapid designation of a National Focal Point for securing legal certainty. Access legislation should retain the flexibility to incorporate emerging multilateral measures and regional frameworks, especially in relation to Plant Genetic Resources for Agriculture. All of these objectives can be achieved through the integration of ABS into National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans, and broad stakeholder participation.*
3. **Intellectual property rights.** *There is a direct link between the adoption of ABS legislation, including user measures, and Intellectual Property Rights. The lack of consensus on this issue, as demonstrated in ISOC, the Expert Panel and the 8(j) Working group, highlights the need for clarification of the extent to which existing IPR impacts the rights of source countries and holders of traditional knowledge. To this end, information gaps and areas where there is lack of clarity must be identified and the findings provided to the parties in a form that will enable appropriate action, including interim national measures, pending adoption of a multilateral solution.*

*The discussions in the workshop on **Agricultural Biodiversity and Sustainable Livelihoods: The Case of Dryland Ecosystems** highlighted the following key points:*

1. **Agricultural Biodiversity has to be a major area for action by the Parties in implementing this Convention.** *Agricultural Biodiversity must form a key dimension of any sustainable agriculture strategy and policy. Agriculture is the largest user of biodiversity and its components and farmers are the main ecosystem managers. Farming is based on agricultural*

biodiversity and it forms a large part of terrestrial biodiversity, not least in drylands. Agricultural biodiversity provides sustainable production of food, biological support to production, and ecosystem services. Therefore COP 5 needs to adopt strong operative programmes of work on agricultural biodiversity and drylands and seek productive collaboration with key implementing agencies such as FAO and the Convention to Combat Desertification. .

2. **The two Programmes of Work on Agricultural Biodiversity and Dry and Sub-Humid Lands must be centred on farmers, including pastoralists, hunter-gatherers and fisherfolk.** COP must stress that in the implementation of these programmes, Parties ensure continuity of farmers' guardian role for a major part of global biodiversity. Thus, the Convention and its Parties should give full support to actions by farmers that conserve and sustainably use / maintain agricultural biodiversity and reflect such actions in their National Reports. The empowerment of farmers is crucial in counteracting the spread of unsustainable agriculture technologies and practices that pose a major threat to agricultural biodiversity, by an increasingly powerful trans-national 'Life Industry' which is making multi-billion investments in technologies and inputs including genetic modification. Parties should work with the private sector to promote farmer-driven research and development. This Convention must actively collaborate with farming communities and their institutions as key partners, in the further development of the programmes of work. The Parties to the Convention must send a strong message to FAO to rapidly complete the harmonisation of the International Undertaking on Plant Genetic Resources with this Convention to include forceful Articles on Farmers' Rights; a multilateral system of Access, outlawing proprietary ownership through patents and Plant Variety Protection of all designated materials and their derivatives; and Benefit Sharing related to end use, such as food security.
3. **The Parties to the Convention should support actions to raise consumer awareness to support sustainable farming, agricultural biodiversity and localised food systems** in all ecosystems particularly in drylands. By the promotion of improved markets which add value locally, consumers can increase the transfer of resources to producers; for example support for niche markets; organic farming; and increased access to national and international markets. The COP should recognise and facilitate this.

Mr. Chairman and distinguished delegates, more detailed conclusions and recommendations from the GBF workshops can be found in the annex to the written version of this statement. Although they are relevant to many other processes, we have linked our recommendations to the COP Agenda Items and Draft Decisions where appropriate to facilitate your discussions.

*Thank you for your attention.*