

**Report on Group of Like-Minded Megadiverse Countries (LMMC)
Expert Working Group Session (17-19 January 2005) and
Ministerial Session (20-21 January 2005), Delhi, India**
Prepared by Charles McNeill, 23 January 2005 [draft of 24 Jan 05]

Note: Acronyms are assigned to common terms used in this report the first time cited.

Summary Points and Key Outputs:

1. UNDP and IUCN supported the Government of India (GOI) in its role of Chair of the LMMC, in carrying out this set of meetings
2. UNDP Country Office staff (Jo Scheuer, Neera Burra, Ravi Chellam) and UNDP HQ team (John Hough, Tehmina Akhtar, Gelila Terrefe, Charles McNeill) collaborated closely to arrange for and support these meetings. [Note: UNDP HQ staff are extremely grateful to UNDP CO staff for their generous support – and for participating in the various sessions and events during the week.]
3. 15 of the 17 Megadiverse countries were represented in these meetings for a total of 63 participants [participants list is [Attachment #3](#)]
4. This meeting was in fact 3 meetings in one: (1) IUCN-sponsored technical meeting on Access and Benefit Sharing (ABS) and Traditional Knowledge (TK) and related topics, (2) UNDP global program-sponsored meeting on GEF Mid-Sized Project on ‘Knowledge and Policy Network’ (KPN) for the Group, (3) Ministerial meeting of the Group [see agendas in [Attachment #1](#) & [Attachment #2](#)]
5. Extremely successful meetings for Megadiverse Group and for UNDP’s work with Like-Minded Megadiverse Countries (LMMC)
6. One area of major focus throughout the meetings was preparation of a common position of the Group for the February 14-18, 2005 Bangkok meeting of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) on defining the terms of the ‘International Regime’ (IR) on ABS and TK. Since the LMMC was the champion and driver of the establishment of such an International Regime at the Johannesburg World Summit on Sustainable Development – they have a special responsibility to contribute to the direction of the IR – and thus the urgency of developing common positions.
7. The Group’s Expert Working session produced a report of conclusions [[Attachment #11](#)]
8. The Group gave UNDP guidance on how to re-shape the KPN [notes from discussions are in [Attachment #15](#)]
9. The Ministerial Session produced a common position in its ‘New Delhi Declaration of LMMC on ABS’ [[Attachment #18](#)]
10. The New Delhi Declaration calls for further work on the MCF
11. One key point that emerged over and over throughout the meetings was that a key decision was taken by the Convention on Biological Diversity’s Conference of the Parties 7 (CBD COP 7) in Kuala Lumpur in February 2004 to call for the GEF to expand significantly the resources available for Capacity Building for ABS and TK activities. It is clear that the LMMC, and other developing countries, would

greatly appreciate efforts by UNDP to operationalize the CBD COP 7 decision on their behalf.

Preparation of GEF Mid-Sized Project:

- Alberto Glender, Mexico's counselor to India, and former head of the Megadiverse Secretariat from 2001 – 2004, prepared a 'concept note' and presentation on the KPN [[Attachment #13](#)] as a starting point for the discussions with the Group
- The Group expanded the focus of the KPN beyond biotechnology to other ABS issues [notes from Tues, 18 Jan. discussion of concept note in [Attachment #15](#)]
- Christopher Cosslett, UNDP GEF consultant, with guidance from Tehmina Akhtar and John Hough, prepared a 'project framework' document on the KPN [[Attachment #14](#)] which Chris reviewed with the Group during a 2 hour session [notes from Wed. 19 Jan. discussion of project framework in [Attachment #15](#)]
- Agreement was reached between UNDP and GOI on timetable and process for finalization of the KPN [included in notes of discussion of KPN in [Attachment #15](#)]

Status of Megadiverse Cooperation Trust Fund:

- The MCF was not formally on the agenda of this meeting because GOI needs to do a final review of the documents before forwarding to all the other LMMCs for their final comments
- UNDP has finalized its own comments on the MCF proposal [[Attachment #16](#) & [Attachment #17](#)]
- The New Delhi Declaration did call for the advancement of the MCF so it is possible that the LMMC will agree to have UNDP establish and manage this Trust Fund within the next few months

UNDP's Role in Delhi Workshops:

- The Government of India gave UNDP great prominence and visibility throughout the meetings, including inviting UNDP to speak at every major opportunity – from the Opening Session (17 Jan), to the Closing of the Expert Working Group (19 Jan), to the Closing of the Ministerial Session (21 Jan) – and also on the panel with GOI at a major national press conference (20 Jan) [See [Attachment #7](#) & [Attachment #20](#) for UNDP remarks]
- UNDP was formally acknowledged in all the major statements made by the Union Minister of Environment and Forests, Thiru A. Raja and the State Minister, Namo Narayan Neema [copy of concluding statement by Hon. Raja is provided as an example, [Attachment #19](#)]
- UNDP's logo was featured in all the banners and advertising about the LMMC meetings, including huge banners in the conference room, inside and outside the hotel and even on the streets of Delhi [see photos, [Attachment #4A](#), [Attachment #4B](#), [Attachment #4C](#), [Attachment #4D](#) and [Attachment #4E](#)]

- In addition, an ad placed in all of India's major newspapers on 20 January featured UNDP's participation in the meetings – along with an article in 'The Indian Express' of 21 January 2005 on the LMMC which mentions UNDP [See [Attachment #5](#) & [Attachment #6](#)]

Participants in Delhi Workshops and Key People Met in Workshops:

- See attached list of participants [[Attachment #3](#)]
- Key contacts made with delegates from: Bolivia, Brazil, China, Indonesia, Kenya, Madagascar, Mexico, South Africa ... and primarily with India
- Also additional contacts made with IUCN, CBD and UNEP colleagues, and Indian media representatives

UNDP's Relationship with Government of India:

- The relationship that had been established between UNDP and GOI during February 2004 CBD COP 7 'LMMC Ministerial Meeting' (with Dr. Prodipto Ghosh, Secretary, Ministry of Environment and Forests (MoEF); and Mr. Desh D. Verma, Joint Secretary, MoEF) – and through visits to NY by Dr. Ghosh, and extensive correspondence with Mr. Verma since Feb. 2004, was expanded through this week of interactions.
- In addition, contact was established with the Union Minister of Environment and Forests, Hon. Thiru A. Raja, and State Minister of MoEF, Hon. Namo Narayan Neema; and good collaboration initiated with Mr. Suresh Chandra, Special Secretary, MoEF; and with Dr. Sujata Arora, Additional Director and Technical Secretary of LMMC, MoEF, and many others in the MoEF.

UNDP's Relationship with IUCN:

- Dr. P. Balakrishna, Head of IUCN's Regional Biodiversity Programme, Asia, based in Colombo, Sri Lanka, and his team, did an exceptional job in assisting the GOI with all aspects of preparing for and implementing these meetings.
- The technical capacity and quality of Dr. Balakrishna's work is of the very highest levels and UNDP is grateful for all that IUCN invested in these meetings – technically and also in terms of very significant financial resources
- Maria Fernando Espinosa, with IUCN's Ecuador office offered excellent expert advice and support as well.
- The collaboration between UNDP and IUCN through this meeting should be considered a best practice in view of the impact of the results achieved.

UNDP's Relationship with UNEP:

- It was a real pleasure to meet and work with during these meetings, Dr. Nehemiah Rotich of UNEP's Division of Environmental Conventions
- He contributed a lot to the discussions and exhibited a very open and sincere collaborative spirit which augurs well for further potential join work with UNEP on behalf of the LMMC.

Follow-Up Items and Next Steps:

1. This Report: Distribute this report to EEG colleagues and all UNDP Environment Focal Points in the 17 LMMC countries
2. GEF MSP on KPN: UNDP must maintain as fast progress as possible and help GOI fulfill its intention to have its second and final year as Chair of the LMMC be maximally productive.
3. Megadiverse Cooperation Trust Fund: UNDP must remain responsive and even proactive on anticipating LMMC's desires on establishment of the MCF
4. Operationalizing CBD COP 7 decision on increasing resources for Capacity Development for ABS and TK: UNDP must plan carefully and strategically how best to expand its work to tap into these resources on behalf of the LMMC and other developing countries.
5. UNDP's Practice Note on ABS & TK: the importance of this Practice Note is enhanced as a result of this LMMC meeting and EEG should distribute the draft to key participants here for a final review, e.g. Dr. Balakrishna, Dr. Olivia Jalbert, CBD; Mr. Glender, and other experts.
6. UNDP's Study of National Experience in ABS: this report also takes on a new importance as a result of this LMMC meeting and it should be reviewed and updated, if appropriate, and more widely distributed to LMMC members, etc.
7. CBD Meeting on Defining the International Regime, 14-18 February 2005, Bangkok: UNDP must find a way to be properly represented at this important meeting
8. UNDP's Further Support to LMMC: vital that UNDP maintains its focus on assisting the Group based on their requests since this year is key for the launch of both the GEF MSP and the MCF.
9. Note on a separate initiative: India's 'National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (NBSAP): India has produced one of the most innovative, far reaching and important NBSAPs in the world and yet it has not yet been released or published because it needs to receive 'Cabinet Approval' from the GOI first. India's NBSAP undertook a most participatory approach which effectively involved stakeholders throughout the country, and reaching below the national level to state governments and NGOs and community based organization and local communities themselves. Since this NBSAP could be considered a 'best practice' of great value to other countries, C. McNeill expressed UNDP's keen interest in the release of India's NBSAP to Dr. Ghosh, Mr. Verman and Dr. Arora and inquired as to its status. C. McNeill was informed that GOI has every intention of releasing the NBSAP as soon as possible and the Cabinet approval process is being expedited and managed by a Dr. Haq in MoEF. Ravi Chellam will follow-up with Dr. Haq and other MoEF officials in case UNDP can provide any support to the NBSAP publication and dissemination process.

Attachments --- Documentation from the LMMC Meetings:

General Documents

1. Agenda of meetings
2. Slides expanding on meeting agenda
3. List of Participants
4. Photos of various sessions of the LMMC meetings
5. Ads on LMMC meeting in 'The Times of India', 'The Indian Express', and 'Hindustan Times' on 20 January 2005
6. Article on LMMC meeting in 'The Indian Express' on 21 January 2005

Documents from Expert Working Group, 17-18 January 2005

7. UNDP's Remarks by C. McNeill at Opening of Session, 17 January 2005
8. IUCN slides on 'Emerging Issues in Conservation, Management and Sharing of Biological Diversity: Focus on ABS, IPRs and TK'
9. IUCN slides on 'Bonn Guidelines and International Regime: Elements and Emerging Issues'
10. Draft slides on 'Negotiation of an International Regime on ABS'
11. Outcomes Report of Group Work on I. National Experiences, II. User Measures and Certification Systems, III. Linkages between ABS, TK and IPR

Documents on GEF MSP on KPN:

12. GEF Project Development Fund, Block A (PDF A) proposal on the KPN
13. Alberto Glender's presentation on the KPN
14. Chris Cosslett's 'project framework' for the KPN
15. Notes from LMMC's discussion of KPN on 18-19 January 2005

Documents on Megadiverse Cooperation Fund (MCF):

16. Terms of Reference for the 'UNDP Trust Fund for Support to the Group of LMMCs: The Megadiverse Cooperation Fund'
17. 'Proposal for a Megadiverse Cooperation Fund, Annex 1

Documents from Ministerial Session:

18. 'New Delhi Declaration of LMMC on ABS'
19. Remarks by India's Minister of Environment, Hon. Thiru A. Raja, in Concluding Session of the LMMC, 21 January 2005
20. UNDP's Remarks by C. McNeill at Closing of Ministerial Session, 21 January 2005
21. UNEP's statement to the LMMC, delivered by Dr. Nehemiah Rotich

Background:

22. Invitation by the Government of India to UNDP.

To copy this note to: UNDP India CO colleagues (M. Olson, J Scheuer, N Burra, R Chellam); EEG HQ, UNDP GEF BD team, EEG outposted staff (including, of course, Bangkok colleagues in view of the CBD IR meeting), BDP Directorate, RBx HQ Environ Focal Points, Country Office Environ. Focal Points in

LMMCs, Yves Sassenrath, DRM colleagues (Jennifer Topping, etc), Balakrishna, IUCN, Christopher Cosslett, Alberto Glender, etc.