A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF LAWS AND POLICIES IMPACTING ON CONSERVATION OF BIODIVERSITY WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO AGRICULTURAL BIODIVERSITY

BY

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ABSTRACT

The process of rapid development comes with a price and it is mostly done at the expense of biodiversity and general environmental degradation. The complex interrelationship between agricultural biodiversity and biotechnology as well as the conflicting institutional interplay in the international governance of the conservation and use of plant genetic resources has resulted in a trade-environment deadlock between the technologically advanced developed nations and genetically resource rich developing and least developed nations to the detriment of the collective interests of the global community. The aim of the current research is to investigate the origins, operations and effects of legal regimes, policies and practices related to conservation of biodiversity. It undertakes a comparative study of laws and policies in this area to gain an in-depth understanding of the factors behind the lack of success in conserving biodiversity in general and agricultural biodiversity in particular and explores ways in which the conflicts between the WTO Agreements and the CBD can be resolved. The research undertook a socio-legal approach utilizing a qualitative research method which predominantly relied on content analysis of provisions in the various treaties that had a bearing on conservation of biodiversity as well as decided cases, reports and studies that analyzed the implementation of these treaties. The findings of the study indicated that global governance structures such as the WTO and the CBD have to reinvent themselves in order to meet the challenges of the millennia brought about by cutting edge technologies such as modern biotechnology. The global community also must have an Ubuntu mindset i.e. unity consciousness to tackle global challenges such as biodiversity loss and global warming which threatens the wellbeing of the planet and its inhabitants. Without such a mindset, no technology, policies or laws will be able to avert the global crises which may culminate into massive extinctions and jeopardize the future of this planet. We need to ensure that our policies and laws are entrenched with ethical values promoted at the global level aimed at ensuring the wellbeing of all.

خلاصة البحث

إن عملية التطوير السريع تأتي مع السعر ويتم ذلك في الغالب بآثار ضارة على التنوع البيولوجي و البيئة العامة. وقد أدى الترابط المعقدة بين التنوع البيولوجي الزراعي و التكنولوجيا الحيوية وكذلك التفاعل المؤسسي في الإدارة العالمية للحفظ واستخدام الموارد الوراثية النباتية إلى طريق مسدود للتجارة والبيئة بين الدول المتقدمة تقدما من الناحية التكنولوجية والدول النامية و الأقل نموا الغنية بالموارد وراثيا على نحو يضر المصلحة العامة للمجتمع العالمي. وكان الهدف من البحث الحالية هو لتحقيق الأسباب والعمليات و آثار الأنظمة القانونية والسياسات و الممارسات المتعلقة بحفظ التنوع البيولوجي. إنه يتولى دراسة مقارنة للقوانين والسياسات في هذا المحال لاكتساب فهم متعمق للعوامل وراء عدم النجاح في المحافظة على التنوع البيولوجي عموما وفي التنوع البيولوجي الزراعي على وجه الخصوص ويستكشف السبل التي تمكن على حل صراعات بين اتفاقيات منظمة التجارة العالمية و اتفاقية التنوع البيولوجي. أجرى البحث نهج الاجتماعية و القانونية باستخدام أسلوب البحث النوعي التي تعتمد في الغالب على تحليل مضمون الأحكام الواردة في المعاهدات المختلفة التي قد تؤثر على حفظ التنوع البيولوجي وكذلك القضايا التي قد قررت والتقارير والدراسات التي حللت تنفيذ هذه المعاهدات. وأشارت نتائج الدراسة إلى أنه يجب على هياكل الحوكمة العالمية مثل منظمة التجارة العالمية واتفاقية التنوع البيولوجي اصلاح نفسها من أجل مواجهة تحديات الألفية التي أحدثتها التقنيات المتطورة مثل التكنولوجيا الحيوية الحديثة. يجب على المجتمع العالمي أيضا أن يكون له التفكير أوبونتو يعني ان يكون على نفس المستوى من الوعى لمعالجة التحديات العالمية مثل فقدان التنوع البيولوجي و ظاهرة الاحتباس الحراري التي تهدد رفاه الكوكب و سكانه. بدون مثل هذا التفكير ، فليس هناك أي تكنولوجيا أو سياسات أو قوانين تكون قادرة على تجنب الأزمات العالمية التي قد تفضى الى انقراض هائل و تعرض للخطر مستقبل هذا الكوكب. نحن بحاجة للتأكد من أن السياسات والقوانين لدينا هي راسخة بالأخلاقيات العالمية التي تضمن الرفاهية للجميع.

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DECLARATION

I hereby declare that this thesis is the result of my own i	nvestigations, except where
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This thesis is lovingly dedicated to the memory of my late father, K. Laxman and my beloved mother S. Leela who has taught me never to give up in my quest for truth in the name of God. It is also in special honor of the three billion people in this world living on less than \$2.50 a day and the 22,000 children who die each day due to poverty.

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Bangkok Declaration, 1967

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The Vienna Convention on the Law of Treaties

Treaty of the Functioning of the European Union

UNESCO Convention for the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage

Wildlife and Countryside Act, 1981 of the United Kingdom

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

Acronym Name

AIA Advanced Informed Agreement AB Appellate Body (for the WTO)

ABS Access to Genetic Resources and Benefit Sharing

AGR Access to Genetic Resources

APEC Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation Group ASEAN Association of South-East Asian Nations AWGE ASEAN Working Group on Environment

AWGNCB ASEAN Working Group on Conservation and Biodiversity

Bt. Bacillus Thuringiensis

BEAs Bilateral Environmental Agreements
CAC Codex Alimentarius Commission
CBD Convention on Biological Diversity
CCD Convention on Combat Desertification

CERES Coalition for Environmentally Responsible Economies
CGIAR Consultative Group on International Agriculture Research
CGRFA Commission on Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture
CITES Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild

Fauna and Flora

CMS Convention on Migratory Species

COP Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological

Diversity

CSR Corporate Social Responsibility

CTE Committee on Trade and Environment (of the World Trade

Organization)

DNA Deoxyribonucleic acid EC European Community

ECA UN Economic and Social Commission for Africa

ECE UN Economic Commission for Europe

ECJ European Court of Justice

ECLAC UN Economic and Social Commission for Latin America and the

Caribbean

EKC The environmental Kuznets curve EMS Environmental Management System

ENGOs Environmental Non-Governmental Organizations

EPA Environmental Protection Agency

ESCAP UN Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific

ESCWA UN Economic and Social Commission for West Asia

ETM Environmental Trade Measure

EU European Union

FAO UN Food and Agriculture Organization

FD Framework Directive G8 Group of Eight

GATS General Agreement on Trade in Services

GATT General Agreement on Tariff and Trade

GDP Gross Domestic Product GEF Global Environment Facility

GHG Greenhouse gas

GISP Global Invasive Species Programme

GM Genetic Modification

GMO Genetically modified organism

GNP Gross National Product
GR Genetic Resources
HGT Horizontal Gene Transfer

IAEA International Atomic Energy Agency
IARCs International Agricultural Research Centers

IAS Invasive Alien Species

IATTC International Organization for Standardization

IBRD International Bank for Reconstruction and Development or World

Bank

ICAO International Civil Aviation Organization ICSU International Council of Scientific Unions

IE International Expert Group on Biotechnology, Innovation and

Intellectual Property

IEA International Energy Agency

IFAD International Fund for Agricultural Development (of UN)
IGC Intergovernmental Committee on Genetic Resources and

Intellectual Property Rights; Traditional Knowledge and Folklore

(of WIPO)

ILCIndigenous and Local CommunitiesILOInternational Labour OrganizationIMFInternational Monetary Fund

IMO International Maritime Organization IPCC International Panel on Climate Change

IPOA International Plan of Action

IPPC International Plant Protection Convention

IPR Intellectual property rights

ISDR International Strategy for Disaster Reduction ISO Inter-American Tropical Tuna Commission

ITC International Trade Centre

ITLOS International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea

ITO International Trade Organization

ITPGRFA International Treaty for Plant Genetic Resources for Food and

Agriculture

ITTO International Tropical Timber Organization ITU International Telecommunications Union

IUCN World Conservation Union (previously International Union for the

Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources)

IWC International Whaling Commission

LDC Least Developed Country LMO Living Modified Organism

LMO-FFP Living Modified Organism for Food and Feed or for Food

Processing

LOP Level of Protection

MA Millennium Ecosystem Assessment
MAI Multilateral Agreement on Investment

MAT Mutually Agreed Terms

MDGs Millennium Development Goals

MEAs Multilateral Environmental Agreements
MEPC Marine Environment Protection Committee

MFN Most Favored Nation

NAFTA North American Free Trade Agreement

NASA National Aeronautics and Space Administration

NATO North Atlantic Treaty Organization NGO Non-governmental organization

OECD Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development

OCHA Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs OHCHR Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights

PBR Plant Breeder's Rights
PCB Polychlorinated Biphenyl

PD Pesticide Directive

PGRFA Plant Genetic resources for Food and Agriculture

PGRs Plant Genetic Resources
PIC Prior Informed Consent
PP Precautionary Principle

PPD Process and production method

RNA Ribonucleic acid

rDNA Recombinant Deoxyribonucleic acid

SAC Special Area of Conservation SBC Secretariat of the Basel Convention

SBSTTA Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological

Advice (of COP)

SCBD Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity

SCM Agreement Subsidies and Countervailing Agreement

SCP Standing Committee on the Law of Patents (WIPO)

SPA Special Protection Area

SPLT Substantive Patent Law Treaty

SPS Uruguay Round Agreement on the Application of Sanitary and

Phytosanitary Measures

TAC Total allowable catch

TCE Traditional Cultural Expressions

TED Turtle Excluder Device

TEG Technical Expert Group of the CBD

TK Traditional Knowledge

TEK Traditional Ecological Knowledge

TT Technology Transfer

TBT Agreement Agreement on Technical Barriers to Trade

TRAFFIC Trade Records Analysis of Fauna and Flora in Commerce TRIPS WTO Agreement on Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual

Property Rights

UNCCD UN Convention to Combat Desertification

UNCED UN Conference on Environment and Development

UNECE UN Economic Commission for Europe UNCTAD UN Conference on Trade and Development

UNDESA/DSD United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs

Division of Sustainable Development

UNDESA/CSD United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs

Commission of Sustainable Development

UNDP United Nations Development Program
UNEP United Nations Environment Program

UNESCAP United Nations Economic and Social Commission of the Asia

Pacific

UNESCO United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

UNFCCC UN Framework Convention on Climate Change

UNFF UN Forum on Forests

UNFPA United Nations Population Fund UN-HABITAT UN Human Settlements Programme

UNHCR United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees

UNICEF United Nations Children's Fund

UNIDO United Nations Industrial Development Organization
UNITAR United Nations Institute for Training and Research

UNU United Nations University

UPOV Union International pour la Protection des Obtentions Végétales

(International Union for the Protection of New Varieties of Plants)

WCMC World Conservation Monitoring Group

WCO World Customs Organization

WEHAB Water, Energy, Health, Agriculture & Biodiversity

WFP World Food Programme WHO World Health Organization

WIPO World Intellectual Property Organization WMO World Meteorological Organization

WSSD World Summit on Sustainable Development

WTO World Tourism Organization
WTO World Trade Organization
WWF World Wide Fund for Nature

CHAPTER ONE

THE CONSERVATION OF GLOBAL BIODIVERSITY & RESEARCH FRAMEWORK

O great King, the birds of the air and the beasts have as equal a right to live and move about in any part of the land as thou. The land belongs to the people and all living things; thou art only the guardian of it.

A sermon on Buddhism preached to King Devanampiya Tissa around 223 BC¹

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Man is part and parcel of the ecology of the earth and the delicate balance of nature is maintained when man co-exists with all species in a symbiotic relationship. The infinite value of biological diversity (hereinafter biodiversity) ² is irrefutable for it has sustained the planet from time immemorial. Numerous benefits both material and non-material continually accrue from natural ecosystem processes but many are yet to be discovered by mankind.³ Some of these possess immense economic value⁴ for it has

¹ Ian McHarg, "Values, process and form," in *The fitness of man's environment*, edited by the Smithsonian Institution, Smithsonian Institution Press, 1968, 213

² 'Biodiversity' is an extremely complex cum multilayered term and thus extremely difficult to define with precision. The concept of biodiversity relates to all life form on earth; it goes beyond the organisms and includes their genetic make-up, and the invisible ecosystem processes and services of which individual species are a part (e.g. photosynthesis, soil formation and pollination). The most legally accepted definition of "biodiversity" is "the variability among living organisms from all sources, including, inter alia, terrestrial, marine, and other aquatic ecosystems, and the ecological complexes of which they part; this includes diversity within species, between species and of ecosystems"; this definition was formulated during the 1992 United Nations Earth Summit in Rio De Janeiro and is currently adopted by the United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity as per Article 2. Source: http://www.cbd.int/doc/meetings/sbstta/sbstta-11/official/sbstta-11-17-en.pdf (accessed 12 January 2009).

³ Balmford, A., Bennun L., ten Brink, B. et al., "The Convention on Biological Diversity's 2010 target," *Himalayan Journal of Sciences*, vol.3 issue 4 (Jan-June 2005): 43-45, 43. See also: Raustiala, Kal and Victor, David G., "Biodiversity since Rio: The Future of the Convention on Biological Diversity," *Environment*, vol.38 no.4 (May 1996): 17-43, 18; Díaz S, Fargione J, Stuart Chapin F III, Tilman D, "Biodiversity Loss threatens Human Wellbeing," *PLoS Biology*, vol.4 issue 8 (August 2006): 1300-1305, 1300

⁴ Ansari, Abdul Haseeb and Jamal, Parveen, "The Convention on Biological Diversity: A Critical Appraisal with Special Reference to Malaysia," *Indian Journal of International Law*, vol.40, no.2 (April-June 2000):137-177, 144

the potential to yield tangible benefits as a result of direct harvesting of plants and animals for food, medicine, fuel, etc. whilst others have environmental benefits such as regulation of air quality and climate, water purification, disease control, biological pest control, pollination, shoreline protection and prevention of soil erosion.⁵ It has been estimated that 40 percent of the global economy is based on biological products and processes.⁶ Non-material benefits are also obtained from eco-systems namely spiritual, cultural, aesthetic and recreational values not to mention research values as well as traditional knowledge systems.⁷ It is safe to surmise that biological diversity offers significant benefits to the global community for it not only sustains livelihoods but life itself.⁸ Its universal relevance thus necessitates the safeguarding of the collective biological diversity⁹ as its protection is a fundamental part of efforts to ensure a thriving and healthy environment for present and future generations of humans and all other living species¹⁰.

The global population today is undergoing various challenges that are closely linked to the environment they live in. The inclination of humans to set themselves apart from the environment and the species that co-habit with them whilst assuming to be superior even to the laws of nature have given rise to many of the challenges faced by the global inhabitants today. In the name of development, 11 many nations have

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⁵ The ASEAN Centre for Biodiversity (ACB), "Importance of Biodiversity," http://www.aseanbiodiversity.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=78&Itemid=97 accessed 20 January 2009

⁶ Koziell, I., *Diversity not Adversity: Sustaining Livelihoods with Biodiversity*, International Institute for Environment and Development and Department for International Development, 2001, 1

ACB, n. 5

⁸ Koziell, n.6, 1

Ansari & Parveen, n. 4, 138

¹⁰ Macquarie Statement: Statement of the Third Colloquium of the IUCN Academy of Environmental Law in *Biodiversity Conservation, Law and Livelihoods: Bridging the North-South Divide, Michael I Jefferey, Jeremy Firestone, Karen Bubna-Litic (eds.), Cambridge University Press, 2008, xiii.*

¹¹ 'Development' is a concept associated with positive attributes. In fact it denotes "evolution from within" and until mid-twentieth century, it was "synonymous with evolution as self-organization." But today the "development ideology" is closely intertwined with the process of globalization – it has "implied the globalization of the priorities, patterns and prejudices of the West." Thus it is not self-

engaged in non-sustainable activities that have endangered the biodiversity of the world. Thus, many species of plants and animals are fast becoming extinct if not already so. 12 The existing pool of genetic resources thus is eroding rapidly mainly due to globalization, habitat loss and fragmentation, species introduction, global warming, overharvesting of flora and fauna, climate change, pollution, tourism. 13 Other contributing factors include industrialization, loss of indigenous knowledge, widespread use of simple variety crop, and lack of gene banks. ¹⁴ Amongst these factors, destruction and deterioration of habitats as well as introductions of exotic species constitute the greatest of threats to biodiversity particularly in tropical developing countries.¹⁵

All of the above mentioned drivers of biodiversity loss not only threaten the sustainability of global biodiversity but also cultural diversity due to the close linkages between the two since they are "mutually reinforcing and mutually dependent." ¹⁶ Although biological diversity is relatively a newer concept than cultural diversity, ¹⁷ both diversities are crucial since they "consist of values of and for the very long

generated but imposed, does not come from within but externally guided. The net effect is homogeneity and uniformity as opposed to "maintenance of diversity." Source: Shiva, Vandana, Biopiracy: the

plunder of nature and knowledge, South End Press, 1997, 107

Ansari, Abdul Haseeb, "Future Directions in Conservation of Biological Diversity: An Interdisciplinary Approach," 1 in Biodiversity Conservation, Law and Livelihoods: Bridging the North-South Divide, Michael I Jefferey, Jeremy Firestone, Karen Bubna-Litic (eds.), Cambridge University Press, 2008

 ¹³ Jeffery et al., n. 10, 1
 ¹⁴ Ansari & Parveen, n. 4, 137

¹⁵ Ammann, Klaus, "The impact of agricultural biotechnology on biodiversity: A Review," at 3, http://www.botanischergarten.ch/Biotech-Biodiv/Report-Biodiv-Biotech12.pdf accessed 15 April 2009

¹⁶ UNESCO & UNEP, "Cultural Diversity and Biodiversity for Sustainable Development," at 8, http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0013/001322/132262e.pdf accessed 15 February 2009. See also Jeffery et al. n.10, 1

There is a general consensus that the concept 'biological diversity' was introduced in 1986 and within a very short time was developed and enshrined in multilateral environmental agreements. Source: Bridgewater, P., Arico, S. and Scott, J., "Biological Diversity and Cultural Diversity: The Heritage of Nature and Culture through the Looking Glass of Multilateral Agreements," International Journal of Heritage Studies vol.13 no.4-5 (July-September 2007): 405-419, 405

term."¹⁸ In fact a growing body of evidence has validated the link between biological and cultural diversity and continues to explore the interface between these and other forms of diversity. This has led to the realization of the crucial role of indigenous peoples around the world both as "custodians of biodiversity and proponents of cultural diversity." Although there is tremendous diversity in the cultures and values of these indigenous peoples, all of them have a commonality. They subscribe to conservation of nature in which the Earth and its resources are "a sacred heritage" arising from the "intergenerational obligation to pass the land to future generations" as well as "to use it in sustainable ways." ²¹

Cultural diversity irrefutably is a "powerful guarantee of biodiversity" given that "human action with respect to the environment, including management itself, is a social act and an expression of culture." Both these diversities are not only jointly addressed in many Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEAs)²³ but also "recognized, explicitly and implicitly, as part of the global heritage of humankind, with the attendant responsibilities that flow from that." Nevertheless, their mutual strengths have not been adequately tapped in the MEAs to address the rapid loss of biodiversity of global proportions.²⁵

Maintaining and protecting global biodiversity requires addressing these multitudinous factors in order to stem the rate of loss occurring at such an unprecedented rate which simultaneously creates ecological imbalances and ultimately

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¹⁸ UNESCO & UNEP, n. 16

¹⁹ Bridgewater et al., n. 17, 406

²⁰ Ibid.

²¹ Id.

²² UNESCO & UNEP, n. 16

Multilateral environmental agreement is "an intergovernmental document intended as legally binding with a primary stated purpose of preventing or managing human impacts on natural resources." Source: Kanie, Norichika, "Governance with Multilateral Environmental Agreements: A Healthy or Ill-Equipped Fragmentation?" http://www.cenerforunreform.org accessed 12 April 2009

²⁴ Bridgewater et al. n. 17, 405

²⁵ Ibid.

erodes the capacity of this planet to sustain life on earth. ²⁶ The mode and mechanisms to address these factors are increasingly subsumed by international environmental governance ²⁷ in the 21st century as environmental protection is progressively viewed from a global perspective.²⁸

The face of modern international environmental law has undergone successive transformations beginning from the 1970s. Not only were a multitude of international environmental instruments²⁹ (bilateral and multilateral of the binding and non-binding types) concluded, 30 the look and feel of these provisions had also drastically altered to resolve complex environmental issues threatening our planet. The provisions of these instruments are "more stringent and detailed" in comparison to their predecessors, their "subject matter wider in scope" and the "provisions for implementation more sophisticated."31

Environmental problem solving however does not occur in the context of "streamlined" international institutions like other international policy fields such as trade, economic policy or health.³² The existing institutional architecture has evolved incrementally over the last forty years in an "ad hoc and fragmented" manner³³ in response to environmental issues that increasingly epitomizes "the complexity and

²⁶ Extracts from UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon's speech on International Day for Biological Diversity on 22 May 2007, http://www.un.org/News/Press/docs/2007/sgsm10994.doc.htm accessed

International environmental governance consists of the United Nation's Environmental Program (UNEP), a multitude of international environmental agreements and various international institutions dealing with environmental issues. Source: Simon, Nils and Dröge, Susanne, "Rio 2012 and Reform of International Environmental Governance," in On the Road to Sustainable Development: How to Reconcile Climate Protection and Economic Growth, Bärbel Kofler and Nina Netzer (eds.), May 2012 ²⁸ Jeffery, Michael I., "An International Regime for Protected Areas," at 1, http://www.earthlore.ca/ clients/WPC/English/grfx/sessions/PDFs/session_1/Jeffery.pdf> accessed 9 May 2009

The International Environmental Agreements Database (University of Oregon, United States) contains details on over 1,100 multilateral and 1,500 bilateral agreements. Source: Simon and Dröge, n.

Weiss, Edith Brown, "International Environmental Law: Contemporary Issues and the Emergence of a New World Order," Georgetown Law Journal vol.81 (March 1993): 675-710, 678 31 Ibid.

³² Kanie, n. 23, 67

³³ Ibid.