

PART II



Summary

The second part of this book contains background information that is needed to get a better understanding of the development of the BDGR programme. To ensure that the programme evolves in a systematic manner uniformly in different member countries, guidelines were developed for each of its components. These are given in Section I of Part II.

As indicated in Chapter 2, interactive dialogue between individuals and organisations involved in the BDGR programme is an essential process of the programme. This was effected by means of workshops whose aim was to explore and equate diverse views on the elements of the programme. The participants were encouraged to discuss ideas they have evolved as a result of their individual and institutional experiences in different areas of concern. The bringing together of leading experts from the disciplines that are relevant for the conservation and sustainable utilisation of biological resources in open dialogue led to greater understanding and assimilation of the key concepts that underpin this subject. As a result of such dialogue the central concepts of the BDGR programme have become accessible to a wide range of persons and institutions. Some of these workshops were directly used for imparting training to scientists (e.g. in Conservation Biology), technicians (e.g. in Herbarium techniques) and indigenous people (e.g. in Ethnobotany) to develop better skills and to strengthen their existing know-how in the concerned subject; while others were used for identifying and clarifying concepts, and for formulating, where possible, outlines of national and regional practical action plans for capacity building, adaptive transfer of technology and development of research programmes. Fourteen workshops have been selected as the key workshops falling into the two categories of: (i) imparting training, and (ii) concept development. Detailed recommendations emanating from these are given in Section II.

The programme was designed to develop in an integral manner by intensive participation and feedback from the field level scientists, technical workers and indigenous persons

from member countries. To ensure that their findings and recommendations influence the decision makers at policy level, a structure consisting of key institutions involved in research and development in the main areas pertaining to biodiversity was established. Scientists working in these institutions were appointed as National Co-ordinators and a pan-Commonwealth network of these co-ordinators was set up. Twenty-eight member countries have identified national co-ordinators who are grouped under seven regional networks covering the Caribbean, West Africa, East Africa, Southern Africa, Asia and the Mediterranean, South-East Asia and the Pacific. Each region is unique in its biogeographical characteristics, thus requiring each regional network to prioritise its own programme of action within the BDGR programme. This facilitates the flow of ideas, concepts and operational details. Section III gives the list of national co-ordinators.

The work undertaken by the CSC and the BDGR network was regularly consolidated in the form of documents prepared by the CSC. Section IV gives a list of these publications together with a suggested reading list for use by scientists and other professionals working in this area.