



# Earth Negotiations Bulletin

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## INCD HIGHLIGHTS MONDAY, 14 AUGUST 1995

### PLENARY

The INCD met in Plenary on Monday morning and gave accreditation to an additional 7 NGOs (A/AC.241/9/Add. 9 and Add. 10). The Chair of Working Group I, **Mourad Ahmia** (Algeria) reported on the first week of negotiations. Offers to host the Permanent Secretariat and Global Mechanism have been received and will be dealt with this week. Japan's **Takao Shibata**, Chair of Working Group II, reported that the discussion had focused on the terms of reference of the Committee on Science and Technology (CST), the roster of independent experts and the organization of *ad hoc* panels. He will present a draft decision on communication of information and review of implementation that invites delegations to send their views to the Secretariat by 15 October 1995.

A revised schedule for the organization of work was circulated in the afternoon.

### URGENT ACTION FOR AFRICA

The Minister of Environment for **Senegal**, Abdoulaye Bathily, urged States to support the CCD on an equal footing with the Biodiversity and Climate Change Conventions. He questioned the problems that seem to be arising on financial commitments. Delegates should make the Global Mechanism effective, not confine it to routine tasks that the Secretariat could deal with.

**Zambia** said that efforts including resource mobilization mechanisms must reflect truly global action. Zambia will endeavor to mobilize national resources and appreciates bilateral and multilateral assistance.

**Guinea** described the establishment of a national committee for the CCD to: organize broad dissemination of the Convention; initiate a national forum and NAP; and include rural forestry using a participatory and partnership approach. Guinea has modest financial resources available but will require additional assistance.

Jean Pierre Camara, external relations director of **FAO**, said FAO is determined to shift world attention to food security related to desertification and drought. It is ready to support IFAD with its field network. FAO has comparative advantages in technical capacity, institutional memory and resource mobilization.

**ENDA**, on behalf of African NGOs, said political will can overcome bureaucratic procedures slowing ratification. The

regional meeting in Dakar created a methodological approach to ensure participation of NGOs in developing and implementing NAPs. He welcomed the proposal that NGO participation at meetings of the COP and subsidiary bodies be funded from the special fund.

### SITUATION AS REGARDS EXTRABUDGETARY FUNDS

Executive Secretary Arba Diallo introduced the situation as regards extrabudgetary funds, as contained in document A/AC.241/41. For greater transparency, the document contains a report on the use of funds provided through the regular budget of the UN. It highlights expenditures from the Trust and Voluntary funds, as well as the staffing situation. Expenditures from the regular budget have been made in accordance with the programme budget implications. Funds allocated for travel and official mission were used for the participation of the Secretariat in the third to sixth INCD sessions and other meetings. Consultancy funds were spent on the IPED and to launch public awareness campaigns during the World Day to Combat Desertification. The situation regarding staffing is precarious. Nine staff are funded from the regular budget of the UN. The other six, funded from extrabudgetary resources, have contracts linked to state contributions whose funding is running out. The Voluntary Fund, through which participants from developing countries are funded to attend the INCD sessions, are almost exhausted. Diallo also outlined the various activities undertaken by the Secretariat including awareness raising, preparation of various publications, information kits, national seminars and subregional consultations.

Several delegations said the document was transparent and well prepared. However, **Canada** would like to see the costings by activity.

**Germany** pledged DM70,000 for the participation of developing country delegates in future sessions of the INCD. **France** said it will soon pay the FF300,000 pledged at INCD-6 for the participation of LDC delegates. **Sweden** said it would continue to support the work of the Secretariat and contribute to the Voluntary Fund for LDC delegates. **Japan** is discussing with the Secretariat a possible contribution of US\$700,000 for both the Trust and Voluntary funds. The Secretariat should organize national awareness seminars and subregional activities, in other regions, in particular Asia, while giving priority to Africa. Its voluntary contributions should fund LDC delegates. **Canada** will fund the legal officer for another year and will donate funds for the participation of LDCs. **Spain**, on behalf of the EU, said the region will provide Ecu 50,000 for the INCD. Earmarking of

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the funds will be done bilaterally and with the Secretariat. **Israel** pledged US\$3,000 to the Trust Fund.

**Kenya** urged the employment of qualified developing country members in the Secretariat. **Colombia** noted that 51 countries, far less than half the number of developing countries, were funded to attend INCD-7. He called for increased funding to enable the most affected countries to participate. **Egypt**, supported by Benin, drew attention to the need to tap into private funding sources. The Secretariat should include scientists and research institutions in their public information campaigns.

**Antigua and Barbuda**, supported by Mauritania, expressed concern about the Secretariat's funding situation, which needs to be addressed adequately as in other environmental conventions. **Mauritania** noted the lack of funding from UNDP called for in the GA resolution. The GA also called for voluntary contributions to support delegates from developing countries, which should be respected. Mauritania is considering making a contribution to the Trust Fund. **Sudan** noted that it would be difficult for the Sudano-Sahelian focal points to participate effectively in the sessions due to the loss of funding from UNSO.

**UNSO's** contributions included: a staff member working with the Secretariat; US\$100,000 and other resources provided in 1993-94 for the case studies; and joint activities such as a video production. The participation of delegates from the Sudano-Sahelian region was from UNSO's general resources, which ran out during INCD-5.

**Norway** expects to make contributions to environmental activities, national implementation and coordination and participation of local communities and NGOs. **Switzerland** has noted a lack of awareness of the CCD in the field and is providing support for national seminars. It is also discussing possible further support for the Trust Fund. **Algeria** said there is need to consider funding for the preparation of reports by affected countries for the first COP. **Bolivia** said activities should also be undertaken in other regions, while giving priority to Africa. **Poland** concurred. He stressed the need to pay attention to the Eastern European region, which was conspicuously absent.

### WORKING GROUP I

The Group considered a Secretariat's note on the Programme and Budget (A/AC.241/36) and an accompanying draft decision (A/AC.241/WG.I(VII)L.4). Delegates also adopted two draft decisions: on financial rules (A/AC.241/WG.I(VII)L.3) inviting a revised draft of the rules from the Interim Secretariat; and on location of a Permanent Secretariat (A/AC.241/WG.I(VII)L.5) inviting governments to submit written offers to the Interim Secretariat.

### PREPARATION FOR THE CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES

**Uganda**, on behalf of the G-77 and China, introduced draft decisions on Designation of a permanent secretariat and arrangements for its functioning (A/AC.241/WG.I(VII)L.1) and Identification of an organization to house the global mechanism (A/AC.241/WG.I(VII)L.2).

### PROGRAMME AND BUDGET

The Secretariat introduced the document (A/AC.241/36) and its annex of sample tables, noting that it was an outline. Budget figures and more specific programme categories could be filled in once decisions are made on a programme of work.

**Morocco** added periodic review of amendments to a list of items outside the standing agenda. The **UK** asked why the Secretariat's note suggested hiring consultants to review implementation by the Parties. **Pakistan** said separate tables should be provided for the general fund, trust fund and special fund because each is earmarked for separate purposes. **Senegal** said tables should also compare income and expenditures. **The**

**Philippines** requested an organizational chart of the number of posts in the Secretariat.

**Sweden** said other actors should be mentioned in Paragraph 11 along with the GEF under standing items. She said Paragraph 13(e) on travel expenses of participants should support LDCs rather than developing countries. **Benin**, supported by the Congo and Kenya, said the GA resolution refers to developing countries, in particular LDCs, and that a reversal of that decision would cause a lengthy debate. **Switzerland** said donors had received a list of supported countries, some of which could bear their own travel cost, which was difficult for donors to accept. He proposed "delegates of developing countries, in particular LDCs." **Senegal** and **Antigua and Barbuda** said the reference to the GEF was appropriate.

**Antigua and Barbuda**, supported by Kenya, said he was taken aback by the presentation of blank budget tables and wondered when delegates would get to a real discussion with real tables. **Spain**, on behalf of the EU, said he prefers a biennial budget financed through annual contributions on the UN scale. **Mauritania** suggested that the budget include a portion covered in the UN budget and a portion from extrabudgetary resources.

After a response from the Interim Secretariat, the Chair invited consideration of the draft decision on the Programme and Budget, which invites the Interim Secretariat to prepare a revised version of the document. Delegates agreed that written submissions could be included in the revised draft but should be indicated as not having been discussed by the INCD. The draft decision (A/AC.241/WG.I(VII)L.4) was adopted.

### INFORMAL GROUP ON SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

The Chair, Takao Shibata, conducted an open-ended informal meeting on the basis of an Informal paper on the terms of reference of the CST, the roster of independent experts and *ad hoc* panels, circulated in the afternoon. The discussion dealt with the general terms of reference and functions of the CST. It was agreed to change the first heading from "General terms of reference" to "Introduction". The first three paragraphs propose that the CST shall: provide information and advice to the COP; make provisions for surveys and evaluations to make recommendations to the COP; and provide advice on research priorities for regions and sub-regions. This text seemed generally acceptable. The fourth proposal provides for advice on measures that should be taken by Governments to combat desertification. It was suggested that it be deleted or amended.

The second heading, "Functions" should be changed to "Objectives". Its first paragraph proposes that the basic function of the CST is to respond to requests made by the COP for scientific information needed to implement the Convention. The content seemed acceptable. There was disagreement on deleting the second sentence reading, "It should not attempt to provide answers to localized problems." Delegates debated the paragraph directing the CST to maintain a watching brief on developments in science and technology, on its own initiative, to advise the COP. The Chair concluded that disagreements could be solved. There were also divergent views regarding the proposal that the advisory work of the CST should facilitate the inclusion of local knowledge in the decision-making process of the COP.

### THINGS TO LOOK FOR TODAY

**WORKING GROUP I:** The Group will meet to consider the draft decisions on the Global Mechanism and on the Designation of a Permanent Secretariat.

**WORKING GROUP II:** The Informal open-ended groups on Science and Technology will meet at 10:00. Working Group II will meet in the afternoon to consider the rules of procedure of the COP (A.AC.241/38).