



CCD COP-2 HIGHLIGHTS

WEDNESDAY, 2 DECEMBER 1998

Delegates to CCD COP-2 met in the COW and the CST during morning and afternoon sessions. The COW discussed agenda items related to Rules of Procedure and review implementation of the Convention. The CST focused on traditional knowledge and possible follow-up actions in the CST.

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

The COW postponed its review of the Global Mechanism report and discussed Rules of Procedure (ROP) 22 (1) and 31 (composition of the Bureau) and 47 (1) (majority voting absent consensus). Executive Secretary Diallo noted that COP-1 adopted the ROP subject to bracketed text in Rules 22, 31 and 47.

Regarding the composition of the Bureau, INDONESIA, on behalf of the G-77/CHINA, said Parties should pay particular attention to equitable geographic distribution and adequate representation of affected country Parties, particularly those in Africa, and favored removing the reference to the implementation Annexes. CANADA, on behalf of JUSCANZ, said the ROP currently provide for such representation and additional language would introduce rigidity and complicate elections. He said Rules 22 (1) and 31 currently mirror and should remain consistent with CCD Article 22 (6). He added that the Annexes do not correspond with those of the UN system and could complicate elections. SPAIN said it did not intend to part from the UN groupings, but adding a reference to Annex countries was logical given the structure of the CCD since they have assumed special obligations under the Convention.

Regarding Rule 47 (1), MAURITANIA, on behalf of the G-77/CHINA, said that, absent consensus, to which Parties should always strive, a simple majority vote and not a two-thirds majority vote should be permitted. JUSCANZ said consensus on key matters, particularly financial, is the best guarantee of the COP's success. The COW agreed to bilateral consultations, chaired by Italy, on Rules 22 (1) and 31. Informal consultations were agreed to on Rule 47 (1).

REVIEW OF IMPLEMENTATION OF THE CONVENTION: Executive Secretary Diallo introduced document ICCD/COP(2)/5 on Review of the Implementation of the Convention, and of its Institutional Arrangements, Including Support to Regional Programmes, which contains information on activities undertaken at national, regional and sub-regional levels. Diallo, supported by UZBEKISTAN, the RUSSIAN FEDERATION, SWEDEN and ARMENIA, stressed the importance of elaborating a fifth annex to the Convention and said informal consultations will be finalized once the countries concerned accede to Party status. Several part-

ners and regional and interest groups, including BRAZIL, JORDAN, TUNISIA, INDIA, TOGO, ANTIGUA and BARBUDA, MOROCCO, CUBA, PANAMA, IRAN, MALI, SENEGAL and the ANNEX IV countries offered detailed presentations on specific national, regional and sub-regional programmes.

The G-77/CHINA said experiences in the interim phase high-light issues to be elaborated, including the need to: streamline the strategic planning framework for affected country Parties; cooperate more closely between multilateral agencies and donors at the country level; channel resources directly to the local level; and structure the level of financial support that may be expected by an affected country over a programme's life-cycle. ALGERIA called for the equitable distribution of meetings organized by the Secretariat, and with GERMANY called for the timely delivery of their records. The EU underlined the importance of the Convention in the context of sustainable development and underscored the importance of National Action Programmes (NAPs) and the institutional framework in which they are set. HONDURAS, PANAMA, HAITI and PERU urged enhanced support for implementation programmes and institutional strengthening in the aftermath of Hurricane Mitch. The AFRICAN GROUP noted the commitment of the Organization of African Unity (OAU) to implementation of the Convention and said interregional activities foster and strengthen cooperation between developing countries.

MALI detailed the components of its NAP and stressed the need for the Secretariat to document problems experienced and how to overcome them in its review report. SENEGAL highlighted the importance of participatory approaches in the development of NAPs and said the process needs to be supported by information from all actors.

CANADA and JAPAN commended the implementation efforts of the affected countries and called on the Secretariat to provide more comprehensive information on the activities. Several partners, including JAPAN, GERMANY, SWEDEN and FRANCE, stressed concentration of efforts on the national and local levels based on national priorities. CANADA and the EU highlighted the role of NGOs and local populations in combating desertification. The NETHERLANDS stressed that NAPs are an expression of recipient countries' priorities to combat desertification, an instrument of policy integration, and a tool to direct and coordinate assistance.

ARGENTINA, supported by CHINA and the US, said NAP implementation should be Parties' priority, but also should be integrated at the sub-regional and regional level, where experiences and information should be shared. CHINA stressed the importance of Regional Action Programmes (RAPs) and Sub-Regional Action

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Programmes (SRAPs) in elaborating NAPs and said consideration should be given to Parties that are not in an Annex. ECUADOR requested assistance based on a bottom-up approach. PAKISTAN called for the establishment of a trust fund for desertification.

BURKINA FASO said the understanding of partnership will remain problematic as long as donors continue to put their assistance in the framework of traditional assistance to countries. The UK stressed the need to ensure that the concerns of desertification expressed here are adequately reflected in bilateral and multilateral discussions on priorities for assistance. The US said any review of implementation and determination of the need for additional institutional structures internal to the Convention must include a review of activities of all existing institutions internal and external to the Convention.

COMMITTEE ON SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

The CST's discussion on traditional knowledge was chaired by CST Vice-Chair Brown (UK) during the morning and CST Chair Jabbari (Iran) during the afternoon. The Secretariat introduced the Synopsis of Reports on Traditional Knowledge (ICCD/COP(2)/CST/5), which summarizes contributions from 12 Parties and 5 observers.

Many speakers, including CANADA, SPAIN, FRANCE and BELGIUM, emphasized the links between traditional and modern technology. The FAO said they form a continuum. MOROCCO stressed the synergies in combining traditional and modern technologies. FINLAND and SPAIN suggested using modern technologies and scientific research to improve traditional knowledge. CENESTA (Center for Ecodevelopment Studies and Application), speaking on behalf of the NGO Working Group on the CST, pointed out traditional knowledge's prominence in the planning and implementation of NAPs, the need for synergy of local knowledge systems and modern science, and the partnership between scientists and local experts.

BOTSWANA suggested approaching the issue in a broad way. UNESCO noted the importance of socio-cultural structures. SWEDEN said technical and social aspects are inherent to traditional knowledge. ITALY drew attention to local socio-economic circumstances that traditional knowledge is based on. Proposals for specific areas or issues to consider included mountain territories (KYRGYSTAN) and energy alternatives (SWITZERLAND). NORWAY and ITALY stressed women's unique role in promoting traditional knowledge related to desertification and suggested addressing gender issues in NAPs. CILSS, supported by others, suggested identifying how to make traditional knowledge more effective and efficient.

A number of speakers, including the UN University, UNDP, WMO, the Southern African Development Community (SADC), the International Court for the Environment, and the International Crop Research Institute for the Semi-Arid Tropics highlighted findings from related reports, projects or technologies. The Secretariat highlighted an upcoming report in which consultants will evaluate traditional knowledge in certain sub-regions, describing the techniques and noting the extent to which they are transferable. WMO suggested developing a list of available publications. The NETHERLANDS noted the lack of impact assessments of local techniques. The GEF discussed efforts of its Scientific and Technological Advisory Panel (STAP) on scientific and technological issues.

TUNISIA reiterated that each country could record their techniques and submit them to the Secretariat. PERU and IRAN highlighted their rich histories of traditional knowledge. CHINA noted national institutional arrangements to promote traditional knowledge and other aspects in dealing with desertification problems.

TURKMENISTAN discussed his country's local experience in water conservation. ICELAND noted national efforts to increase soil fertility and the related impact on climate change.

TANZANIA proposed identifying threats to traditional knowledge, such as modern technology, population growth, marginalization of women, poverty, bio-invasions and climate change. BRAZIL noted the difficulty of applying traditional knowledge when dealing with an economic situation that is driven at market speed. WMO called attention to external and internal pressures on the use of traditional techniques and to the method of transferring traditional knowledge as old languages disappear. NIUE said cash crops, which many donors emphasize, degrade the land and stressed the need for sustainable crops. SENEGAL and CHAD noted that wars and civil strife cause irreparable damage. CILSS underscored the need to identify harmful technologies.

BOTSWANA, CUBA, CANADA and others stressed the need for education about traditional knowledge. TANZANIA, JAPAN, the US and the UK encouraged coordination with other Rio processes, including the CBD and Intergovernmental Forum on Forests (IFF), that are considering traditional knowledge. SWEDEN stressed communication at local levels and strengthening networks. The UK suggested considering linkages between traditional knowledge and the UNEP-led survey of networks. The US said networking should be among the highest priorities of CST.

Delegates closed the afternoon with a discussion of whether to create an *ad hoc* group and what its composition and mandate would be. EGYPT, BRAZIL, KENYA, MAURITANIA, SUDAN, SENEGAL and others supported a panel to carry forward projects identified during the discussion, including inventories of traditional practices, identifying existing reports and outlining work done in similar conventions. ITALY, CANADA, TURKEY and others stressed the need for clear terms of reference for such a group. The UK, SWITZERLAND, FRANCE, GERMANY, the NETHERLANDS, KAZAKSTAN, KYRGYSTAN, SWEDEN, JAPAN and the US did not believe an *ad hoc* panel under the CST was the best place to accomplish the work and questioned whether all of the work identified was necessary. They supported identifying ways to increase access to information and networks to assist implementation of NAPs. The Chair asked for consultations to take place on possible terms of reference.

IN THE CORRIDORS

Some delegates speculated on the possibilities for other reasons for G-77/China's request to postpone Wednesday afternoon's informal consultation on the budget and the possible implications for the definition of a medium-term strategy for the Secretariat. Several G-77/China delegates expounded on their Chair's call for time to prepare as a group, given the late receipt of documents, and to honor an already scheduled meeting. They said that time to review the documents will facilitate discussion of the issue.

THINGS TO LOOK FOR TODAY

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE: The COW is expected to meet at 9:30 am to continue the review of implementation of the Convention and consider the designation of a Permanent Secretariat and arrangements for its functioning. A dialogue with NGOs is scheduled for the afternoon.

COMMITTEE ON SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY: The CST is scheduled to conclude its work during morning and afternoon sessions. Draft decisions on its agenda items are expected to be available during the morning.