



CCD COP-2 HIGHLIGHTS FRIDAY, 4 DECEMBER 1998

The fourth meeting of the Plenary met briefly during the morning to accord observer status to additional international organizations (ICCD/COP(2)/12/Add.1). The COW then considered the Secretariat's medium-term strategy and the COP Programme of Work. The CST completed its work during the morning. At the beginning of the afternoon COW meeting, US Congressman Donald Payne (New Jersey) addressed the COW and conveyed US President Clinton's support for the CCD and the desire for the US to become a CCD Party by COP-3. The COW then reviewed the report on the Global Mechanism.

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

MEDIUM-TERM STRATEGY: The COW reconsidered the Secretariat's medium-term strategy (ICCD/COP(2)/6). BENIN, on behalf of the G-77/CHINA and supported by INDONESIA, CHINA, UGANDA, TUNISIA, HAITI, EGYPT, ALGERIA, ARGENTINA, UZBEKISTAN, MAURITANIA, SENEGAL, ZIMBABWE, CHINA, KENYA, ZAMBIA, TUVALU, MALI, SWAZILAND, CUBA and CAPE VERDE, reiterated his support for the strategy and said the document should be used as a basis for further discussion. He stressed that the Secretariat's mandate should not be limited solely to the provisions of Article 23 and that he interpreted the EU and JUSCANZ positions as a non-objective and restrictive interpretation of the Secretariat's strategy. SENEGAL said he was concerned by attempts to reduce the Secretariat to its lowest common denominator, which he said tended to confirm that the CCD was a "poor relation" of the other Rio Conventions. TUVALU noted that the strategy made no reference to countries in the Pacific, in particular small island States.

GERMANY, supported by the UK, noted the EU and JUSCANZ positions that defined the Secretariat's role based on the Convention and called for Parties, both developed and developing, to "remain in the driver's seat." He noted that many international organizations were already actively fighting desertification. He said the COW should avoid theoretical discussion and concentrate on a practical business plan of the Secretariat's role. The UK said one of the successes of the CCD in the future could be what other organizations are doing to implement the objectives of the Convention. SWEDEN said the strategy unduly placed all activities under the umbrella of the Secretariat and the COP should concentrate on the core areas where the Secretariat has an indisputable role.

SAHEL DEFIS outlined the role the Secretariat could play in ensuring that NGOs and civil society are involved in implementation of the Convention at all levels: giving the Secretariat the means

of operating a strong NGO liaison office; making sure that gender balance is reflected; and ensuring that the Secretariat has adequate means to organize a smooth operation between activities at the global level in relation to national and local levels. Executive Secretary Diallo urged that, while there are many actors, they too are limited by their mandates. He said that, where the Secretariat could contribute to facilitating the process, it should do so.

PROGRAMME OF WORK AT COP-3 and COP-4: The Secretariat said COP-3 and COP-4 will consider, *inter alia*, the review of: implementation reports from Africa; the Global Mechanism (GM) modalities and activities; the promotion and strengthening of relationships with other conventions; procedures and institutional mechanisms for the resolution of questions on implementation; and arbitration and conciliation procedures (Article 28). He reminded Parties that all reports should be submitted six months prior to the COP.

BENIN for the G-77/CHINA expressed concern over the short timeframe for African Parties to prepare and submit the reports to COP-3 and appealed for resources to facilitate their timely delivery. He called for more time for the GM to prove itself and proposed proceeding with consideration and review at COP-5.

The EU suggested that: the COP agendas not be overloaded; NAP reports be a major element of COP-3; activities of other UN agencies, especially the GEF, be adequately reflected; and COP documents be harmonized and distributed at the UN in a timely fashion. The EU and EGYPT underscored the role of NGOs and called for their inclusion in the agenda to share their experiences. EGYPT stressed the need to operationalize the GM in 1999 and said that issues relating to arbitration can be dealt with at COP-5.

GLOBAL MECHANISM: The Secretariat introduced the report on the GM, including a draft MOU with IFAD, a report from the GM Managing Director, and a report of the current chair of the Facilitation Committee (ICCD/COP(2)/4, Add.1, CRP.1 and 2). Per Ryden, the GM Managing Director, noted his activities since his appointment two months ago and outlined the strategy he is developing to guide the GM. He grouped GM tasks into eight operational activities, including partnership building, channeling and match-making, developing a database, identifying innovative techniques, and marketing and communicating the GM as the framework for addressing land degradation issues. He and an assistant currently comprise the GM staff. He is recruiting a senior officer to implement the database and a senior programme officer. He said it will take time before the GM will really make a difference given its limited resources.

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Bahman Mansuri (IFAD) stressed the Fund's continued support to the CCD and commitment, as the housing institution of the GM, to make GM operations effective. He also reported on the establishment of a Facilitation Committee, which is a collaborative arrangement between IFAD, UNDP and the World Bank that has now expanded to include the CCD Secretariat, the GEF and other regional banks.

The G-77/CHINA commended the establishment of a Facilitation Committee by IFAD and requested the Secretariat to invite relevant organizations and interested NGOs and the private sector to support IFAD's activities. He called for the GM to be operationalized after COP-2 and stressed the need to set priorities for the GM in accordance with the CCD. BENIN for the AFRICAN GROUP sought clarification on the absence of reference to mobilization of resources and requested more detail on collaboration with the NGO community. He supported the G-77/CHINA in calling for the adoption of the MOU with IFAD on the GM.

The EU outlined three prerequisites for successful operation of the GM including: conducive conditions for full ownership and responsibility of developing country Parties; consideration of the experiences of the Consultative Group on desertification control between 1978-88; and designation of CCD, UNDP, bilateral and multilateral donor focal points as GM contact points. He stressed prioritizing partnership building at all levels, provision of advice on innovative financial mechanisms, identification of CCD technology financing sources, development of a GM database for the establishment of a baseline for future performance and a joint GM/Secretariat website for awareness services.

ALGERIA said the mechanism will measure the commitment of the Parties and partners. He sought clarification on the mandate and policies regarding the status of mechanisms and the fund, and of the link between the Managing Director, the President of IFAD and the COP. He stressed the need to look to other things to facilitate the work of the mechanism. The US underscored the importance of collaboration between the Secretariat and the GM and said it was essential to channel funds to the local level. SENEGAL and NIGER highlighted the importance of national desertification funds and supported GM attention to them. BENIN noted the need for cooperation between the COP's subsidiary bodies, the GM and the CST. The Nigerian Environmental Study Team (NEST), on behalf of NGOs at COP-2, asked how the Managing Director would communicate with NGOs and highlighted RIOD, the network of NGOs following the CCD.

Managing Director Ryden's responses to delegates' questions included noting that all of the GM's tasks are related to resource mobilization. He said he would cooperate with RIOD and will also try to reach other NGOs at the community level. He suggested that a full review of the GM might wait until after COP-3, but added that COP-3 could have a meaningful debate on how to move the GM forward. Diallo said the COP will learn through experience how things should fall into place. Mansuri offered to share with the CCD IFAD's experience at the local level and pledged IFAD's support to NGOs.

COMMITTEE ON SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

TRADITIONAL KNOWLEDGE: The draft decision requests the Secretariat to complete its ongoing compilation on traditional knowledge (TK) and to make it available to CST-3. It also appoints an *ad hoc* panel to: explore linkages between the work of the CST and other conventions; assess the socio-economic impacts of TK and practices in combating desertification and outline the threats confronting TK; and identify ways and means of integrating TK with modern knowledge, with a view to ensuring effective and wider application. The UK added text requesting

UNEP to ensure that the survey and evaluation of networks addresses issues relating to linking information networks on TK to the NAPs.

TANZANIA, CUBA, EGYPT, MALAWI, SUDAN, CHINA, KENYA, BRAZIL, PAKISTAN and PERU supported the panel. FRANCE, SWITZERLAND, SWEDEN, TURKEY and ARGENTINA opposed a panel, citing reasons ranging from financial implications, overly ambitious tasks, duplication of the Secretariat's ongoing compilation on TK and the need to first identify knowledge gaps. The UK, SENEGAL and CANADA did not support the terms of reference (TOR) for the panel.

The Chair concluded that a significant portion of the CST supported establishing a panel and asked delegates to discuss its TOR. The UK supported exploring linkages between the CST and other conventions' work on TK and preparing and presenting to the next meeting of the CBD SBSTTA a report on TK in dryland ecosystems drawing on CST-2 discussions and the Secretariat's ongoing compilation. EGYPT, supported by CUBA and KENYA, said the Secretariat could explore the linkages between the CST and other conventions so the panel could focus on assessing socio-economic impacts and ways and means of integration. CILSS, SAUDI ARABIA, the US, the UK and ARGENTINA supported postponing the decision on the TOR until CST-3. SUDAN said the Secretariat could determine the TOR.

After informal consultations, delegates agreed that the panel would draw on the synthesis report being compiled by the Secretariat to identify and report to CST-3 successful experiences and conclusions relating to: threats and other constraints, including socio-economic impacts confronting TK and practices; strategies for integrating TK and local knowledge with modern knowledge based on specific case histories; and mechanisms for promoting and exchanging successful approaches.

The CST Chair suggested that 10 experts be appointed to the panel according to the following regional allocations: 3 from Africa, 2 from Asia, 2 from GRULAC, 2 from WEOG and 1 from Eastern Europe. SWITZERLAND proposed that the regional groups select 5 men and 5 women. The NETHERLANDS expressed doubt that the panel would be useful, based on its involvement with a similar five-year study that will cost NLG 9 million. Delegates adopted the decision.

IN THE CORRIDORS

Delegates are preparing to submit and/or consider a number of draft decisions during the second week of COP-2. The G-77/China is planning on submitting eight draft decisions on, *inter alia*: the programme of work; the procedure for communication of information and review of implementation; administration and support arrangements for the Permanent Secretariat; regional implementation annexes and interregional programmes and platforms of cooperation; and solidarity with Central America. They are also expected to propose establishing a committee to prepare for the review of implementation and holding COP-5 in 2001. Delegates also anticipate draft decisions on the GM and MOU with IFAD and collaboration with other conventions.

THINGS TO LOOK FOR TODAY

PLENARY: Delegates are expected to meet in Plenary at 9:30 am to take up the decisions of the CST.

INTERPARLIAMENTARY ROUND TABLE: An Interparliamentary Round Table will meet in the morning after the Plenary session and in the afternoon.