



CCD COP-6 HIGHLIGHTS FRIDAY, 29 AUGUST 2003

Delegates met in formal and informal meetings, contact groups, and an Open Dialogue Session (ODS). The CST met to complete its work regarding the creation of *ad hoc* panels of experts, future programme of work, other matters, improving the efficiency and effectiveness of the CST, and traditional knowledge. The ODS with NGOs considered water resources management and its relationship to the CCD. In the evening, delegates convened in the CRIC to approve draft decisions and elect officers other than the CRIC Chair. Informal consultations on the programme and budget and on the CRIC draft decisions continued throughout the day, while contact groups on the outcomes of the WSSD were held in the morning, and on Regional Coordination Units (RCUs) in the afternoon.

OPEN DIALOGUE SESSION

COP President Simeón Negrín welcomed participants and introduced the first ODS theme addressing water resources management. CCD Executive Secretary Diallo said participation of civil society in an effective and efficient manner is fundamental for the successful implementation of the CCD. Juan Luis Mérega, Fundación del Sur, Argentina, moderated the dialogue. He highlighted aspects of water resources, including scarcity, pollution, irregular distribution, mismanagement, and privatization. He then introduced speakers presenting case studies on the ODS theme.

Florent Ouedraogo, Association des Volontaires pour le Développement, Burkina Faso, described a pilot project on low-pressure irrigation aimed at addressing water resource management and also increasing agricultural yields. Tanvir Arif, SCOPE, Pakistan, described a water harvesting project which aims to mobilize communities to manage water resources, secure participation of stakeholders, and repair traditional water points.

Clement Ouedraogo, Eau Vive, Burkina Faso, presented a case study on the problems of water extraction systems and their rehabilitation in Burkina Faso. He underscored the need to maintain water resources and supplies, and to support local communities in repairing wells. Patrice Burger, French NGO Working Group on Desertification, said that water resources are poorly distributed and that irrigation, agriculture, population pressures, and tourism are increasing water demand in the Mediterranean region. Mounir Bencharig, AREA-ED, Algeria, underscored the importance of water conservation, awareness campaigns, local water committees, and the treatment and reuse of wastewater for agriculture, as measures to protect water resources in Algeria's oases. Paula Duarte, Associação Paraibana dos Amigos da Natureza, Brazil, presented a project in the northwest of Brazil to promote water access to communities in semi-arid areas. She said the project aims to strengthen the participation of civil society, promote local cultural value, and empower women.

President Simeón Negrín then invited participants to comment on the presentations and the theme of the dialogue. FRANCE, UGANDA and ISRAEL underscored the need for cooperation between countries who share transboundary water resources. MAURITANIA stressed the relationship between the CCD and the Ramsar Convention. BURKINA FASO and NIGER highlighted the importance of drip irrigation. SWITZERLAND supported wastewater irrigation and studying traditional systems that are integrated into different cultures. PAKISTAN and ITALY underscored closer coordination between NGOs and governments. UGANDA urged the involvement of local authorities, and the DOMINICAN REPUBLIC stressed participation of the private sector and NGOs.

KENYA highlighted a programme supporting community initiatives for the sustainable utilization of water in seasonal rivers. BRAZIL said that the relationship between water management and programmes to combat desertification should be addressed in the CCD process. FRIENDS OF THE EARTH said that water privatization has led to the diversion of water resources from rural to urban areas. On water availability for consumption, GAMBIA underscored the importance of considering attitude and behavior. In conclusion, President Simeón Negrín said efforts to improve water management must be enhanced and noted the value of including NGOs in this process.

CST

BENCHMARKS AND INDICATORS: The draft COP decision on benchmarks and indicators was approved with a minor textual amendment.

IMPROVING THE EFFICIENCY AND EFFECTIVENESS OF THE CST: The EU suggested deleting an annex containing a two-year work plan for the Group of Experts (GoE), citing insufficient prioritization of listed tasks. He proposed that the GoE prioritize the tasks on the basis of comments and recommendations made at CST-6, and according to deliverables and the tasks' relevance to the CCD's implementation.

GERMANY emphasized that the tasks did not reflect the discussions held during CST-6. BRAZIL, opposed by BELGIUM and GERMANY, said that Parties, rather than the GoE, should prioritize the experts' tasks. Regarding the EU's proposal that the GoE implement its work plan based on sound financial planning, Chair Valentini said the CST does not have the mandate to set a budget, but that it must first identify priorities before the COW can determine an appropriate budget. David Mouat, Coordinator of the Facilitation Committee of the GoE, noted that the GoE has worked, and continues to work, without a budget, and cautioned Parties not to reduce the list of tasks. ITALY suggested the GoE prepare a financial proposal, and NIGER proposed that the GoE



approach donors for funding. FRANCE noted the need to maximize existing financial resources. A contact group was convened to draft priorities for the GoE's work plan.

The revised draft decision, including priorities, was presented to the CST in the afternoon. An NGO representative proposed adding text to the draft decision emphasizing NGO participation, and delegates agreed to include it in the preamble. ARGENTINA, MOROCCO, MEXICO and COLOMBIA expressed concern over the provision that the GoE would use only English, as this would limit discussion. Delegates agreed to add "primarily in English." The WMO proposed its inclusion in the list of international agencies with which the GoE would develop synergies. Delegates agreed, and the draft decision was approved with the amendments.

TRADITIONAL KNOWLEDGE: SAINT LUCIA, for GRULAC, suggested amending the draft decision to invite Parties and relevant organizations to submit views, case studies, and lessons learned on how traditional knowledge can contribute to the CCD's objective. JAPAN suggested adding a deadline for such submissions. An NGO representative proposed the addition of text to ensure adequate protection of the rights of traditional knowledge owners. The draft decision was approved as amended.

FUTURE WORK PROGRAMME OF THE CST: The Secretariat said that CST-7 could focus on items relating to COP-6 decisions. Chair Valentini said the future CST work programme should reflect the topics of the eight draft decisions only. The EU observed that future work should be based on best practice, an integrated approach to addressing land degradation and rehabilitation, and recommended relevant criteria.

CREATION OF AD HOC PANELS OF EXPERTS: Welcoming the creation of the GoE, the EU said there is no need to create new *ad hoc* panels, and delegates agreed.

OTHER MATTERS: CUBA suggested that the CST consider having intersessional meetings similar to the CRIC, in the future. The Secretariat said it would try to mobilize resources for this purpose.

Chair Valentini thanked delegates and closed the CST at 4:47 pm.

CRIC

In the late night meeting of the CRIC, Chair El Ghaouth noted that Parties had held informal negotiations throughout the day, resulting in consensus draft decisions. Parties approved the draft decisions with minor amendments and forwarded them to the COP for adoption. The draft decisions address: an overall review of the Secretariat's activities and of the progress made by affected country Parties in implementing the CCD; the review of the policies, operational modalities and activities of the GM; the programme of work of CRIC-3; the implementation of the Bonn Declaration to enhance the implementation of the CCD's obligations; collaboration with the GEF; and further steps in the implementation of the CCD.

ELECTION OF OTHER OFFICERS: The EU requested reconvening the CRIC after the COP Plenary in order to elect the Chair of CRIC-3, prior to electing the CRIC Vice-Chairs. After deliberations, Parties agreed to elect the three nominated Vice-Chairs: for the Asian Group, Khaled Al Shara'a (Syria); for GRULAC, Víctor del Angel González (Mexico); and for the Central and Eastern European Group, Evgeni Gorshkov (Russian Federation).

Thanking participants for their work, Chair El Ghaouth closed the CRIC at 12.07 am.

CONTACT GROUPS

OUTCOMES OF THE WSSD: The contact group convened for the first reading of the draft decision. Several amendments were proposed, in particular: referring to the special circumstances of small island developing States; addressing poverty that "results

from land degradation;" deleting reference to "the lack of substantial financial resources" for CCD implementation; adding reference to "promoting action at all levels" to strengthen implementation; dropping reference to NAPs as "priority" tools; deleting mention of the need for the CCD Executive Secretary to "actively" participate in the follow-up to the WSSD outcomes; and adding that he take part only in "relevant" sessions of the CSD. The text concerning the GEF was bracketed pending final decision on this issue in the CRIC.

REGIONAL COORDINATION UNITS: The contact group on RCUs met in the afternoon to have an in-depth discussion of the added value of RCUs. Views were expressed on the possibility of duplication of work and rising costs, which might be avoided if existing mechanisms were employed to perform the same functions. Several delegates argued that the mandate of the RCUs was different from the terms of reference of existing subregional and regional organizations, and supported strengthening the existing RCUs. The group requested more information from the Secretariat on the operation of the three existing RCUs.

INFORMAL CONSULTATIONS

PROGRAMME AND BUDGET: The informal consultations on the budget continued throughout the day, with delegates participating in a question-and-answer session on the Secretariat budget for the biennium 2004-5. Parties requested the Secretariat to prepare several scenarios for the budget, including addressing zero real and zero nominal growth, which will be presented on Monday, 1 September.

IN THE CORRIDORS I

Just as delegates were making plans for weekend outings on the sandy beaches of Santa Maria, some negotiations were grinding down to a snail's pace in the Palacio de Convenciones. The Secretariat faces a growing in-tray of requests for yet new information and explanatory papers. The budget discussions are stalled, with alternative scenarios to be produced for the delegates' perusal next week. Mercifully, the decision on the GEF, after "bobbing in rough seas," reached land, at last. Strangely, in the same weather, the colorful sails of the regional coordination units' proposal are drooping. With the high-level segment dominating Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday, the deadlines for COP-6 are approaching at Hurricane Mitch speeds.

IN THE CORRIDORS II

Following a late night CRIC session, delegates appeared confused about the sequencing of elections of the Chair and Vice-Chairs of the CCD's subsidiary bodies. Several observers noted a lack of consultation and transparency regarding the election of CRIC officers, with at least one delegate suggesting that some Parties to the CCD are "fostering a tradition" of not following the Rules of Procedure.

THINGS TO LOOK FOR TODAY

HIGH LEVEL SEGMENT: The high level segment will take place from 9:45 am to 1:30 pm in Sala 1. The segment will include an opening ceremony and statements by Heads of State and Government, followed by statements by regional and interest groups, and a representative of the NGO community.

ROUND TABLE: A round table meeting of Heads of State and Government will take place in Sala 3 from 3:30 pm to 6:00 pm and from 7:00 pm to 9:00 pm. Delegates will address the theme of "The UNCCD as a tool to achieve the Millennium Development Goals as they relate to poverty eradication and food security."