

## UNCCD COP 10 HIGHLIGHTS THURSDAY, 13 OCTOBER 2011

Delegates at UNCCD COP 10 convened in the CST and CRIC during morning sessions. The contact group on CST issues met all afternoon and evening to complete negotiations on its draft decisions, following which delegates convened for the final CST during a night session to complete its work. The other contact groups convened in the evening.

### COMMITTEE ON SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

**DRAFT DECISIONS:** Chair Magalhães introduced three draft decisions: on advice on how best to measure progress on strategic objectives 1, 2 and 3 of the Strategy (ICCD/COP(10)/CST/L.1); on measures to enable the UNCCD to become a global authority on scientific and technical knowledge pertaining to DLDD (ICCD/COP(10)/CST/L.9); and on the role and responsibilities of STCs (ICCD/COP(10)/CST/L.2). Delegates agreed to these draft decisions without discussion.

**KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT SYSTEM (KMS):** A representatives from the Secretariat presented the review and needs assessment undertaken on a KMS, including traditional knowledge as outlined in article 16(g) of the Convention text, best practices and success stories on combating DLDD (ICCD/COP(10)/CST/9).

The EU suggested building on existing systems, including PRAIS, and said there should be more information about existing systems, the added value of a new system, potential links with existing systems and partners, and the costs of a KMS. He said the KMS should not be extended to the national level, but links with the country level should be encouraged. Argentina, for GRULAC, emphasized traditional knowledge and noted difficulties with access to technology as an issue for a computer-based KMS. He also suggested that the RCUs be involved with this initiative. EGYPT and ALGERIA asked how the initiative would take intellectual property rights (IPR) over traditional knowledge into account. CSOs said holders of traditional knowledge should be rewarded. UKRAINE suggested looking at how other conventions address IPR.

SWITZERLAND and JAPAN supported the EU and suggested building links to existing KMS and networks. The PHILIPPINES also supported exploring linkages among existing KMS. INDONESIA and others noted the use of WOCAT in this regard.

MOROCCO, UGANDA, SOUTH AFRICA, GHANA and YEMEN emphasized the importance of local and traditional knowledge, and of capturing it in a KMS. SENEGAL, GUINEA and NIGER suggested that alternative ways to disseminate the knowledge should be considered, such as through rural radio or television, and translation into local languages. BOLIVIA suggested exploring flexible mechanisms. CUBA said the emphasis should be on best practices that lead to SLM. PERU said there should be a dialogue among scientists with different backgrounds. TUNISIA noted the need to adapt knowledge to local conditions. The US said flexible systems are important, and the integration of local knowledge and science must be developed at the local level. KENYA emphasized culture and gender components. ITALY said it is essential to document and transmit traditional knowledge as an element of human heritage.

BURUNDI said KMS should respond to specificities of each country. BANGLADESH said the sustainability of indigenous knowledge should be tested. MALI said the information flow should be in multiple directions. UNU suggested prioritizing and finding efficiencies. IRAN said the fourth UNCCD reporting cycle seeks to capture best practices and they should be developed and tested in a systematic way.

**CST WORKPLAN:** The Secretariat introduced the draft multi-year (four-year) workplan for the CST (2012-2015) (ICCD/CRIC(10)/7-ICCD/COP(10)/CST/10). The EU said the outcomes from the CST Contact Group should be taken into account, and therefore adjustments to the workplan might be needed. BOLIVIA noted the importance of efficient resource use by the CST's working groups, and of continued work on refining impact indicators. NIGERIA encouraged the provision of further information on indicators of success and milestones, to measure the CST's achievements and successes in two years.

The CST reconvened at 10:45 pm, following the conclusion of the CST contact group. Delegates reviewed and agreed on the following draft decisions: Roster of independent experts (ICCD/COP(10)/CST/L.3); UNCCD fellowship programme (ICCD/COP(10)/CST/L.4); Knowledge management, including traditional knowledge, best practices and success stories (ICCD/COP(10)/CST/L.5); Date, venue and programme of work of the third special session of the CST (ICCD/COP(10)/CST/L.6); Programme of work of the eleventh session of the CST (ICCD/COP(10)/CST/L.7); and Reshaping the operation of the CST in line with the Strategy and framework to enhance the implementation of the Convention (ICCD/COP(10)/CST/L.8).

The CST Rapporteur Nicholas Hanley (EU) presented the draft report of CST 10 orally. Elysabeth David (Secretariat) thanked the CST Chair and Bureau. CST Chair Magalhães thanked delegates for their work. Lawrence Townley-Smith, Co-Chair of the contact group, thanked the contact group for its work and cooperation. The CST Chair declared CST 10 closed at 11:57 pm.

### CRIC

**COLLABORATION WITH THE GLOBAL ENVIRONMENT FACILITY (GEF):** The GEF introduced the report on its financing activities concerning desertification (ICCD/CRIC(10)/23), noting the allocation of US\$340 million in projects addressing SLM during the GEF 4th replenishment, and planned allocation of US\$405 million in the GEF 5th replenishment.

Several countries welcomed the report, the amendment to the GEF instrument, by which the GEF now serves as a financial mechanism for the UNCCD, and the support received by GEF. Many delegates, lamenting the low level of resources allocated to the SLM focal area, and the unbalanced distribution of resources allocated for SLM among different regions, called on the GEF and the Secretariat to redress this situation. GUINEA-BISSAU, SWAZILAND, ARGENTINA, LESOTHO, MOROCCO SOUTH AFRICA, CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC, ALGERIA, ZIMBABWE, CHAD, TANZANIA, NIGER and BURUNDI discussed the cumbersome procedures and long time for accessing GEF funds, particularly for enabling activities to support NAP alignment and reporting, and called for fast tracking procedures for such funds.

CHINA asked for more attention to North East Asia and support to focal points. GHANA questioned the conditionality attached to GEF funds disbursement. VIET NAM stressed NAP alignment as a priority for GEF funds. LIBERIA asked for clarification on the role of the GEF focal point. Costa Rica, for GRULAC, supported by CHILE, CUBA and PANAMA, suggested an evaluation of the financial resources and mechanisms in view of establishing a specific fund for the Convention. JORDAN and INDONESIA lamented the absence of a GEF representative during regional coordination meetings. SENEGAL asked for more resources for the Great Green Wall initiative. The LEAGUE OF ARAB STATES asked for more regular meetings with GEF and links to innovative financing mechanisms.

The GEF, responding to the issues raised, highlighted: GEF organizes, at countries' request, national workshops and training on GEF procedures; GEF has established a time limit of 18 months for developing proposals to be submitted for GEF funding, and a 10 business day standard for the GEF Secretariat to respond to funding requests; and the three existing options to access GEF funds for UNCCD enabling activities – direct access with GEF Secretariat, access through a GEF agency and through an umbrella project with no conditionality attached.

The Secretariat introduced a note on facilitating access to funding under the GEF land degradation focal allocations (ICCD/CRIC(10)/24). GUINEA called for funding for NAP alignment and national reporting to be channeled through the Secretariat. Noting it was one of only two countries to have fully aligned its NAP with the Strategy, ALGERIA highlighted the value of the PRAIS process for “renewing our vision for this Convention.” ARGENTINA said NAP alignment is not just an intellectual exercise. INDIA welcomed the availability of predictable funding.

CST Vice-Chair Amjad Virk presented the draft decision for measuring progress on strategic objectives 1, 2 and 3 of the Strategy (ICCD/COP(10)/CST/L.1). The CRIC agreed on the decision without comment.

### CONTACT GROUPS

**WORKPLANS AND BUDGET:** This group discussed a draft decision on multi-year workplans of the Convention's institutions and subsidiary bodies and completed its first reading. It will resume its work on Friday.

**CST:** Delegates agreed to hold the CRIC, CST and 2nd Scientific Conference back-to-back, no later than March of 2013, and noted that this would require an amendment to the previous decision to hold the 2nd Scientific Conference in 2012. The contact group debated a number of proposed themes for the 3rd Scientific Conference and decided on: Combating DLDD for poverty reduction and sustainable development: the contribution of science, technology and local knowledge and practices. On knowledge management, the Secretariat summarized discussions in the CRIC on the issue. Discussions on the roster of independent experts, fellowships, knowledge management, CST S-3 and CST 11 included questions on the implications of various decisions on the workload and budget of the Secretariat. Delegates also questioned the implications of decisions on the workload and budget of the Secretariat, priorities for the work of CST 11 and the outcome area of KM in the workplan for the CST.

**ITERATIVE PROCESS:** The contact group continued its work on communication and improved reporting procedures. One delegate cautioned against preempting the outcome of the mid-term reporting process, while others urged parties to avoid setting ambitious targets that might not fit in with priorities being discussed by the budget contact group. The group finalized the text and began negotiations on the assessment of the Convention against performance indicators.

**GM:** Delegates continued discussing general principles for governance, accountability and institutional arrangements for the GM, with one regional group circulating a document to this effect. Delegates discussed the need for more information on the costs of the different institutional options. Views diverged among those wishing that COP 10 could take a decision on the housing arrangement for the GM, and others considering this secondary to agreeing on a governance structure that meets the expectations of all parties. Facilitator Moghadasi asked each regional group to work on their preferred model for the governance structure for consideration on Friday.

### IN THE CORRIDORS

By the end of the fourth day of COP 10, the gracious ladies serving refreshing green tea were long gone, the lines of delegates waiting to pose in traditional Korean costumes had dwindled, and the novelty of scrolling down a shiny tablet loaned to delegates by the Samsung Corporation was starting to wear off. Delegates arrived on Thursday morning having realized in contact group meetings the night before just how much work they needed to complete. As they settled into night sessions, some wondered whether critical decisions would finally be resolved at COP 10, or if they would squander their auspicious start and end up passing the buck to the next COP. The camaraderie among contact group delegates continued to buoy their expectations from the session, and while few were willing to reveal their cards so early in the game, there were hints that consultations among interested parties were underway in an effort to bridge the differences on long standing issues.