

## UNCCD COP 10 HIGHLIGHTS THURSDAY, 20 OCTOBER 2011

UNCCD COP 10 delegates convened in the CRIC during the afternoon, where they considered and agreed on four draft decisions. During the evening, the COW considered and agreed on six draft decisions. The Rio Conventions Pavilion held a closing reception, and side events and contact groups also took place during the day.

### CRIC

In the afternoon, CRIC 10 Chair Chenchou Norbu reopened discussions on the review of the implementation of the Convention and the Strategy. Four draft decisions were tabled and agreed to without comment.

The draft decision on the iterative process relating to the assessment of implementation, including performance and impact indicators, methodology and the reporting procedures (ICCD/CRIC(10)/L.3/Rev.1) includes sections on: refinement of the set of performance indicators and associated methodologies; how best to measure progress on strategic objective 4 of the Strategy; format and methodological guidelines for reporting by CSOs (2012-2013); and guidelines for the preliminary analysis of information contained in the reports.

The draft decision on the consideration of best practices in the implementation of the Convention (ICCD/CRIC(10)/L.4) decides that the review of the themes of best practices will be carried out according to an annexed schedule, invites the reporting entities to continue reporting on best practices on the themes already considered at previous CRIC sessions, and takes note of a revised classification of best practices, among other items.

The draft decision on the programme of work for CRIC 11 (ICCD/CRIC(10)/L.5) decides that CRIC 11 should review the communication of information in light of decision 11/ COP.9 on additional procedures or institutional mechanisms to assist the COP in regularly reviewing the implementation of the Convention, and to review input and reports from specified entities.

Draft decision ICCD/CRIC(10)/L.6 decides that CRIC 11 will be held in Bonn, Germany, for five working days not later than March 2013, in the event that no party makes an offer to host that session and meet the additional financial cost.

### COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

On Thursday evening, COW Chair Philbert Brown led delegates through six draft decisions that had been forwarded by the COW contact group (ICCD/COP(10)/L.1, 2, 4-6 and 8).

He introduced a draft decision on the election of officers of the CST (ICCD/COP(10)/L.5), and the Secretariat read out a proposed correction to the text. The text decides to replace paragraph 1 of rule 22 with alternate text specifying that the Chairperson of the CST will be elected at the final meeting of the COP and will assume office immediately. It also decides to replace rule 31 with text that indicates the Vice-Chairpersons of the CST shall be elected at the same time as the Chair. The COW agreed to the amended draft decision, and agreed to forward it to the COP.

Chair Brown introduced, and the Secretariat read aloud for simultaneous translation, a draft decision on strengthening and enhancing the process of alignment of action programmes with the Strategy (ICCD/COP(10)/L.8), with a correction to insert missing text on funding assistance. The REPUBLIC OF KOREA proposed the addition of a preambular paragraph welcoming the Changwon Initiative proposed at COP 10 as a complementary measure for enhancing support to the NAP alignment process. Acknowledging some parties' concerns that the Initiative was not a negotiated text, he recalled references in CBD decisions to the Satoyama Initiative, which he noted was not a negotiated document either. GUINEA BISSAU appreciated the proposal, although he suggested adding reference to alignment at national and subregional, in addition to regional, levels. Several delegations, including the US, AUSTRALIA and BRAZIL, expressed appreciation to the Republic of Korea for its efforts to support the implementation of the Convention and its proposal, but objected to the inclusion of a reference to the Changwon Initiative in the draft decision. The COW agreed on the draft decision as corrected, without the additional preambular text proposed by the Republic of Korea, and agreed to forward it to the COP.

The COW agreed and recommended to the COP a draft decision on the review of progress in the implementation of the comprehensive communication strategy (ICCD/COP(10)/L.1), without discussion. The decision calls on parties to implement the comprehensive communication strategy and invites financial and in-kind support to ensure effective implementation, among other actions.

Chair Brown introduced the draft decision on revised procedures for the accreditation of CSOs and representatives from the private sector to the COPs and their participation in meetings and processes of the UNCCD (ICCD/COP(10)/L.6). PERU, supported by ARGENTINA and BRAZIL, proposed the addition of a paragraph, which he recalled had been suggested

by GRULAC on Wednesday, on changes to the composition of the selection panel for CSO accreditation, requesting representation on the panel of CSOs from all annexes of the Convention and proposing they use electronic technology for their communication. With minor adjustments to the proposed text, parties agreed to this addition.

On an operative paragraph deciding that CSOs shall submit reports on their activities to the Secretariat every 5 years, GUINEA BISSAU asked for clarification on the choice of 5 years as the time scale for reports. The Secretariat explained that the contact group had debated the options of 3 or 5 years, following procedures established for CSO inclusion in other processes, including the Economic and Social Council. He further clarified the aims of the decision, noting these reports were intended to confirm the activities and interests of CSOs in supporting the implementation of the Convention, and would be required for CSOs to maintain accreditation to the UNCCD.

BOLIVIA, supported by KENYA, proposed adding text to mandate CSOs to submit these reports through the NFPs, as she said one of the functions of NFPs is to coordinate national reports. The US and PARAGUAY opposed the addition, noting that CSOs are free to submit and publish information outside of government channels. GUINEA and LIBERIA raised concerns about data validation and quality if NFPs were not involved in these processes. The DOMINICAN REPUBLIC proposed that CSOs would submit reports directly to the Secretariat, but would be required to send copies to NFPs to ensure the data could be compiled and disseminated nationally. The COW agreed and, with the amendments, agreed to the draft decision to forward to the COP.

Chair Brown invited delegates to consider the draft decision on Rule of 47 of the rules of procedure (on voting majority) (ICCD/COP(10)/L.4). The decision requests that this pending rule of procedure be included in the agenda of COP 11 and for the Secretariat to report on the status of similar rules of procedure under other MEAs. No comments were made and the COW agreed on the draft decision and decided to submit it to the COP for adoption.

On the draft decision on the UN Decade for Deserts and the Fight against Desertification (UNDDD) (ICCD/COP(10)/L.2), SAUDI ARABIA suggested adding to the preamble “taking note of the document ICCD/COP(10)/27 entitled ‘Report on activities supporting the UNDDD (2010-2020)’.” With this addition and some editorial amendments, the draft decision was agreed on and the COW decided to submit it to the COP for adoption. The decision requests the Secretariat to extend its partnership network to include representatives of civil society, intergovernmental organizations and NGOs and invites funding to support the elaboration and implementation of the programme for UNDDD, among other actions.

### CONTACT GROUPS

**OUTSTANDING MATTERS:** This contact group reconvened on Thursday morning and discussed the proposal for a draft decision on a common fundraising strategy. Acknowledging that any decision would need to be in accordance with the decision taken on the structure of the GM, they agreed to take note of the strategy.

**CRIC:** The contact group finalized consideration of a draft decision on collaboration with the GEF, before embarking on negotiations on its final decision, relating to the mid-term evaluation of the Strategy.

**WORKPLANS AND BUDGET:** This group met on Wednesday evening, and continued to discuss the list of items in the programme and budget of the Secretariat about which

parties had raised questions. Parties reached consensus on most of the items. On Thursday, Co-facilitator Thomas Heimgartner proposed limiting discussions on four items for which no consensus had been reached the night before. Three of these items were related to staff posts. The group accepted the proposal and decided to continue the discussion of the four items once the outcomes of the other contact groups, mainly those on the GM and GEF, are clear. The group also finalized the draft decision on the multi-year workplans (2012-2015).

**GM:** This group met throughout the day and in the evening to complete a first reading of the draft decision. The group agreed on authorizing the ES to revise its MoU with IFAD to limit it to logistic and administrative support to the GM. The group also agreed to request the ES in consultation with the COP10 Bureau to undertake a process to identify a new housing arrangement for the GM, including potential co-location, with the Secretariat and to present a recommendation on this issue to COP 11 for decision. The proposed establishment of an advisory committee remained bracketed.

### RIO CONVENTIONS PAVILION

The Rio Conventions Pavilion organized an informal discussion bringing together presenters from the various sessions to talk about the outcomes of the sessions and how to move forward. Many speakers agreed that the Pavilion is an important outlet for bilateral discussion as, unlike regular side events, themes run over several days. Some participants also noted that it is useful to have actual sessions devoted to exploring the linkages between the three conventions and how to achieve synergies. They cited the gender day as a good example of how specific presentations on different approaches to gender mainstreaming by the three conventions had provided the basis for developing a forward-looking perspective for enhancing synergies during Rio+20 and beyond. The Pavilion will convene again at the Durban Climate Change Conference.

### IN THE CORRIDORS

On the penultimate day of UNCCD COP 10, delegates continued to work through the large number of draft decisions in the contact groups. The interconnections among several decisions, on issues such as the programme and budget and the GM, held up some talks, while another key issue – the mid-term evaluation of the Strategy, including the terms of reference for the review – was addressed for the first time and looked to keep delegates going into the night. Unlike previous days, where a predominantly positive spirit had been observed among participants negotiating difficult issues, many commented that tensions were high and attributed this “fun-free zone” to multiple late nights, the stress of needing to reach agreement by the close of the meeting, and the attention needed for keeping track of all the emerging details.

**ENB SUMMARY AND ANALYSIS:** The *Earth Negotiations Bulletin* summary and analysis of UNCCD COP 10 will be available on Monday, 24 October 2011 online at: <http://www.iisd.ca/desert/cop10/>

**SIGN UP FOR LAND-L:** A mailing list for news and announcements related to land policy issues, moderated by IISD: <http://www.iisd.ca/land-l/>