



CSD INTERSESSIONAL WORKING GROUP: TUESDAY, 29 FEBRUARY 2000

The *Ad Hoc* Intersessional Working Group (AHWG) on Integrated Planning and Management of Land Resources & Agriculture reconvened to discuss land issues in the morning and agriculture in the afternoon. The G-77/CHINA requested a delay in the afternoon session.

The AHWG Co-Chair, Patrick McDonnell (Ireland), opened the meeting and invited delegates to begin discussion on Integrated Planning and Management of Land Resources.

General Comments: The G-77/CHINA, with BRAZIL and INDONESIA, said the UN Secretary-General's Report on Integrated Planning and Management of Land Resources ignored the international dimension of sustainable land development and offered little on resolving technical problems. He said the CSD Secretariat was promoting Eurocentric concepts. The RUSSIAN FEDERATION highlighted the importance of effective international cooperation. The US offered condolences to flood victims in MOZAMBIQUE and expressed concern about references to the precautionary approach, centralized planning, and a suggestion that biotechnology presents unique risks. The EU and associated countries called for, *inter alia*, the promotion of productive land use systems, the prevention of urban sprawl, and the protection of critical resources and ecosystems together with poverty eradication. On coordination and decentralization, CHINA cautioned that land management structures differ from country to country. The INTERNATIONAL COUNCIL FOR LOCAL ENVIRONMENTAL INITIATIVES identified measures to strengthen local government including improved coordination of national and local policies. The EU described good urban management and spatial appreciation of the land-use interdependence between rural and urban areas, and said these were key to sustainable urban development and sustainable livelihoods for the poor. The G-77/CHINA said private capital flows, while complementing ODA, could not replace global funding for sustainable development. INDONESIA called on donor countries to increase assistance, using the GEF.

Capacity Building and Technology Transfer: The G-77/CHINA noted the absence of capacity building and technology transfer issues in the Report. CHINA noted failures in the timely transfer and resourcing of monitoring technology. MEXICO noted the limits imposed by the lack of technology transfer and capacity to manage information. INDONESIA highlighted information technology, the transfer of appropriate technologies and capacity building.

Land Tenure: The G-77/CHINA said that land ownership in developing countries was governed by culture and tradition. CHINA called for recognition of the multiplicity of land tenure systems. The

EU said that the CSD should encourage governments to promulgate laws that guarantee secure tenure and access to land, particularly for marginalized groups. He also called for soil protection measures as a prerequisite for food production and security, and the protection of biodiversity. SWITZERLAND urged action to secure fair tenure systems and land use rights, and to support mountain populations. NORWAY called for the acknowledgement of women's right to own, inherit and buy land, and for the rights of indigenous people. MEXICO noted the absence of reference to the impact of livestock grazing trends. The US encouraged countries to review property rights and land tenure systems. The RUSSIAN FEDERATION, with BULGARIA, highlighted the importance of effective cadastral infrastructures. BULGARIA said tenure security, without capacity building, could not ensure sustainable land management practices. The CSD NGO WOMEN'S CAUCUS recommended that the CSD draw up timetables for governments to ensure that laws guarantee women's equal rights to own and inherit land.

National Experiences: CANADA offered to share its experience of the ecosystem approach to land management and described efforts to develop a drought early warning system. NEW ZEALAND identified the following factors for success in land management: a flexible statutory framework for integrated planning; devolving planning responsibility to local government and encouraging public participation; and effective implementation. On mountain areas, SWITZERLAND recommended that land planning should be small-scale, integrated and participatory. ICELAND noted its experience in halting export subsidies as a contribution to sound land management.

Trade Liberalization: The G-77/CHINA described the instruments of trade liberalization, and not liberalization itself, as the cause of declining prices for agricultural products, external debt, and frequent fluctuations in exchange rates. BRAZIL said the lack of a global framework for free trade harmed agriculture stakeholders. INDONESIA noted the potential contribution of trade liberalization and called for cooperation to address the decline in commodity prices and debt in the least developed countries (LDCs).

UN Conventions and Other International Initiatives: The G-77/CHINA called for implementation of the provisions of the Convention to Combat Desertification (CCD), including forest rehabilitation, and, with INDONESIA, called for funding for the CCD through the Global Environment Facility (GEF). IRAN expressed disappointment that desertification was not a focal point at the GEF and called for support for the CCD Global Mechanism. INDONESIA noted its national plan to implement the CCD. MEXICO called for stronger links between the Conventions on Climate Change and Biodiversity.

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AUSTRALIA encouraged greater cooperation between UN agencies and noted the possible contribution of the Kyoto Protocol to combating desertification and protecting biodiversity. The REPUBLIC OF KOREA encouraged countries to implement the Conventions on Biodiversity, Climate Change and Desertification. TURKEY recalled the Habitat II commitments on human settlements. CANADA welcomed the creation of the UN Forum on Forests, and underlined the urgency of appointing a secretariat, drawing from the Intergovernmental Forum on Forests (IFF) Secretariat.

Poverty: The G-77/CHINA said the issue of Integrated Land Management could not be addressed effectively without the eradication of poverty. BRAZIL said it was not poverty, but an inadequate international enabling environment that caused land degradation. The POPULAR COALITION TO ERADICATE HUNGER AND POVERTY called on the AHWG to support effective legal frameworks for land redistribution and to address the historical problems faced by indigenous people and women.

Information and Decision Making: The EU said that good governance implies frameworks for decision making using transparent, interactive and participatory methods. He called for reliable and accessible land-use indicators. CHINA said that international analytical work had been hindered by the absence of common standards in land classification. NORWAY called on UNEP to take a lead in advancing the principles of the Aarhus Convention. MEXICO noted the importance of micro-level approaches to ensure participation by marginalized and indigenous people. TURKEY noted the importance of women's participation in project design and implementation. He described his country's farmer-centered participation in land-use issues. CANADA highlighted the importance of stakeholder participation, particularly by aboriginal peoples. AUSTRALIA, with the REPUBLIC OF KOREA and JAPAN, stressed community-based approaches.

AFTERNOON MEETING

Co-Chair Modesto Francisco Fernandez Diaz-Silveira (Cuba) opened the afternoon meeting at 4:30 pm. In response to a request for clarification on plans for the CSD to discuss three ECOSOC resolutions on water, the Co-Chair informed EGYPT that, in accordance with a General Assembly decision (Resolution 54/452), consideration of the resolutions would be included in the programme of work at CSD-8. He also acknowledged that an AHWG document on water had not yet been formally circulated for consideration.

GENERAL DISCUSSION WITH A FOCUS ON AGRICULTURE

General Comments: BRAZIL stressed the negative impact of food aid on small farmers. EGYPT noted that the Secretary-General's Report on Sustainable Agriculture and Rural Development did not elaborate on how developed countries would meet their financial obligations. The EU underlined the need to address the unsustainable use of fertilizers. SRI LANKA cautioned against developed countries over-emphasizing marginal environmental issues.

Food Security: INDIA and JAPAN stressed the primacy of food security concerns. The US stressed the importance of national management action plans for food security. The EU, with INDONESIA and CHINA, called on the CSD to endorse the goals of halving the proportion of people in absolute poverty and those who are food-insecure by 2015. The REPUBLIC OF KOREA advocated sustainable intensification of food production and stockpiling. The RUSSIAN FEDERATION underscored the importance of comparable trade policies among trading partners. INDONESIA and SRI LANKA cautioned against accepting biotechnology as a solution to food insecurity.

Finance, Technology Transfer and Capacity Building: CHINA, INDONESIA, SRI LANKA, REPUBLIC OF KOREA and POLAND called for enhanced international cooperation, transfer of technology and capacity building. CANADA expressed a commitment to supporting the food security needs of developing countries. The US endorsed increased donor coordination and leveraging funds for

investment in agriculture. On overseas development assistance (ODA), INDIA described as specious, arguments that FDI flows have compensated for the decline in ODA. BRAZIL warned that the decline in ODA for agriculture could endanger the strategies of LDCs to combat poverty. INDIA said her country faced second-generation problems, requiring an extension of the benefits of the green revolution through affordable access to agri/biotechnology and financial resources. She expressed concern that biotechnology research is controlled by a few private agencies. EGYPT underlined the importance of financing the CCD through the GEF.

Trade Liberalization: The EU, with the US, CANADA, AUSTRALIA and NEW ZEALAND, supported a more open multi-lateral trading system, including the reduction of subsidies. INDIA agreed with the Report's observation that international markets for agriculture remain highly distorted, thus limiting economic benefits for farmers in developing countries. On the Uruguay Round, she said there was a need to ensure that environmental or stringent production norms do not translate into non-trade barriers. BRAZIL said the WTO had not met the expectations of many developing countries, though it represented a step forward in providing access to the benefits of trade liberalization. MEXICO called for special support to ensure access for small farmers to the benefits of trade liberalization. Recalling initiatives to promote the use of organic fertilizers, EGYPT said the trend should not constitute an additional obstacle to agricultural exports from developing countries. He called for a stronger FAO role in helping developing countries adopt organic agricultural methods. The G-77/CHINA called for the elimination of export subsidies as these contributed to increased poverty. SWITZERLAND called on the CSD to support labeling of agricultural products.

International Cooperation: The G-77/CHINA stressed the need to reform international financial institutions to improve resource flows to more countries. The DEMOCRATIC PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF KOREA called for assistance from international organizations for countries developing food strategies.

Information and Participation: The US, CANADA, AUSTRALIA, NEW ZEALAND and the INTERNATIONAL FUND FOR AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT (IFAD) emphasized the importance of multi-stakeholder dialogue and partnership. CANADA supported rural community access to the knowledge-based economy. The US with INDONESIA encouraged improved capacity for managing data, and more efficient use of early warning systems. MEXICO called for cooperation on early warning systems.

The Multifunctional Character of Agriculture and Land (MFCAL): The G-77/CHINA stressed that introducing MFCAL might create trade distortions. NORWAY noted that MFCAL had public goods characteristics. AUSTRALIA acknowledged a lack of consensus on MFCAL.

IN THE CORRIDORS

The nominated Co-Chairs of the Open-Ended Intergovernmental Group of Experts on Energy and Sustainable Development briefed AHWG delegates on the Group's upcoming first session from 6-10 March. Irene Freudenschuss-Reichl (Austria) and Mohammad Reza Salamat (Iran), outlined the proposed programme of work. There was some discussion on which body would finally determine the key issues for consideration at CSD-9.

THINGS TO LOOK FOR TODAY

AHWG GENERAL DISCUSSION: The Co-Chairs' initial draft "Summary" and "Elements" for a decision on land and planning issues will be available at 10:00 am. The AHWG will reconvene to discuss the draft papers at 3:00 pm in Conference Room 4.

BRIEFING ON IFF-4: H.E. Bagher Asadi (Iran), Co-Chair of the IFF, will hold a briefing at 1:15 pm in the ECOSOC Chamber.

AGRICULTURE AND FREE TRADE: Wilfred Legg (OECD) will make a presentation at 1:15 pm in Conference Room D.