

CSD 17 HIGHLIGHTS: WEDNESDAY, 6 MAY 2009

On the third day of CSD 17, delegates continued their first readings of the Chair's draft negotiating text in two Working Groups, and convened for a stock-taking Plenary at the close of the day.

WORKING GROUP I

AGRICULTURE: Indonesia, for the G-77/CHINA, proposed adding reference to enhancing agricultural production. CANADA proposed references to: the protection of soil resources in promoting soil conservation techniques; women small-scale producers and farmers; and a comprehensive approach to management of agricultural landscapes. SWITZERLAND supported ISRAEL's proposal on "multitask and multifunctional" agriculture and suggested, *inter alia*, reference to protecting biodiversity and ensuring efficient use of water. The EU proposed developing international guidelines for sustainable agriculture to secure food security, biodiversity, soil, water and people's livelihoods.

The G-77/CHINA suggested deleting reference to further genetic improvements and stressing improvement of plant varieties and livestock, thus contributing to poverty eradication. The US added references to genetic improvements of plants, animals and other organisms. ISRAEL added text on water-saving technologies. The US proposed: support to organic agriculture; use of more sustainable bio-based products, such as fuel additives and lubricants; and references to agroforestry, reduced tillage, integrated land management, and strong rural-urban linkages.

NORWAY proposed support for conserving plant genetic resources. The G-77/CHINA included language in accordance with national laws and regulations, and proposed paragraphs on enhancing capacity of developing countries, support to small and resource-poor farmers, and crop insurance policies. AUSTRALIA added text on commercial lending practices, and JAPAN bracketed a reference to increased ODA.

AUSTRALIA said favorable conditions need to be consistent with WTO rules. The EU proposed text calling for international sustainability criteria on bio-energy and the Global Bio-Energy Partnership, and sustainable fishing practices and the protection of marine biodiversity. The G-77/CHINA proposed: support for developing country capacity; and strengthening the multilateral trading system to promote "fair and non-discriminatory trade." SWITZERLAND suggested broader use of second and third generation biofuels. CANADA stressed the role of "women and men, girls and boys" in securing tenure rights and access. The US suggested, *inter alia*, the control and prevention of transboundary diseases, pests and invasive species. MEXICO

highlighted the implementation of IWRM. NORWAY proposed intensifying efforts to develop national guidelines for sustainable production and use of biofuels.

The US proposed reducing and eliminating tariffs and other barriers and market distorting subsidies, while bracketing reference to elimination of subsidies for agricultural goods "in developed countries." MEXICO added language on transforming subsidies into neutral mechanisms to support vulnerable economic sectors in developing countries. CANADA suggested reducing wastage and contributing to food security in developing food testing equipment. The US offered text on reducing post harvest losses and enabling critical private sector investments. AUSTRALIA proposed referencing the successful conclusion of the Doha Round in the context of ensuring improved market access. JAPAN said trade-distorting subsidies should be reduced rather than eliminated. The G-77/CHINA proposed language on the role of all relevant international organizations in assisting developing countries in implementing revised policies to help farmers. The EU proposed promoting a Global Partnership for agriculture and food security and, supported by SWITZERLAND, supporting the 2004 FAO voluntary guidelines to support the progressive realization of the right to adequate food. NORWAY, supported by SWITZERLAND, said global responses to the food crisis should build on relevant existing institutions and mechanisms.

The US replaced poverty eradication with "reduction," and suggested language on empowerment of rural communities. The G-77/CHINA proposed text on coordination of rural development initiatives, their access to economic opportunities, and the rural-urban divide. The Group also suggested text on: poverty eradication; pro-poor planning; social protection of vulnerable groups; proactive strategies to deal with climate change; and drought, desertification and disasters.

The EU proposed mentioning a bottom-up approach. MEXICO proposed harmonizing modern technology with traditional knowledge. The US said humanitarian aid is "a short-term response" and development of agricultural insurance markets is "a longer-term strategy." CANADA suggested involvement of indigenous and local communities in natural resource management.

Delegates agreed on text on developing rural public and private services. The G-77/CHINA proposed eliminating illiteracy and providing free primary education. ISRAEL offered text on rural communities' participation in decision-making. The US highlighted the development of rural organizations. CANADA proposed text on improving access for women and men, boys and girls. SWITZERLAND, supported by ISRAEL, offered text on the creation of added value through payments for unaccounted benefits. The EU highlighted the significance of sustainably managed forests. MEXICO proposed strategies for payment of hydrologic environmental services.

WORKING GROUP II

DROUGHT: Guatemala, for the G-77/CHINA, made proposals on: aid in preparing risk reduction strategies; rainwater harvesting; mobilizing financial resources; developed countries' UNCCD commitments; promoting research cooperation; and replacing afforestation/reforestation references with "sustainable forest management." They bracketed a subparagraph on soil carbon stocks. The EU proposed: changing "drought risk reduction" to "drought management"; noting the importance of IWRM; adding reference to drought observatories; and calling for information-sharing on "water use and water availability." NORWAY proposed integrating climate change adaptation and disaster risk reduction policies.

NORWAY suggested increasing funding and support for research and development for improved techniques and practices that can improve food security and reduce human vulnerability. The US proposed providing free open access to climate-related data and promoting improved information, communication and data sharing, modeling and forecasting capabilities, and improved user-based community resilience planning and implementation. SWITZERLAND proposed text supporting current strategies of rural affected communities to cope with drought. The EU suggested adding text on promoting sustainable soil, land-use and land management practices to adapt to drought and climate change. The EU proposed underlining the importance of the UNCCD as the main instrument to combat desertification as well as drought.

DESERTIFICATION: The US said land degradation should refer to "arid, semi-arid, and dry sub-humid lands" throughout the section. Algeria, on behalf of the G-77/CHINA, noted that desertification "is a global problem that requires a global response through concerted efforts" and bracketed text indicating that addressing desertification is an essential part of climate change adaptation and mitigation and mitigating global biodiversity losses.

Delegates suggested that national action plans be integrated into: relevant sectoral and investment plans and policies (SWITZERLAND); national programmes for adaptation to climate change (G-77/CHINA); and national financial strategies and global financial mechanisms (EU). The EU proposed adding text calling for use of best farming practices. The G-77/CHINA suggested changing reference to "rural poor" to "rural population including women and youth." MEXICO proposed text on restoring degraded ecosystems of biological corridors and commercial forest plantations. The G-77/CHINA suggested harmonizing sectoral policies and programmes for arresting and reversing land degradation. The US proposed strengthening disaster management capacities at all levels and covering related climate change impacts.

In text on financial resources, the US proposed deleting reference to the Global Environment Facility (GEF). The G-77/CHINA called for making available new, additional, adequate and predictable financial resources, and for scaling up the allocation of financial resources to land degradation in the GEF replenishment. SWITZERLAND, supported by the US, NORWAY and CANADA, proposed replacing text on mobilizing resources for the Global Mechanism (GM) with text calling for support to the awareness-raising and policy work of the UNCCD Secretariat and resource mobilization work of the GM for the implementation of the UNCCD and its Ten-year Strategic Plan. The G-77/CHINA suggested deleting the text on mobilizing resources for the GM. The EU proposed alternative text on mobilizing international and national resources for the implementation of the Ten-year Strategic Plan.

On regional cooperation, the G-77/CHINA added references to the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD), the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP) and the TerraAfrica Programme. MEXICO proposed enhanced regional cooperation "of the UNCCD according to the

five regional implementation annexes." The EU, supported by the US and Japan, said text on ODA should retain "adequate and predictable," but not "new and additional."

AFRICA: Tanzania, for the G-77/CHINA, proposed text indicating support for the sustainable use of natural resources and diversification of African economies. The EU proposed that the CSD support the establishment of a Global Partnership for Agriculture and Food Security. The G-77/CHINA proposed language on: investing in rural infrastructure; addressing reasons for land conflicts; and equitable access to land for vulnerable groups. The EU offered amendments on: applying the Paris Declaration's aid effectiveness principles; the risks and impacts of land acquisition by foreign investors; the essential elements of sustainable public agricultural policies; efficient water resources; and improved soil conservation techniques. NORWAY proposed safeguarding women's land inheritances and integrating climate change adaptation and disaster risk reduction into agricultural policies.

On stimulating private investments in agriculture, the US proposed referencing "appropriate domestic conditions," the EU called for investments exemplary in social/environmental responsibility, gender sensitivity and income/employment generation, and CANADA suggested protecting small farmers' rights. The US suggested referencing all finance for all farmers, especially regarding "non-farm rural enterprises."

The EU proposed, *inter alia*: further promoting sustainable consumption and production patterns by building infrastructures; encouraging broad participation of civil society organizations; promoting traditional agriculture and indigenous knowledge; and accelerating African regional integration and integration into the world market. CANADA proposed developing government capacity to manage natural resource development. The G-77/CHINA bracketed the paragraph on promoting an enabling environment for sustainable development, and suggested adding reference to improving access of farmers and their integration into the world markets.

The EU added text on supporting the completion of negotiations for Economic Partnership Agreements and encouraging African regional economic organizations to play a key role in the ongoing, multiple global crises and, supported by JAPAN, bracketed the paragraph on reducing the debt burden of African countries. The US, supported by CANADA, suggested text on continuing to reduce the debt burden of qualifying African countries. The G-77/CHINA said the text is "useless" without this part.

PLENARY

During an evening "stock-taking" Plenary, Vice-Chair Raguz reported that Working Group 1 has completed a first reading of approximately three-fourths of its assigned text and Vice-Chair Mansour said Working Group 2 has finished first readings of the sections on land, desertification and drought. Chair Verburg then briefed delegates on the modalities of the High-Level Segment.

IN THE CORRIDORS

Wednesday afternoon, delegates in both Working Groups commented on the "avalanche" of additions to the Chair's negotiating draft text. One exasperated delegate observed that the length of the negotiating draft is increasing exponentially and is "ready to burst at the seams." During Working Group 2's discussion on Africa, numerous EU amendments led some African delegates to comment about attempts "to dictate how to manage Africa's natural resources." Not surprisingly, some said, the G-77/China bracketed portions of the original text and proposed amendments of its own. A participant noted that the old tactic of introducing text or putting brackets as bargaining chips seems to be alive and well in the CSD. Many participants indicated they expect tough negotiations during the second reading in both Working Groups.