

SUMMARY OF THE 17TH SESSION OF THE COMMISSION ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT: 4-15 MAY 2009

Delegates to the 17th session of the UN Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD 17), which convened from 4-15 May 2009, at UN Headquarters in New York, focused on the thematic cluster of agriculture, rural development, land, drought, desertification and Africa. The CSD meets annually in two-year "Implementation Cycles," with each cycle focusing on one thematic cluster alongside cross-sectoral issues. This approach was outlined in a multi-year programme of work (2004-2017) adopted at CSD 11 in 2003. Each cycle is comprised of a Review Year and a Policy Year. CSD 16, in May 2008, conducted a review of barriers and constraints in implementation, as well as lessons learned and best practices, in relation to the thematic cluster. CSD 17 negotiated policy recommendations based on CSD 16's review of the issues and the development of a draft Chair's Negotiating Text during an Intergovernmental Preparatory Meeting, which convened in February 2009.

Negotiations on CSD 17's policy recommendations extended late into the night throughout the session, with delegates resolving most of the issues. A "Text as prepared by the Chair" was distributed on Friday evening, 15 May, with proposed language for policy options and practical measures to expedite implementation of the issues under the cluster. Delegates adopted this text by acclamation during the closing plenary. Following its adoption, the text was described as being the best text that could be agreed in the current situation, which included rising food prices, ongoing negotiations in the World Trade Organization (WTO) on the Doha Development Round, and an international focus on the climate change negotiations under the auspices of the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change.

In addition to negotiating policy options related to the thematic cluster of issues, CSD 17 delegates also engaged in dialogues with Major Groups and the policy research community, and a High-level Segment and Ministerial Roundtables focused on the food crisis, a sustainable green revolution in Africa, and integrated management of land and water resources for sustainable agriculture and rural

development. The results from the Ministerial Roundtables were summarized in a Shared Vision Statement, which was annexed to the CSD 17 report. The CSD 17 Organization of Work also included, for the first time, a tripartite dialogue between heads of UN agencies, Chairs of Executive Boards/Governing Councils of UN agencies, and ministers. These closed and informal discussions took place prior to the morning sessions of the first two days of the High-level Segment. A Partnerships Fair, Learning Center and side events also took place during the two weeks.

A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE CSD

The Commission on Sustainable Development emerged from Agenda 21, the programme of action for sustainable development adopted in June 1992 by the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED), also known as the "Rio Earth Summit." Agenda 21 called for the creation of the CSD to ensure effective follow-up of UNCED, enhance international cooperation, and examine progress in the implementation of Agenda 21 at the local, national, regional and international levels. In 1992, the 47th session of the UN General Assembly adopted resolution 47/191, which established the

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CSD's terms of reference and composition, organization of work, relationship with other UN bodies, Secretariat arrangements, and guidelines for the participation of Major Groups. The CSD is a functional commission of the UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC), and its decisions are forwarded to ECOSOC. The CSD has 53 member states, although all UN member states are invited to participate in its sessions. The Division for Sustainable Development (DSD), within the UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs (DESA), serves as the CSD's Secretariat.

The CSD held its first substantive session in June 1993 and has convened annually since then at UN Headquarters in New York. During its first five years, the CSD systematically reviewed the implementation of all chapters of Agenda 21. In June 1997, five years after UNCED, the 19th Special Session of the UN General Assembly (UNGASS-19), also known as "Rio+5," was held to review the implementation of Agenda 21. Negotiations produced a Programme for the Further Implementation of Agenda 21. Among the decisions adopted at UNGASS-19 was a five-year CSD work programme organized around sectoral, cross-sectoral and economic thematic issues.

CSD 8: The eighth session of the CSD met from 24 April to 5 May 2000. Participants addressed: integrated planning and management of land resources; financial resources, trade and investment and economic growth; and sustainable agriculture and land management. The decision on land resources addressed the importance of a holistic approach to sustainable development, including integrated watershed management and the application of an ecosystem-based approach that takes into account the necessary balance between environmental conservation and rural livelihoods. The decision on agriculture recognized the important place of agriculture in society for food and fiber production, food security and social and economic development.

WSSD: The World Summit on Sustainable Development met from 26 August - 4 September 2002, in Johannesburg, South Africa, and adopted two main documents: the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation (JPOI) and the Johannesburg Declaration on Sustainable Development. In their consideration of desertification, delegates agreed to call on the Global Environment Facility (GEF) Assembly to designate land degradation as a focal area of GEF and to consider the GEF as a financial mechanism for the UN Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD). The JPOI chapter on the Sustainable Development of Africa affirms the international community's commitment to support sustainable development in Africa, through addressing the special challenges by taking concrete actions to implement Agenda 21 in Africa, within the framework of the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD). A section on means of implementation calls for, among others, the fulfillment of WTO members' commitments, notably on market access, and the fulfillment of a commitment to comprehensive WTO negotiations initiated under the Agreement on Agriculture, aiming, *inter alia*, to phase out all forms of export subsidies.

CSD 16: CSD 16 convened from 5-16 May 2008, to review the thematic cluster of agriculture, rural development, land, drought, desertification and Africa. Delegates "reviewed" constraints and obstacles to implementation, as well as lessons learned and best practices, in relation to the thematic cluster,

and highlighted the connections with the global food crisis and climate change. CSD 16's review of the issues highlighted the drivers of food prices, including land degradation, high energy costs, climate change, poor harvests, speculation in agricultural commodities, inequitable terms of trade, decline of investments in agricultural development, and increased production of biofuels from food crops. Speakers also tied their discussions to upcoming meetings, such as: the June 2008 Food and Agriculture Organization's (FAO) High-level Conference on Food Security and the Challenges of Climate Change and Bioenergy; and ongoing processes, particularly the Doha Round of negotiations in the WTO and its treatment of agricultural subsidies, and NEPAD.

INTERGOVERNMENTAL PREPARATORY MEETING:

The IPM for CSD 17 took place from 23-27 February 2009. The IPM's role was to provide a forum to discuss policy options and possible actions to enable the implementation of measures and policies concerning agriculture, rural development, land, drought, desertification and Africa. Building on the CSD 16 review of these issues, the IPM discussed each thematic area and delegates proposed policy options and actions for adoption at CSD 17. Delegates also considered inter-linkages, cross-cutting issues and means of implementation, as well as small island developing states (SIDS). The IPM's deliberations were reflected in a Chair's Negotiating Text distributed on the final afternoon of the meeting. The document was developed with the expectation that it could form the basis for further discussions and negotiations during CSD 17.

CSD 17 REPORT

Opening CSD 17 on Monday, 4 May 2009, Chair Gerda Verburg, Minister of Agriculture, Nature and Food Quality, the Netherlands, said agriculture must be included in climate change negotiations if fundamental mitigation and adaptation goals are to be met. She highlighted that negotiations should be guided by the principle that we are here to play a role in "making poverty history." UN Deputy Secretary-General Asha-Rose Migiro stressed the need to, *inter alia*, ensure revival of long-term investments in agriculture and shift from ecologically unsustainable agriculture toward sustainable practices, including help in adapting to climate change.

Delegates then elected, by acclamation, Kaire Mbuende (Namibia), Tania Raguž (Croatia) and Ana Bianchi (Argentina) as Vice-Chairs, with Raguž as Rapporteur. Vice-Chair Javad Amin-Mansour (Iran) had been elected during the first meeting of CSD 17 in 2008. Delegates adopted the agenda and organization of work without amendments (E/CN.17/2009/1).

Negotiations on the outcome took place in two working groups, the first chaired by Vice-Chairs Kaire Mbuende and Tania Raguž, and the second by Vice-Chairs Ana Bianchi and Javad Amin-Mansour. A High-level Segment convened from 13-15 May, with opening statements followed by three roundtable discussions.

OPENING STATEMENTS: Sudan, for the Group of 77 and China (G-77/China), called for global cooperation. The Czech Republic, for the European Union (EU), proposed that the outcome document address sustainable agriculture. Mexico,

for the Rio Group, prioritized restoration of land. Grenada, for the Alliance of Small Island States (AOSIS), said the draft negotiating text did not capture the urgency of climate change impacts. The United Arab Emirates, for the Arab Group, stressed increasing investment in the agricultural sector. Nauru, for the Pacific Small Island Developing States (PSIDS) highlighted cross-cutting climate adaptation strategies. Sudan, for the African Group, highlighted women's full rights to land. The US stressed agricultural sustainability. The Russian Federation said the draft text could serve as a good basis for consensus. The Republic of Korea said the current world crises call for coordinated responses. Palestine said the CSD recommendations should take into account the special needs of people living under foreign occupation. Israel highlighted the importance of a non-political approach.

REGIONAL PERSPECTIVES: The Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) cautioned that growth must be transformational. The Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) discussed African cooperation. The Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) said the region needs to invest in better water resource management. The UN Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) highlighted the challenges of urban sprawl. The Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA) underscored policy options.

STATEMENTS BY MAJOR GROUPS: Women underscored the role of women as food producers and environmental managers. Children noted that true collaboration helps local communities deal with global challenges. Indigenous Peoples said governments must shift toward valuing ecosystems, fisher folk, pastoralists and land-based producers. NGOs noted the need to address current unsustainable agricultural models. Local Authorities recommended an immediate examination of the effects of the current global financial crisis and climate change. Workers and Trade Unions highlighted the need for agriculture to become sustainable. Business and Industry noted six interlinked imperatives for sustainable development. The Scientific and Technological Community underscored that critical gaps of knowledge must be addressed through interdisciplinary research. Farmers emphasized the need for a long-term global plan for agriculture.

The *Earth Negotiations Bulletin's* coverage of these statements can be found at: <http://www.iisd.ca/vol05/enb05272e.html>

THEMATIC CLUSTER FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION CYCLE 2008-2009 — POLICY SESSION

Negotiations on the CSD 17 policy recommendations used the Chair's Draft Negotiating Text, which was distributed on the final day of the Intergovernmental Preparatory Meeting in February, as its starting point. Delegates offered amendments to the draft during a first reading of the text, and then proceeded to negotiate the text. Chair Verburg distributed a new draft on Friday, 15 May, which included her suggested text for paragraphs that had not yet been resolved. Delegates adopted this text by acclamation.

PREAMBLE: Negotiations on the preamble were facilitated by Vice-Chairs Mbuende and Raguž in Working Group 1. There were lengthy discussions on the appropriateness of this section

mentioning principle 7 of the Rio Declaration, i.e., on common but differentiated responsibilities. The G-77/China wanted to reference principle 2 on the sovereign right of states to exploit their natural resources. This was objected to by the US, Canada and the EU as being selective. Many paragraphs in the Preamble coincided with similar text in the Means of Implementation section, and delegates debated at length on their appropriate placement.

The G-77/China proposed several references to "enhanced" means of implementation, emphasizing that without this reference, the whole negotiating text "will be useless." The G-77/China introduced text on the need to increase efforts at national, regional and international levels to address food security, and on concern over the current financial crisis and its effect on developing states' ability to secure access to financing. Norway suggested adding text reaffirming that states have a primary responsibility to make their best efforts to respect, ensure, fulfill and promote the right to regular and permanent access to adequate food.

Alternative language on official development assistance (ODA) was proposed by the G-77/China, with a view to its enhancement, and the US noted that while aid effectiveness is important, citations need to be balanced. The G-77/China submitted new language on: least developed countries; Africa's development needs; and development obstacles for people living under foreign occupation. The US argued that these proposals were not the most effective way of addressing the concerns of developing countries.

The US, supported by Canada, suggested deleting text on "eradicating" poverty. There were protracted negotiations on the impacts of trade: the G-77/China stressed "deep concern" that agricultural development in developing countries was negatively impacted by market distortions originating in subsidies in developed countries, but this was opposed by the US, EU and Switzerland. The G-77/China suggested a commitment to reach an early, ambitious, successful and development-oriented conclusion of trade negotiations, and Canada proposed to add "balanced."

The US, supported by Canada, proposed substituting "sustainable green revolution" with sustainable "agricultural productivity." The G-77/China introduced new language reiterating that all measures relating to the sustainable use of biodiversity and sharing of relevant benefits must be consistent with the UN Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD). The US bracketed text on voluntary guidelines on the right to adequate food.

Final Outcome: The final text contains references to the Rio Declaration, specifically to its principle 7 on common but differentiated responsibilities, Agenda 21, the JPOI, SIDS-related and other summit documents. It reaffirms the commitment to strengthen support to the special needs of Africa, recalls the Monterrey Consensus and the Doha Declaration on Financing for Development, and recognizes the need for new and additional financial resources, as well as the essential role of ODA, while welcoming efforts to improve its quality. It also reaffirms eradicating poverty and changing unsustainable patterns of production and consumption as essential requirements for

sustainable development, as well as achieving the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). It goes on to emphasize the urgent need to address food security and agricultural development, and notes the relevant decisions of various fora on this issue, as well as on trade. It recognizes the need for a bold innovative response to the impact of the financial crises and economic slowdown, and notes and appreciates: best practices; participation of all stakeholders; partnerships and other non-negotiated outcomes of the CSD; and the practices and knowledge of indigenous peoples. The preamble also references the rights of peoples living under colonial and foreign occupation.

AGRICULTURE: Negotiations on the section on Agriculture were facilitated by Vice-Chairs Mbuende and Raguž in Working Group 1. The G-77/China stressed the right to food, which the US proposed bracketing. The G-77/China also highlighted the importance of strengthening the capacity of developing countries to enhance agricultural productivity, which the US recognized to the extent it involved efforts at all levels rather than just international efforts. Similarly, Canada suggested highlighting the commitments of “national governments.” The G-77/China objected and added that all relevant international organizations should assist developing countries in implementing revised policies to help farmers. The US noted the importance of defining the broad range of activities associated with agriculture. The G-77/China, supported by Australia and the US, suggested deleting the word “multifunctional” before agriculture, but Israel and Switzerland asked for its retention. Switzerland said agriculture is inextricably tied to natural resources, soil, water and biodiversity and suggested reference to protecting biodiversity and ensuring efficient use of water. The EU, supported by Switzerland, proposed relocating references to ecosystem services to the introductory paragraph, but the G-77/China said ecosystem services is a concept that is not yet agreed. Also supported by Switzerland, the EU proposed adding a reference to the 2004 FAO voluntary guidelines to support the progressive realization of the right to adequate food.

In addition, the EU suggested: developing international guidelines for sustainable agriculture to secure food security, biodiversity, soil, water and people’s livelihoods; text calling for international sustainability criteria on bio-energy and noting the work of the Global Bio-Energy Partnership; sustainable fishing practices; and the protection of marine biodiversity.

The G-77/China stressed the difficulty of discussing climate change in the section on agriculture, noting that climate discussions are carried out at the UNFCCC and this section cannot add to what is discussed there. Norway, supported by Switzerland, proposed sustainable production and use of biofuels. Canada suggested involvement of indigenous peoples and empowerment of local and rural communities. The G-77/China proposed harmonizing modern technology with traditional knowledge. The EU highlighted the significance of sustainably managed forests. Egypt noted the role of forests in maintaining biodiversity. Mexico highlighted the implementation of Integrated Water Resources Management (IWRM). The G-77/China stressed the promotion of “fair and non-discriminatory trade.” Australia noted that favorable conditions need to be

consistent with WTO rules. On plant genetic resources, the G-77/China proposed referencing equitable sharing of benefits in harmony with the CBD, but Canada, the EU, US and Norway, suggested stressing merely the “full implementation” of the treaty. Switzerland, supported by Norway, added to the paragraph on plant genetic resources reference to the FAO Global Plan of Action on Animal Genetic Resources. The US also debated the definition of poverty and extreme poverty, suggesting that extreme poverty can be eradicated and poverty reduced. The G-77/China objected. The G-77/China also proposed eliminating illiteracy and providing free primary education and Japan bracketed a reference to increased ODA.

Final Outcome: Delegates agreed to the “right to adequate food” and deleting “all” and “international” before “efforts” to create and promote an enabling environment. They compromised on the issue of sustainability of agriculture by maintaining the reference to “sustainable agriculture” and avoiding reference to ecosystem services, with the exception of increasing awareness of non-trade distorting models where farmers are encouraged to adopt practices that would restore, maintain and enhance ecosystem services. The reference to the 2004 FAO Voluntary Guidelines and the suggestion to developing international guidelines for sustainable agriculture were deleted.

On climate, text was agreed that sustainable agricultural practices and sustainable forest management can contribute to meeting climate concerns. Delegates agreed to emphasize the challenges and opportunities posed by biofuels. They also recognized the value of indigenous knowledge. On genetic resources, delegates recognized the importance of achieving the objectives of the International Treaty of Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture and the Global Plan of Action for Animal Genetic Resources. All agreed to “eradication of poverty” and increasing ODA, “as appropriate.” On trade, delegates acknowledged the need to ensure that: trade is supportive of agriculture; access to markets is substantially improved, including integration of Africa; export subsidies should be eliminated; and trade distorting domestic support is substantially reduced.

RURAL DEVELOPMENT: Negotiations on rural development took place in Working Group 2, chaired by CSD Vice-Chair Amin-Mansour. During the discussion of the chapeau, the G-77/China expressed concern about a reference to the “bottom-up approach,” in text proposed by the EU on effective participation and empowerment of rural communities, and objected to the US proposal to eradicate “extreme” poverty rather than “eradicate poverty.”

The G-77/China objected to an EU proposal to add “in particular women’s rights” after the G-77/China-proposed reference to land tenure supported by a legal framework that protects families, and opposed a reference to inheritance rights in the same subparagraph. The US, EU and Canada objected to the G-77/China-proposed reference to “consistent with national legislation” in text on participation of vulnerable groups in the elaboration of local and national planning for rural development, and opposed reference to “in accordance with national

legislation” in text on fostering and strengthening capacities of rural communities for self-organization for building social capital.

The EU proposed deleting a G-77/China proposal on investing new resources in research aimed at adapting to climate change, and in enhancing access of rural populations to safe drinking water and adequate sanitation. The G-77/China proposed text on providing free health-care services but the EU did not agree and suggested text on promoting equitable and improved access to affordable and efficient health-care services instead.

Final Outcome: In the recommendations adopted by CSD 17, the actions to achieve sustainable rural development identified include, *inter alia*:

- promoting poverty eradication in rural areas;
- empowering women and small-scale farmers, and indigenous peoples, including through securing equitable land tenure supported by appropriate legal frameworks;
- promoting equitable access to land, water, financial resources and technologies by women, indigenous peoples and other vulnerable groups; and
- facilitating the active participation of vulnerable groups including women, youth and indigenous peoples and rural communities in the elaboration of local and national planning for rural development, taking into account national legislation.

The CSD also called for: investing resources to enhance research aimed at adapting to climate change; enhancing access of rural populations to safe drinking water and adequate sanitation; and strengthening rural healthcare facilities and capacities, including through promoting equitable and efficient health-care services for the poor in rural areas, in particular in Africa.

LAND: Negotiations on land were facilitated by Vice-Chair Amin-Mansour in Working Group 2. In several passages, the G-77/China proposed calls for new or additional international aid and financial resources and greater access to transfer of technology, which the EU and the US resisted or modified. Negotiations also focused on the precise terms and qualifiers to use regarding, *inter alia*: land tenure and land administration; the appropriate level (international, national, regional, subnational, local) for actions involving land and water management; building landscape resilience; access to credit; and references to water management and balancing water uses. The G-77/China resisted proposed references in this section to: ecosystem services (US, Switzerland); conservation agriculture (Norway); soil carbon stocks and land’s potential as a carbon sink (Canada); urban sprawl (Switzerland); the World Bank Land Governance Assessment Framework (US); recognition of secondary use rights such as grazing and wood gathering (US); and guidelines for governance of land tenure based on the initiative taken by the FAO (Norway). The G-77/China also initially opposed references to global policy indicators for policy review, monitoring and evaluation, but eventually agreed to reference “domestic” indicators.

Text was agreed with limited changes on, *inter alia*:

- addressing coastal erosion and increased saltwater intrusion due to sea-level rise;
- implementing policies that address the direct and indirect drivers of land degradation;

- improving efficiency of irrigation and rainfall harvesting;
- establishing and strengthening knowledge management networks and a database of land experts;
- ensuring that policy measures to reduce land degradation also promote poverty eradication and employment opportunities in developing countries; and
- implementing policies that lead to the recovery of the soil’s physical integrity.

Final Outcome: The agreed text calls for promoting sustainable and integrated land use planning and land management practices, through:

- inventory, assessment and monitoring systems on land’s capacity to support ecosystem functions;
- long-term land use and spatial planning strategies;
- incorporation of sustainable development principles in land-use planning;
- transparent and decentralized land tenure and administration;
- science-based, targeted incentives for investment in infrastructure and research;
- enhanced access to micro-credit;
- conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity;
- sustainable forest management;
- domestic land policy indicators for policy review; and
- risk management tools that build landscape resilience.

It suggests reducing land degradation and rehabilitating degraded land. The text also calls for promoting policies for integrated water and land management, including: strengthened coordination and cooperation among water and land management authorities; improved irrigation efficiency and water management practices; and addressing the threats of saltwater intrusion and of coastal erosion due to sea-level rise. Promoting equitable access to land and clear and secure land tenure, in particular for women, indigenous peoples and other vulnerable groups is also recommended.

DROUGHT: Negotiations on drought took place in Working Group 2 facilitated by Vice-Chair Amin-Mansour. The EU and US bracketed text proposed by the G-77/China on mobilizing financial resources to mitigate the effects of drought and calling upon developed countries to fulfill their commitments under the UNCCD, particularly in the provision of adequate, timely and predictable financial resources. The G-77/China suggested deleting EU-proposed text calling for a strengthened knowledge base on water use and water availability in addition to drought, preferring focus on drought.

The G-77/China objected to the EU proposal that work on indicators and benchmarks should be harmonized with the set of indicators to be developed under the UNCCD, on the basis that these indicators have not been developed, but the EU insisted on its proposal. Delegates agreed to a paragraph referring to “sustainable agricultural practices aimed at mitigating the effects of and adapting to drought,” after dropping: an EU-proposed references to climate change and preventing biodiversity loss; a Norway-proposed reference to conservation agriculture; and an Australian-proposed reference to replanting logged areas with high-temperature tolerant trees and thinning drought-stressed forests. In a paragraph on promoting innovative technical

solutions and practices for sustainable water management, the G-77/China objected to the EU's additions of reference to water-saving systems, sustainable desalinization and water reuse.

The G-77/China said it could not accept reference to basin- or transboundary-level management in text on IWRM. The G-77/China and the US could not agree on text referencing funding and supporting research and development on underlying causes and effects of drought. The G-77/China objected to text indicating that addressing desertification is an essential part of climate change adaptation and mitigation and mitigating global biodiversity loss.

In text on financial resources, the US proposed deleting reference to the 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. The EU, supported by the US and Japan, said the reference to ODA could retain the call for it to be "adequate and predictable," but proposed deleting text indicating it should be "new and additional." Switzerland, supported by the US, Norway and Canada, proposed replacing text on mobilizing resources for the UNCCD 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.

On regional cooperation, the G-77/China added references to NEPAD, the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme and the TerrAfrica Programme.

Final Outcome: Actions for drought preparedness and mitigation identified include, *inter alia*, integrating policies and strategies for climate change adaptation and disaster risk reduction, and continuing to mobilize financial resources from all sources to mitigate the effects of drought, including in accordance with the UNCCD, particularly Articles 5, 6 and 20.

CSD 17 also agreed to:

- encourage and, where appropriate, establish scientifically-based drought and desertification-related local, national and, where appropriate, regional indicators and benchmarks and related web-based information systems bearing in mind the set of indicators under development within the UNCCD regarding the Ten-year Strategic Plan and Framework;
- mobilize and enhance funding and support research and development on the underlying causes and effects of drought; and
- promote sustainable land-use practices, including sustainable agricultural practices aimed at mitigating the effects of and adapting to drought.

DESERTIFICATION: Negotiations on desertification in Working Group 2 were chaired by Vice-Chair Amin-Mansour. The EU bracketed a G-77/China proposal on supporting the efforts of developing countries to establish centers of excellence and monitoring to combat desertification. The G-77/China objected to the EU's proposed reference to contribute to the building of a global set of key indicators to the paragraph on

expanding access to appropriate technologies to assess, analyze and quantify the nature, severity and impacts of land degradation and desertification.

The US opposed the G-77/China's addition to the paragraph on best practices and lessons learned to combat desertification with reference to supporting developing countries in the development, deployment and diffusion of technologies, and the G-77/China objected to Norway's proposed reference to conservation agriculture.

The EU, supported by the US, Australia, Japan and Norway, proposed replacing five sub-paragraphs related to resources with a sub-paragraph calling for the mobilization of "adequate, predictable and timely financial resources for the implementation of the Ten-year Strategic Plan of the UNCCD" as well as for support for the work of the UNCCD Secretariat, and inviting the GEF Council to take the Strategic Plan into account in the next replenishment period. The G-77/China preferred to keep the Chair's draft sub-paragraphs on resources.

In the sub-paragraph on regional cooperation, Mexico insisted on referencing the UNCCD regional implementation annexes and the G-77/China suggested the addition of international support to the regional mechanisms for combating desertification. The EU did not want to restrict cooperation to the annexes, given that they only include affected countries.

On a paragraph on sand dune movement and sand storms, Republic of Korea insisted adding reference to "taking into account their transboundary nature," which the G-77/China said it could not accept. The G-77/China proposed a new paragraph calling on governments, in cooperation with relevant multilateral organizations, including the GEF, and implementing agencies to integrate desertification and land degradation into their plans and strategies for sustainable development. The G-77/China did not accept this addition. The EU, US and Japan proposed deleting reference to "new and additional" in the text on strengthening international development cooperation, including ODA, by providing adequate, predictable, new and additional resources aimed at combating desertification and land degradation.

Final Outcome: Actions on combating desertification identified include, *inter alia*:

- calling upon governments, where appropriate, in collaboration with relevant multilateral organizations, including the GEF implementation agencies, to integrate desertification and land degradation into their plans and strategies for sustainable development;
- integrating National Action Plans (NAPs) related to drought and desertification into national development strategies;
- supporting the implementation of the UNCCD as well as the Ten-year Strategic Plan, including through regional and international cooperation, provision of adequate and predictable financing, technology transfer and capacity-building; and
- undertaking measures and providing international assistance, promoting national action and encouraging subregional, regional and international cooperation to prevent sand dune movement and reduce the frequency and severity of sandstorms.

There was agreement to: improve existing and establish new centers of excellence and monitoring in developing countries to combat desertification; encourage developed countries and invite the GEF Council to provide in the GEF fifth replenishment adequate, timely and predictable financial resources, including new and additional financial resources, for the focal area on land degradation; and enhance regional cooperation in particular within the UNCCD framework.

AFRICA: Negotiations on Africa were facilitated by Vice-Chair Bianchi in Working Group 1. Submissions of new language by the EU, US, Canada, Japan, Norway and Switzerland on, *inter alia*, aid, debt, integration with world markets, investments, climate change, gender, soil conservation, and small farmers' rights more than doubled the Chair's original proposed text, leading the G-77/China to warn that if other delegations insisted on so many amendments, it would present new "counterbalancing" text.

In several passages, the G-77/China added calls for new or additional international aid and financial resources, reduction of the external debt of African nations, more support for African regional organizations, and for the UNCCD, which the EU, US and Japan modified. Negotiations addressed the precise terms and qualifiers regarding: land tenure and land administration; the appropriate level (international, national, regional, subnational, local) for actions; education and quality of education; gender equality and promoting the role of women; protecting small farmers; trade and integration with regional and world markets; and Africa's difficulties in achieving the MDGs.

The G-77/China preferred deleting references to: ecosystem services (Switzerland); the development of African legislation geared to transparent and sustainable management of natural resources (US); sustainable consumption and production (EU); the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness principles (EU); an enabling environment for sustainable development; the Maputo Declaration target of 10% of national budgets devoted to agriculture (original Chair's text); and a "sustainable" green revolution for Africa (EU). The G-77/China initially also resisted an EU reference to the Madrid High Level Meeting on Food Security for All, but later agreed to "take note" of it, as well as call for CSD support for establishing a new Global Partnership on Agriculture and Food Security, and the need for the consultative process to actively involve African countries. Delegations also offered alternate proposals related to an EU-proposed reference to land acquisition by foreign investors, with the G-77/China proposing wording from a 2008 African summit statement, and Switzerland proposing reference to a code of conduct on such investments.

Final Outcome: The agreed text calls for:

- a green revolution boosting agricultural productivity, food production and food security while supporting ecosystem functions;
- revitalized agriculture as the basis for sustainable rural development;
- improved land governance;
- access to microfinance;
- equitable and sustainable use of shared water resources; and

- integration of climate change adaptation and disaster risk reduction.

It suggests integrating farmers and local entrepreneurs into agricultural supply chains, through, *inter alia*: affordable credit; access to insurance; participation of farmer organizations in decision-making; extension services; improved market infrastructure; reduced pre- and post-harvest losses; and agro-ecological practices. It also calls for promotion of an enabling environment, including the regional 10-year Framework of Programmes on Sustainable Consumption and Production (SCP). This section also calls for: integration of Africa into world trade; support for African regional economic organizations in addressing food security; reduction of Africa's debt burden; increased and more effective development aid; and increased investment in rural infrastructure, renewable energy and energy efficiency.

INTERLINKAGES, CROSS-CUTTING ISSUES AND MEANS OF IMPLEMENTATION:

Negotiations on this section were facilitated by Vice-Chairs Mbuende and Raguž in Working Group 1. Language contained numerous cross-references to the preamble, and delegates spent much time deciding whether paragraphs should be shifted to the preamble or left in this section. Several contact groups met to develop compromise language on: ensuring that biodiversity, land, water and forests provide ecosystem services; promoting the development of ecosystem services, especially strategies of increased policy coherence; and trade.

The G-77/China suggested adding mention of "universal, rules-based, open, non-discriminatory and equitable" in regard to the trading system. Japan and the EU asked for deletion of the phrase on improved market access for developing countries' agricultural exports, and Canada replaced elimination of trade-distorting subsidies with "substantial reduction of distorting domestic support." On trade, several countries supported the US in noting that trade issues are highly sensitive and are being discussed in a different forum.

In a section on enhancing the availability of finance for sustainable development, the US, supported by EU, proposed indicating that the section should refer to "effective use" as well as enhanced availability, but the G-77/China opposed this addition. The EU suggested language on the essential role of ODA as a complement to other sources. The G-77/China insisted on mentioning in several places "support of the international community." The US and several other countries noted the unbalanced focus on finance.

The EU added "primarily at the national level" to the phrase on creating an enabling environment. Norway proposed a new paragraph on establishing transparency in managing external and national financial resources and curbing illegal flight of capital and money laundering.

Language on changing unsustainable patterns of production and consumption was extensively discussed. The EU highlighted these patterns as an overarching objective and essential requirement of sustainable development, and noted the role of education in changing consumer behavior. Australia bracketed

text on “developed countries taking the lead” in promoting SPC patterns, and the G-77/China suggested adding “especially in developed countries” when mentioning sustainable lifestyles.

In the paragraph on national sustainable development strategies addressing the three pillars of sustainable development, the EU added text on international migration, stakeholder engagement and strategic assessment of such strategies. Delegates debated paragraphs on: empowering rural women; strengthening the human resource and institutional capacity of SIDS and Africa; and promoting the role of local authorities.

On the issue of CSD 17 follow-up, Lebanon proposed mechanisms for increased assistance, such as FAO, the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) and the World Food Programme (WFP), but Australia said a review process would be onerous and resource-intensive.

Final Outcome: This section stresses the need for coherence of international processes and institutions having impact on agriculture, food security and rural development; and references the social dimension of globalization, international migration, gender equality, multi-stakeholder engagement and strategic assessments. It calls for: improving health systems, promoting education and extension services, sustaining the livelihoods of vulnerable groups, empowering women, and strengthening human resources and institutional capacity of SIDS and Africa.

The section terms climate change as a key interlinkage to be addressed in accordance with the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities, noting that it impacts on all themes of the current CSD cycle, and actions should be taken to integrate climate change adaptation strategies in agricultural and rural development strategies and action plans to combat drought and desertification. The provision of means of implementation is qualified as critical. The section references the target of 0.7% of gross national income (GNI) for ODA to developing countries by 2015, their external debt problems, and a rules-based, open, non-discriminatory and equitable trading system. It includes three follow-up subsections on, *inter alia*, devoting a CSD segment in 2012 and 2016 to review the CSD 17 decision on Africa.

MINISTERIAL DIALOGUES WITH MAJOR GROUPS AND THE POLICY COMMUNITY

DIALOGUE WITH MAJOR GROUPS: On Tuesday, 12 May, ministers from Namibia, Jordan, Nigeria and Guatemala, the State Secretary from Mongolia, and representatives from the nine Major Groups as well as from the United Nations Environment Program (UNEP), United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO), World Meteorological Organization and IFAD participated in the Ministerial Dialogue with Major Groups and the UN System. CSD Chair Verburg opened the session highlighting that sustainable development could only be achieved with the involvement of all stakeholders focusing on concrete measures and action. Major Group representatives highlighted, *inter alia*: involving the Major Groups in decision-making processes at all levels; empowerment of women, small farmers and indigenous peoples; securing land tenure and rights to land, food and water, particularly for women, indigenous peoples and other vulnerable groups; food sovereignty; the ecosystem approach; traditional and indigenous knowledge and technologies; education and training; the

important role of local authorities; public-private partnerships; capacity building, scientific research and knowledge sharing; rural-urban linkages; and equal access of developing countries’ agricultural products to the world market. Ministers and representatives from governments and UN agencies highlighted the important role played by the Major Groups, and committed to develop partnerships with them in implementing the CSD’s decisions.

DIALOGUE WITH THE POLICY RESEARCH

COMMUNITY: On Tuesday, 12 May, representatives from governments, Major Groups, UNDP, UNEP, UNIDO and IFAD participated in the Ministerial Dialogue with the Policy Research Community. CSD Chair Verburg opened by stressing the need to link science and research with application and policymaking. Participants discussed, *inter alia*: the establishment of a broad-based knowledge management partnership on sustainable development; a “wiring diagram” for the next 20 years of the sustainable development process that includes agreed criteria, accountability mechanisms, appropriate incentives and the capacity for resilience and adjustment; how extremes of affluence and poverty both have major economic impacts on the environment; inconvenient choices that need to be made about unsustainable consumption and lifestyles; the Copenhagen meeting on climate change as a litmus test of the sustainable development process; and inclusion of agriculture in the next climate change agreement.

HIGH-LEVEL SEGMENT

The High-level Segment opened in the General Assembly Hall on Wednesday, 13 May. Chair Verburg said the objective of the High-level Segment is to develop a shared vision. UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon highlighted that sustainable agriculture can contribute to climate change mitigation, and urged CSD 17 to succeed and inspire the world to address its multiple, daunting challenges. Bharrat Jagdeo, President of Guyana, called for reforming multilateral institutions in a way that meaningfully integrates sustainable development into global decision-making and taking bold action on climate change at the Copenhagen meeting. Several other ministers and high-level officials addressed the session, following which three roundtable themes were discussed. These were summarized in the Chair’s Shared Vision Statement that was distributed on the final day.

ROUNDTABLE 1. RESPONDING TO THE FOOD CRISIS THROUGH SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT:

Kathleen Merrigan, US Deputy Secretary, Department of Agriculture, and Netumbo Nandi-Ndaitwah, Namibian Minister of Environment and Tourism, co-chaired one roundtable on this theme, and Manfred Bötsch, Secretary of Agriculture, Switzerland, and Oliver Dulić, Minister of Environment and Spatial Planning, Serbia, co-chaired the other parallel roundtable. Speakers stressed: international cooperation; innovative technologies; good nutrition for empowering individuals; efforts to help farmers develop their own organizations and cooperatives; building capacity for the production of value-added, branded produce; the need for more trade; the importance of access to markets and fair rules of the game, particularly in the WTO; addressing subsidy policies; creating a package of instruments to deal with speculation in the commodity markets;

and the needs of small holder farmers, including those related to livestock. A speaker questioned how preservation of forests and agricultural development could be reconciled. The development of international guidelines on biofuels was also discussed, as was the value of micro-credit systems.

ROUNDTABLE 2. REALIZING A SUSTAINABLE GREEN REVOLUTION IN AFRICA: Nandi-Ndaitwah, chaired one group and Homero Bibiloni, Secretary of Environment and Sustainable Development, Argentina, and Paul Biyoghe Mba, Minister of Agriculture, Husbandry, Food Security and Rural Development, Gabon, co-chaired the other. Participants emphasized the importance of urgently bringing about a green revolution in Africa to attain food security and combat desertification, water scarcity and the threat of climate change. Speakers focused on, in particular: South-South cooperation; increased international support; easier access to markets; technology transfer; partnerships and government political will and the role of the public sector; capacity building, especially to combat desertification and soil degradation; and use of indigenous knowledge. Some participants stressed a “green-green” revolution sensitive to environmental and biodiversity considerations, the risk of genetically modified organisms (GMOs), culturally-appropriate food, and sustainable biofuels. Increased productivity was discussed, as well as multifunctional agriculture, dependence on rain and IWRM, inclusion and empowerment of small farmers and women, and population growth. Several participants reported on their governments’ programmes of support to Africa.

ROUNDTABLE 3. INTEGRATED MANAGEMENT OF LAND AND WATER RESOURCES FOR SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURE AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT:

Luis Alberto Ferraté, Minister of Environment and Natural Resources, Guatemala, chaired one of the parallel roundtables, and Christopher Tufton, Minister of Agriculture, Jamaica, and Sumardjo Gatot Irianto, Vice-Minister of Agriculture, Indonesia, co-chaired the other. Some countries highlighted the adoption of policies enabling international partnerships. Threats discussed included: water resource deficit; natural disasters; mountain development; land degradation; vulnerability to climate change; increasing land productivity and rural income; the role of tariffs and subsidies; access to technologies such as geographic information systems (GIS); and desertification. One delegate proposed a forum for Africa to increase support and cooperation for the continent; another noted community-oriented groups with participation of farmers to promote efficient water use. Speakers stressed the need to: improve rural livelihoods; improve dissemination of knowledge and good practices; implement systematic policies to improve resilience; give the UNCCD the same importance as the UNFCCC; improve access to wastewater treatment technologies; integrate the various international legal instruments related to land; tackle land tenure issues when introducing ecosystem service payments; and invest in research. Also discussed were the role of women in agriculture; impacts of biofuel production; climate change mitigation aspects of agriculture; and the impact of climate change on water and land.

SUMMARY OF THE MINISTERIAL ROUNDTABLES:

On Friday morning, 15 May, CSD Chair Verburg opened the final session of the High-level Segment, and invited the Roundtable Chairs to summarize the discussions of their sessions. Dulić said: biofuel production can complement energy needs, but concerns were expressed about their negative impacts on food security; there is a need to provide farmers, especially small-holder farmers with market access; agricultural trade distortions should be removed; and climate change and agriculture should be included in the Copenhagen agenda.

Nandi-Ndaitwah highlighted the importance of an African green revolution. She emphasized actions including: dissemination and uptake of science and technology by farmers; increasing investment in research, capacity building and rural infrastructure; empowerment of women; strengthening farmers’ organizations and developing new institutions to help farmers manage their risks; promoting non-farming activities including tourism; and transfer of technology and financing.

Ferraté noted that successful IWRM depends on secure land tenure arrangements, among others. He highlighted the need for: an institutional framework for coordination across ministries on water resource issues; technologies to implement IWRM; access to safe drinking water; and participation of women and local authorities in decision making and promoting human and social capital, respectively.

The Prince of Orange, HRH Willem-Alexander, Chair, UN Secretary-General’s Advisory Board on Water and Sanitation, noted the difficulties in altering power structures and taking on entrenched interests, and noted that the world would be a different place if all the commitments made in Rio had been respected. He said priorities fall into three categories: IWRM, innovation and implementation.

Alexander Mueller, Assistant Director-General, Natural Resource Management and Environment Department, FAO, said there is clear agreement that agriculture needs to adapt to climate change and that it can be part of the climate change solution. He said the CSD remains a crucial global platform, but needs to link global strategies with concrete action on the local level.

Matthew Wyatt, Assistant President, IFAD, said small holders in Africa and their organizations need to play a concrete role, and emphasized the importance of keeping Africa at the top of the international agenda. He said agriculture and the African green revolution should feed into Copenhagen and should remain at the top of the G-8 agenda.

Farmers stressed: allowing Major Groups to play an important role in sustainable agricultural development; recognizing farmers, especially small farmers, as being at the heart of sustainable agricultural development; using the ecosystem approach and a human rights approach; reforming land tenure systems; reducing rural to urban migration through providing high quality jobs and other measures; promoting South-South cooperation; and providing resources and tools to NGOs, local authorities and the scientific and technological community.

The Scientific and Technological Community reported that participants discussed, *inter alia*, the long-term nature of the sustainable development agenda; the role of science, technology and local knowledge; need for establishing a broad-based

knowledge management partnership on sustainable development; appropriate incentives and the capacity for resilience and adjustment; and economic impacts of both extremes of affluence and poverty on the environment.

Chair Verburg then introduced the “Draft Shared Vision Statement (Chair’s Summary),” which was distributed at the beginning of the day. She said it is a Chair’s Summary and will not be a negotiated text, but opened the floor for comments on the draft.

The US said four items were not incorporated: the need to manage the ecological potential of the land for the long-term; research performed in tandem with and directed to the needs of the farmers; integrated pest management, reduced purchased inputs and other organic practices should be encouraged; and reference to the Global Bio-Energy Partnership.

The EU emphasized support for investments in agriculture and suggested that water and agriculture should be managed by one minister. Guyana said the summary should reference SIDS, and suggested indicating that market access should be granted to small farmers.

Namibia highlighted need to help smallholder farmers increase their income and reduce poverty. Italy said the Global Bio-Energy Partnership represents linking energy production with sustainable development. Brazil highlighted the need to: open markets for agricultural products; eliminate agricultural subsidies; enhance efforts in technology transfer, capacity building and mobilization of financial resources; and stimulate a revolution in technology. India highlighted: the importance of national experiences; need for a broader strategic shared vision; for developing countries, poverty reduction is the highest priority; climate change should not distract attention from other issues, such as the UNCCD; and adequate financial resources. Cameroon suggested noting that some countries are skeptical about GMOs. Argentina said more time should be spent on implementation, and fuel should not compete with food.

The Republic of Korea emphasized the importance of water resources management, because water is key to food security, poverty reduction, rural development and achieving sustainable development. Pakistan emphasized the need to build trust, and said we do not need to wait for Copenhagen to take measures that could lead to that agreement and highlighted agriculture as an area that offers potential for such action. Israel emphasized inclusive policies, the importance of technologies, focusing on food production by small farm holders, and strengthening policies and plans of action to address the global water crisis. Sweden emphasized investment in agriculture and rural areas and said: measures for adaption and mitigation should go hand in hand with development in different countries; more trade is needed along with the successful conclusion of the Doha Round; and forestry and agroforestry should be given more attention in the text.

Business and Industry emphasized collaborative approaches, farm groups, extension services, and training and education. Farmers encouraged renewing and strengthening the role of Major Groups in future sessions. Workers and Trade Unions

said environmental protection and social development should be advanced coherently. Local Authorities highlighted South-South and triangular cooperation.

At the close of the Friday morning session, Grenada, on behalf of AOSIS, introduced the draft resolution (E/CN.17/2009/L.3) requesting the Commission at its 18th session to use the Small Island Developing States Day (SIDS Day) as a preparatory Committee Meeting for the high-level review of the Mauritius Strategy for Implementation, which is to be held in September 2010, as decided in General Assembly Resolution 63/213 of 19 December 2008.

Shared Vision Statement: The five-page text highlights deep interconnections among agriculture, rural development, land, drought, desertification, and Africa, and their close relationship to eradicating hunger and extreme poverty and addressing climate change. It emphasizes: the need for an integrated response to multiple challenges; the urgency of appropriate national and international action and greater cooperation to bring about a paradigm shift and to realize a truly sustainable green revolution; the need to put sustainable development of agriculture on the international agenda and developing countries at the center of the agricultural and rural revival; and the need for political will, including investments in agriculture, a supportive enabling environment, fair prices for produce, fuller integration of markets and greater international market access.

CLOSING PLENARY

The closing plenary began at 8:14 pm on Friday evening, 15 May. The Chair invited delegates to adopt the final policy outcome document distributed at 5:00 pm, which comprised all negotiated agreements and the Chair’s proposals for sections that were still bracketed. Hearing no objection, Chair Verburg declared that it was so decided. Delegates also adopted the draft programme of work for the biennium 2010-2011 for the Division of Sustainable Development (E/CN.17/2009/11) and the provisional agenda for CSD 18 (E/CN.17/2009/L.4). The Commission also adopted a resolution presented by Grenada, on behalf of AOSIS (E/CN.17/2009/L.3), with India, Ghana, Italy, Ireland, Portugal, Austria, Greece, the EU, the Czech Republic and Croatia as co-sponsors. Vice-Chair Raguž presented the Commission’s draft report (E/CN.17/2009/L.2). Venezuela asked that the final report include its written statement on the Mauritius Strategy. The Chair announced adoption of the CSD 17 report, with the understanding that the Secretariat will include Friday’s debate.

Responding to the Chair’s invitation for brief comments, all speakers commended the Bureau and the Chair for her hard work and commitment to a successful outcome. The G-77/China said it attaches great importance to the CSD, and supports efforts to revitalize it; the language approved is important for the group, and it accepts it “as is,” and as the best possible outcome. The EU, while commending the document as sending a strong signal, said it had reservations about the follow-up paragraphs, and repeated references to new and additional financial resources. He said the CSD’s working methods need to be analyzed, and it needs more transparency and efficiency to live up to the current challenges.

The US said it sees the value of the CSD in focusing on best practices, lessons learned, side events and the learning center, all of which are equal in importance to the adopted text. He said the CSD should learn from Major Groups, and its value will be measured by action on the ground. The Russian Federation, supported by France, expressed concern that the document is being adopted without translation into all official UN languages. Tanzania stressed that the document outlines challenges for Africa, and called for realizing the commitment to provide financial resources. Switzerland commended the document's mention of the right to food, ecosystem services and other important issues, but lamented absence of acknowledging the multifunctionality of agriculture. He said references to occupied territories belong to other documents, and supported thinking of the conduct of the CSD and its negotiations. Brazil said the compromise achieved was fair and balanced.

The Chair announced the recommended dates for the next CSD cycle: 3-14 May 2010 for CSD 18; 21-25 February 2011 for CSD 19's IPM; and 2-13 May 2011 for CSD 19. Responding to the EU, the Secretariat promised to coordinate the dates, so that there is no conflict with other meetings.

Responding to the Chair's invitation for brief comments, Women welcomed outcome references to women farmers and environmental managers. Youth and Workers and Trade Unions lamented that provisions on workplace health and safety had been taken out. Indigenous People welcomed acknowledgement of the need to secure land rights for indigenous people and to protect traditional knowledge. NGOs said CSD 17 failed to invoke the Spirit of Rio, and instead was too rooted in "the spirit of WTO." Local Authorities said cities can play an important role in food security and helping agriculture and rural development. The Scientific and Technological Community said advancement of science, engineering, and technology must be at the center of addressing the challenges discussed by CSD 17.

Concluding CSD 17, Chair Verburg said the energy, inspiration and spirit prevailing in CSD 17 would be needed to transform words into action. She reiterated her call for a paradigm shift and to view agriculture not as part of the problem, but rather as part of the solution. She gavelled the session to a close at 9:16 pm.

CSD 18 REPORT

CSD 17 Chair Verburg then opened the first meeting of CSD 18, which proceeded to elect its officers. Luis Alberto Ferraté, Minister of Environment and Natural Resources, Guatemala, was elected by acclamation as the new Chair. Ferraté offered his perspectives on each CSD 18 theme: on transport, the CSD should discuss energy consumption and the addiction to fossil fuels; on chemicals, it must look at the consequences for health, particularly persistent poisons with environmental impacts; on waste, it should look at waste treatment; on mining, it should examine irresponsible mining, especially metals pollution of water; and on SCP, it will look at the draft Ten-Year Programme developed by the Marrakech Process. He promised to prepare "a rich and balanced programme of activities" to enhance CSD 18 dynamism.

Two additional Bureau members were elected: Hilario Davide Jr. (Philippines) for the Asian Group; and Mohamed Alahraf (Libya) for the African Group. The other regional groups had not yet agreed on nominations, so they will be elected at a later meeting. The first meeting of CSD 18 closed at 9:25 pm.

A BRIEF ANALYSIS OF CSD 17

The agenda for the 17th session of the UN Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD 17) covered a complex cluster of interrelated issues – agriculture, rural development, land, drought, desertification, and Africa – and took place against the backdrop of a confluence of related global crises – food prices, energy and financial, in addition to global attention to the challenge of climate change. Delegates at CSD 17 were expected to respond by identifying meaningful policy options to issues that reach to the heart of sustainable development. It did respond, with a lengthy and detailed consensus decision, and a "Shared Vision" statement from ministers. However the decision was not particularly forward-looking as it did not quite send a clear message as to how sustainability, in particular sustainable agriculture, can be "part of the solution" in addressing poverty and climate change. The session thus provided a cause to reflect on the place of CSD in the universe of sustainable development governance. This brief analysis will examine some of the controversial themes that emerged during the session, changes in the negotiating dynamics and how the outcome may define the CSD's future role.

SWORDS INTO PLOWSHARES, WORDS INTO ACTION?

While CSD 16's "review" of the thematic cluster in 2008 took place against the backdrop of rising food and energy prices, CSD 17 occurred in the midst of still lingering rising food prices and a severe global economic downturn. These crises increased the sense of urgency regarding the need to identify how to deliver concrete actions to address poverty. In the words of one delegate, all these crises are interrelated and require an integrated approach, and sustainable development is about "overcoming fragmentation of thought and action." But as the delegates settled in to address the complexity and interconnections between the issues, what came under scrutiny was the very role of the CSD itself and its ability to build a bridge between different domains on the sustainable development agenda.

The battles over words were intense, even when reaffirming existing commitments. While the G-77/China strived for new ground in terms of international financial support, pointing out that agriculture and rural development lie at the heart of the goal of eradicating poverty, the developed countries were reluctant to go beyond previously agreed commitments, stressing that the CSD is not a pledging conference.

Some delegates wrestled over the meaning of sustainable agriculture, arguing that it should not be interpreted in "environmental terms." The agricultural dilemmas that emerged during long and frustrating negotiations were summarized by some in three questions: Does agriculture have to be sustainable or not? Does it play a role in climate adaptation and mitigation? Can sustainability be enhanced by removing subsidies and tariffs? Tackling these questions proved complex, and especially

challenging given that the answers to the latter two might prejudice decisions to be taken in climate change and World Trade Organization negotiations.

Finding an answer to the first question also proved difficult. As one delegate noted, the slow pace and level of controversy in reaching a compromise was related in part to “delegates and their level of commitment.” Instead of focusing on areas of agreement and the substance of sustainable agriculture policy recommendations, some countries proposed changes to the text that resembled “bargaining chips” more than efforts to gather support around constructive ideas. This tactic was evident throughout much of the negotiations. To complicate matters, some lack of commitment to the issues prevailed at times.

Despite the food crisis and front-line importance of agriculture for many countries, a delegate noted that some countries were already focused on the UNFCCC meeting in Copenhagen. As a result food and agriculture did not appear as pressing issues, at least not the way they did a year before, as in one delegate’s words “climate hijacked the CSD agenda.” With proposals to flesh out the role of sustainable agriculture in climate mitigation and adaptation and emphasize climate’s role as a cross-cutting issue, some “territoriality” emerged that cast in doubt the “right” of CSD 17 to have a say on climate. One delegate said bluntly that negotiations at the UNFCCC are so advanced and technical that, at this point, the CSD could not add much, but could risk sending a message that is not consistent with what is under discussion at the UNFCCC. Others, however, offered an opposite view, suggesting that the CSD could have sent a strong political message to the UNFCCC reinforcing the role of agriculture in climate mitigation and adaptation. In the end, the compromise was a tentative one as delegates agreed that sustainable agriculture can contribute to meeting climate concerns but deliberations at the CSD should not prejudice negotiations under the UNFCCC. “We missed an opportunity here,” commented a delegate, lamenting that the role of agriculture in terms of its ability to provide ecosystem services was not fully recognized. Until delegates bridge the divide in their approaches to what the CSD can accomplish, they may continue to find themselves focused on “bargaining chips” and miss opportunities to develop key messages.

ENLARGING THE TENT

One other factor that seemed to affect the negotiations dynamic was the personalities of the negotiators themselves. In a sense, this CSD session marked a generation change. Younger faces were seen at the microphones, expounding positions with renewed conviction but invariably without intricate knowledge of the battles waged over the same issues in recent decades. To some delegates, CSD 17 resembled “a training session” for diplomats who will have to conduct negotiations in the next decade, after taking over from the old guard. Some suggested that this offered one reason for the slow progress and excessive “textual clutter” that, as experienced participants noted, had no chance of surviving in the final document.

In addition to this new crop of delegates, two other new groups were introduced to CSD 17. Recognizing that the CSD is not an implementing body, CSD Chair Verburg visited the Governing Councils and Executive Bodies of the UN agencies

and programmes during the past year, emphasizing the CSD’s thematic cluster and how it might be integrated into the work of the UN system’s implementing bodies.

The individuals in these Councils and Bodies were also invited to the CSD to participate in the early morning, closed “straight talk” sessions with ministers and the heads of UN agencies and conventions, but the “harvest” of this effort to engage these actors will take some time to cultivate and mature. The problem of establishing a truly “interactive” dialogue persists.

CSD 17 also sought to bring in a third set of new actors: the policy research community. Recognizing the contribution that scientific research and dissemination of its results can bring to an issue of global concern, the policy research community was invited to a specific dialogue in an effort to engage the research community in the issues on the CSD’s agenda. While the deliberations of this community with the ministers was seen to have brought new energy and ideas to the table, some questioned how this new addition would fit into the fragile arrangement among Major Groups for their participation in the CSD’s activities. The Research and Scientific Community Major Group will probably play a bigger role, at least in building a new knowledge tool, the sustainable development policy network, a project brainstormed by the Secretariat on the margins of the session.

LESSONS LEARNED

As the two weeks of negotiations came to a close, some delegates took the opportunity to raise pointed issues. True, the CSD did adopt a policy-oriented document (though some thought it more resembled an “instruction manual”). The CSD also remains the primary UN forum for debating sustainable development, for stakeholder involvement, building partnerships, and reviewing lessons learned. Many, however, questioned the Commission’s ability to genuinely inform other negotiations and the work of governments and implementing agencies, and to provide them with a clear-cut basis for action. In their view, the potential of the CSD as a forum that can help illuminate sectoral approaches from a sustainable development perspective remains largely unrealized. The sectoral negotiations have their own convention governing bodies, and have become too independent and powerful to heed the largely politicized debates in the CSD.

Behind the congratulatory words on the final evening, there was lingering concern. The widespread view is that the main lesson learned from this session is that the CSD is not a leader, but a follower. Has its original design and intent been superseded by events? Is it useful for the generalist negotiators to debate political language every year? Or is it the way the CSD sessions are organized? These were some of the questions posed by participants in the corridors. As one delegate warned, thought should be given “to the way we conduct the CSD, and the way we negotiate.”

The keen perceptions that were presented in many interventions, especially by experts, might be instrumental in helping find ways to address the new challenges in the coming years and breathing new life into the CSD. But the sheer breadth and urgency of the problems engulfing the world today provoked some participants to cast a glance beyond the horizon, and

openly ponder the CSD's future. "We need a CSD" delegates said. "We need a strengthened CSD," said others. Thus, the quest for CSD effectiveness continues in earnest.

It is probably for this reason that there was some curiosity, in the margins of the session, about Brazil's offer to host a Rio+20, a possible summit on sustainable development in 2012 on the 20th anniversary of the Rio Summit. Some of the exotic ideas offered by Brazil, with support from South Africa, at a side event, concerned a reformed or augmented CSD, perhaps through an umbrella-like institutional home for sustainable development. The option that may be chosen will largely depend on whether the influence of the CSD will increase, stagnate or dwindle. Clearly, much greater political will and commitment is needed for resolving issues on the CSD's agenda, and to produce tangible results. "You can bring the horse to the water but cannot make it drink," commented a participant.

The CSD 16/17 cycle will probably be remembered as a difficult one, but also, perhaps by pure coincidence, responsive to the current crises. At the last hour of the last day, agreement on the Chair's text was reached, although mere hours before delegates were still speculating whether there would even be an agreed text. No one, it appears, wished the session to end in failure, as CSD 15 did, without adopting a decision. However, some delegates considered the consensus fragile: it does not guarantee that the same battles will not be replayed during the next CSD cycle. Although it made a small step forward, CSD 17 did not drastically change the expectations countries have for a policy-making body. The level of commitment to the session's outcome will only be revealed in practical actions on the ground. To paraphrase Chair Verburg's opening challenge to delegates, "Will the words truly become action?"

UPCOMING MEETINGS

FOURTH MEETING OF THE GROUP ON INTERNATIONAL AVIATION AND CLIMATE CHANGE (GIACC/4):

This meeting will take place from 25-27 May 2009, in Montreal, Canada. The International Civil Aviation Organization's (ICAO) GIACC is in charge of the process to develop goals, a Programme of Action and common strategy on civil aviation and its impact on climate change. For more information, contact: Jane Hupe, ICAO; tel: +1-514-954-8219, ext. 6236; fax: +1-514-954-6744; e-mail: env@icao.int; internet: <http://www.icao.int/env/>

3RD SPECIAL SESSION OF THE AFRICAN MINISTERIAL CONFERENCE ON THE ENVIRONMENT (AMCEN) ON CLIMATE CHANGE:

This meeting will take place from 25-29 May 2009, in Nairobi, Kenya. Participants will examine Africa's preparation of a common negotiating position on the post-2012 climate regime. For further information, contact: AMCEN Secretariat; tel: +254-20-762 4289 e-mail: amcensec@unep.org; internet: http://www.unep.org/roa/Amcen/Amcen_Events/3rd_ss/default.asp

30TH SESSIONS OF THE UNFCCC SUBSIDIARY BODIES, AWG-LCA 6, AND AWG-KP 8: The 30th sessions of the Subsidiary Bodies of the UNFCCC – the Subsidiary Body for Implementation and the Subsidiary Body for Scientific and Technological Advice – are scheduled to take place from 1-12

June 2009, in Bonn, Germany. At the same time, AWG-LCA 6 and AWG-KP 8 will also take place. For more information, contact: UNFCCC Secretariat; tel: +49-228-815-1000; fax: +49-228-815-1999; e-mail: secretariat@unfccc.int; internet: <http://unfccc.int/meetings/items/2654.php>

GLOBALLY HARMONIZED SYSTEM WORKSHOP FOR CLASSIFICATION AND LABELLING OF CHEMICALS:

This meeting is scheduled to take place from 10-11 June 2009 in Doha, Qatar. For more information, contact: Abdulelah Alwadaee, UNEP; tel: +973-17-812777; fax: +973-17-825111; e-mail: Abdulelah.Alwadaee@unep.org.bh; internet: <http://www.unep.fr/ozonaction/events/index.htm>

REGIONAL CAPACITY BUILDING WORKSHOP ON THE GUIDELINES ON BEST AVAILABLE TECHNIQUES AND BEST ENVIRONMENTAL PRACTICES (BAT/ BEP) AND ENVIRONMENTALLY SOUND MANAGEMENT (ESM) OF POPS WASTES AND PCBS:

This workshop will take place from 15-19 June 2009, in Nairobi, Kenya, and is to be organized by the Stockholm Convention Secretariat in cooperation with the UNEP Regional Office for Africa. The workshop objective is to assist parties with the implementation of the BAT and BEP guidelines in accordance with the requirements pertaining to Article 5 of the Stockholm Convention, and environmentally sound management of PCBs and POPs wastes in accordance with the Convention's requirements and Basel Convention technical guidelines. For more information, contact the Stockholm Convention Secretariat; tel: +41-22-917-8729; fax: +41-22-917-8098; e-mail: ssc@pops.int; internet: <http://chm.pops.int/Secretariat/Meetings/tabid/331/language/en-US/Default.aspx>

REACH EUROPE 2009: This conference, to be held from 24-25 June 2009, in Amsterdam, the Netherlands, will provide an opportunity to assess the current status of the EU REACH regulations, and to learn from a wide range of organizations on how the regulations are working and what actions industry has taken to ensure compliance. For more information, contact: tel: +44-1939-250383; fax: +44-1939-252416; e-mail: conferences@rapra.net; internet: <http://www.ismithers.net/conference-details.php?id=XREU09->

REGIONAL EXPERT MEETING ON SUSTAINABLE CONSUMPTION AND PRODUCTION: This meeting is scheduled to take place from 24-25 June 2009, in Addis Adaba, Ethiopia. Participants will finalize the Regional Review Report on SCP and prepare Africa's input to the Ten-Year Framework of Programmes on SCP Patterns as an input to CSD 18. For more information contact: Adriana Zacarias, UNEP; tel: +33-1-4437-3002 fax: +33-1-4437-1474 e-mail: azacarias@unep.fr; internet: <http://www.unep.fr/pc>

SEVENTH SESSION OF THE IMPLEMENTATION AND COMPLIANCE COMMITTEE OF THE BASEL CONVENTION:

This session will convene from 25-26 June 2009, in Geneva, Switzerland, immediately after the meeting of the Basel Convention COP9 Expanded Bureau, which will convene from 23-24 June 2009. For more information, contact the Basel Convention Secretariat; tel: +41-22-917-8218; fax: +41-22-797-3454; e-mail: sbc@unep.ch; internet: <http://www.basel.int/meetings/meetings.html>

SUB-COMMITTEE OF EXPERTS ON THE GLOBALLY HARMONIZED SYSTEM OF CLASSIFICATION AND LABELLING OF CHEMICALS:

This expert group meeting will convene from 29 June - 1 July 2009, in Geneva, Switzerland. The expert group meets under UN Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) auspices. For further information, contact the UNECE Secretariat; tel: +41-22-917-4444; fax: +41-22-917-0039; email: infotransport@unece.org; internet: http://www.unece.org/trans/danger/publi/ghs/ghs_welcome_e.html

REVIEWING AND UPDATING NATIONAL IMPLEMENTATION PLANS UNDER THE STOCKHOLM CONVENTION:

This workshop will take place from 9-11 August 2009, in Mexico City, Mexico. Organized by the Stockholm Convention Secretariat, the workshop will focus on training on the use of relevant guidance to implement the Convention, as well as on accessing and using the electronic system for reporting under the Stockholm Convention. For more information, contact the Stockholm Convention Secretariat; tel: +41-22-917-8729; fax: +41-22-917-8098; e-mail: ssc@pops.int; internet: <http://chm.pops.int/secretariat/meetings/tabid/331/language/en-us/default.aspx>

MEETING OF ALL MARRAKECH PROCESS TASK FORCES (MTFs):

This meeting is scheduled to take place in September 2009, in Helsinki, Finland. The meeting will, among other things, consider the inputs of the task forces on sustainable consumption and production (Sustainable Tourism, Sustainable Buildings and Construction, Sustainable Lifestyles, Sustainable Products, Sustainable Public Procurement, Education for Sustainable Consumption, and Cooperation with Africa) to CSD 18. For more information, contact: Adriana Zacarias, UNEP; tel: +33-1-4437-3002 fax: +33-1-4437-1474; e-mail: azacarias@unep.fr; internet: <http://www.unep.fr/pc>

INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON GREEN INDUSTRY IN ASIA:

This conference will convene under the theme of "Managing the transition from the resource-efficient and low-carbon industries," from 9-11 September 2009, in Manila, the Philippines. It will serve as a platform to extensively discuss the opportunities generated and challenges posed by a move towards resource efficient industries and sustainable production and consumption patterns. For more information, contact UNIDO; tel: +43-1-260-26-0; fax: +43-1-269-2669; e-mail: unido@unido.org; internet: <http://www.unido.org/index.php?id=7503>

REACH ASIA 2009: REACH Asia 2009 will take place from 15-16 September 2009, in Shanghai, China. The meeting will explore themes related to Asia's role as an engine of growth in the global economy, and the costs and opportunities associated with the EU's REACH Regulation. For more information, contact: tel: +44-1939-250383; fax: +44-1939-252416; e-mail: conferences@rapra.net; internet: <http://www.ismithers.net/conference-details.php?id=XREAS09>

LATIN AMERICAN FIFTH REGIONAL MEETING ON SUSTAINABLE CONSUMPTION AND PRODUCTION:

This meeting, which will convene from 17-18 September 2009, in Cartagena, Colombia, will finalize the Regional Review Report on SCP and prepare Latin America's input to the Ten-

Year Framework of Programmes as an input to CSD 18. For more information contact: Adriana Zacarias, UNEP; tel: +33-1-4437-3002; fax: +33-1-4437-1474; e-mail: azacarias@unep.fr; internet: <http://www.unep.fr/pc>

NINTH CONFERENCE OF PARTIES (COP 9) TO THE UN CONVENTION TO COMBAT DESERTIFICATION:

This meeting is scheduled to take place from 21 September - 2 October 2009, in Buenos Aires, Argentina. Delegates will consider the Joint Inspection Unit assessment of the GM; review the Secretariat's communication strategy; review the Convention bodies' work programmes; consider options for regional coordination mechanisms; discuss the format for future CRICs and reporting guidelines; and conduct a concurrent scientific conference during the ninth session of the Committee on Science and Technology. For more information, contact: UNCCD Secretariat; tel: +49-228-815-2800; fax: +49-228-815-2898; e-mail: secretariat@unccd.int; internet: <http://www.unccd.int>

REGIONAL MEETING ON SUSTAINABLE CONSUMPTION AND PRODUCTION IN ARAB COUNTRIES:

This meeting, which will take place from 28-29 September 2009 in Egypt, will prepare Arab countries' input to the Ten-Year Framework of Programmes as an input to CSD 18. For more information contact: Adriana Zacarias, UNEP; tel: +33-1-4437-3002; fax: +33-1-4437-1474 e-mail: azacarias@unep.fr; internet: <http://www.unep.fr/pc>

SECOND WORKSHOP FOR STOCKHOLM CONVENTION REGIONAL AND SUBREGIONAL CENTRES:

This workshop will take place from 28-30 September 2009, in Geneva, Switzerland. It will focus on the work of the Stockholm Convention regional and subregional centres. For more information, contact the Stockholm Convention Secretariat; tel: +41-22-917-8729; fax: +41-22-917-8098; e-mail: ssc@pops.int; internet: <http://chm.pops.int/Convention/Meetings/UpcomingMeetings/tabid/521/language/en-US/Default.aspx>

REGIONAL AWARENESS RAISING WORKSHOP ON ENHANCING COOPERATION AND COORDINATION FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE BASEL, ROTTERDAM AND STOCKHOLM CONVENTIONS:

This workshop will be organized by the Stockholm Convention Secretariat and is tentatively scheduled to take place on 1 October 2009, in Pretoria, South Africa. It aims to offer a holistic approach to enhancing cooperation and coordination when implementing the three conventions at the national and regional levels. For more information, contact Stockholm Convention Secretariat; tel: +41-22-917-8729; fax: +41-22-917-8098; e-mail: ssc@pops.int; internet: <http://chm.pops.int/Convention/Meetings/UpcomingMeetings/tabid/521/language/en-US/Default.aspx>

FIFTH MEETING OF THE PERSISTENT ORGANIC POLLUTANT REVIEW COMMITTEE (POPRC-5):

POPRC-5 is scheduled to take place from 12-16 October 2009, in Geneva, Switzerland. For more information, contact the Stockholm Convention Secretariat; tel: +41-22-917-8729; fax: +41-22-917-8098; e-mail: ssc@pops.int; internet: <http://chm.pops.int/Convention/Meetings/UpcomingMeetings/tabid/521/language/en-US/Default.aspx>

OPEN-ENDED WORKING GROUP ON MERCURY:

This meeting will convene from 19-23 October 2009, in Bangkok, Thailand. The meeting will prepare for the first intergovernmental negotiating committee (INC) on mercury, scheduled to convene in 2010. The meeting will discuss the negotiating priorities, timetable and organization of work for the INC. For more information, contact UNEP Chemicals: tel: +41-22-917-8183; fax: +41-22-797-3460; e-mail: mercury@chemicals.unep.ch; internet: <http://www.chem.unep.ch/mercury/>

CSD REGIONAL IMPLEMENTATION MEETING FOR AFRICA:

This meeting will take place from 26-30 October 2009, in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. It will be organized by the UN Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA) and will prepare for CSD 18. For more information, contact: Josué Dioné, UNECA; tel: +251-11-551-0406; fax: +251-11-551-0350; e-mail: jdione@uneca.org; internet: <http://www.un.org/esa/dsd/csd/>

AWARENESS RAISING ON THE BAT AND BEP GUIDANCE UNDER THE STOCKHOLM CONVENTION:

This meeting will be held on 1 November 2009, in Barcelona, Spain. This regional workshop aims to foster the implementation of Article 5 and use of the guidelines on BAT and BEP in Central and Eastern European countries. For more information, contact: the Stockholm Convention Secretariat; tel: +41-22-917-8729; fax: +41-22-917-8098; e-mail: ssc@pops.int; internet: <http://chm.pops.int/Convention/Meetings/UpcomingMeetings/tabid/521/language/en-US/Default.aspx>

AWARENESS RAISING ON THE BAT AND BEP GUIDANCE UNDER THE STOCKHOLM CONVENTION:

This meeting will be held on 1 November 2009, in Panama City, Panama. This regional workshop aims to foster the implementation of Article 5 and use of the guidelines on BAT and BEP in South America and the Caribbean. For more information, contact: the Stockholm Convention Secretariat; tel: +41-22-917-8729; fax: +41-22-917-8098; e-mail: ssc@pops.int; internet: <http://chm.pops.int/Convention/Meetings/UpcomingMeetings/tabid/521/language/en-US/Default.aspx>

GLOBAL FORUM ON ECO-INNOVATION: This Forum, scheduled to take place from 4-5 November 2009, in Paris, France, is being organized by the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD). It will take stock of current knowledge on policies to support eco-innovation and four policy challenges: how to make environment and innovation policies mutually supportive; how to most effectively induce eco-innovation; how to support the diffusion of eco-innovation, in particular to developing countries; and the consequences of the economic crises and the stimulus packages on existing policies and instruments. For more information, contact OECD Environment; tel: +33-1-45-24-82-00; fax +33-1-44-30-61 79; e-mail: gfsd.eco-innovation@oecd.org; internet: <http://www.oecd.org/environment/innovation/globalforum>

CSD REGIONAL IMPLEMENTATION MEETING FOR ASIA AND THE PACIFIC: This meeting will take place from 24-26 November 2009, in Bangkok, Thailand. It will be organized by the UN Social and Economic Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) and will prepare for CSD 18. For more

information, contact: Masakazu Ichimura, ESCAP; tel: +662-288-1234; fax: +662-288-1059; e-mail: escap-esdd-oc@un.org; internet: <http://www.un.org/esa/dsd/csd>

CSD REGIONAL IMPLEMENTATION MEETING FOR EUROPE:

This meeting will take place from 1-2 December 2009, in Geneva, Switzerland. It will be organized by the UN Economic Commission for Europe (ECE) and will prepare for CSD 18. For more information, contact: Monika Linn, UNECE; tel: +41-22-917-1315; fax: +41-22-917- 0107; e-mail: monika.linn@unece.org; internet: <http://www.un.org/esa/dsd/csd>

CSD REGIONAL IMPLEMENTATION MEETINGS FOR WESTERN ASIA AND LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN:

Regional implementation meetings will be organized for these regions by the UN Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia and the UN Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean, respectively, at dates that are to be announced. For more information, contact: UN Division for Sustainable Development; tel: +1-212-963-8102; fax: +1-212-963-4260; e-mail: dsd@un.org; internet: <http://www.un.org/esa/dsd/csd>

UNFCCC COP 15 AND KYOTO PROTOCOL COP/MOP 5:

The 15th session of the Conference of the Parties to the UNFCCC and fifth session of the Meeting of the Parties to the Kyoto Protocol are scheduled to take place from 7-18 December 2009, in Copenhagen, Denmark. These meetings will coincide with the 31st meetings of the UNFCCC's subsidiary bodies. Under the "roadmap" agreed at the UN Climate Change Conference in Bali in December 2007, COP 15 and COP/MOP 5 are expected to finalize an agreement on a framework for combating climate change post-2012 (when the Kyoto Protocol's first commitment period ends). For more information, contact: UNFCCC Secretariat; tel: +49-228-815-1000; fax: +49-228-815-1999; e-mail: secretariat@unfccc.int; internet: <http://unfccc.int/>

EXTRAORDINARY MEETING OF THE CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES (ExCOP) TO THE BASEL, ROTTERDAM AND STOCKHOLM CONVENTIONS:

The ExCOP of the three chemicals conventions will take place in February 2010, at a venue to be decided, back-to-back with the eleventh special session of the UNEP Governing Council/Global Ministerial Environment Forum. For more information, contact: a) Rotterdam Convention Secretariat; tel: +41-22-917-8296; fax: +41-22- 917-8082; e-mail: pic@pic.int; internet: <http://www.pic.int>; b) Stockholm Convention Secretariat; tel: +41-22-917-8729; fax: +41-22-917-8098; e-mail: ssc@pops.int; internet: <http://www.pops.int>; c) Basel Convention Secretariat; tel: +41-22-917-8218; fax: +41-22-797-3454; e-mail: sbc@unep.ch; internet: <http://www.basel.int>

CSD 18: The 18th session of the CSD is expected to convene from 3-14 May 2010. This review-year session will evaluate progress and identify constraints to implementing the issues on the thematic cluster for the CSD 18-19 cycle: transport, chemicals, waste management, mining and the Ten-Year Framework of Programmes on Sustainable Consumption and Production Patterns. For more information, contact: UN Division for Sustainable Development; tel: +1-212-963-8102; fax: +1-212-963-4260; e-mail: dsd@un.org; internet: <http://www.un.org/esa/dsd/>