



# Earth Negotiations Bulletin

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## CSD INTERSESSIONAL WORKING GROUP FRIDAY, 28 FEBRUARY 1997

Delegates to the CSD Intersessional Working Group completed their discussion of institutional issues and the format of the Special Session during a morning meeting. The Co-Chairs were to incorporate the first week's discussion into a draft text, which is to be distributed Monday morning, 3 March.

### **INSTITUTIONAL ISSUES AND FORMAT OF THE SPECIAL SESSION**

**UN INSTITUTIONAL ISSUES:** The G-77/CHINA said the mandates and decisions taken by other intergovernmental bodies in the field of environment should be respected. They stated that any proposal for review and reform of the institutional structure of any body in this area should be undertaken in the appropriate forum, such as ECOSOC or the UNGA. EGYPT agreed with BRAZIL that it is not the role of this body to decide the structure of any other UN body, and recommended that UNEP be strengthened so it can carry out the responsibilities assigned to it in Agenda 21. NORWAY called for improved coordination of UN field activities and said the functional commissions, including the CSD, have a crucial role to play under a strengthened ECOSOC. He called for the reform process in UNEP to be put into motion again and for UNEP to become the Centre of Excellence for environmental activities in the UN system. AUSTRALIA emphasized the need to strengthen and streamline ECOSOC and to avoid duplication of discussions among its commissions.

INDONESIA said that UNEP and its Governing Council should have an enhanced and strengthened role. The REPUBLIC OF KOREA called for strengthening UNEP's contribution to developing international environmental law, monitoring the state of the environment and reviewing implementation of regional agreements. PAKISTAN said UNEP must remain the leading agency in the UN system for monitoring the environment, suggesting policy options and catalyzing international action to protect the environment. He stressed that there is no overlap in the mandates of the CSD and UNEP but there is a need for greater clarity. PAKISTAN and SWITZERLAND proposed that UNGASS endorse the Nairobi Declaration of the 19th session of the UNEP

Governing Council, which calls for strengthening and revitalizing UNEP's mandate and ensuring stable and predictable funding for its activities. IRAN said that UNEP has a clear mandate and should be strengthened with necessary resources.

The G-77/CHINA said the GEF should be reviewed with a view to expanding its mandate and its funds should be increased. URUGUAY stated that the GEF should be sent a clear message regarding the themes discussed at each CSD session and that the GEF should exchange information with the WTO's Committee on Trade and Environment through an appropriate mechanism. IRAN advocated expanding GEF's mandate beyond its existing focal areas to areas such as land degradation and desertification. PAKISTAN supported the proposal for an annual increase in the GEF's resources and in the funds available to the convention Secretariats, particularly the desertification convention.

**CSD MANDATE:** The G-77/CHINA said the CSD has done a commendable job and should continue to provide a forum for policy coordination on issues concerning environment and development. NEW ZEALAND identified a need to address overlapping and outdated UN bodies. JAPAN said UNGASS should reaffirm the CSD as the central forum for instituting and reviewing long-term goals and strategies and high-level policy and strategy discussion. UNGASS should also note the importance of regional implementation of sustainable development. The US supported the CSD as the main body for the review of Agenda 21 implementation and sustainable development policies and programmes in the UN and said that it could absorb the duties of other committees, such as the UN Committee on New and Renewable Resources of Energy and Energy for Development. The REPUBLIC OF KOREA, PAKISTAN and SWITZERLAND also supported the CSD as the forum for monitoring implementation of Agenda 21. SWITZERLAND added that the CSD could provide impetus for further progress in key areas and that its recommendations should be more concrete and action-oriented.

**CSD PROGRAMME AND METHOD OF WORK:** The REPUBLIC OF KOREA, PAKISTAN and the PHILIPPINES called for enhanced coordination and cooperation to strengthen effectiveness and avoid duplication. SWITZERLAND stressed the need for the CSD to work in a coordinated manner, to collaborate more closely with the Bretton Woods institutions and the WTO, and to strengthen cooperation with international environmental

This issue of the *Earth Negotiations Bulletin* © <enb@iisd.org> is written and edited by Peter Doran <PF.Doran@ulst.ac.uk>, Kira Schmidt <kiras@iisd.org> and Lynn Wagner <grund@scf-fs.usc.edu>. The Editor is Pamela Chasek, Ph.D. <pam@iisd.org> and the Managing Editor is Langston James Kimo Goree VI <kimo@iisd.org>. French translation by Mongi Gadhoun. The sustaining donor of the *Bulletin* is the International Institute for Sustainable Development <reception@iisdpost.iisd.ca>. General support for the *Bulletin* for 1997 is provided by the Overseas Development Administration (ODA) of the United Kingdom, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Denmark and the Swiss Federal Office of the Environment. Funding for the French version has been provided by ACCT/IEPF with support from the French Ministry of Cooperation. The authors can be contacted at their electronic mail addresses or at tel: +1-212-644-0204; fax: +1-212-644-0206. IISD can be contacted at 161 Portage Avenue East, 6th Floor, Winnipeg, Manitoba R3B 0Y4, Canada; tel: +1-204-958-7700; fax: +1-204-958-7710. The opinions expressed in *Earth Negotiations Bulletin* are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the views of IISD and other funders. Excerpts from the *Earth Negotiations Bulletin* may be used in other publications with appropriate citation. Electronic versions of the *Bulletin* are sent to e-mail distribution lists (ASCII and PDF format) and through the *Linkages* WWW-server at <<http://www.iisd.ca/linkages/>>. For further information on ways to access, support or contact the *Earth Negotiations Bulletin* send e-mail to <enb@iisd.org>.

conventions without duplicating their efforts. AUSTRALIA called for further development of the task manager system. AUSTRALIA also called for: stronger links to other relevant bodies, particularly the energy committee, which should report directly to the CSD; greater interaction with the High-Level Advisory Board; and consideration of holding shorter CSD sessions with more interactive high-level segments. JAPAN and the US also called for stronger links with other international organizations and UN convention bodies, and UNDP and multilateral development banks, respectively. The PHILIPPINES noted the need for a mechanism to ensure that the work of the CSD and other organizations can be made more complementary. She said that shortening the sessions of the Commission is an interesting idea but cautioned that this could lead to more frequent and longer intersessional working group meetings, which could disadvantage developing countries. She suggested that the intersessional and full sessions could be combined.

The G-77/CHINA supported covering all the important sectoral and cross-sectoral issues, and attached special importance to the implementation of agreements on the cross-cutting issues of resource and technology transfer, trade and investment and poverty eradication. Among the issues EGYPT supported were: freshwater; oceans; atmosphere; land resources; energy and transport; agriculture; industry; tourism; finance, technology transfer and trade; capacity-building, education and science; and information. The CO-CHAIR suggested considering trade and consumption and production patterns together. NORWAY supported consideration of: oceans and living marine resources; POPs and PIC; freshwater management; poverty eradication; and sustainable production and consumption patterns. PAKISTAN called for a focus on poverty eradication, technology transfer, cooperation and capacity-building, consumption patterns and education and public awareness.

The REPUBLIC OF KOREA said the future work programme should focus more on emerging issues, particularly on unfulfilled expectations. AUSTRALIA called for an action-oriented work programme focusing on priority and newly emerging issues. SWITZERLAND said the CSD should focus on areas where other ongoing processes are lacking and where further intergovernmental dialogue is needed, and called for a work programme that focuses on a limited number of issues. She recommended that: education and science be discussed concurrently with information for decision making; the cross-sectoral theme for 2000 be finance, trade and investment; consideration of the chapter on atmosphere in 2001 focus on energy and transportation issues; and local and transboundary air pollution be put on the agenda.

NEW ZEALAND called for a more focused agenda and the use of intersessionals to identify key outputs expected at CSD meetings. The NEW YORK CITY BAR and the INTERNATIONAL FEDERATION OF SETTLEMENTS called for a focus on vulnerable human groups, species and States and suggested an intergovernmental panel on poverty involving ECOSOC commissions.

EGYPT agreed with CANADA that the CSD should be attended by sectoral and finance ministers and not just environment ministers. NORWAY concurred and added that major group participation should be increased. INDONESIA suggested that those in the field should contribute to the CSD. The US said a focus on national implementation would attract more than environment ministers. PAKISTAN underscored that major group participation

must be pursued with greater vigor. SWITZERLAND called for intensified dialogue with all relevant stakeholders, particularly the business community, and said discussion with major groups should be integrated into all areas rather than being a separate agenda item. The PHILIPPINES supported the active participation of major groups. JAPAN underscored the importance of major group participation and proposed that: CSD sessions be as brief as possible; a high-level meeting carry out a second comprehensive review of Agenda 21 implementation in 2002; and ministers from environment and development ministries participate.

The US said the CSD should continue to use national reporting and employ indicators that can augment and enhance the reports. He did not support the establishment of new formal intergovernmental bodies, but said the expert working groups have produced useful work. AUSTRALIA and SWITZERLAND suggested that national reporting requirements be streamlined. SWITZERLAND recommended that national reports focus on issues on the agenda for that particular session rather than attempting to be comprehensive, and called for a more flexible reporting system to allow countries to focus on best practices.

**UNGASS OUTPUT:** EGYPT said any declaration should reaffirm but not replicate the Rio Declaration. He stressed that Agenda 21 is not open for renegotiation, and was pleased with the EU's call for the inclusion of operational commitments. The CO-CHAIR said the Bureau envisioned one text, but it could be split into two. NEW ZEALAND said UNGASS need not shy away from issues beyond the immediate agenda of the CSD and the output from UNGASS should consist of two components, one political and one operational. The REPUBLIC OF KOREA said two documents should be adopted, a political declaration and a 10-15 page document that reflects a balance between sectoral and cross-sectoral issues. PAKISTAN echoed the call for establishing a set of achievable targets.

### **IN THE CORRIDORS**

Observers have indicated that a number of European delegates are floating suggestions designed to raise the public profile of the CSD and Agenda 21 implementation. The ideas range from media-friendly presentations of initiatives that demonstrate successful implementation of UNCED recommendations to enlisting personalities from the worlds of entertainment, sport and the intelligentsia as good-will ambassadors. Some are linking the need to take public outreach and communication more seriously at the CSD with a recognition that sustainability will eventually demand a profound shift in personal and collective value systems in line with the policy recommendations flowing out of the CSD. Private discussions have already generated some light-hearted nominations for a good-will ambassador. Observers note that there is at least one Bruce Springsteen fan among the discussants.

### **THINGS TO LOOK FOR ON MONDAY AND TUESDAY**

**WORKING GROUP:** The Working Group will meet briefly on Monday to receive a draft text from the Co-Chairs. Delegations will discuss the text in their regional and interest groups for the remainder of the day. On Tuesday morning, delegates will meet in Conference Room 4 at 10:00 am and will first address cross-sectoral and institutional issues.