



SBSTTA-5 HIGHLIGHTS THURSDAY, 3 FEBRUARY 2000

During the morning, delegates met in Working Group One to conclude discussions on marine and coastal biodiversity, and to review draft recommendations on alien species and agricultural biodiversity, and in Working Group Two to discuss draft recommendations on indicators and the ecosystem approach. In the afternoon, delegates met in Plenary to discuss draft recommendations on the Global Taxonomy Initiative, inland waters biodiversity and national reports. The Working Groups then reconvened to conclude discussions on draft recommendations.

WORKING GROUP ONE

MARINE AND COASTAL BIODIVERSITY, INCLUDING CORAL BLEACHING: Several countries stressed cooperation with the UNFCCC and Ramsar Convention, and coordination with the International Coral Reef Initiative and the Global Coral Reef Monitoring Network. GERMANY called for implementation of the Kyoto Protocol, identifying coral bleaching as an early warning sign of global warming. SLOVENIA asked for reference to the joint work plan with the Ramsar Convention. The US requested efforts to monitor and minimize local impacts. The SEYCHELLES stressed that the recommendations need to emphasize the primary role of climate change and transmit this view to UNFCCC. The RAMSAR CONVENTION said coral bleaching is of common interest to the CBD, UNFCCC and Ramsar that there will be funds available for addressing site management issues for coral reefs. The NETHERLANDS called for cooperation with Oslo and Paris Convention.

NEW ZEALAND, ANTIGUA AND BARBUDA and SWEDEN supported Seychelles' Wednesday statement calling for action rather than further research. CANADA noted that the programme of work should be cost effective and not duplicated. ANTIGUA AND BARBUDA and DOMINICAN REPUBLIC called for case studies on the biological and socio-economic impacts of coral bleaching, as well as capacity-building for small island developing states. PHILIPPINES and INDONESIA stressed capacity-building for human resources development. On implementation tools for marine and coastal biodiversity, BANGLADESH stressed the need for capacity-building regarding many countries' limited financial capacities, expertise and access to electronic means. NEW ZEALAND and AUSTRALIA suggested an analysis of progress made with these proposed tools. INDONESIA suggested a research programme on socio-economic impacts. FRANCE called for identification of methods and financial means to combat impacts of coral bleaching. A small informal group was established to draft the recommendation based on a Chair's text.

After lunch, the informal group presented an "Informal Group Chair's Text." GAMBIA highlighted changes, including: emphasis on collaboration with international bodies with experience on the issues; deletion of reference to the GEF regarding resources for implementation; and other minor textual changes. The UK proposed a new formulation regarding resources, to avoid giving financial guidance to the COP. Some editorial comments were made, and the group came to agreement.

DRYLANDS: On drylands, delegates considered draft recommendation (UNEP/CBD/SBSTTA/5/WG.1/CRP.2). The NETHERLANDS suggested text on the relationship between poverty and biodiversity loss. ARGENTINA requested reference to including a meta-database on relevant dryland information in the Clearing-House Mechanism (CHM). The changes were accepted.

ALIEN SPECIES: On the draft recommendation (UNEP/CBD/SBSTTA/5/WG.1/CRP.1), delegates agreed not to address the guiding principles contained in the annex, since they had not been revised to reflect previous deliberations. Delegations agreed to submitting written comments on the principles to the Secretariat, which along with comments made during SBSTTA-5, would be incorporated and available for consideration at SBSTTA-6. COLOMBIA suggested that Parties should "take into account," rather than use, the guiding principles since they have not been finalized. The COOK ISLANDS proposed language urging Parties to implement alien invasive strategies as soon as they are developed, in order not to delay action until SBSTTA-6 or 7. Regarding an outline for case studies, GERMANY suggested that case studies be disseminated through the CHM. NORWAY suggested including case studies focusing on thematic assessments. PORTUGAL requested written copies of comments made on alien species during SBSTTA-5. These changes were accepted. The principles will be further considered in subsequent SBSTTA meetings. HUNGARY suggested a reference to the impact of alien species on human health.

AGRICULTURAL BIODIVERSITY: In the afternoon, the Secretariat introduced the draft recommendation (UNEP/CBD/SBSTTA/5/WG.1/CRP.3), noting ten hours of informal deliberations to produce the text. MALI, supported by ETHIOPIA and KENYA, requested inclusion of references to "participatory breeding and selection processes" under the capacity-building rationale to accommodate concerns about genetic engineering. On the overall objectives, ETHIOPIA raised concern about reference to the ecosystem approach which listed some, but not all, elements of this approach. BRAZIL said that the *inter alia* placed prior to the list could accommodate this concern. EL SALVADOR requested clarification on a formulation under adaptive management, referring to interactions between different genetic resources. To clarify the text, POLAND

suggested replacing "genetic resources" with "components of agricultural biodiversity," which was accepted. With minor amendments, the text was accepted.

The revised recommendations will be forwarded to Plenary for adoption.

WORKING GROUP TWO

INDICATORS OF BIODIVERSITY: Delegates considered the Chair's draft recommendation (UNEP/CBD/SBSTTA/5/WG.II/CRP.1). The EC proposed "framework for selecting" instead of "menu" of potential indicators. NEW ZEALAND recalled from COP discussions that principles and questions and the menu together should provide a framework. On this issue, CANADA, supported by the NETHERLANDS, suggested developing an indicator manual, guidelines and training. NORWAY, ZIMBABWE and NEW ZEALAND noted that this is premature and more experience is needed. Based on proposals by COSTA RICA and BRAZIL, "to develop a key set of standard questions and a list of available and potential indicators" was accepted. ZIMBABWE and KENYA proposed language on capacity-building, training, establishing networks and sharing experiences. The NETHERLANDS suggested an interim progress report for consideration at SBSTTA-6 or 7. Both proposals were accepted.

ECOSYSTEM APPROACH: Apart from minor textual changes, discussions on the Chair's draft recommendation (UNEP/CBD/SBSTTA/5/WG.II/CRP.2) focused on the annex containing a description of the approach, its management principles and operational guidance. Regarding the definition, ROMANIA, supported by ECUADOR, suggested referring to the interrelationship between natural capital and socio-economic systems. The NETHERLANDS, GERMANY, RWANDA, COLOMBIA and GHANA expressed concern about changing an agreed definition. It was decided to note ongoing conceptualization in a glossary. Regarding the precautionary principle, ROMANIA noted that the wording was inconsistent with its broader understanding. The wording was simplified to avoid misinterpretation. The UK suggested changing the heading for a provision in the operational guidance on sharing benefits derived from ecosystem biodiversity, to "distribution of services," arguing that benefit-sharing under the Convention addresses genetic resources, not ecosystem services. Some delegations expressed concern about changing the spirit of the text and the notion of distribution of services. In the afternoon, delegates agreed to change "sharing of the benefits" to "access to the benefits" of ecosystem services.

Although COLOMBIA, the RUSSIAN FEDERATION and NORWAY raised concern about opening discussion on the principles, ZIMBABWE's proposal to delete reference to "management" in the headings of the 12 principles was accepted. With regard to the first principle stating that management objectives are a matter of societal choice, the EC requested deletion of language on ecosystem management for human benefit, citing a contradiction with the CBD's explicit reference to the intrinsic value of biodiversity. ECUADOR, COSTA RICA, PERU, ZIMBABWE, HAITI and BRAZIL opposed this and later agreed on a modification, reflecting the EC's concerns. The last paragraph on other management and conservation approaches was moved to the more prominent heading "description of the ecosystem approach;" and a reference to "traditional" protected areas was deleted. CANADA proposed including reference to underlying causes mentioned in the rationale of a principle on the economic context of ecosystem management and, lacking support, agreed to note their concern in the meeting's report.

SUSTAINABLE USE: The Chair introduced recommendation (UNEP/CBD/SBSTTA/5/WG.II/CRP.3). AUSTRALIA suggested deleting language on integrating sustainable use into sectoral and cross-sectoral plans, programmes, policies and national strategies and action plans, as it duplicates CBD Article 6. The UK supported the tabled text, as it links sustainable use with COP decisions and the ecosystem approach. The language was maintained. On experiences to draw upon, NORWAY proposed to delete reference to the CSD and the OECD and, supported by the US, stressed that cooperation

with the private sector is of high importance. The NETHERLANDS proposed to include FAO. References to the organizations were retained.

The revised recommendations will be forwarded to Plenary for adoption.

PLENARY

GLOBAL TAXONOMY INITIATIVE (GTI): Chair Cristián Samper (Colombia) introduced draft recommendation (UNEP/CBD/SBSTTA/5/CRP.3). The UK requested addition of assessing national and regional taxonomic needs, as well as submission of projects and initiatives for consideration as pilot projects to the Executive Secretary and the GTI coordination mechanism. SWEDEN requested the Executive Secretary with the GTI to facilitate the formulation of projects to meet identified needs. Regarding capacity-building in developing countries, MALAWI suggested including cooperation with national, regional and global taxonomic centers. NORWAY requested that the GTI coordination mechanism work closely with the CHM and that national taxonomic focal points be linked with other national focal points. SWEDEN announced it would support two regional meetings in Africa and Central America. NEW ZEALAND requested that the Executive Secretary develop terms of reference for the GTI coordination mechanism for COP-5's consideration. The changes were accepted.

INLAND WATER BIODIVERSITY: Delegates discussed draft recommendation (UNEP/CBD/SBSTTA/5/CRP.4). Discussion focused on text related to the endorsement of the joint work plan with the Ramsar Convention. ZIMBABWE and the SEYCHELLES took issue with reference to Ramsar-defined sites for implementing work programmes on inland water and marine and coastal biodiversity, as it prejudices those not Party to the Ramsar Convention. ECUADOR called for inclusion of education and public awareness within the same sentence. The text was deleted, but the work plan endorsed.

NATIONAL REPORTS: Delegates considered the Chair's draft recommendation (UNEP/CBD/SBSTTA/5/CRP.6). The UK suggested changing wording on resources for preparation of reports, to avoid giving financial guidance to the COP. IRELAND requested including the need for information on the status of biodiversity. The SEYCHELLES requested reference to the capacity of developing countries. At the EC and NEW ZEALAND's suggestion, wording on preparation of reports through a consultative process including all relevant stakeholders, changed to a more flexible formulation. The EC proposed new language on preparation of thematic reports for the COP's consideration. MEXICO suggested making the reports and their compilation available to national focal points and the CHM. The GEF asked for a preambular reference to its contribution to the reporting process, rather than one in the recommendations. Minor textual changes were also made.

COOPERATION WITH OTHER BODIES AND CLEARING-HOUSE MECHANISM (CHM): Chair Samper introduced final recommendations on cooperation with other bodies (UNEP/CBD/SBSTTA/5/L.2) and the CHM (UNEP/CBD/SBSTTA/5/L.3). NEW ZEALAND requested a note in the record regarding the unfocused nature of the CHM's development and that demands on participation will be a drain on resources. The recommendations were adopted.

IN THE CORRIDORS

Wednesday's deliberations on agricultural biodiversity and the concept of multi-functionality finally concluded at 6:00 am Thursday. Reflecting on the various negotiating positions, some participants wondered whether the previous week's deliberations on biosafety had carried over. One delegate expressed dismay that SBSTTA seemed embroiled in political debates, resulting once again in a mini-COP.

THINGS TO LOOK FOR TODAY

PLENARY: The Plenary will convene at 10:00 am to discuss and adopt recommendations on topics discussed during the previous Plenaries and the Working Groups.