

WGRI 2 HIGHLIGHTS: TUESDAY, 10 JULY 2007

On Tuesday, participants to the second meeting of the Working Group on Review of Implementation (WGRI 2) to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) met in plenary to address: options and a draft strategy for resource mobilization; mechanisms for implementation of the Convention; inputs to the process of revising the Strategic Plan beyond 2010; and proposals for the scope and format of the third edition of the Global Biodiversity Outlook (GBO 3).

PLENARY

OPTIONS AND A DRAFT STRATEGY FOR RESOURCE MOBILIZATION: Chair Rezende de Castro introduced the agenda item and related documents (UNEP/CBD/WG-RI/2/4 and INF/4, 5 and 8).

Many countries supported that COP 9 convey a message on biodiversity and financing for development to the International Conference on Financing for Development to be held in Doha, Qatar, in 2008, with COLOMBIA urging parties to submit relevant information to their finance or interior ministries ahead of the negotiations, and MEXICO requesting that a variety of financial options be presented.

Supporting the establishment of an advisory task force to further develop a strategy for resource mobilization, CHILE and others noted it should be open-ended, Malawi, on behalf of the AFRICAN GROUP, stressed that it should be regionally balanced, TANZANIA requested specifying the terms of reference for the task force, and BRAZIL urged that it meet prior to COP 9.

AUSTRALIA, ARGENTINA, SWITZERLAND, CANADA and others opposed the creation of a task force, noting the lack of a mandate from COP 8 and suggesting instead that the Secretariat compile comments from parties and develop a draft strategy for consideration at COP 9.

SWITZERLAND, supported by FRANCE, underscored the need to review financing options from existing instruments and to explore innovative funding sources. He noted that a resource mobilization strategy should address, *inter alia*: awareness-raising on the economic value of biodiversity and, supported by the EU, the costs of inaction; the full range of financing options; integration into development cooperation and trade sectors; and synergies with other development objectives. ALGERIA recommended the use of: other multilateral and regional funds besides the GEF; innovative funding mechanisms to address linkages between biodiversity, climate change and

desertification; and regional and national resource mobilization. CHINA requested more complete regional and international proposals for resource mobilization, and suggested making full use of the existing financial mechanism.

Highlighting innovative financial mechanisms under the UNFCCC, MALAYSIA supported exploring market-based mechanisms, and organizing donor meetings at future COPs. PERU drew attention to the successful experience with environment funds in the Latin America and the Caribbean region, and requested incorporating such approaches into the resource mobilization strategy. ECUADOR suggested building capacity for negotiating funding agreements, particularly among local communities. SINGAPORE and THAILAND encouraged exploring potential synergies in using funding available for other activities for biodiversity conservation. INDIA suggested incorporating cost-benefit analyses into natural resource decision-making. BRAZIL opposed a reference to subsidies and voluntary payment schemes. ARGENTINA expressed concerns with references to generation of funds from ecological services, noting that it could lead to the "commodification" of biodiversity rather than its conservation. INDONESIA encouraged the development of incentive measures in accordance with domestic needs.

Noting that the efficient use of resources is as important as increasing financing, the EU called for improving synergies between multiple development objectives. He said the document prepared by the Secretariat is inadequate and requested further elaboration and analysis of possible mechanisms. CANADA highlighted national and subnational initiatives to mobilize financial resources.

IUCN highlighted the lack of capacity in some countries to implement innovative funding mechanisms, and noted an IUCN-UNEP initiative exploring opportunities for international payments for ecosystem services. BIRDLIFE INTERNATIONAL lamented that donors often focus on short-term projects rather than long-term sustainability.

Noting resource and capacity constraints for the Secretariat to produce an adequate draft strategy and the limited number of country submissions on this issue, CBD Executive Secretary Ahmed Djoghlaif called on countries to take ownership of the strategy and convene a small, open-ended advisory task force of financial and technical experts, to prepare a strategy that can be adopted at COP 9. He also noted the need for an expert on resource mobilization within the Secretariat, pointing out that, on average, only US\$ 1 million is available through the GEF to each eligible party over the next four years for implementing some 1,800 CBD decisions. ALGERIA expressed concern about

the paucity of resources available to the Secretariat and urged all stakeholders to respond to the funding needs for tasks requested from the Executive Secretary.

MECHANISMS FOR IMPLEMENTATION OF THE CONVENTION: Chair Rezende de Castro introduced the agenda item, noting links to priority areas for action for capacity building, access to and transfer of technology, and technology cooperation.

Supported by ARGENTINA, MEXICO, CHILE, ECUADOR and the BAHAMAS, BRAZIL introduced draft recommendations based on Monday's discussions, including requesting the Executive Secretary to develop and submit to COP 9 a range of instruments to support parties in implementing their NBSAPs, and allocating time at future subsidiary body meetings to discuss NBSAP development. The proposed recommendations also envisage regional workshops to support the implementation of NBSAPs and the 2010 target; and recognize that parties must improve their support to enhance the capacity of developing countries. The AFRICAN GROUP, Bhutan for the ASIAN GROUP, the EU and AUSTRALIA requested additional time to review the document.

SOUTH AFRICA pointed to the need for human and technological, in addition to financial, resources and suggested that legal instruments to enable implementation and civil society participation could help augment resources.

Stressing the need to focus on regional, national and local implementation, the EU noted that the CBD Secretariat should not become an implementation body. CANADA stated that the Executive Secretary can play a role in facilitating implementation and, with NEW ZEALAND and YEMEN, emphasized the "One UN" approach and synergies with other MEAs.

MEXICO called for an overall evaluation of the CBD's work since its inception, and suggested that whenever the Executive Secretary is requested to undertake an activity, the Secretariat indicate if it has the necessary capacity to fulfill the task. CHINA called for the COP to prioritize and adopt fewer decisions to ensure that all decisions are effectively implemented, and for national implementation mechanisms to be evaluated. MALAYSIA requested that the Secretariat consolidate all COP decisions within related areas.

The AFRICAN GROUP called for strengthening the CBD Secretariat and suggested that the COP monitor compliance with guidance given to the financial mechanism. He further pointed to key CBD mechanisms for effective implementation, including: NBSAPs; application of the ecosystem approach; and the Global Taxonomy Initiative.

Executive Secretary Ahmed Djoghlaif noted limited opportunities for the Secretariat to provide parties with estimates of cost implications of COP decisions, and stressed that the Secretariat does not strive to become an implementing agency.

INPUTS TO THE PROCESS OF REVISING THE STRATEGIC PLAN BEYOND 2010: Chair Rezende de Castro introduced the agenda item (UNEP/CBD/WG-RI/2/INF/6), noting that there are no draft recommendations on this issue.

THAILAND highlighted the need to harmonize the revision processes of the different biodiversity-related MEAs and called for the inclusion of national achievements into the revised Strategic Plan. The EU underscored the importance of including national targets in revising the Strategic Plan but doubted the need to expand the list of indicators used. Supported by BRAZIL but opposed by COLOMBIA, he noted that discussions on revising the Strategic Plan beyond 2010 are premature, and proposed taking into consideration scenarios and other projections, and to complete GBO 3 before COP 10.

INDIA suggested that the revised Strategic Plan include long-term targets alongside short-term ones. With TANZANIA, she stressed that the new plan should focus on mainstreaming

biodiversity concerns into other sectors and on developing national targets. COLOMBIA urged to address obstacles to attaining the 2010 target in the preparation of a future Strategic Plan, and noted the importance of baselines and indicators. CANADA underscored the inclusion of milestones, and the benefits of engaging partners and Bureau members in the Plan's revision. INDONESIA and TANZANIA called for the development of indicators on ABS. MEXICO noted that the future Strategic Plan should be developed between COP 9 and COP 10 and consider, *inter alia*: the MA findings; the impacts of climate change; and the costs of inaction.

PROPOSALS FOR THE SCOPE AND FORMAT OF GBO 3: Chair Rezende de Castro introduced the agenda item (UNEP/CBD/WG-RI/2/6 and INF/13).

CANADA requested that the GBO 3 advisory group include scientists and traditional knowledge holders. Supported by AUSTRALIA, she proposed that GBO 3: monitor the implementation of the 2010 target and headline indicators; include bioregional case studies; be placed under the oversight of SBSTTA, not the WGRI; and have its final draft reviewed at SBSTTA 14. AUSTRALIA called for GBO 3 to be conducted with scientific rigor, rather than it solely becoming an advocacy tool, and suggested that parties clearly state the purpose of GBO 3 and its target audience. NEW ZEALAND supported, also cautioning that increasing the substantive scope of GBO 3 will require additional reliable data. The EU underscored systematic data collection to enable analysis across data sets, suggesting that scientific information be drawn from other authoritative sources, as well as from parties.

BRAZIL requested making full use of the information contained in parties' fourth national reports in preparing GBO 3, and considering the GBO 3 financial and communication plans at COP 9. He also considered it premature to include information on actions for significantly reducing the rate of biodiversity loss, including possible post-2010 targets, in GBO 3. MEXICO suggested that GBO 3 include information on, *inter alia*: socioeconomic implications of biodiversity loss; direct and indirect benefits of biodiversity conservation; and impacts of invasive alien species on aquatic ecosystems.

NORWAY recommended building on past collaborative efforts between the GBO and UNEP's Global Environmental Outlook. ECUADOR recommended taking advantage of existing networks to improve dissemination of GBO 3 messages. UNEP reported on current initiatives on harmonizing national reporting processes, including the use of a joint reporting framework on specific themes.

IN THE CORRIDORS

On Tuesday, a number of delegates expressed confusion over the procedure and envisaged outcome of WGRI 2 discussions on the development of a resource mobilization strategy. Several delegates lamented that no draft strategy was tabled at this meeting – as had been requested by the COP – noting that even a bare-boned structure would have added much-needed substance to the deliberations. Executive Secretary Ahmed Djoghlaif's explanation that the Secretariat had not been in a position to prepare a draft strategy due to lack of both funding and inputs from parties triggered mixed reactions in the corridors. Several delegates emphatically echoed his plea to increase funding for the Secretariat and establish an advisory group to assist it in developing a strategy for consideration by COP 9. Others, however, while recognizing the challenge of performing a growing number of tasks with limited resources, pointed out that an earlier notification would have enabled parties to prepare an adequate response, such as detailed suggestions on the strategy's elements.