



Earth Negotiations Bulletin

A Reporting Service for Environment and Development Negotiations

Vol. 9 No. 61

Published by the International Institute for Sustainable Development (IISD)

Tuesday, 12 November 1996

CBD COP-3 HIGHLIGHTS MONDAY, 11 NOVEMBER 1996

Delegates to COP-3 heard statements regarding cooperation with other biodiversity-related conventions and the medium-term programme of work during a morning session of the COW, and began to consider draft decisions during the evening. Several working and drafting groups also met to discuss draft decisions.

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

COOPERATION WITH OTHER BIODIVERSITY-RELATED CONVENTIONS: The Secretariat introduced the documents addressing cooperation between the CBD and other biodiversity-related conventions and processes (UNEP/CBD/COP/3/29, 30, Inf.21, 22, 38-41, 52 and 55). The Chair of the Ramsar Standing Committee noted the need to strengthen the coordination of policies and actions of biodiversity-related conventions and recommended an integrated database. The EU submitted draft conclusions to the Secretariat regarding coordination of work with the Ramsar and Bonn conventions. KENYA said implementation of all biodiversity-related conventions should be mutually supportive. ROMANIA and BULGARIA, on behalf of the CEE countries, sought the establishment of modalities for enhanced cooperation among biodiversity-related institutions and conventions at the international and regional levels. POLAND, NORWAY, CUBA and JAMAICA called for more emphasis on regional cooperation and conventions. AUSTRALIA, MOROCCO, MALAWI, TUNISIA and UNESCO stressed the need to avoid duplication with other biodiversity-related instruments and institutions.

SWITZERLAND supported adopting the decision on close cooperation with the Ramsar Convention. SENEGAL, for the African Group, supported coordination with the Ramsar and Bonn conventions and called for assistance from the GEF. FRANCE said synergy with other biodiversity instruments will prevent fragmentation of financial resources.

DOMINICA highlighted the need to protect marine and coastal biodiversity and, with NORWAY, called for formulation of MOUs with other conventions. CAPE VERDE and TANZANIA urged recognition of the CBD's relationships to UNCLOS and the climate change and desertification conventions. JAMAICA called for closer cooperation with UNCLOS. TUNISIA recommended that the COP consider transmitting a declaration to the Convention to Combat Desertification and ARGENTINA called for an MOU with this convention. AUSTRIA recommended cooperation with the Intergovernmental

Panel on Sustainable Mountain Development. MALAWI said it is not satisfied that the IPF will cover all aspects of forests and biodiversity and proposed that SBSTTA analyze the complementarity of other fora addressing biodiversity. MOROCCO called for meaningful national policies and proposed a draft COP-3 decision to renew COP-2 decision II/14 (convening an open-ended intergovernmental workshop on cooperation with other international conventions).

Representatives of FAO, CITES, the BONN CONVENTION and the WORLD BANK expressed their commitment to cooperate with the CBD and contribute to the implementation of its three objectives. OECD said it embraces the goals of the CBD and highlighted its work on incentives, IPR and biosafety. The INTERGOVERNMENTAL OCEANIC COMMISSION emphasized the importance of indicators for assessing and monitoring biodiversity. UNESCO said it established a focal point for coordination of biodiversity issues. UNEP highlighted its efforts to coordinate assessments and harmonize the work of other conventions. The WORLD BANK requested guidance on financial innovations, integration of biodiversity into sectoral programmes, and targeted programmes for biodiversity.

MEDIUM-TERM PROGRAMME OF WORK: The Secretariat introduced the document addressing the review of the medium-term work programme for 1996-97. John Ashe (Antigua and Barbuda) summarized the progress made in the Working Group he chaired on this issue.

Many delegations called for prioritization of the work programme of the COP and of SBSTTA. AUSTRALIA said the COP should set a well-focused medium-term work programme that takes into account its financial implications. JAMAICA called for prioritization of issues and streamlining of activities to enable developing countries to participate more fully. The EU called for a distinction between items that only require additional information and those for which clear recommendations need to be submitted to the Parties.

A number of countries identified priority issues: COLOMBIA emphasized a review of work done thus far, clarification of how the distribution of benefits fits into the agenda, and the CHM; CHINA highlighted benefit-sharing; PARAGUAY underscored forests, land and marine ecosystems, benefit-sharing, and cooperation with relevant conventions; and CHILE focused on marine biodiversity, CHM implementation, distribution of benefits, and agrobiodiversity.

The G-77/CHINA, RUSSIA and JORDAN said SBSTTA meetings should be held in all official UN languages. NEW ZEALAND emphasized a thematic approach for SBSTTA and,

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with the US, reminded delegates that some decisions of COP-2 had not yet been implemented. EQUATORIAL GUINEA stated that SBSTTA should meet once per year to cover all issues and to reduce costs. MOROCCO expressed concern over the size of the SBSTTA agenda.

SINGAPORE asked for guidance on the content of national reports. DOMINICA and ST. LUCIA highlighted the needs of SIDS and supported a Secretariat staff position on this issue. ST. LUCIA also supported a position for indigenous knowledge issues. WETLANDS INTERNATIONAL offered technical expertise in working with the Ramsar Convention and its wetlands database.

MALAWI proposed a special working group on inland freshwater ecosystems to be discussed at COP-4. ARMENIA called for concrete proposals for implementation and for translation of documents.

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE DRAFT DECISIONS:

The COW met for an evening session to review progress on draft decisions. In response to comments by several delegations, including AUSTRALIA, RUSSIA and IRAN, the Chair noted that draft recommendations with financial implications would be consolidated and addressed under the draft decision on finance.

Introducing the draft decision on the Clearing-House Mechanism (CHM) (CRP.17), the Chair noted a large degree of unanimity. The G-77/CHINA proposed several substantive changes. The EU reiterated its call for a CHM newsletter. The UK objected to proposed amendments by the G-77/CHINA and NORWAY, and the matter was referred to informal consultations.

Regarding the draft decision on Implementation of Articles 6 and 8 of the Convention (CRP.12), the G77/CHINA, the EU and CANADA proposed language regarding the UN Norway Conference on Alien Species as it related to Article 8(h). HUNGARY proposed language referring to "legislation" in addition to national plans or strategies. CANADA proposed language that would not limit measurable targets to national plans and strategies.

Regarding the draft decision on Identification, Monitoring and Assessment (CRP.13), the G77/CHINA proposed wording that encourages the interim financial mechanism "to provide financial resources to developing countries." To the draft decision on Technology Transfer (CRP.20), the EU proposed a new paragraph encouraging supportive political, institutional and economic frameworks to facilitate technology cooperation.

The Secretariat read out proposed changes to the draft decision on Incentive Measures (CRP.19), including: a preambular paragraph identifying incentive measures as a financial priority; reference to economic valuation under thematic items of the work programme; incorporation of "market and nonmarket values of biodiversity" into plans; and deletion of the reference to priority GEF funding for incentive measures. The G77/China and the EU agreed with this deletion. NEW ZEALAND and RUSSIA disagreed. The G77/China added language to the preamble recognizing that incentives are the responsibility of national governments and the international community.

Draft decisions on Terrestrial Biodiversity (CRP.10), Technology Transfer (CRP.20) and Biosafety (CRP.11) were tabled but the G77/CHINA had not yet considered them. The draft decision on IPR (CRP.16) was also tabled but was referred to an informal group. The Secretariat updated delegates on the status of issues for which draft decisions had not yet been formally tabled: Statement to the UNGA Special Session; Access to Genetic Resources; SBSTTA *modus operandi*; Financial Issues, Agricultural Biodiversity; Medium-Term Programme of Work and Budget; Cooperation with Other Biodiversity-Related Conventions and Processes.

WORKING AND DRAFTING GROUPS

FINANCIAL ISSUES: Issues discussed during the Working Group on financial issues included the following. On the G-77/China draft regarding additional financial resources, several

delegates recalled their statements to the COW regarding the accuracy of documents on suggestions for funding institutions and additional financial resources (UNEP/CBD/COP/3/7 and 37). They did not support the proposal to take note of the information and recommendations contained in those documents. Discussion on the mechanism for the review of the effectiveness of the financial mechanism included whether an independent consultant should conduct a review or whether information should be gathered and reviewed by delegates during COP-4. Delegates discussed whether the MOU text should contain references to the GEF as the "interim financial mechanism" or not. The Group then examined the preambular paragraphs in the G-77/China (CRP.2) and OECD (CRP.21) drafts regarding guidance to the financial mechanism, and continued into the night.

SPECIAL SESSION OF THE UNGA: The Working Group on the COP's statement to the Special Session of the UNGA, chaired by Terry Jones (the Seychelles), based its discussions on CRP.7. Delegates added a subparagraph on terrestrial biodiversity and forests. Delegates deleted language on the lack of adequate financial resources as a main obstacle to the CBD's implementation and added the need for "new and" additional financial resources. In a section outlining future challenges, delegates added a reference to collaboration with other relevant conventions and a subparagraph on public awareness and education programmes. Delegates replaced language on means to "protect" indigenous knowledge with means to "respect, preserve and maintain" this knowledge, and added a reference to benefit-sharing. The Group finished its work and submitted its decision to the COW.

FORESTS: Delegates met to consider the Chair's draft text on the relationship between the COP and the IPF on matters related to forest biodiversity. Divisive issues in the debate included the need to distinguish the roles of plantation and natural forests in the conservation of biodiversity and establishing SBSTTA's initial programme of work. With regard to SBSTTA, some delegates advocated expanding the programme to address underlying causes of loss of biodiversity, alien species introductions, and ecological landscape models. In the interest of efficacy, delegates decided to limit SBSTTA's initial work programme to devising methodologies for biodiversity conservation as part of sustainable forest management and analyzing the impact of human activities on biodiversity loss, but recommended that SBSTTA consider the remaining recommendations for future action. While delegates welcomed the comprehensive work taking place under the IPF and acknowledged the cooperation between the IPF and CBD, they sought ways to develop common priorities and a focused work programme for forest biodiversity. An unbracketed text was forwarded to the COW.

IN THE CORRIDORS

As the meeting began to consider draft decisions, many delegations reflected on the process used to develop the decisions. Delegations large and small commented that the organization of consultations into an array of formal and informal groups influenced their ability to participate fully. Several small delegations admitted that they had not expected to be able to follow the entire drafting process, no matter what approach was employed, and reported that they relied on regional group representation and coordination with other delegations. Delegates and observers noted that until the COP agenda becomes more manageable, any negotiating structure will remain challenging.

THINGS TO LOOK FOR TODAY

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE: The COW is expected to meet during the morning and evening to continue consideration of draft decisions.

GROUPS: Groups on agricultural biodiversity, financial issues and IPR are expected to meeting during the morning.