

UNCS D INFORMAL CONSULTATIONS: THURSDAY, 22 MARCH 2012

Delegates continued their first reading of Section V (Framework for Action and Follow-up) of the zero draft. Many consultations and side events also took place throughout the day.

CONSULTATIONS ON THE ZERO DRAFT

V. FRAMEWORK FOR ACTION AND FOLLOW-UP:

Green Jobs and Social Inclusion: SWITZERLAND supported New Zealand's proposed reference to ecosystem services and the G-77/China's proposed reference to sustainable agricultural production, and joined CANADA, LIECHTENSTEIN and the REPUBLIC OF KOREA in supporting an EU paragraph on encouraging business and industry to create green jobs.

Oceans and Seas, SIDS: The G-77/CHINA, supported by NEW ZEALAND, AUSTRALIA, MONACO and the US, called for splitting this subsection into two, one on oceans and one on SIDS. He supported the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) and the Regular Process for the Global Reporting and Assessment of the state of the marine environment. The EU bracketed a G-77/China proposal that he said only reaffirmed past commitments, while G-77/CHINA insisted it should stay to underscore the link to Agenda 21 and JPOI. JAPAN and NEW ZEALAND supported Norway's proposal for a new opening paragraph referencing the UNCLOS and the 1995 agreement on straddling fish stocks.

JAPAN and CANADA opposed a G-77/China proposal on maintaining or restoring fish stocks. TURKEY opposed the EU proposal on stressing the universal and unified character of UNCLOS. NORWAY stressed the importance of the ecosystem and precautionary approaches and of sustainable harvesting and, with MONACO, supported the EU call on all to become parties to UNCLOS. AUSTRALIA proposed text on food security and sustainable livelihoods, and adapting to climate change, and rejected Norway's reference to sustainable "harvesting." The US supported Australian text on actions including: stakeholder cooperation; capacity building for managers, policymakers and scientists (also supported by the REPUBLIC OF KOREA); effective monitoring and surveillance; application of an ecosystem approach; and social inclusion. MEXICO supported an EU proposal to consider mangroves in addition to coral reefs and said the paragraph could include other ecosystems such as lagoons and estuaries.

On paragraph 79 on the Regular Process, JAPAN proposed moving a New Zealand proposal on marine protected areas to the Biodiversity subsection; AUSTRALIA opposed it. ICELAND suggested, *inter alia*, deleting a call to consider assessment findings in the formulation of national, regional and global oceans policy.

On paragraph 80 on the establishment by the UNGA of an Ad Hoc Open-ended Informal Working Group and on the negotiation of an implementing agreement to UNCLOS, JAPAN and NORWAY supported Iceland's proposed alternative language noting the process initiated by the UNGA. CANADA called for deleting all versions of this paragraph, saying it was covered already in other fora. NEW ZEALAND supported the zero draft.

On paragraph 81 on the Global Programme of Action for the Protection of the Marine Environment from Land-based Activities (GPA), CANADA supported the US in changing the G-77/China's proposal on sea level rise provision to refer to all coastal countries. The REPUBLIC OF KOREA suggested linking sea-level rise and coastal erosion to climate change. AUSTRALIA welcomed Mexico's proposal for regional and subregional cooperation on marine litter, and highlighted the impacts on migratory sea birds. The US proposed deleting the G-77/China's call for a moratorium on ocean fertilization activities, saying geo-engineering techniques are under consideration in appropriate fora.

On paragraph 82, on an international observation network for ocean acidification, the EU, NORWAY and MONACO supported Australia's proposal for text recognizing the linkage with climate change.

On paragraph 83, on restoring global fish stocks, including science-based management plans and elimination of subsidies, the EU reserved its opinion, questioning the target date of 2015. JAPAN rejected text on fisheries subsidies, requesting the Doha negotiations not be prejudged. AUSTRALIA proposed that "maximum sustainable yield" should account for ecosystem requirements. The US stressed transparency in fisheries regulation and sustainable aquaculture practices and welcomed text on fisheries subsidies. ICELAND supported Japan's text on giving priority to the restoration of depleted fish stocks to levels that can produce maximum sustainable yield by 2015.

On combating illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing (IUU), the EU rejected G-77/China and US text on subsidies contributing to overcapacity and overfishing. JAPAN opposed, while MONACO supported, a US proposal on "destructive fishing practices." JAPAN also opposed G-77/China text on greater market access for developing countries and SIDS. NEW ZEALAND proposed text on "domestic and regional action including, where warranted, against their own nationals" to combat IUU.

NEW ZEALAND supported the G-77/CHINA in calling for the third SIDS Conference in 2014. CANADA proposed changing a call for "increased" efforts to assist SIDS to "continued" efforts, whereas G-77/CHINA opposed the change.

Natural Disasters: JAPAN and SWITZERLAND proposed a subtitle “disaster risk reduction and resilience,” supported by the US and NEW ZEALAND. The REPUBLIC OF KOREA proposed referencing “disaster relief.” JAPAN and the US opposed the EU and Switzerland’s inclusion of “manmade” disasters. The G-77/CHINA suggested “Natural disasters and disaster risk reduction.”

SWITZERLAND recommended a “3x3” approach addressing natural and man-made disasters, and any combination thereof, within a post-2015 framework. JAPAN proposed adoption of a post-Hyogo Framework for action after 2015, supported by the US. The REPUBLIC OF KOREA suggested that a preambular paragraph include the threat to human security.

The US welcomed the concept of resilient cities and communities. NEW ZEALAND supported Japan’s proposal on increased coordination at the local, national, regional and international levels. NORWAY supported the EU proposal regarding the relationship between security, development and environment.

Climate Change: The REPUBLIC OF KOREA and SWITZERLAND supported the EU proposal for a new opening to the climate change subsection regarding the threat posed by climate change. The REPUBLIC OF KOREA supported an EU amendment regarding how it makes addressing food security and poverty more difficult. SWITZERLAND supported Australia’s amendment to change a reference to developing countries being most affected to “all countries, in particular the poorest and most vulnerable.” The EU, supported by JAPAN, called for deleting G-77/China proposed amendments on financing, which he said were better left to the climate negotiations. The US and CANADA said the issues are covered in UN Framework Convention on Climate Change discussions. CANADA proposed deleting reference to the threat to the territorial integrity of SIDS, and introduced text on the threat to the polar regions. She suggested calling for efforts to “mobilize” rather than “provide” funds, from both public and private sources. NEW ZEALAND did not support the G-77/China’s text on common but differentiated responsibilities, which urged developed countries to take the lead in combating climate change.

In paragraph 89, on initiatives and partnerships to address interrelationships among water, energy food and climate change, the REPUBLIC OF KOREA proposed deleting New Zealand’s insertion of trade, Serbia’s reference to the Economic Commission for Europe (ECE) Convention on Long-range Transboundary Air Pollution, and the US proposal related to Short Lived Climate Pollutants. CANADA supported the latter US proposal; NEW ZEALAND suggested it could be in the compendium of commitments. The G-77/CHINA said the climate change paragraphs were “in strict conformity” with negotiations at the UNGA and said Rio+20 should highlight, *inter alia*: the rise of emissions; the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities; and the territorial integrity issue for SIDS.

Forests and Biodiversity: JAPAN, the EU, the US and others proposed creating separate sections for these two issues. The EU opposed Canada’s proposal to delete the call for urgent implementation of the Non-Legally Binding Instrument on All Types of Forests (NLBI). CANADA, the US and AUSTRALIA proposed deleting Switzerland’s amendment calling for launching the development of a legally binding global agreement on forests. CANADA, the US and AUSTRALIA said the proposal for the establishment of a voluntary global fund on forests should be deleted, and NORWAY said that proposal prejudices ongoing negotiations in the UN Forum on Forests (UNFF). SWITZERLAND supported Norway’s proposed introduction on the importance of ecosystem services and of implementing the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 and the Aichi Targets. The EU supported a proposal by Mexico on incorporating biological diversity and its components into the national policies

and market instruments. The G-77/CHINA said its proposed additions on sustainable forest use and management were from a UNFF ministerial statement intended as a contribution to Rio+20.

Land degradation and desertification: NEW ZEALAND supported the G-77/CHINA proposal to add “drought” to the title. On paragraph 92, calling for enhanced implementation of the UN Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD), JAPAN said proposals calling for consideration of the establishment of an intergovernmental scientific panel and for strengthening the advisory role of its subsidiary bodies are decisions to be taken within the UNCCD, not Rio+20. The REPUBLIC OF KOREA supported a reference to the Changwon Initiative, supported by the G-77/CHINA and SWITZERLAND but opposed by the US and others. SWITZERLAND supported Norway’s proposal on restoring the health of farmlands; Mexico’s proposal for capacity building and extension training; and the EU’s text on strengthening the link with existing science/policy interface bodies. The EU suggested including goals for zero net land degradation. The G-77/CHINA emphasized the importance of this section.

Mountains: SWITZERLAND proposed text on, *inter alia*, integration of mountain-specific strategies in national sustainable development strategies and poverty reduction plans and programmes. The US said this section was a model for others. The US suggested moving references to payment for ecosystem services into a cross-cutting provision on the subject, while the G-77/CHINA proposed deleting them. NEW ZEALAND, CANADA, the EU and SWITZERLAND proposed moving a G-77/China call for support from developed countries to the MOI section, which the G-77/CHINA opposed.

Chemicals and Wastes: The EU supported Japan’s call for the mercury agreement negotiations to be completed by 2013. The EU and REPUBLIC OF KOREA opposed a US-proposed deletion of electronic waste and plastics as emerging issues. CANADA supported the call for a gradual phasedown of hydrofluorocarbons (HFCs) and opposed an EU amendment calling for the new mercury agreement to join the synergies process of the three chemical and waste MEAs and support coordination with the Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management (SAICM). The US proposed deleting G-77/China proposals on efforts to end illegal dumping in developing countries, and on environmentally sound management of electronic waste and plastics. She sought clarification of G-77/China text on developed and developing country cooperation on safer alternative products and techniques for replacing the use of hazardous chemicals.

IN THE CORRIDORS

As high-level delegates and UN agency representatives began to trickle into UN Headquarters, delegates continued slogging through their consideration of issues. By the end of their fourth evening meeting, 32 paragraphs, and many subparagraphs, remained before the first reading would be completed. An “unexpected co-benefit” of the multiple proposed subparagraphs within each paragraph was a “lesson in Latin numbering,” said one delegate. Indeed, one subparagraph was labeled *tricesimus (et) uno*, indicating 31 proposed subparagraphs within a paragraph on cities. Illustrating the slower pace of the day’s negotiations, Co-Chair Kim Sook said “Sometimes we like to tango, but sometimes we like to dance more slowly to the blues,” leading one delegate to whisper “We will have to start to tango if we want to finish a first reading by the end of the meeting.”