



IMoSEB Asian Regional Consultation Bulletin

A Summary Report of the Asian Regional Consultation of the Consultative Process Towards an International Mechanism of Scientific Expertise on Biodiversity (IMoSEB)

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SUMMARY OF THE IMOSEB ASIAN REGIONAL CONSULTATION: 24-25 SEPTEMBER 2007

The Asian Regional Consultation of the Consultative Process Towards an International Mechanism of Scientific Expertise on Biodiversity (IMoSEB) was held from 24-25 September 2007, in Beijing, China. The fourth in a series of regional meetings planned for the IMoSEB process, the Beijing meeting was attended by 40 experts and officials from 18 Asian countries, and international and non-governmental organizations (NGOs), including scientific research institutions.

Participants heard presentations, exchanged views and discussed various options for a possible IMoSEB, its structure and governance, and issues relevant to the Asian region, in the context of the science-policy interface. Discussions were held in plenary sessions and in three working groups. Participants agreed on an IMoSEB in the form of an independent intergovernmental panel serving the five biodiversity-related conventions including a multi-stakeholder component affiliated to a UN body.

A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE IMOSEB PROCESS

The proposal for a Consultative Process Towards an IMoSEB was initiated at the Paris Conference on Biodiversity, Science and Governance, held in January 2005 (see IISD Reporting Services' report: <http://www.iisd.ca/sd/icb/>). The proposal focused on a consultation to assess the need, scope and possible form of an international mechanism of scientific expertise on biodiversity. The proposal received political support from French President Jacques Chirac and the French Government.

A consultative process was launched, with an International Steering Committee, an Executive Committee and an Executive Secretariat entrusted to the Institut Français de la Biodiversité, established to support and facilitate discussions. The International Steering Committee is an open group composed of around 90 members, including scientists, government representatives, intergovernmental, international and non-governmental organizations and indigenous and local community representatives.

The International Steering Committee met for the first time in Paris, France, from 21-22 February 2006. Participants agreed that the current system for bridging the gap between science and policy in the area of biodiversity needs further improvement, and that a consultation should identify gaps and needs at the science-policy interface, if any, in the existing processes and formulate appropriate steps forward. It tasked the Executive Committee to propose a plan of action for the consultation phase. It was decided that the consultation should begin with the development of relevant case studies and feedback, and be followed by a broader consultation.

A number of case studies were developed in 2006, while the idea for an IMoSEB was also discussed at a number of events, including the eighth Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biodiversity (CBD COP-8) in March 2006, and a workshop on "International Science-Policy Interfaces for Biodiversity Governance," held in Leipzig, Germany, from 2-4 October 2006.

At its second meeting in December 2006, the Executive Committee discussed the results of the case studies, and paved the way for wider consultations on any IMoSEB that might be considered by identifying a series of "needs and options." These needs and options were circulated to members of the International Steering Committee for their input, and a document outlining the ideas, entitled "International Steering Committee Members' Responses: 'Needs and Options' Document," was prepared by the IMoSEB Consultative Process Executive Secretariat and distributed in January 2007. The document was designed to assist participants during a series of regional consultations in 2007.

REGIONAL CONSULTATIONS: The IMoSEB North American Regional Consultation was held in Montreal, Canada, from 30-31 January 2007. Participants heard presentations, exchanged views and discussed various options for a possible IMoSEB in plenary sessions and in three working groups. The meeting did not result in consensus on a new mechanism. However, a number of views and proposals were generated that formed the basis of subsequent discussions.

The African Regional Consultation was held in Yaoundé, Cameroon, from 1-3 March 2007. In addition to discussing options for a possible IMoSEB, participants considered expertise for Africa and potential users of an IMoSEB, as well as institutional and financial aspects of an IMoSEB. There was general consensus on the need for an IMoSEB, with a range

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of views and proposals expressed as to how to make progress. Specific recommendations contained in the meeting report included: making the assessment of past or ongoing activities a usable knowledge tool; exploring the possibility of establishing a pilot project in Africa; and including traditional knowledge and socioeconomic aspects to ensure sustainable development of biodiversity while complying with local and national legislative structures.

The European Regional Consultative process was held in Geneva, Switzerland, from 26-28 April 2007. Participants identified ten needs for an IMoSEB, a possible structure of an IMoSEB to meet these needs and goals and guiding principles for a strategy to communicate scientific information on biodiversity.

Regional meetings will also be held in South America and Oceania, and the outcomes of the consultations will be taken up by the International Steering Committee in Montpellier, France, from 15-17 November 2007, when the Committee is expected to produce recommendations for consideration at the thirteenth meeting of the CBD's Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice (SBSTTA), to be held in Rome, Italy, from 11-22 February 2008, and CBD COP-9, to be held in Bonn, Germany, from 19-30 May 2008.

IISD Reporting Services Reports from the consultations held to date, can be found at: http://www.iisd.ca/process/biodiv_wildlife.htm#imoseb. Additional information is also available at <http://www.imoseb.net>

REPORT OF THE CONSULTATION

Anne Larigauderie, IMoSEB Executive Secretariat and Executive Director of DIVERSITAS, welcomed participants to the fourth consultative process, explaining that the aim of the process was to devise regional recommendations from Asia, which would be presented to the final Steering Committee



Anne Larigauderie, IMoSEB Executive Secretariat and Executive Director of DIVERSITAS

meeting in November. She outlined the structure of the meeting and presented the provisional agenda, which was approved.

Le Kang, Director of the Bureau of Life Sciences and Biotechnology, Chinese Academy of Sciences, highlighted the complexity of biodiversity and the corresponding challenges it presents for scientists and managers in Asia. He observed that China, a mega-diverse country, is experiencing a period of rapid industrial and urban development, which is causing environmental problems and biodiversity loss. Le Kang emphasized the importance of exchanging ideas on potential new mechanisms and welcomed positive comments regarding an IMoSEB.

Alfred Oteng-Yeboah, Co-Chair of the IMoSEB Executive Committee, expressed appreciation to China for hosting the meeting and then outlined the background and consultations that have taken place to date. Noting that biodiversity issues have been overlooked and lacked a "mouth piece" like the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), he explained that the international consultative process aims to

explore the common interface between scientific expertise and decision making for biodiversity. Stressing the need to prioritize biodiversity in government decision making in the same way that climate change is being considered, Oteng-Yeboah, commented that Asia has a lot to contribute to the consultative process.

During the meeting, participants heard presentations, held a roundtable discussion on needs and options identified by the IMoSEB Executive Committee and split into three working groups to address: potential users for an IMoSEB; options to best address user needs; particular needs for the Asian region; whether IMoSEB should be an intergovernmental mechanism; and the feasibility of locating IMoSEB within the CBD. Participants further refined and finalized the outcomes of the working-group discussions in a plenary session and exchanged ideas on the structure and governance of a proposed intergovernmental panel on biodiversity, as well as issues specific to the Asian region. The following summarizes main discussions and issues analyzed during the consultation.

PRESENTATIONS

On Monday, 24 September, participants heard presentations on the contribution of indigenous peoples to decision making, and on the Millennium Ecosystem Assessment's contribution to scientific expertise on biodiversity for decision making. Vladimir Bocharnikov, RAIPON – Russian Association of Indigenous Peoples of the North, presented on the Indigenous Peoples Network for Change (IPNC) and its use for decision



Vladimir Bocharnikov, RAIPON - Russian Association of Indigenous Peoples of the North

making. He observed that UN figures indicate that there are approximately 350 million indigenous people globally. He outlined their role in the implementation of the CBD and modalities for integrating traditional knowledge into the wider political agenda and decision making. He also highlighted IMoSEB as a good opportunity to connect science and traditional knowledge.

Bocharnikov outlined his organization's objectives as being: to increase awareness and capacity of indigenous peoples; to further contribute to and participate in the CBD and the Global Environment Facility (GEF) processes; and to establish strategic partnerships. Discussing information flows, he noted variations in the use of web-based solutions, and stressed the importance of sharing knowledge and success stories on the implementation of national biodiversity strategies.

Abdul Zakri, United Nations University and co-chair Millennium Ecosystem Assessment, gave an overview of lessons learned from the Assessment in relation to the establishment of an IMoSEB. He described the Millennium Ecosystem Assessment as a social process which connects scientific findings to decision making by focusing on how human activities impact on ecosystems. He explained that the key features of the Assessment are: political legitimacy, scientific credibility and utility. He also outlined its organizational structure, which includes a board, an assessment



Abdul Zakri, United Nations University and co-chair Millennium Ecosystem Assessment

panel, and four technical working groups comprised of governments, UN agencies, NGOs, indigenous people, and other stakeholders including the private sector and the media. He stressed the need to: widely disseminate the Millennium Ecosystem Assessment findings; make informed, equitable, and representative decisions; and ensure that science reaches the highest political level.

ROUNDTABLE ON NEEDS AND OPTIONS

Alfred Oteng-Yeboah facilitated the roundtable on needs and options. He first outlined three broad needs identified for an IMoSEB: independent scientific expertise; communication and timely dissemination of information; and enhancing capacity. Regarding options, he observed that two possibilities had emerged from previous consultations: an intergovernmental panel on biodiversity located within the CBD or a network of networks consisting of a governing board with a small secretariat and an advisory group. Oteng-Yeboah then invited participants to explore additional needs and consider the two proposed options.

Discussion: Regarding independent scientific expertise, a university representative sought clarification on the envisaged role of an IMoSEB its strengths and weaknesses and its relation to the CBD. SBSTTA's ability to provide assessments to the COP was debated and knowledge gaps identified. A government representative expressed support for an independent body reiterating concerns about political considerations, which permeate SBSTTA's proceedings, compromising its independence. He asked who IMoSEB would report to and whether there would be "interference" from SBSTTA.

Turning to needs, a participant proposed to provide credible scientific information to reconcile livelihood demands and conservation needs, as an additional need for IMoSEB. Meanwhile a university representative emphasized the importance of an IMoSEB and discussed its position within the CBD framework, favoring it as a support system for SBSTTA rather than for the COP. A participant from an intergovernmental organization (IGO) called for the debate to move beyond the CBD and SBSTTA to include other conventions. While another from a regional organization, explained how the IPCC operates. Drawing parallels with biodiversity, he noted the need to consolidate scientific information from different sources.

An NGO representative urged discussions to take local communities into account and ensure that knowledge translates from international conventions to national implementation and community action. Oteng-Yeboah underlined the role of the media in such a process and Larigauderie noted the impact of the Stern report, which articulates the economic cost of inaction.

Discussions moved on to the need to enhance capacity to predict the consequences of current actions affecting biodiversity, and the provision of proactive scientific advice on emerging threats associated with biodiversity loss. A

university representative observed that the ability to monitor, assess and predict consequences and provide scientific advice on emerging threats differs among countries, and called for an international body to assist them in building capacity in this respect. Addressing this point, Oteng-Yeboah reiterated the need for assistance from international organizations for capacity building, noting people need to understand the issue before they can take action.

Highlighting the social value of biodiversity, an IGO representative also noted the need to disseminate information efficiently to decision makers and the wider public. Another participant highlighted a Russian government funded programme, which reviews and compares data on biodiversity and synthesizes scientific research outputs, government reports and indigenous people's perspectives and opinions emanating from national projects.

SUBSTANTIVE ASPECTS OF AN IMOSEB

On Monday afternoon three working groups convened in parallel sessions to consider: potential IMoSEB users; options to best address user needs; specific needs for the Asian region; whether IMoSEB should be an intergovernmental mechanism; and the feasibility of locating an IMoSEB within the CBD. The working groups reported back to plenary late in the afternoon and discussions ensued in response to the presentations. On Tuesday, in plenary, participants continued to consider issues emanating from previous day's working-group discussions, using a "Summary of Discussions" text prepared by the Secretariat. This document was refined and approved and will be reflected in the final report of the Asian Regional Consultation.

WORKING GROUP DISCUSSIONS: Working Group One: Ramatha Letchumanan, Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment, Malaysia, chaired this group and invited participants to consider potential IMoSEB users. The group proposed a wide range of users including: convention secretariats; IGOs; NGOs; regional and sub-regional organizations; governments; academia; local governments; communities; the private sector; and the media.

The group then addressed the two proposed options for an IMoSEB by considering their merits and limitations. Regarding the proposed intergovernmental panel mechanism located within the CBD, the group generally agreed that it would be easier for governments to endorse such a setup, and earmark funding for it. Additionally such an entity could achieve national level acceptance. Conversely they noted that such a mechanism would lack flexibility and autonomy and constrain local level implementation if embedded within the CBD framework.

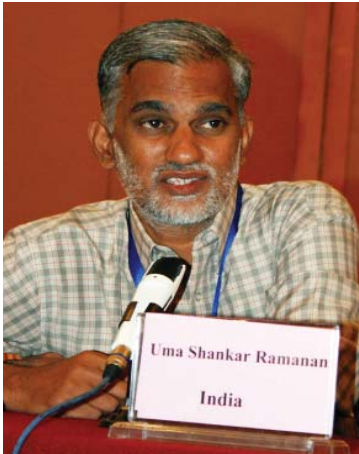
For the second option of a meta-network on biodiversity-related conventions and stakeholders, participants said such a mechanism could build on existing networks, utilizing



Participants in Working Group One

institutional experiences rather than creating a new structure. However, several disadvantages were identified including: potential resistance from existing international networks due to perceptions of their focus being diluted; weak local level connections and implementation; and funding constraints.

The group then turned to needs particular to the Asian region. Participants discussed the challenge of reconciling economic development, poverty alleviation and biodiversity conservation in a region primarily dependent on biological resources. The lack of awareness concerning biodiversity conservation was cited as another obstacle as was rural community dependency on biomass fuel and its resulting adverse impacts on biodiversity.



Working Group One rapporteur, Uma Ramanan, University of Agricultural Sciences, India

Working Group One rapporteur, Uma Ramanan, presented the outcomes of his group's deliberations in plenary. Regarding the establishment of an intergovernmental panel, he said that precedence established by the IPCC would make this option more viable. Participants suggested that biodiversity-rich countries might have an impetus for agreeing to a global intergovernmental mechanism, while other less endowed countries may

not. The issue of funding was also cited as a constraint to this option.

Regarding Asian needs, dependency on biodiversity for subsistence was raised as a concern. Ramanan informed that the group had not reached consensus on whether the IMoSEB should be intergovernmental, or whether it should be located within the CBD. One participant stressed that none of the proposed options for an IMoSEB had the capacity to enhance local level implementation.

Working Group Two: Chair Anne Larigauderie opened the floor for discussion on potential users of an IMoSEB, noting that previous debates centered on limiting users to convention parties or including other relevant stakeholders such as the private sector and NGOs. Regarding its structure, one participant suggested a hybrid mechanism such as IUCN, working with NGOs and governments, and questioned whether an IMoSEB should only address the CBD or include other conventions.

On proposed options, one participant pointed out that neither an intergovernmental panel, nor a network were feasible and suggested an additional option, potentially modeled on the Arctic Council, drawing on practice from existing mechanisms. On intergovernmental panels, some noted the lack of tangible results in the forestry sector, and others called for clarification on a network of networks.

Building on the experience of the IPCC and the Millennium Ecosystem Assessment, participants stressed the need to bridge the gap between scientific findings and stakeholder understanding, noting that the knowledge often exists but is not easily available to stakeholders in an appropriate format. One participant raised the question of measuring the effectiveness of well-packaged scientific information, and its resulting impacts on government programmes. Others stressed *inter*

alia: the need to take a long-term view; affiliating an IMoSEB to a UN agency such as UNESCO; bridging the weaknesses of other conventions; drawing on biodiversity-related conventions; adopting an inclusive multi-stakeholder approach; and taking emerging issues on board.

Participants generally favored an intergovernmental mechanism, separate from the CBD, which would service the different conventions to increase cooperation, possibly use networks to collate information, engage a broad range of stakeholders, and identify new knowledge gaps. They proposed two additional options for consideration by other regional consultations: an intergovernmental panel outside the CBD and a multi-stakeholder intergovernmental body catering to synergies and linkages. Participants noted that options should fulfill the minimum criteria of: scientific credibility; political legitimacy; meeting user needs; and identifying key stakeholders.

In terms of needs of the Asian region, participants noted its intrinsic characteristics, such biodiversity richness, high poverty levels and a growing population. The group underscored the links between ecosystems and health, taking into account traditional medicine and ecosystem wellbeing. Other points raised related to endogenous capacity building and funding needs, and the misappropriation of biological resources and traditional knowledge.

Working Group Two rapporteur, Rodrigo Fuentes, presented outcomes of the group's discussions to plenary, outlining the four potential options for an IMoSEB.

Fuentes reiterated the two main needs for Asia as relating to the assessment of the region's resources and the measurement of the socio-economic impacts of their misappropriation.

Working Group Three: Chair Keping Ma, opened the session by inviting participants to consider options and needs for an IMoSEB. One participant sought clarification concerning the distinction between the two options and their advantages and disadvantages. An Executive Committee member shared some insights on the advantages of a mechanism connected to the CBD process, which converges current jurisprudence on biodiversity and also links up to the other biodiversity-related conventions, thereby ensuring a far-reaching effect. One participant emphasized that, for an IMoSEB to be effective, it must create a niche for itself. An IMoSEB secretariat member provided an overview of the meta-network option envisaged to make use of tools and techniques that would elevate local knowledge to the global scale as well as downscaling global knowledge. Another participant cautioned against limiting the IMoSEB to the CBD process thereby diminishing its support base.

Chair Keping Ma invited participants to focus on the five issues identified for consideration in the working groups. The group identified decision makers, the private sector, local communities, NGOs and scientists in this extensive category of potential users. Regarding options to best address user needs, participants generally favored the meta-network option to avoid restricting the mechanism to the CBD and potential



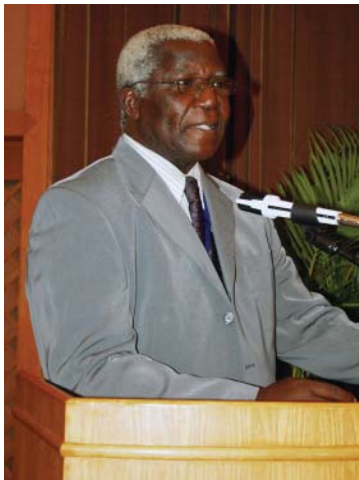
Working Group Two rapporteur, Rodrigo Fuentes, ASEAN Centre for Biodiversity, the Philippines

conflict with SBSTTA's role within the CBD process. A third option was proposed consisting of an intergovernmental organization of scientific experts operating outside the CBD process.

On the needs specific to Asia, participants highlighted the problem of population pressure impacting negatively on biodiversity and the need to coordinate social and economic development and biodiversity concerns within the region. Enhancing access to information was emphasized in view of the region's cultural and language diversity, as well as the complexity of translating and transferring knowledge. Because of the region's vulnerability to natural disasters and need for shoreline protection, participants discussed developing capacity to anticipate and respond to disasters. Finally, the group agreed that the mechanism should neither be intergovernmental nor be located within the CBD.

Working Group Three rapporteur, Charlotte Hicks presented the outcomes of her group's deliberations in plenary. She reported that the group agreed on the need for an IMoSEB and had identified potential users though it had difficulty prioritizing them. She noted that the structure of an IMoSEB would be contingent on the users identified during the consultative process. In the ensuing discussion participants considered the niche that IMoSEB would occupy and the need to avoid duplication with other networks and organizations.

OPTIONS AND NEEDS FOR AN IMOSEB: On Tuesday, 25 September, participants convened in a morning plenary session to review, refine and finalize the outcomes of the working group discussions held on Monday on options and



Alfred Oteng-Yeboah, Co-Chair of the IMoSEB Executive Committee

needs, working from a "Summary of Discussions" text prepared by the Secretariat.

Chair Oteng-Yeboah introduced the main points emanating from the discussions on needs, namely the overarching principles, the definition of users, and the links of biodiversity to the broader concepts of human wellbeing and ecosystem services. On options, he identified the advantages and disadvantages of

an intergovernmental panel within the CBD and a meta-network. On Asian regional specificities, he highlighted its rich biodiversity, population trends and dependence on natural resources.

Regarding users, one participant representing a regional organization noted that they are primarily governments and civil society, while others suggested involving the private sector, local communities and indigenous peoples. Participants agreed that the three overarching principles of a mechanism should be: scientific credibility, political legitimacy and saliency – the latter defined as meeting user needs.

Due to confusion on the definition of "drivers of change", participants agreed that any new mechanism should be established with a long-term perspective, to gain understanding of the status and trends of biodiversity, and present options and responses that could mitigate any loss of biodiversity and ecosystem goods and services.



Participants during the plenary session

A participant from an international research institute observed that the CBD is the only biodiversity convention and that others are "biodiversity related", while another suggested the mechanism should primarily serve the needs of the CBD. A debate ensued on the concept of a body "serving" a convention and on what this new mechanism would effectively do. Some participants called for the mechanism to collate and package scientific data for users, by providing timely scientific information to defined audiences. Participants agreed that the mechanism should respond to decision maker's needs on biodiversity issues, based on the defined overarching principles.

Debate centered on prioritizing the options from previous regional consultations and refining the additional options identified by the working groups. A university representative, supported by other participants, highlighted the advantages of pursuing a single option, namely an intergovernmental panel located within the CBD, urging participants to reach consensus, while another called on them "to keep all options open". One government representative cautioned against creating a large body servicing a number of conventions, since decisions relating to biodiversity are taken under the CBD. However, some participants objected to housing the mechanism within CBD framework.

Several alternatives were proposed, including: an independent intergovernmental panel; an intergovernmental panel to provide services to CBD; an intergovernmental panel addressing the needs of the CBD; and an intergovernmental panel addressing the objectives of CBD. Some participants suggested using the IPCC, which is administered and supported by UNEP and the World Meteorological Organization, as models.

Participants finally agreed on the needs for a mechanism in the form of "an intergovernmental panel serving the five major biodiversity conventions, including a multi-stakeholder component affiliated to a UN body."

Final outcome: "The Summary of Discussions" text addresses the discussions on needs options and states that participants of the Asian regional consultation agree on the need for a mechanism to address the needs identified by the previous consultations, in the form of an intergovernmental panel on biodiversity serving the five biological diversity related conventions including a multi-stakeholder component affiliated to a UN body.

It also notes that any new mechanism should satisfy the overarching principles of scientific credibility, saliency and political legitimacy. The need for endogenous capacity building, and adequate, new and additional financial, technical and technological resources for developing regions of Asia is also stated.

STRUCTURE FOR AN IMOSEB: On Tuesday morning participants exchanged ideas on the structure and function of a proposed intergovernmental panel on biodiversity, in plenary. Chair Oteng-Yeboah invited participants to consider the possible structure and function of an intergovernmental panel since, since participants had agreed on the feasibility such a mechanism.

Participants gave examples of various organizational structures, which a potential mechanism could draw on, such as the IPCC. Various participants emphasized the need to find the best model from existing mechanisms, adding that the envisaged structure should be innovative. Oteng-Yeboah reflected on modalities for transmitting scientific expertise to decision makers and on the need for: varied expertise; synthesizing tools to provide opportunities for understanding trends relating to biodiversity; and monitoring and evaluation. One participant suggested an international executive panel composed of regional coordinators.

Oteng-Yeboah noted the difficulty of finalizing the mechanism's structure before reaching agreement on its functions since the entity's mandate is contingent on its structure. An IMoSEB Executive Committee member commented on whether the mechanism should be an assessment body similar to the IPCC, which synthesizes raw data and compares scenarios but does not conduct research, or whether the Millennium Ecosystem Assessment was a better model, suggesting that a hybrid of the two could also be considered. A government representative pointed out that an assessment panel model was feasible, because it could commission studies to fill knowledge gaps where required.

Participants continued to refine the structure of the proposed intergovernmental panel on biodiversity suggesting it package scientific data into an appropriate format for decision makers. On perceived outputs, they suggested: assessments; synthesized information; defining new research directions; disseminating and storing information; and elaborating methodology. The structure for the mechanism was not finalized during this consultation.

REGIONAL SPECIFICITIES: Participants reconvened in plenary on Tuesday afternoon to discuss issues intrinsic to the Asian region in the context of a proposed IMoSEB. Chair Oteng-Yeboah invited the meeting to review the outcomes of the Leipzig Workshop on the "Design of Science-Policy Interfaces for Global Biodiversity Governance", during which a number of recommendations concerning the mandate, outputs and process for a possible IMoSEB were made.

One science academy representative noted that the knowledge base on biodiversity should be geared towards the needs of decision makers.



Jaivardhan Bhatt, Ministry of Environment and Forests, India

Jaivardhan Bhatt (India), Syed Khurshid (Pakistan) and Charlotte Hicks (IUCN) presented a document on the specificities of the Asian region, to be taken into account in future discussions. Participants highlighted the region's biological and cultural diversity, acknowledging the socio-economic challenges. They further agreed that since a significant proportion of



Charlotte Hicks, IUCN China Liaison Office

Asia's population depends on biological resources for sustenance, particular attention should be paid to ensuring sustainable livelihoods and conservation priorities.

Participants concurred that Asia lacks a review concerning misappropriation of biological resources and associated traditional knowledge and its social and economic impacts. They further underscored a need for endogenous capacity building in biodiversity conservation and management, as well as in new and emerging technologies. The meeting noted the need for adequate new and additional financial and technical resources for the developing regions of Asia.

Participants suggested adding information and technological resources. Others highlighted a need to study the impacts of globalization and the market-based economy on Asia's biological resources, in addition to assessing and conserving endemic species and threatened ecosystems, and other biological resources. Debate centered on the option of listing specific ecosystems for conservation, and participants concurred on the need to understand the impacts of climate change on biodiversity and ecosystem goods and services, as well as its possible role in adaptation.

Final outcome: "The Summary of Discussions" text on specificities for Asia, acknowledges its rich biodiversity, rapidly growing population and dependence on natural resources, and further notes the lack of review concerning the misappropriation of biodiversity resources and their socio-economic impacts. The meeting agreed to reflect this discussion in the final report of the Asian Regional Consultation.

CLOSING PLENARY

Participants expressed their appreciation to the Government of China and to the IMoSEB Executive Secretariat for hosting and organizing the meeting. They also complimented Chair Oteng-Yeboah for his sterling stewardship, expressing satisfaction with the consensus reached on the option for an IMoSEB, which would link science to decision making. They expressed hope that the progress towards such a mechanism would continue.

Asian Regional Consultation nsultative Process towards a



L-R: Anne Larigauderie; Keping Ma; Alfred Oteng-Yeboah; and Didier Babin thanked all participants.

Didier Babin, IMoSEB Executive Secretary, thanked partners and participants for their support and active engagement in discussions. Looking towards the remaining consultative processes and the final International Steering Committee meeting, he hoped that they too would generate positive outputs.

Ma Keping observed that the consultation had taken strides towards the establishment of an IMoSEB. Describing the Asian consultative meeting as “the most focused to date,” Anne Larigauderie expressed satisfaction with its outcomes. Oteng-Yeboah remarked that participants could go back to their countries as “victors” and encouraged them to convey the meeting outcome to the national CBD focal points and other stakeholders. Participants also acknowledged IISD Reporting Services for their outstanding contribution. The meeting closed at 3:40 pm.

UPCOMING MEETINGS

IMOSEB SOUTH AMERICAN REGIONAL

CONSULTATION: The South American regional consultation of the IMoSEB process will take place from 2-3 October 2007, in Bariloche, Argentina, during the second Latin American Congress of National Parks and Other Protected Areas. For more information, contact the IMoSEB Executive Secretariat; e-mail: executive-secretariat@imoseb.net; internet: <http://www.imoseb.net>

FIFTH MEETING OF THE CBD AD HOC OPEN-ENDED WORKING GROUP ON ACCESS AND BENEFIT-SHARING:

The meeting, organized by the CBD Secretariat, will take place from 8-12 October 2007, in Montreal, Canada. The meeting will continue CBD's work on aspects of an international regime on access and benefit sharing, including access to genetic resources, prior informed consent and traditional knowledge. For more information contact: CBD Secretariat; tel: +1-514-288-2220; fax: +1-514-288-6588; e-mail: secretariat@cbd.int; internet: <http://www.cbd.int/doc/meeting.aspx?mtg=ABSWG-05>

FIFTH MEETING OF THE CBD AD HOC OPEN-ENDED WORKING GROUP ON ARTICLE 8(J) AND RELATED PROVISIONS:

The meeting is organized by the CBD Secretariat, from 15-19 October 2007, in Montreal, Canada. This meeting will consider a progress report on the programme of work for Article 8(j), as well as a plan of action for retention of traditional knowledge, innovation and practices. For more information contact: CBD Secretariat; tel: +1-514-288-2220; fax: +1-514-288-6588; e-mail: secretariat@cbd.int; internet: <http://www.cbd.int/doc/meeting.aspx?mtg=WG8J-05>

IMOSEB OCEANIA REGIONAL CONSULTATION:

The Oceania Regional Consultation of the IMoSEB process will take place on 19-20 October 2007, in Alotau, Papua-New Guinea, before the 8th Pacific Islands Conference on Nature Conservation and Protected Areas. For more information, contact the IMoSEB Executive Secretariat; e-mail: executive-secretariat@imoseb.net; internet: <http://www.imoseb.net>

THIRD MEETING OF THE PARTIES TO

ACCOBAMS: This meeting is organized by the Secretariat to the Agreement on the Conservation of Cetaceans of the Black Sea, Mediterranean Sea and contiguous Atlantic Area, from 22-25 October 2007, in Dubrovnik, Croatia. It is scheduled to look into the synthesis of the national implementation reports of the parties and will also appoint the members

of the scientific committee. For more information contact: ACCOBAMS Secretariat, tel: +377-93152078; fax: +377-93154208; e-mail: accobams@accobams.net; internet: <http://www.accobams.org/2006.php/parties/show/5>

FIFTH TRONDHEIM CONFERENCE ON

BIODIVERSITY: The Trondheim Conference will be held from 29 October 2007 - 2 November 2007, in Trondheim, Norway. Hosted by the Norwegian Government in cooperation with UNEP, this conference aims to provide input to the CBD and its preparations for COP-9, to be held in Germany in 2008. For more information contact: Norway's Directorate for Nature Management; e-mail: trondheim.conference@dirnat.no; internet: <http://www.trondheimconference.org/>

SECOND SESSION OF THE ITPGR GOVERNING

BODY: The second session of the Governing Body of the International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture is organized by the UN Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), from 29 October 2007 - 2 November 2007, in Rome, Italy. The meeting will look into the Global Crop Diversity Trust as well as the implementation of the Multilateral System of Access and Benefit Sharing. For more information contact: Shakeel Bhatti, ITPGR Secretary; tel: +39-06-570-53057; fax: +39-06-570-56347; e-mail: shakeel.bhatti@fao.org; internet: http://www.planttreaty.org/gbnex_en.htm

IMOSEB INTERNATIONAL STEERING

COMMITTEE: The Final International Steering Committee of the Consultative Process Towards an IMoSEB will be held from 15-17 November 2007, in Montpellier, France. It will seek to finalize the recommendations and proposals based on input from the consultations, with a view to submitting recommendations for consideration by CBD COP-9 in May 2008. For more information, contact the IMoSEB Executive Secretariat; e-mail: executive-secretariat@imoseb.net; internet: <http://www.imoseb.net>

GLOSSARY

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| CBD | Convention on Biological Diversity |
| COP | Conference of the Parties |
| IMoSEB | International Mechanism of Scientific Expertise on Biodiversity |
| IPCC | Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change |
| SBSTTA | Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice |



IMoSEB Asian Regional Consultation participants