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MEA BULLETIN

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RECENT MEA ACTIVITIES

► BIODIVERSITY AND WILDLIFE



L-R: Antonio Serrano, Spain's Secretary General for Lands and Biodiversity; Suboh Mohd Yassin (Malaysia); Ahmed Djoghlaif, CBD Executive Secretary; and Olivier Jalbert, Secretary of the Meeting during the fourth meeting of the *Ad hoc* Open-ended Working Group (WG) on Access and Benefit-sharing (ABS)

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UNFF-6 Co-Chair Franz Perrez (Switzerland)

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RESEARCH AND RESOURCES

MILLENNIUM ECOSYSTEM ASSESSMENT TECHNICAL VOLUMES

(Millennium Ecosystem Assessment, January 2006) Four technical volumes of the Millennium Ecosystem Assessment (<http://www.millenniumassessment.org/en/products.global.overview.aspx>) have been published containing the detailed scientific assessments on which the synthesis reports are based. These technical volumes focus on current state and trends, scenarios, policy responses, and multi-scale assessments. A fifth volume provides a summary for decision makers.

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GUEST ARTICLE

UNEP's programme for climate change outreach

By Michael Williams and Arkadiy Levintanus, UNEP's Division of Environmental Conventions

Abstract

Under Article 6 on Education, Training and Public Awareness, the UNFCCC calls on governments to promote the development and implementation of public awareness activities and requests intergovernmental organizations to continue supporting these efforts through their regular programmes. In 2002, the New Delhi COP gave a new impulse to those efforts by adopting a five-year Programme of Work on Article 6 outlining specific interventions and activities.

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RESEARCH AND RESOURCES (cont.)

GLOBAL ENVIRONMENT OUTLOOK (GEO) YEAR BOOK 2006

(UNEP, February 2006) The 2006 Global Environment Outlook (GEO) Year Book (<http://www.unep.org/geo/yearbook/yb2006/>) focuses on energy and air pollution. In addition, its section on emerging challenges focuses on crop production in a changing climate, and fish and shellfish farming in marine ecosystems.

CHALLENGES TO INTERNATIONAL WATERS; REGIONAL ASSESSMENTS IN A GLOBAL PERSPECTIVE

(UNEP, February 2006) The Global International Waters Assessment's Final Report (<http://www.giwa.net/publications/finalreport/>) summarizes the major transboundary concerns and their environmental and socio-economic impacts, identifies the root causes of the concerns and draws policy relevant conclusions, and outlines knowledge gaps that impede the sustainable management of international waters.

THE EVOLUTION OF CITES, 8TH EDITION

(CITES, 2006) Authored by Willem Wijnstekers, Secretary-General of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Flora and Fauna (CITES), the 8th edition of this e-book (<http://www.cites.org/eng/news/sundry/2006/evolution.shtml>) presents the provisions of the Convention, relevant resolutions and decisions, and explanations and insights on the Convention and how it should be implemented.

THE A TO Z OF THE GEF

(GEF, 2005) This guide (<http://www.eldis.org/ct/rdr/rdr.cfm?doc=DOC20547>) seeks to help the reader understand how the GEF operates, how to access its funds, and how to influence its policies. It contains several sections explaining the structure, operation, history and programmes of the GEF.

ASSESSING ENVIRONMENT'S CONTRIBUTION TO POVERTY REDUCTION

(PEP, 2005) This 64-page report (http://www.undp.org/pei/pdfs/Indicators_Paper_Final.pdf), prepared by staff from UNDP, UNEP, IED, IUCN and WRI, on behalf of the Poverty-Environment Partnership, reviews five indicators of the MDG framework that measure progress toward reversing environmental resource loss, including indicators of forest cover, biodiversity, energy use, emissions of carbon dioxide and ozone-depleting substances, and use of solid fuels.

MATRIX ON TRADE MEASURES PURSUANT TO SELECTED MULTILATERAL ENVIRONMENTAL AGREEMENTS (MEAs)

(WTO, 2005) This resource consists of a matrix (http://www.wto.org/english/tratop_e/envir_e/mea_database_e.htm) on trade-related measures contained in 14 selected MEAs, from their treaty text to subsequent decisions by the Parties. The WTO Secretariat prepared this matrix, in consultation with the Secretariats of the relevant MEAs.

► BIODIVERSITY AND WILDLIFE

CBD WORKING GROUPS DISCUSS TRADITIONAL KNOWLEDGE, ACCESS AND BENEFIT-SHARING; PREPARATIONS UNDERWAY FOR CBD COP-8

Participants attending a Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) Working Group addressed issues of traditional knowledge protection and agreed on a voluntary fund for indigenous and local community participation in the process. The fourth meeting of the CBD *Ad hoc* Open-ended Intersessional Working Group on Article 8(j) and related provisions (<http://www.iisd.ca/biodiv/wg8j-4/>) met from 23-27 January 2006, in Granada, Spain. Delegates considered an ethical code of conduct for the respect of the cultural and intellectual heritage of indigenous and local communities, and established a participatory and time-bound process aiming for its adoption by COP-9. The creation of a voluntary funding mechanism for indigenous and local community representatives to participate in the CBD process was also hailed as an important step toward enhancing indigenous participation in the framework of the Convention. Progress was generally thought to be slower on genetic use restriction technologies (GURTs), as the Working Group reaffirmed a previous COP Decision, invited the World Intellectual Property Organization to report on GURTs patents and recommended studies on their socioeconomic impacts. Finally, some initial steps were taken to enhance indigenous participation in the discussions of the Working Group on Access and Benefit-sharing.

The *Ad Hoc* Open-ended Working Group on Access and Benefit-sharing (ABS) of the CBD (<http://www.iisd.ca/biodiv/abs-wg4/>) continued talks on an international regime and agreed on a draft to serve as the basis for future negotiations during its fourth meeting, which convened from 30 January to 3 February 2006, in Granada, Spain. The meeting made some progress on the international regime, agreeing on a recommendation to the COP and a draft to serve as the basis for future negotiations. This draft, although bracketed almost in its entirety, contains a structure and core issues that may allow for a more formalized negotiation process to take place at COP-8 and beyond. Divisions remain among the key players on issues such as: the need for a new instrument and whether it should contain legally binding elements; the inclusion of derivatives and products of genetic resources; disclosure requirements in applications for intellectual property rights; and the participation of indigenous and local communities in the ABS negotiations.

The recommendations of both Working Groups will be submitted to CBD COP-8, to be held from 20-31 March 2006, in Curitiba, Brazil. The CBD Secretariat has organized a



Delegates from Brazil saying "See you in Curitiba, Brazil for COP-8" at the close of WG ABS-4

number of activities and meetings in preparation for this event (<http://www.biodiv.org/doc/meeting.aspx?mtg=COP-08>), including the Virtual Curitiba Biodiversity Conference (<http://2010.biodiv.org>). In preparation for the brainstorming meeting on the impact of avian influenza on wildlife, to be held on 19 March, an e-forum (<http://www.biodiv.org/other/avian-flu.shtml>) is being organized.

WORKING GROUP ADDRESSES LIABILITY ISSUES IN THE CARTAGENA PROTOCOL'S CONTEXT

The second meeting of the Open-ended *Ad Hoc* Working Group of Legal and Technical Experts on Liability and Redress in the context of the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety (<http://www.iisd.ca/biodiv/wg1r2/>) convened from 20-24 February 2006, in Montreal, Canada, a few weeks before the third meeting of the Parties to the Protocol, to be held from 13-17 March 2006, in Curitiba, Brazil. Established pursuant to Article 27 of the Protocol, the Working Group is mandated to: review information relating to liability and redress for damage resulting from transboundary movements of living modified organisms (LMOs); analyze general issues relating to the potential and/or actual damage scenarios of concern; and elaborate options for elements of rules and procedures on liability and redress, with a view to completing its work by 2007. Deliberations were based on a working draft prepared by Co-Chairs René Lefeber (the Netherlands) and Jimena Nieto (Colombia), synthesizing proposed texts and views submitted by governments and other stakeholders on approaches, options and issues pertaining to liability and redress, including on: effectiveness criteria; scope, definition and valuation of damage; causation; channeling of liability; standard of liability; limitation of liability; and mechanisms of financial security. The Working Group considered all the options identified in the Co-Chairs' synthesis and delegates submitted operational texts on scope, definition and valuation of damage and causation. Following informal consultations held throughout the week, a non-negotiated and non-exhaustive indicative list of criteria for the assessment of the effectiveness of any rules and procedures referred to under Article 27 of the Protocol was annexed to the meeting's report.

► BIODIVERSITY AND WILDLIFE

CITES AND EARTH COUNCIL E-LEARNING ESTABLISH PARTNERSHIP

A memorandum of understanding was signed between Earth Council e-Learning and the CITES Secretariat, to develop online courses on the regulation of wildlife trade for CITES Management Authorities and stakeholders (http://www.cites.org/eng/news/press_release.shtml). The courses are scheduled to begin in the first half of 2006.

CMS WARNS AGAINST BLAMING MIGRATORY BIRDS FOR AVIAN FLU SPREAD, UNDERTAKES INITIATIVE FOR GORILLA CONSERVATION

UNEP, the Convention on Migratory Species (CMS) and the African Eurasian Waterbird

Agreement are launching a campaign to reverse the public perception, often supported by inaccurate media coverage, that migratory birds are responsible for the spread of avian influenza, and to promote awareness on the importance of bird migrations for ecosystem functioning. These organizations have launched World Migratory Bird Day, which will be celebrated on 8 April and will include information on avian influenza and its effects on birds (<http://www.cms.int/news/PRESS/nwPR2006/WMBD.pdf>). They are also organizing an expert meeting, which will convene from 10-11 April 2006, at UNEP headquarters in Nairobi, Kenya, to investigate the root causes of the spread and identify effective solutions for its containment

(<http://www.cms.int/news/PRESS/nwPR2006/AvianFLU.pdf>).

On other CMS-related news, the Convention is initiating work to develop an international agreement on gorillas (http://www.cms.int/news/PRESS/nwPR2006/nw060206_saving_king_kong.htm). This agreement, to be signed by the relevant African Range States, will envisage a number of joint activities, programmes and projects to be undertaken by the Convention and the Range States to conserve existing populations of the species. Negotiating sessions will be organized in the months to come and it is expected that the agreement will be ready for signature by the end of 2008. Other initiative partners include UNEP's Great Apes Survival Project and UNESCO.

► FORESTS, DESERTS AND LAND

INTERNATIONAL TROPICAL TIMBER AGREEMENT, 2006 AGREED

After nearly three years, negotiators representing the membership of the International Tropical Timber Council reached agreement on the terms of the International Tropical Timber Agreement, 2006 (<http://www.iisd.ca/forestry/itto/itta4/>; <http://www.unctad.org/Templates/Page.asp?intItemID=3676&lang=1>). The ITTA, 2006 was agreed to on 27 January in Geneva and is expected to enter into force in 2008. It will then remain in effect for ten years with possible renewal for an additional eight years. The new agreement retains ITTO's

longstanding objectives to promote both the tropical timber trade and sustainable forest management. It also includes new provisions that will allow donors to earmark funds for specific projects and that will stabilize operational funding through assessed contributions of all members.



Amb. Carlos Antonio da Rocha Paranhos, President of the UN Conference for the Negotiation of a Successor Agreement to the International Tropical Timber Agreement, 1994

reconstituting the international arrangement on forests (IAF) (<http://www.iisd.ca/forestry/unff/unff6/>; <http://www.un.org/esa/forests/>). Although no final decisions were reached at UNFF-6, delegates did generate a negotiating text that contains new language on the function of the international arrangement on forests, a commitment to convene UNFF biennially after 2007, and a request that



Jose Antonio Ocampo, UN Under Secretary General for Economic and Social Affairs

UNFF-7 (16-27 April 2007) adopt a non-legally binding instrument on all types of forests. UNFF-6 also set four global objectives for the IAF: reverse the loss of forest cover worldwide through sustainable forest management (SFM), including protection, restoration, afforestation and reforestation; enhance forest-based economic, social and environmental benefits and the contribution of forests to the achievement of internationally agreed development goals; increase significantly the area of protected forests worldwide and other areas of sustainably managed forests; and reverse the decline in ODA for SFM and mobilize significantly increased new and additional financial resources from all sources for the implementation of SFM.

CCD ORGANIZES WORKSHOP ON CIVIL SOCIETY PARTICIPATION AND COMMENTS ON REPORT OF THE UN BOARD OF AUDITORS

Sixty-eight representatives from NGOs, national and local government and UN or-

ganizations gathered in Rome, Italy, from 19-20 January 2006, to discuss "Combating desertification and poverty in drylands: Promoting the participation of civil society and decentralized cooperation in the framework of the UNCCD implementation" (<http://www.unccd.int/workshop/rome2006/menu.php>). The Secretariat of the Convention to Combat Desertification helped organize this workshop, which was the first official event in the framework of the celebration of the 2006 International Year of Deserts and Desertification (IYDD; <http://www.iydd.org>). The 25 NGOs at the workshop developed a declaration that conveys their concern about delays in implementing national action programmes to combat desertification (NAPs) and concern that there is "little methodological rigour in the process for examining the Convention's implementation." They called on countries to complete their NAPs and demanded greater efficiency in the examination of implementation (http://www.unccd.int/workshop/rome2006/docs/NGOs_declaration-eng.pdf).

The CCD has also prepared a response (http://www.unccd.int/secretariat/docs/audit_recommendations.pdf) to the report of the United Nations Board of Auditors and the audited financial statements for the biennium 2002-2003 (ICCD/COP(7)/2/Add.5 (A)) ([http://www.unccd.int/cop/officialdocs/cop7/pdf/2add5\(a\).eng.pdf](http://www.unccd.int/cop/officialdocs/cop7/pdf/2add5(a).eng.pdf)), which had been prepared for COP-7. The response contains comments by the Secretariat regarding the Board of Auditors' recommendations and notes on the status of implementation of the recommendations.

GUEST ARTICLE (cont.)

UNEP has been supporting work on Article 6 for over 10 years. Today its Article 6 programme has four priorities:

1 – Building national and regional outreach programmes. UNEP is supporting a dozen governments in Africa, Asia and Europe that are committed to launching their own Article 6 outreach programmes. These national projects start by conducting a needs assessment, building a domestic network of interested stakeholders and then initiating priority activities.

2 – Reaching out to key target groups. UNEP's projects with India's Tata Energy Research Institute (TERI), Scouts Canada and the South African Scout Association all aim to promote climate change awareness among youth. UNEP is also training journalists from developing countries to help them improve and expand their climate change coverage.

3 – Promoting the findings of the IPCC. UNEP promotes the use of IPCC information through its series of Vital Climate Graphics, the press, fact sheets, simplified guides and outreach seminars.

4 – Supporting the Article 6 process. UNEP has established a partnership on Article 6 with the Secretariat of the Climate Change Convention. In addition to organizing side events at Convention meetings, it has provided financial and logistical support to the three regional workshops on Article 6 requested by the Parties.

Read Full Article:
<http://www.iisd.ca/mea-1/guestarticle1.htm>

Editor's note:

MEA Bulletin invites articles from practitioners, MEAs and academics on issues that are of interest across the MEA community. Please contact the Research Editor, lynn@iisd.org, for further information and article

► CLIMATE AND ATMOSPHERE

UN CLIMATE CONFERENCE GETS NEW PRESIDENT; BUREAU AND KYOTO BOARDS MEET

Canada's new Environment Minister Rona Ambrose has replaced her predecessor Stéphane Dion as the President of the Conference of the Parties to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and the Conference of the Parties serving as the Meeting of Parties to the Kyoto Protocol through to November 2006 (http://unfccc.int/files/parties_and_observers/notifications/application/pdf/notice_060221_cop_president.pdf). Ambrose assumed the environment portfolio following the recent election of a Conservative government in Canada. Ambrose was scheduled to meet with UN climate officials in Bonn in late February (Canadian Press, 24 February 2006: <http://www.canada.com/topics/news/national/story.html?id=fd0f938d-dc1c-44a1-938b-65ff7b90dade&k=79242>).

COP President Ambrose chaired the 27 February 2006 meeting of the Bureau of the Conference of the Parties, during which the Bureau accepted the offer of the Government of Kenya to host COP 12 and COP/MOP 2 in Nairobi at the Moi International Sports Centre from 6-17 November 2006 (<http://unfccc.int/2860.php>).

The Executive Board of the Kyoto Protocol's Clean Development Mechanism met for its 23rd meeting, from 22-24 February, to discuss various work plan issues (<http://cdm.unfccc.int/EB/Meetings/023>). Prior to that, the new Executive



Rona Ambrose, Canada's new Minister of the Environment (Photo courtesy UNFCCC)

Board of the Joint Implementation mechanism held its first meeting, from 2-3 February (http://ji.unfccc.int/Sup_Committee/Meetings).

The UNFCCC secretariat has also published the provisional agendas and organization of work for the upcoming 24th sessions of the UNFCCC subsidiary bodies in May 2006: <http://unfccc.int/meetings/sb24/items/3648.php>.

OZONE SECRETARIAT RELEASES REPORTS FROM RECENT MEETINGS AND THE AGENDA FOR THE WORKSHOP ON THE IPCC/TEAP SPECIAL REPORT

The Ozone Secretariat has released the report of the 35th meeting of the Implementation Committee under the Non-Compliance Procedure for the Montreal Protocol, held from 7-9 December 2005 in Dakar, Senegal (http://hq.unep.org/ozone/Meeting_Documents/impcom/35impcom-10.e.pdf), the report of the Seventh meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Vienna Convention and the Seventeenth Meeting of the Parties to the Montreal Protocol, held from 12-16 December 2005 in Dakar, Senegal (http://hq.unep.org/ozone/Meeting_Documents/mop/17mop/17mop-11.e.pdf) and the agenda for the July 2006 Ozone Secretariat Workshop on the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change/ Technology & Economic Assessment Panel (IPCC/TEAP) Special Report. The workshop is aimed at developing a list of practical measures arising from the report and to consider the cost-effectiveness of such measures. The Ozone Secretariat has also made technical and policy-focused summaries of the full IPCC/TEAP Special Report, on issues related to hydrofluorocarbons and perfluorocarbons, available (http://hq.unep.org/ozone/Meeting_Documents/ipcc/index.asp).

► WATER, WETLANDS AND COASTS

WORKING GROUP DISCUSSES MARINE BIODIVERSITY IN AREAS BEYOND NATIONAL JURISDICTION

The *Ad Hoc* Open-ended Informal Working Group of the General Assembly to study issues relating to the conservation and sustainable use of marine biological diversity beyond areas of national jurisdiction met from 13-17 February 2006, at UN headquarters in New York (<http://www.iisd.ca/oceans/marinebiodiv/>). Participants agreed on the need for short-term measures to address illegal, unregulated and unreported fishing and destructive fishing practices as the most urgent threats to marine biodiversity, as well as institutional coordination. Many delegates also agreed that there should be an ongoing process to advance discussions

on sharing the benefits from marine genetic resources, avoiding the adverse impacts of marine scientific research on marine biodiversity, and facilitating the establishment of high seas marine protected areas.

COOPERATION BETWEEN RAMSAR AND BARCELONA CONVENTIONS ANNOUNCED, REPORTS RELEASED

Peter Bridgewater, Ramsar Secretary General, and Paul Mifsud, Coordinator of the Convention for the Protection of the Marine Environment and the Coastal Region of the Mediterranean (Barcelona Convention), signed a new memorandum of cooperation on 7 February 2006, during the UN Environment Programme Governing Council meeting taking place in Dubai. This MOC su-

persedes the two conventions' MOC of 2001 (http://www.ramsar.org/moc/key_barcelona_moc_2006.htm).

Ramsar has also recently released a number of reports, including the compilation by the Ramsar Secretariat's Americas team of a listing of all of the projects involving mangroves that have been supported by the Ramsar Convention through its Wetlands for the Future Fund for the Americas and the Ramsar Small Grants Fund for developing countries in all of the regions (http://www.ramsar.org/types_mangroves_projects.pdf)

Also available is a report of the Panama Bay Ramsar Site Workshop, which was held from 12-16 December 2005 to familiarize the local Chinina and Aquendo communities with vari-

► WATER, WETLANDS, OCEANS AND COASTS



L-R: Paul Mifsud and Peter Bridgewater (Photo courtesy Ramsar)

ous tools to understand and use their wetland wisely (in Spanish: http://www.ramsar.org/wn/w.n.panama_tallerdemanejo_s.htm). The workshop covered topics including the sustainable use of mangroves, the environmental problems of wetlands, and options for their management.

One of Ramsar's partner organizations, Wetlands International, and the South African National Biodiversity Institute (SANBI) organized an international workshop on wetlands, water and livelihoods from 30 January - 2 February 2006 in St. Lucia, South Africa, which included a demonstration visit to a Working for Wetlands project site and ended with the celebration of World Wetlands Day (http://www.ramsar.org/wn/w.n.southafrica_stlucia2006.htm).

GPA PREPARES REPORT ON FINANCING CONSERVATION OF PERSGA

The Regional Seas Coordination Office and the Coordination Office of the Global Programme of Action for the Protection of the Marine Environment from Land-based Activities (GPA) of UNEP, in cooperation with the Regional Organization for the Conservation of the Environment of the Red Sea and Gulf of Aden (PERSGA), have prepared a report on "Financing for the Environmental Conservation of the Red Sea and the Gulf of Aden (PERSGA)." The report presents available options for increasing sustainable financing for the implementation of PERSGA activities at all levels (http://www.gpa.unep.org/document_lib/en/pdf/unep_persga_finance.pdf).

► SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

CSD SECRETARIAT RELEASES ORGANIZATION OF WORK, SECRETARY-GENERAL'S REPORTS AND CASE STUDIES FOR CSD-14

The CSD Secretariat has released a draft organization of work for the May 2006 CSD session, containing detailed descriptions of all events to take place during CSD-14 as well as an identified "purpose" for each day's activities (http://www.un.org/esa/sustdev/csd/csd14/orgOfWorkCSD_14.pdf). Advance, unedited versions of the Secretary-General's reports on energy, industrial development, air pollution/atmosphere and climate change, an integrated review of the thematic cluster and an overview of progress towards sustainable development are available at http://www.un.org/esa/sustdev/documents/docs_csd14.htm. The CSD Secretariat is also collecting case studies related to the thematic topics on the CSD-14 agenda. Countries are invited to share their experiences by submitting relevant case studies. The Secretariat has made available case studies searchable by topic and country/organization (<http://www.un.org/esa/sustdev/csd/casestudies/caseStudies.htm>).

► INTERGOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS

UNEP GOVERNING COUNCIL CONSIDERS ENERGY AND GOVERNANCE, APPROVES CHEMICALS PLAN; DEC SCOPES OUT MEA COMPLIANCE AND ENFORCEMENT ISSUE

UNEP's ninth Special Session of its Governing Council and Global Ministerial Environment Forum (7-9 February 2006, Dubai, United Arab Emirates) considered energy and climate change issues as a contribution to the upcoming session of the Commission on Sustainable Development. The Council session immediately followed the International Conference on Chemicals Management, which concluded negotiations on a "strategic approach to international chemicals management" (SAICM), which UNEP's Governing Council endorsed. Participants also discussed environmental governance, focusing in particular on the question of universal membership of the Governing Council and the proposal by France and the EU to transform UNEP into a UN Environmental Organization, although no agreement was reached (<http://www.unep.org/gc/gcss-ix/>; <http://www.iisd.ca/unepgc/unepss9/>).

Discussions on international environmental governance also will be taken up by the newly established High-level Panel on UN System-wide Coherence in the areas of Humanitarian

Assistance, the Environment and Development, which aims to examine a range of options on how to strengthen the coordination of UN operational activities. The panel is expected to complete its work and present its recommendations to the next session of the General Assembly in September 2006 (<http://www.un.org/News/Press/docs/2006/sgsm10349.doc.htm>).

UNEP's Division of Environmental Conventions (DEC) organized in January 2006 a High-Level Meeting on envisioning the next steps for MEA compliance with and enforcement of MEAs (<http://www.unep.org/dec/>; <http://www.iisd.ca/yimb/unepmea/>). Representatives from MEA secretariats, governments and civil society gathered in their personal capacities to discuss the tech-



Participants during the High-Level Meeting on Envisioning the Next Steps for Compliance with and Enforcement of MEAs held in Colombo, Sri Lanka

nical aspects of compliance and enforcement and to search for potential legal, structural and institutional innovations that could enhance implementation of MEAs. Based on its two days of deliberations, the High-Level Meeting developed a Chair's Summary, which identified key challenges to the effective implementation, compliance with and enforcement of MEAs that could be addressed by UNEP and in collaboration with its partners. These challenges include the need to: reinforce national measures to enhance national implementation; involve and engage all stakeholders throughout the negotiation and in the implementation of MEAs; mainstream environmental protection into economic development and poverty reduction issues and use these policies as an entry point for the effective national implementation of MEAs; demonstrate the value of ecosystem services and extended cost-benefit analyses; invest in human resources dealing with the implementation of MEAs, specifically the training of personnel and officials dealing with cross-cutting issues such as parliamentarians, judges, prosecutors, customs officials, police officers, etc.; and harmonize and enhance synergies and inter-linkages in the implementation of MEAs, such as through clustering issues and MEAs and national reporting.

▶ CHEMICALS AND WASTES

BASEL CONVENTION BUREAU CONSIDERS ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS, SYNERGIES STUDY; SECRETARIAT ORGANIZES REGIONAL MEETING

The second meeting of the expanded Bureau of the seventh Conference of Parties (COP-7) to the Basel Convention on the Control of Transboundary Movements of Hazardous Wastes and their Disposal convened in Geneva from 14-15 February 2006, ahead of the fifth Open-ended working group (OEWG-5), which is scheduled for 3-7 April 2006, in Geneva (<http://www.basel.int/meetings/frsetmain.php?meetingId=2&sessionId=31&languageId=1>). Among the financial and administrative matters taken up by the Bureau were: the proposed format and contents of the budget to be submitted to OEWG-5; the Basel Convention Resource Mobilization Strategy and the examination of Article 14; and sustainable support to the Basel Convention Regional Centres. On the study of synergies with other chemicals-related secretariats, which was prepared following relevant decisions by Parties to the Stockholm and Rotterdam Conventions, the expanded Bureau recommended placing the examination of synergies and cooperation on the Basel Convention agenda. Accordingly, the issue will be under consideration at OEWG-5.

The Secretariat to the Basel Convention prepared the "Regional Workshop Aimed at Promoting Ratification of the Basel Protocol

on Liability and Compensation for Damage Resulting from Transboundary Movements of Hazardous Wastes and their Disposal," which took place in Warsaw, Poland, from 18-20 January 2006. Participants learned about the history of the Convention, key elements of the Protocol, elements of civil liability under participants' domestic regimes, EU legislation on transboundary movements of waste, difficulties with respect to ratification and implementation of the Protocol, and financial limits and insurance issues. Participants suggested that the Secretariat of the Basel Convention begin a dialogue with the EU aimed at identifying common ground and discrepancies between the Liability Protocol and the EU law on liability, as well as the possible solutions for the ratification of the Liability Protocol by EU Member States (<http://www.basel.int/legalmatters/regworkshops/poland/report.doc>).

ROTTERDAM REVIEW COMMITTEE CONSIDERS CHRYSOTILE ASBESTOS, OTHER CHEMICALS

The Rotterdam Convention's Chemical Review Committee (CRC) has met for a second time, discussing chrysotile asbestos and various other chemicals. The CRC of the Rotterdam Convention on the Prior Informed Consent Procedure for Certain Hazardous Chemicals and Pesticides

in International Trade took place in Geneva from 13-17 February 2006. The meeting: agreed to the text of the draft decision guidance document for chrysotile asbestos and will submit it to the Conference of the Parties at its third meeting for a decision on possible inclusion of chrysotile asbestos in Annex III of the Convention; recommended that the requirements of the Convention for inclusion of both endosulfan and tributyltin had been met and agreed that work would start on drafting a decision guidance document; and agreed that one of the notifications under consideration met the requirements of annex II for the chemicals alachlor, mirex, cyhexatin and dicofol (as soon as a second notification that meets the requirements of annex II is submitted, a decision guidance document will be drafted). Participants also discussed the content of papers on chemicals assessed or regulated under the Stockholm Convention or the Montreal Protocol and how these should be managed under the Rotterdam Convention (<http://www.pic.int/en/ViewPage.asp?id=409>).

The Secretariat has released a paper entitled "Risk evaluations conducted under the Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer and the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants," as requested by the second Conference of the Parties (<http://www.pic.int/incs/crc2/d4/English/CRC2-4.doc>)

▶ COMINGS AND GOINGS

- Maged Younes has been appointed as the **new Head of the UNEP Chemicals Branch** in Geneva. Younes has also served as the Chief of the Assessment of Risks and Methodologies at the International Programme on Chemical Safety (IPCS).
- Elisabeth Bask-Rundquist, who was the Senior Programme Manager of Forest Affairs with the **UNFF**, has taken the position of Director, Strategic Programmes, with the **UNCCD's Global Mechanism**.
- Daniele Violetti has taken the position of **Lead Officer, CDM - Registration and Issuance Unit, UNFCCC**. He previously worked on technology transfer issues within the UNFCCC Secretariat.
- Cyrie Sendashonga, **Senior Programme Officer for Biosafety**, has left the CBD Secretariat after more than seven years (<http://www.biodiv.org/doc/notifications/2006/ntf-2006-009-bs-en.pdf>).
- The **World Trade Organization has appointed its Chairpersons for 2006**. Following the appointments agreed to on 8 February, the TRIPs Council will be chaired by C. Trevor Clarke (Barbados), the Committee on Trade and Environment by Shree Baboo Chekitan Servansing (Mauritius), and the Special Session of the Committee on Trade and Environment by Toufiq Ali (Bangladesh). Full list of chairpersons: http://www.wto.org/english/news_e/pres06_e/pr433_e.htm

▶ KEY UPCOMING MEA MEETINGS

- **VIRTUAL CURITIBA BIODIVERSITY CONFERENCE:** 20 February-20 March 2006. The CBD Secretariat is organizing this online consultation process, which will gather opinions on how to achieve the 2010 biodiversity target. The outcome will be forwarded to the eighth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the CBD. <http://2010.biodiv.org>
- **WORLD BANK ENERGY WEEK 2006: "CLEAN ENERGY FOR DEVELOPMENT":** 6 -8 March 2006. Washington, DC, US. The World Bank's Energy Week 2006 will focus on clean energy for achieving development. <http://www.worldbank.org/energy/energyweek>
- **BIO SAFETY PROTOCOL COP/MOP-3:** 13-17 March 2006. Curitiba, Brazil. The third meeting of the Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety is organized by the CBD Secretariat. <http://www.biodiv.org/doc/meeting.aspx?mtg=MOP-03>
- **CBD EXPERT WORKSHOP ON PROTECTED AREAS:** 17-18 March 2006. Curitiba, Brazil. This workshop, which is organized by the CBD Secretariat, will discuss implementation of the CBD work programme on protected areas. <http://www.biodiv.org/doc/meeting.aspx?mtg=PAWS-01>
- **CBD COP-8:** 20-31 March 2006. Curitiba, Brazil. The eighth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity, organized by the CBD Secretariat, will include a ministerial segment, to be held from 26-29 March. <http://www.biodiv.org/doc/meeting.aspx?mtg=COP-08>