



RECENT MEA ACTIVITIES

► BIODIVERSITY AND WILDLIFE

CBD AND RAMSAR SIGN JOINT WORK PLAN



Ahmed Djoghlaif, Executive Secretary of the Convention on Biological Diversity, and Peter Bridgewater, Secretary General of the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands, set a new standard for collaboration between MEAs through the signing of a joint work plan for the two conventions. Photo courtesy of Ramsar.

A new draft joint work plan of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) and the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands was signed in January 2007, in Montreal, Canada. The work plan runs until 2010, the date by which countries are to have realized a reduction in the rate of loss of biodiversity to meet the 2010 biodiversity target. The work plan, which emphasizes communication and public awareness and addresses institutional weaknesses and capacity-building, will be presented to the Conference of the Parties (COP) of each convention for approval. (<http://www.biodiv.org/doc/press/2007/pr-2007-01-09-ramsar-en.pdf>).

The CBD will organize several meetings during the January-July 2007 period, including: the meeting of the group of technical experts on an internationally recognized certificate of origin/source/legal provenance (22-25 January 2007, in Lima, Peru); the third meeting of the Working Group of liability and redress in the context of the Biosafety Protocol (19-23 February 2007, in Montreal, Canada); the third meeting of the Compliance Committee under the Biosafety Protocol (5-7 March 2007, in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia); the meeting of the *Ad hoc* technical expert group on the review and implementation of the programme of work on forest biodiversity (28 May-1 June 2007, in Rome, Italy); the 12th meeting of the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice (2-6 July 2007, in Paris, France); and the second meeting of the Working Group on review of implementation of the Convention (9-13 July 2007, in Paris, France).

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RESEARCH AND RESOURCES

UNITED NATIONS FRAMEWORK CONVENTION ON CLIMATE CHANGE HANDBOOK

(UNFCCC Secretariat, December 2006)
This 220-page handbook is intended as a "reference document linking the Convention and the decisions through which it has been implemented." It aims to assist Parties, researchers and others interested in the international climate change regime and negotiations (http://unfccc.int/essential_background/background_publications_htmlpdf/items/2625.php).

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GUEST ARTICLE

European Countries Start Common Work Under the Protocol on Water and Health to Improve Water Management and Curb Water-Related Diseases

By Francesca Bernardini, United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE), and Roger Aertgeerts, Regional Office for Europe of the World Health Organization (WHO)

Abstract

The first meeting of the Parties to the Protocol on Water and Health to the Convention on Protection and Use of Transboundary Watercourses and International Lakes will be held in Geneva from 17 to 19 January 2007.

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The *MEA Bulletin* © is a publication of the International Institute for Sustainable Development (IISD) <info@iisd.ca>, publishers of the *Earth Negotiations Bulletin* © <enb@iisd.org>. This issue was researched and written by Soledad Aguilar, Melanie Ashton, Alice Bisiaux, Reem Hajjar, Amber Moreen, Renata Rubian, Chris Spence, Elsa Tsoumani, Cecilia Vaverka and Lynn Wagner, Ph.D. The Digital Editor is Diego Noguera. The Editor is Lynn Wagner, Ph.D. <lynn@iisd.org>. The Deputy Director of IISD Reporting Services is Chris Spence and the Director of IISD Reporting Services is Langston James "Kimo" Goree VI <kimo@iisd.org>. The *MEA Bulletin* is published by IISD in cooperation with UNEP's Division of Environmental Law and Conventions (DEL/C). Opinions expressed in *MEA Bulletin* are those of the authors and not the publishers. Excerpts from the *MEA Bulletin* may be used in non-commercial publications with appropriate academic citation. For information on IISDRS publications, including requests to provide reporting services, contact the Director of IISD Reporting Services at <kimo@iisd.org>, +1-646-536-7556 or 212 East 47th St. #21F, New York, NY 10017, USA.

RESEARCH AND RESOURCES *(cont.)***THE RAMSAR CONVENTION MANUAL: A GUIDE TO THE CONVENTION ON WETLANDS (RAMSAR, IRAN, 1971), 4th EDITION**

(Ramsar, December 2006) The Ramsar Manual was first prepared in 1994 and has been revised several times to account for subsequent developments. This fourth edition provides a 116-page overview of the Ramsar Convention and describes its history and present structures, the services it provides, the workings of the COP, the Standing Committee, the Scientific and Technical Review Panel, the Secretariat, and relations with other environmental institutions. The Manual also includes: brief descriptions to the guidance documents adopted by the Parties through COP-9 in 2005; a list of all the COP's Resolutions and Recommendations; and the text of the Convention (http://www.ramsar.org/lib/lib_manual2006e.pdf).

REMEMBERING THE MONTREAL PROTOCOL

(Technology Review, 2007) This paper, authored by David Rotman, outlines the history of our understanding of the depletion of the stratospheric ozone layer and its relationship to chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs). The paper goes on to analyze the similarities and differences between the process of reaching international consensus in the Montreal Protocol and the process of reaching consensus on the control of greenhouse gases (<http://www.technologyreview.com/Energy/17994/>).

LINKING TRADE, CLIMATE CHANGE AND ENERGY

(ICTSD, November 2006) This collection of issue briefs edited by Erwin Rose and Moustapha Kamal Gueye addresses the points of contact between trade liberalization and the mitigation of and adaptation to climate change, to ensure that domestic and international measures to address climate change and the international trade system are mutually supportive. Issue briefs summarize the links between trade, climate change and energy; explain some of the specific circumstances in Asia, especially China; and focus on bioenergy, looking both at the global picture and at experiences in Africa, Asia and Brazil (http://www.trade-environment.org/output/ictsd/resource/Energy_issuebriefs.pdf).

► BIODIVERSITY AND WILDLIFE

ASCOBANS MOP ELECTS TO MERGE ASCOBANS WITH CMS SECRETARIAT

On 12 December 2006, the Fifth Meeting of the Parties to the Agreement on the Conservation of Small Cetaceans of the Baltic and North Seas (ASCOBANS) met for a second session in The Hague, the Netherlands. At this meeting, eight of the ten Parties voted to merge the Secretariats of UNEP/ASCOBANS and UNEP/Convention on Migratory Species (CMS). On 31 December 2006, the ASCOBANS Secretariat therefore ceased to exist and the Secretariat of UNEP/CMS assumed the Secretariat's functions. The Executive Secretary of UNEP/CMS Robert Hepworth took over as Acting Executive Secretary to ASCOBANS on 1 January 2007 (<http://www.ascobans.org/index0401.html>). Negotiations on ASCOBANS were concluded in 1991 under the auspices of UNEP/CMS and the Agreement entered into force in 1994.

In other CMS-related news, Madagascar became the 101st Party to accede to the Convention as of 1 January 2007. Madagascar is also a signatory to the Agreement on the Conservation of African-Eurasian Migratory Waterbirds (http://www.cms.int/news/PRESS/nwPR2006/december/Madagascar_country_profile.pdf).

The CMS calendar of events for the January-June 2007 period includes the 14th meeting of the CMS Scientific Council, to be held from 14-17 March 2007, in Bonn, Germany.



Executive Secretary of UNEP/CMS Robert Hepworth.

CITES AUTHORIZES EXPORT QUOTAS FOR CAVIAR

On 9 January 2007, the CITES Secretariat published export quotas for caviar and other sturgeon products from the Caspian

Sea for 2007. In 2006, quotas were not authorized because the five States concerned – Azerbaijan, Iran, Kazakhstan, the Russian Federation and Turkmenistan – did not provide sufficient information about the sustainability of their sturgeon catch. The 2007 combined quotas for caviar exports are 15% lower than for 2005, following an agreement among the Caspian Sea States to reduce the combined catch quotas for the six sturgeon species, recognizing that sturgeon stocks have declined in recent years. However, quotas for beluga have not been published, as the information provided by the five range States is not yet complete. The Secretariat has granted the range States an additional month to provide the missing information before a final decision is made (<http://www.cites.org/eng/news/E-Press%20release%202007%20quotas.pdf>).

On 11 January 2007, the CITES Secretariat published a press release to express its disappointment at the announcement by the EU of an indefinite ban on imports of wild birds. As noted in the press release, "the EU ban has been adopted on the grounds that it will help prevent the spread of avian flu and other diseases in human beings, but as it only concerns the import of wild birds, it risks casting the wrong impression that the international bird trade is not effectively controlled. However, this trade is carefully regulated by the 169 member countries of CITES." The CITES Secretariat highlighted that the EU measure risks driving the market underground and making it less transparent; undermining the communities who depend on the environmentally sustainable trade in birds, and removing their economic incentives for protecting bird habitat (<http://www.cites.org/eng/news/press/index.shtml>).

Finally, the CITES Secretariat has published a notification on general information concerning COP-14, to be held from 3-15 June 2007, in The Hague, the Netherlands, as well as working documents submitted by Parties. The 55th and 56th meetings of the CITES Standing Committee will take place in conjunction with COP-14, on 2 June and 15 June respectively (<http://www.cites.org/eng/notif/2006/E076.pdf>; http://www.cites.org/eng/cop/14/raw_docs.shtml).

► SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

UNSD RELEASES REPORTS FOR CSD-15, INDICATORS FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

The UN Division for Sustainable Development (UNSD) has announced the release of advance, unedited versions of the Secretary-General's reports for the fifteenth session of the UN Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD-15), scheduled to take place from 30 April-11 May 2007. These documents present policy options and possible actions related to energy for sustainable development, industrial development,

air pollution/atmosphere, climate change and inter-linkages and cross-cutting issues. A report on major groups' priorities for action on these issues is also available (http://www.un.org/esa/sustdev/documents/docs_csd15.htm). These documents will feed into the 26 February-2 March 2007 Intergovernmental Preparatory Meeting as well as CSD-15.

UNSD has also released the third, revised set of indicators of sustainable development prepared for the CSD. New features of this third revision include the creation of a new set of 50

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RESEARCH AND RESOURCES (cont.)

FINANCIAL INFORMATION ENGINE ON LAND DEGRADATION (FIELD)

(Global Mechanism, 2007) The Global Mechanism of the UN Convention to Combat Desertification has released an updated and enhanced version of its Financial Information Engine on Land Degradation (FIELD), a knowledge management system for searching, sharing and harnessing information related to sustainable land management financing (<http://www.gmfield.info/english/Field/main.htm>).

► SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

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core indicators. These indicators will be incorporated into the 3rd edition of the "Blue Book" on CSD indicators, which will be published in 2007 (<http://www.un.org/esa/sustdev/natlinfo/indicators/isd.htm>).

From 19-20 December 2006, UNDSO collaborated with the Republic of Korea to organize a Technical Meeting related to the "Shared Learning and Review of the National Strategy for Sustainable Development (NSSD) of the Republic of Korea." This meeting will feed into the 12-16 March 2007 "Shared Learning and Review Workshop,"

during which experts from a number of Asian countries and international organizations will develop recommendations for the Republic of Korea regarding its NSSD (<http://www.un.org/esa/sustdev/natlinfo/nsds/tmKorea/index.htm>). UNDSO is also organizing the Third International Expert Meeting on the 10-Year Framework of Programmes on Sustainable Consumption and Production (Marrakech Process), which will meet from 26-29 June 2007 in Sweden (<http://www.un.org/esa/sustdev/sdissues/consumption/Marrakech/conprod10Yglobmeet.htm>).

► WATER, WETLANDS AND COASTS

RAMSAR SIGNS MOC, GAINS NEW PARTY AND PREPARES FOR MEETINGS

The Secretary General of the Ramsar Convention and the Director of UNEP's Regional Office for Europe, on behalf of the Interim Secretariat of the Carpathian Convention, signed a memorandum of cooperation (MOC) during the 13 December 2006 high-level segment of the First meeting of the Carpathian Convention, which took place in Kyiv, Ukraine. The anticipated areas of collaboration between these two bodies include: providing better information on wetland ecosystems; examining the desirability of designation of additional wetlands of international importance; integrating wetlands into river basin management and focusing on wetland restoration; building capacity and raising public awareness; and examining transboundary wetland ecosystems and possibilities for their joint management (http://www.ramsar.org/moc/key_carpathian_moc_2006.htm).



Frits Schlingemann, Director, UNEP Regional Office for Europe, signs MOC on behalf of UNEP Vienna - ISCC. Photo courtesy of Ramsar.

The Ramsar Secretariat also has announced that the accession instrument of Kazakhstan was received by the Director-General of UNESCO on 2 January 2007, so the Convention will enter into force for this country on 2 May 2007. The Convention's 154th Contracting Party's first Ramsar site, the "Tengiz-Korgalzhyn Lake System" in Akmola Oblast, was added to the List of Wetlands of International Importance by the former Soviet Union in October 1976, and has been redefined by Kazakhstan's authorities. The site, which includes the nature reserve itself around the lakeshore area plus a 2-km buffer zone around it, is host to a high number of migratory birds such as the Greater Flamingo and Dalmatian Pelican, and the White-headed Duck (http://www.ramsar.org/wn/w.n.kazakhstan_joins.htm).

During the coming months, the 35th meeting of the Ramsar Standing Committee will convene in Gland, Switzerland, from 14-16 February 2007. Subgroups related to COP-10,

Finance, the Strategic Plan, and the Management Working Group will also meet during this time. Some of the documentation for these meetings is available, the remainder will be posted in late January (http://www.ramsar.org/sc/35/key_sc35_agenda_papers.htm).

POLLUTION PREVENTION CONVENTION FOR SHIPS AMENDED, EAST ASIAN SEAS PARTNERSHIP CREATED

The International Maritime Organization (IMO) has announced that stricter rules entered into force on 1 January 2007 for Parties to the International Convention for the Prevention of Pollution from Ships, 1973, as modified by the Protocol of 1978 relating thereto (MARPOL 73/78). These amendments include: new rules on carrying vegetable oils in bulk by ship; regulations on the phasing-in of double hull requirements for oil tankers to protect the marine environment; and amendments to the International Bulk Chemical Code (http://www.imo.org/Newsroom/mainframe.asp?topic_id=4&doc_id=7446).

The IMO Secretariat provided support to the Partnerships in Environmental Management for the Seas of East Asia (PEMSEA), which organized the East Asian Seas (EAS) Congress 2006, from 12-16 December in Haikou City, People's Republic of China. PEMSEA is also supported by the GEF and provides a region-wide platform for dialogue, knowledge exchange, capacity building, strategic action and cooperation for the sustainable management and development of the seas of East Asia. The event culminated in the signing of the Haikou Partnership Agreement on the Implementation of the Sustainable Development Strategy for the Seas of East Asia and Operating Arrangements by 11 ministers and high-level officials from countries in the East Asian region. The accompanying Partnership Operating Arrangements were also signed by 12 PEMSEA stakeholder partners during the East Asian Seas Partnership Council meeting. These agreements transform PEMSEA into a fully-fledged regional partnership, featuring a decision-making body, a resource facility and a financial mechanism, to advance the sustainable development of the region's marine and coastal resources (<http://www.iisd.ca/ymb/easc2006/html/ymbvol131num5e.html>).

Activities of the IMO Secretariat in the next few months will include: the International Conference on Wreck Removal, which will consider for adoption a wreck removal convention from 14-18 May 2007, in Nairobi, Kenya; the fifteenth session of the Sub-Committee on Flag State Implementation, to be held from 4-8 June 2007, in London, UK; and the 56th session of the Marine Environment Protection Committee, which will also be held in London, UK, from 9-13 July 2007.

UNDOALOS RELEASES UNGA RESOLUTION

The UN Division for Oceans Affairs and the Law of the Sea (UNDOALOS) has released, as resolution 61/222, the draft resolution of the General Assembly adopted on 20 December 2006 (A/61/L.30) on "Oceans and the law of the sea." The resolution contains sections on, *inter alia*: implementation of the Convention and related agreements and instruments; capacity-building; meeting of States Parties; peaceful settlement of disputes; the Area; the continental shelf and the work of the Commission; maritime safety and security and flag State implementation; marine environment and marine resources; marine biodiversity; regular process for global reporting and assessment of the state of the marine environment, including socio-economic aspects; regional cooperation; and the activities of UNDOALOS. In the resolution, the General Assembly requests the Secretary-General to convene the eighth meeting of the Consultative Process in New York, US, from 25-29 June 2007, to address the topics "marine genetic resources" in 2007 and "maritime security and safety" in 2008. (http://www.un.org/Depts/los/reference_files/new_developments_and_recent_adds.htm). During the January-June 2007 period, UNDOALOS' activities will include preparing for and holding the Informal Consultations of States Parties to the UN Fish Stocks Agreement, scheduled to take place from 23-27 April 2007 in New York, US; and the Eighth Meeting of the UN Open-Ended Informal Consultative Process on Oceans and the Law of the Sea, which will also convene in NY from 25-29 June 2007.

GUEST ARTICLE (cont.)

The meeting is organized by UNECE and the WHO Regional Office for Europe, which are jointly servicing the Protocol, an innovative set up for multilateral environmental agreements.

The Protocol was adopted and signed by 36 countries at the third Ministerial Conference on Environment and Health, London, 1999. It entered into force in August 2005 and to date it has been ratified by 20 countries. The main aim of the Protocol is to protect human health and well being by better water management, including the protection of water ecosystems, and by preventing, controlling and reducing water-related diseases.

The Protocol is therefore a pioneering agreement linking social and environmental aspects and addressing health, development and poverty issues. As such, the Protocol is closely linked to the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), in particular Goal 4 to reduce child mortality and Goal 7 to ensure environmental sustainability. But it does even more: it offers a platform to go beyond the target of halving the proportion of people without sustainable access to safe drinking-water and basic sanitation by 2015, since it aims to grant access to drinking water and sanitation to everybody.

The Protocol displays innovative features of modern environmental law that will be strong assets for its implementation:

- It requests Parties to establish targets and target dates, tailored to their environmental, social and economic conditions, to reduce water-related diseases and promote sustainable water management. The Protocol also provides for the establishment of a mechanism for review of compliance of a non-confrontational, non-judicial and consultative nature.
- It includes provisions for international cooperation and international support for national action to support its implementation. The Protocol provisions on international cooperation could offer opportunities for the creation of a forum where low and middle-income countries can review the effectiveness of their investments in the areas related to the Protocol, and where donor countries can

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▶ INTERGOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS

UNGA RESUMES ENVIRONMENTAL GOVERNANCE CONSULTATIONS

The first meeting of the second round of UN General Assembly (UNGA) consultations on environmental governance will be held on 18 January 2007 at UN headquarters in New York, US. Two additional meetings are scheduled for 23 and 25 January 2007. These consultations constitute a separate process from that of the High-level Panel on System-wide Coherence, which also addressed environmental governance. Delegations have been asked to prepare their responses to a questionnaire that covers four areas: implementation at the country level; enhancement of global governance; funding; and partnerships. Subsequent to the January meetings, the Co-Chairs Enrique Beruga (Mexico) and Peter Maurer (Switzerland) will share member States' positions on environmental governance at the Global Ministerial Environment Forum in Nairobi in early February 2007. This round of UNGA consultations is expected to be concluded in May or June 2007 (<http://www.reformtheun.org/index.php/update/2773>).

UNEP CAMPAIGN HAS PLANTED MORE THAN 100,000 TREES, PLANS FOR BUSY 2007 UNDERWAY

UNEP's "Plant for the Planet: Billion Tree Campaign," which seeks to plant one billion

trees world-wide during 2007, has recorded pledges of 157,038,943 trees as of 14 January 2007, with 101,691 trees having been planted (<http://www.unep.org/billiontreecampaign/>).

Among the UNEP-related events that are scheduled for the January-June 2007 period is the Poverty and Environment Partnership's 10th meeting, in Nairobi, Kenya, from 30 January-1 February 2007. The overall theme for the proceedings will be "Country experiences in mainstreaming environment into national development processes." The Global Civil Society Forum (GCSF) will take place from 3-4 February 2007 in Nairobi, in conjunction with the 24th session of the UNEP Governing Council/Global Ministerial Environment Forum (GC-24/GMEF). The GCSF's programme of work is currently being developed with a view to increasing impact and interaction with the GC-24/GMEF. GC-24/GMEF will meet from 5-9 February 2007, and will focus its deliberations on, *inter alia*: emerging policy issues; coordination and cooperation with the UN system and civil society, international environmental governance; water policy and strategy; and UNEP's contribution to CSD-15. Organized by the Global Compact and UNEP Finance Initiative, the Principles for Responsible Investment will be launched in April 2007 in New York, US (<http://www.unep.org/Documents.Multilingual/Default.asp?DocumentID=303>).

▶ CHEMICALS AND WASTES

STOCKHOLM CONVENTION PREPARES FOR COP-3

The Secretariat for the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants (POPs) is organizing a number of meetings that will take place prior to COP-3 in Dakar, Senegal, from 30 April-4 May 2007. The second meeting of the provisional *ad hoc* technical working group for the global monitoring plan for POPs will convene from 29 January-2 February 2007, in Geneva, Switzerland, to review the effectiveness of the Convention on the basis of available scientific, environmental, technical and economic information. The meeting of the POP Review Committee (POPRC) inter-sessional working group chairs will convene, resources permitting, from 18-20 February 2007, in Geneva, Switzerland, to discuss the outline for risk management evaluation. The second meeting of the open-ended *ad hoc* working group on non-compliance will convene immediately prior to COP-3, from 25-27 April 2007, in Dakar, Senegal (<http://www.pops.int/>).

ROTTERDAM CONVENTION CONSULTS WITH FAO AND UNEP REGIONAL OFFICES

The Rotterdam Convention Secretariat participated in a Consultation with Regional Offices of the FAO and UNEP on Technical Assistance for Implementation of the Rotterdam Convention. The 4-8 December 2006 consultation

took place in Chiang Mai, Thailand, and was the third in an ongoing series of meetings to strengthen cooperation and collaboration



On behalf of the Rotterdam Convention Secretariat, Bill Murray opened the consultation with FAO and UNEP regional offices.

between the Secretariat and the FAO and UNEP Regional Offices in the regional delivery of technical assistance in support of the ratification and implementation of the Convention. Participants reviewed work undertaken in 2006, identifying success stories and needed improvements with a view to reflecting these lessons in activities planned for 2007, and developed an initial schedule of national, regional and sub-regional meetings for 2007. A similar meeting is planned for November-December 2007 in cooperation with the FAO sub-Regional Office for North Africa in Tunisia (<http://www.pic.int/proceedings/Tahiland/Final%20draft%20report%20dec%202006.pdf>).

For the January-June 2007 period, the Rotterdam Convention Secretariat will organize a regional awareness-raising workshop and consultation on the Rotterdam Convention from 29 January-2 February

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GUEST ARTICLE (*cont.*)

assist low and middle-income countries in meeting their self-defined needs.

At their first meeting, Parties will set the basis for future cooperation by adopting their programme of work for 2007-2009.

Further information on the Protocol is available on the UNECE and WHO Regional Office web sites (<http://www.unece.org/env/water/> and <http://www.euro.who.int/watsan>).

The full article can be accessed at <http://www.iisd.ca/mea-l/guestarticle19.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 Editor, lynn@iisd.org, for further information.

► CHEMICALS AND WASTES

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2007, in Nairobi, Kenya, for Ethiopia, Kenya, Madagascar, Tanzania and Uganda. The Rotterdam Convention's third Chemical Review Committee meeting will convene in Rome, Italy, from 19-23 March (<http://www.pic.int/home.php>).

BASEL CONVENTION RELEASES COP REPORT

The Basel Secretariat has released the advance, unedited report from COP-8, which took place in Nairobi, Kenya, from 27 November to 1 December 2006. Among the COP-8 decisions that have implications for the January-June 2007 period is the establishment of a 31 March 2007 deadline for proposals of items and the specific content pertaining to such items that could be addressed in an instruction manual on the prosecution of illegal traffic, as well as for submission of experiences and cases relevant to this manual (<http://www.basel.int/meetings/cop/cop8/docs/16e-uned.pdf>). Based on the outcome of COP-8, the Basel Secretariat also has released a message regarding the decision on

cooperation between the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm Conventions, highlighting the 31 January 2007 deadline for nominating representatives from the three Conventions to the *ad hoc* joint working group to study cooperation and coordination among the Conventions, as well as to submit comments on the supplementary report on cooperation prepared by the President of the Stockholm Convention (<http://www.basel.int/convention/communications/com201206.pdf>).

SAICM PREPARES FOR REGIONAL MEETINGS

The Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management (SAICM) Secretariat has released the report for the Central and Eastern Europe regional meeting on SAICM, which convened in Riga, Latvia, from 4-6 December 2006 (http://www.chem.unep.ch/saicm/meeting/cee/dec_06/default.htm), and is preparing for additional regional meetings for the Arab sub-region (1-2 April 2007, in Cairo, Egypt) and the Pacific sub-region (21-23 May 2007, in Bangkok, Thailand) (<http://www.chem.unep.ch/saicm/regionalmeetings.htm>).

► FORESTS, DESERTS AND LAND

UNFF SECRETARIAT POSTS EXPERTS REPORT, PREPARES FOR 2007 MEETINGS

The report of the UN Forum on Forests *ad hoc* expert group, which met in December 2006 to consider the content of the non-legally binding instrument (NLBI) on forests, is now available in an advance, unedited version. In the coming months, the Secretariat and UNFF-7 Bureau will consolidate this text based on all proposals made at the experts meeting, and the revised version of the text will be distributed prior to UNFF-7 (<http://www.un.org/esa/forests/pdf/ahegn/nlbi/ahegn-nlbi-report.pdf>).

The Secretariat also has posted the provisional agenda for the seventh session, which is planned for 16-27 April 2007. At this session, the Forum will consider its multi-year programme of work (MYPow) and the NLBI, among other agenda items. A multi-stakeholder dialogue is also planned for the session (<http://www.un.org/esa/forests/session.html>). Prior to this session, a Country-led Initiative on the Forum's MYPow will be held in Bali, Indonesia from 13-16 February 2007 (http://www.dephut.go.id/INFORMASI/UNFF/G_Info.htm).

ITTO TO CO-HOST COUNCIL SESSION, PLANS CONFERENCE ON BIOENERGY

The International Tropical Timber Organization (ITTO) Secretariat and the government of Papua New Guinea are preparing for the 42nd Session of the International Tropical Timber Council, to be held in Port Moresby from 7-12 May 2007 (<http://www.itto.or.jp/live/index.jsp>). Also in May, ITTO, with the German

government and the UN Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), will organize an international conference on wood-based bioenergy in Hannover, Germany, from 17-19 May 2007 (<http://www.itto.or.jp/live/PageDisplayHandler?pagelid=223&id=2733>).

UNCCD AND ITS GLOBAL MECHANISM CO-HOST MEETINGS, PLAN FOR 2007

The Secretariat for the UN Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) helped organize a Joint International Conference on "Desertification and the International Policy Imperative," which met from 17-19 December 2006, in Algiers, Algeria, at the conclusion of the 2006 International Year of Deserts and Desertification (IYDD). The conference built on outcomes from other IYDD events to consider policies needed for successful dryland management. Two signing ceremonies were organized at the conclusion of the meeting, during which high-level representatives endorsed a proposal requesting that 2010-2020 be named as a decade of deserts and desertification at the next session of the UN General Assembly, and six partner research institutes reflected their commitment to support an international master's degree programme for drylands at the United Nations University (<http://www.iisd.ca/africa/desert/jicd/>).

The Global Mechanism (GM) of the UNCCD co-organized an International Workshop on the Costs of Inaction and Investment Opportunities in Arid, Semi-arid and Dry Sub-humid areas. Participants at the workshop (4-5 December 2006, in Rome, Italy) discussed the need to quantify the economic and social outputs of efforts to combat desertification.



Opening session of the Joint International Conference - Desertification and the International Policy Imperative.

They stressed the importance of methodologies, such as cost-benefit analysis (CBA), to convince potential investors and politicians that rural development is a means of preventing desertification, with some speakers illustrating how CBA applied to certain projects to combat desertification has resulted in rates of economic return in excess of 30%. Several donors, including the World Bank and the French Agency for Development, announced their decision to support CBA of projects to combat desertification and agreed to share their methodologies and knowledge base (<http://www.global-mechanism.org/>).

Looking ahead, at the end of January the GM will host, along with the International Centre for Trade and Sustainable Development, a meeting to discuss ways of promoting investment in sustainable land management through market access and trade in the context of the new financial architecture and resource allocation patterns for development and poverty reduction (<http://www.global-mechanism.org/news--events/events/promoting-slm-through-trade-workshop/>). The UNCCD's Committee for the Review of the Implementation of the Convention is scheduled to hold its fifth session from 12-21 March 2007 in Buenos Aires, Argentina (<http://www.unccd.int/cop/cric5/menu.php>).

► CLIMATE AND ATMOSPHERE

MONTREAL PROTOCOL BODIES PREPARE FOR 20TH ANNIVERSARY

Numerous bodies will meet in the next six months in preparation for the upcoming 20th anniversary of the Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer (the Montreal Protocol). The Chemical Technical Options Committee will meet in February, the Methyl Bromide Technical Options Committee will meet from 19-23 March 2007 and the Medical Technical Options Committee will meet from 21-23 March 2007. In addition: the Technology and Economic Assessment Panel (TEAP) will meet from 27-30 March 2007; the Dialogue on key future challenges to be faced by the Montreal Protocol will take place 2-3 June 2007; the Open-ended Working Group of the Parties to the Montreal Protocol will take place 4-8 June 2007; and the Implementation Committee will meet from 9-10 June 2007 (<http://ozone.unep.org/Events/index.asp>).

UNFCCC SECRETARIAT POSTS 2007 SCHEDULE, DE BOER PROPOSES CLIMATE SUMMIT

The UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) Secretariat has posted the

meeting schedule for 2007, in light of decisions taken during the recent UN Climate Change Conference in Nairobi and during earlier meetings of the COP, Protocol, and subsidiary bodies. The schedule starts with a meeting of small island developing States in the Caribbean on the subject of adaptation, which is taking place in February. The subsidiary bodies to the UNFCCC and Kyoto Protocol are scheduled to meet separately, from 7-18 May 2007 in Bonn, Germany. Almost 20 other official meetings are already scheduled for 2007 (http://unfccc.int/meetings/unfccc_calendar/items/2655.php). In addition to the schedule of meetings, the Secretariat has identified 35 different issues and/or deadlines that will come up in 2007 and 2008 (http://unfccc.int/files/parties_and_observers/notifications/application/pdf/061206_mess_parties.pdf). In other news from the Secretariat, Executive Secretary Yvo de Boer has suggested that the new UN Secretary-General should consider holding a world summit on climate change in 2007 (<http://www.alertnet.org/thenews/newsdesk/L08837741.htm>).

IPCC LOOKS TO ADOPTION OF FOURTH ASSESSMENT REPORT

The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) has posted online the steps to be taken in the coming months to adopt the latest reports of its three Working Groups in the first half of 2007, and the Synthesis Report of its Fourth Assessment Report (AR4) in November 2007. Working Group I is expected to approve its report on "The Physical Science of Climate Change" at a meeting in Paris, France, in early February. Working Group II should finalize its report on "Impacts, Adaptation and Vulnerability" at a meeting in Brussels, Belgium, in early April. And Working Group III will approve its report on "Mitigation of Climate Change" at a meeting in Bangkok, Thailand, in early May. The final "Synthesis Report" will be adopted at the IPCC's 27th session in Valencia, Spain, in mid-November. The Secretariat's website was updated in early 2007 with detailed information on these meetings and the schedule of events (<http://www.ipcc.ch/>).



The 10th Session of IPCC Working Group I will convene in Paris, France.

► TRADE, FINANCE AND INVESTMENT

IFIs AND OTHER FINANCE BODIES PLAN 2007 CALENDARS

Trade and finance for sustainable development activities during the first half of 2007 will include the Spring Meetings of the World Bank Group and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) on 14-15 April 2007, and the meeting of the Global Environment Facility (GEF) Council on 4-8 June 2007. At this meeting, the GEF Council will consider and adopt funding strategies in all focal areas for the next four-year period (countries were in-

vited to comment on draft strategies by 15 January 2007), as well as operational guidelines for the application of the incremental cost principle, and steps for project cycle streamlining.

Within the UN, the Financing for Development Office is organizing its annual dialogue between ECOSOC and financing and trade institutions (the IMF, the World Bank, the WTO and the UN Conference on Trade and Development) on issues related to financing

for development and the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), to be held in New York, US, on 16 April 2007. Multi-stakeholder consultations will also be organized on: rethinking the role of national development banks; financing basic utilities for all; and strengthening the business sector and entrepreneurship in developing countries (<http://www.imf.org/external/am/index.htm>; <http://www.gefweb.org>; <http://www.un.org/esa/ffd/>).

► COMINGS AND GOINGS

- Miguel Palomares (Spain) has stepped up to become Director of the **International Maritime Organization's (IMO) Secretariat's Marine Environment Division** following the retirement of Jean-Claude Sainlos. Stefan Micallef (Malta) becomes Deputy Director of that Division and Head of its Sub-Division for Pollution Response and Technical Co-operation Co-ordination. The appointment became effective from 1 January 2007 (http://www.imo.org/Newsroom/mainframe.asp?topic_id=1472&doc_id=7445).
- **UNEP has named new Directors** for four of its Divisions: Sylvie Lemmet has been appointed Director of the Division of Technology, Industry and Economics (DTIE); Peter Gilruth has been appointed Director of the Division of Early Warning and Assessment (DEWA); Ibrahim Thiaw has been appointed Director of the Division of Environmental Policy and Implementation (DEPI); and Janos Pasztor has been appointed Chief of the Environment Management Group (EMG) Secretariat (IISDRS Sources and http://www.unep.fr/shared/docs/about/sl_appointment_en.pdf).

► KEY UPCOMING MEA MEETINGS

- **FIRST MEETING OF THE PARTIES TO THE PROTOCOL ON WATER AND HEALTH:** 17-19 January 2007. Geneva, Switzerland. <http://www.unece.org/env/water/whmop1/info.htm>
- **MEETING OF THE CBD GROUP OF TECHNICAL EXPERTS ON AN INTERNATIONALLY RECOGNIZED CERTIFICATE OF ORIGIN/SOURCE/LEGAL PROVENANCE:** 22-25 January 2007. Lima, Peru. <http://www.biodiv.org/meetings/default.shtml>
- **SECOND MEETING OF THE PROVISIONAL AD HOC TECHNICAL WORKING GROUP FOR THE GLOBAL MONITORING PLAN FOR POPS (GMP-TWG):** 29 January-2 February 2007. Geneva, Switzerland. <http://www.pops.int/documents/meetings/gmptwg/twg2/announcement.htm>
- **EXPLORATORY DIALOGUE ON PROMOTING SUSTAINABLE LAND MANAGEMENT THROUGH TRADE:** 31 January-1 February 2007. Geneva, Switzerland. <http://www.global-mechanism.org/news--events/events/promoting-slm-through-trade-workshop/>