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# MEA BULLETIN

A newsletter on the activities of key multilateral environmental agreements (MEAs) and their secretariats  
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## RECENT MEA ACTIVITIES

### ▶ BIODIVERSITY AND WILDLIFE

**CBD WORKING GROUP ON LIABILITY AND REDRESS PREPARES TO ENTER NEGOTIATING PHASE**



View of the dais during the opening plenary for the *Ad Hoc* Open-ended Working Group on Liability and Redress in the Context of the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety.

The third 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 convened from 19-23 February 2007, in Montreal, Canada. This group is scheduled to hold two more meetings before reporting to COP/MOP-4 in May 2008 in Bonn, Germany. At the February meeting, deliberations focused on a working draft prepared by the Co-Chairs synthesizing proposed texts and views submitted by governments and other stakeholders on approaches, options and issues identified (sections IV to XI) pertaining to liability and redress in the context of Article 27 of the Biosafety Protocol (UNEP/CBD/BS/WG-L&R/3/2). Delegates worked through the elements and options included in the Co-Chairs' synthesis and were asked to submit operational text. With an eye towards the end of the Working Group's mandate at COP/MOP-4, participants expressed satisfaction that this meeting had achieved progress in preparing to enter the negotiating phase at the Working Group's next meeting, which is scheduled to take place in Montreal in October 2007 (<http://www.iisd.ca/biodiv/ltlr3/>).

#### RESEARCH AND RESOURCES

##### **BILATERAL INVESTMENT TREATIES – IMPLICATIONS FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT AND OPTIONS FOR REGULATION**

(FES, February 2007) This report, authored by Luke Eric Petersen, summarizes discussions at the international workshop "Bilateral Investment Treaties – Implications for Sustainable Development and Options for Regulation," held in Berlin, Germany, on 10 December 2006, organized by the Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung (FES) ([http://www.fes-globalization.org/publications/ConferenceReports/FES%20CR%20Berlin\\_Peterson.pdf](http://www.fes-globalization.org/publications/ConferenceReports/FES%20CR%20Berlin_Peterson.pdf)).

*Continued on page 2*

#### GUEST ARTICLE

##### **Issues related to MEA Institutional Clustering**

*By Jerry Velasquez\**

##### **Abstract**

Although there have been numerous examples of MEA clustering at the implementation level that show immediate win-win benefits<sup>1</sup>, some experts<sup>2</sup> warn that clustering of functions alone will not be sufficient to strengthen coordination of the international environmental governance system. This would mean that a closer look at institutional clustering is necessary as part of the ongoing reform process within the UN.

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## RESEARCH AND RESOURCES (cont.)

**WHERE THE LAND IS GREENER: CASE STUDIES AND ANALYSIS OF SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION INITIATIVES WORLDWIDE**

(UNEP, 2007) This publication describes a wide range of technologies and approaches to soil and water conservation, based on 42 case studies from more than 20 countries around the world. It also provides an overall analysis of the study's results with policy points for decision makers and donors (<http://www.wocat.org/overviewbookPDF.asp>).

**UNLOCKING VALUE: THE SCOPE FOR ENVIRONMENTAL, SOCIAL AND GOVERNANCE ISSUES IN PRIVATE BANKING**

(UNEP FI, 2007) This report, issued by the UN Environment Programme Finance Initiative (UNEP FI) Asset Management Working Group, addresses the opportunities and barriers associated with environmental, social and governance inclusive investments in the private banking industry ([http://www.unepfi.org/fileadmin/documents/unlocking\\_value.pdf](http://www.unepfi.org/fileadmin/documents/unlocking_value.pdf)).

**THE RAMSAR CONVENTION ON WETLANDS: ASSESSMENT OF INTERNATIONAL DESIGNATIONS WITHIN THE UNITED STATES**

(Environmental Law Institute, February 2007) This article, authored by Royal Gardner and Kim Diana Connolly, presents background on the Ramsar Convention followed by an analysis of the results of a survey of the site managers and related people at all of the US's Ramsar sites, and concludes with recommendations for strengthening Ramsar within the US ([http://www.ramsar.org/wurc/wurc\\_gardner\\_elr2007.pdf](http://www.ramsar.org/wurc/wurc_gardner_elr2007.pdf)).

**LAST STAND OF THE ORANGUTAN: STATE OF EMERGENCY**

(Great Apes Survival Project, February 2007) This report highlights that the survival of orangutans and other rain forest wildlife in Indonesia is seriously endangered by illegal logging, forest fires including those associated with the rapid spread of oil palm plantations, illegal hunting and trade. The report calls for substantially strengthening Indonesia's own efforts with the rapid deployment of reconnaissance units, removal of illegal plantations, mining and agricultural development inside the parks and enhanced international law enforcement programmes against illegal logging (<http://www.unep-wcmc.org/resources/publications/LastStand.htm>).

## ► BIODIVERSITY AND WILDLIFE

**CBD SIGNS MOUs, BIOSAFETY PROTOCOL COMPLIANCE COMMITTEE HOLDS OPEN SESSION**

On 19 February 2007, the Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO), to formalize the relationship between the two institutions that has existed on an *ad hoc* basis since the establishment of the Secretariat in 1996 (<http://www.biodiv.org/doc/press/2007/pr-2007-02-19-icao-en.pdf>).

Establishing another partnership, on 22 February, the CBD Secretariat and the City of Montreal signed a MoU to link the city's Nature Museums with the Steering Committee of the Secretariat's Consortium of Scientific Institutions and Partners. The MoU aims to facilitate the development of and provide training programmes on strategic, technical and scientific issues for the effective implementation of the Convention (<http://www.biodiv.org/doc/press/2007/pr-2007-02-22-mou-en.pdf>).

In other news, the Secretariat has published draft documents for the 12th meeting of the



A Memorandum of Understanding between the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) and the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) was signed during the meeting in Montréal. L-R: Taieb Cherif, Secretary General of ICAO and Ahmed Djoghlaif, CBD Executive Secretary.

Convention's Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice (<http://www.biodiv.org/meetings/sbstta-12.shtml>).

With regard to the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety, on 6 February 2007 Costa Rica ratified the Protocol, bringing the number of Parties to 139 (<http://www.biodiv.org/biosafety/signinglist.aspx?sts=rtf&ord=dt#cr>).

The Protocol's Compliance Committee held its third meeting from 5-7 March 2007, in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. The Committee conducted this meeting in an open session (<http://www.biodiv.org/doc/meeting.asp?mtg=BSCC-03>).

**CITES SECRETARIAT PUBLISHES PROVISIONAL ASSESSMENTS OF COP-14 PROPOSALS**

The Secretariat of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) has published a provisional scientific and technical assessment of governments' proposals to be considered at the upcoming Conference of the Parties (3-15 June 2007, in The Hague, the Netherlands). An increased number of proposals address high-value marine and timber species. According to a Secretariat press release, "many of the proposals reflect growing international concern about the accelerating destruction of the world's marine and forest resources through overfishing and excessive logging." ([http://www.cites.org/eng/news/press\\_release.shtml](http://www.cites.org/eng/news/press_release.shtml); <http://www.cites.org/eng/cop/14/doc/E14-assess.pdf>; <http://www.cites.org/eng/cop/14/prop/index.shtml>).

Furthermore, the Secretariat has published the summary records of the 16th meeting of the Plants Committee, the 22nd meeting of the Animals Committee, and the 54th meeting of the Standing Committee (<http://www.cites.org/eng/com/pc/index.shtml>; <http://www.cites.org/eng/com/ac/index.shtml>; <http://www.cites.org/eng/com/SC/index.shtml>).

## ► SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

**CSD INTERGOVERNMENTAL PREPARATORY MEETING CONVENES**

The Intergovernmental Preparatory Meeting (IPM) for the fifteenth session of the Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD-15) took place from 26 February to 2 March 2007, at UN headquarters in New York, US. The IPM's role was to provide a forum to discuss policy options and possible actions to enable the implementation of measures and policies concerning energy for sustainable development, industrial development, air pollution/atmosphere and climate change – the thematic issues under consideration during the CSD-14/CSD-15 two-year "implementation cycle." The IPM conducted broad-based discussions to help identify relevant policy

options and actions, and convened sessions on small island developing States and inter-linkages and cross-cutting issues. Delegates' deliberations were reflected in a preliminary draft Chair's negotiating document, on which participants provided feedback. A revised Chair's negotiating document was distributed at the conclusion of the meeting. It is expected to form the basis for further discussions and negotiations during CSD-15 (30 April to 11 May 2007, in New York) (<http://www.iisd.ca/csd/csdint15/>).



CSD-15 Vice-Chair Jirí Hlaváček (Czech Republic) co-chaired a discussion on inter-linkages and cross-cutting issues (Photo courtesy of UNDESA)

GUEST ARTICLE (cont.)

**Pilot Work on MEA Clustering**

One clustering pilot launched through the International Environmental Governance (IEG) process is the global chemicals cluster, which includes the Basel, Stockholm and Rotterdam Conventions. Although implementation or functional level work for this cluster has been generally recognized and encouraged<sup>3</sup>, it is the institutional or administrative clustering approach where considerable debate still exists. At present, many countries have serious concerns about establishing a common secretariat for the three Conventions, based on the fear that specific issues, such as non-chemical wastes, could get lost in a broader, more general secretariat. Some countries generally support a joint secretariat head as a means to achieve financial savings and greater synergies, while others are concerned that a full merger of the three conventions' secretariats would create legal and political problems, in particular at the national level.

In parallel, there have been many initiatives at the national level with components attempting to either study or promote national clusters to assist MEA implementation. One interesting lesson from these initiatives, in particular from work done by the UN University, is that, unlike sectoral institutional committees or groups, the creation of cross-sectoral MEA bodies does not necessarily point to better coordination.

**One Size Does Not Fit All**

Lessons from national case studies on clustering tell us that cross-sectoral institutional set-ups, if not properly backed at the systemic level, will not be effective. For example, Palau, with an environmentally minded President, created an informal structure that has promoted coordination among stakeholders. The Cook Islands created a similar informal structure, but did not formalize procedures for consultation between this mechanism and the government's formal institutional structure, leading to difficulties in coordination. The Thailand and Malaysian experiences demonstrate that a drawback to concentrating MEA focal points in one agency is that the appropriate technical capacity for a specific agreement may be located in another ministry or agency. In such cases, efforts to centralize national focal points under one administrative division would not necessarily produce effective and efficient results. The case from the Philippines shows that there are many levels of coordination, including horizontal (among government line departments) vertical (between the

*Continued on page 4*

► TRADE, FINANCE AND INVESTMENT

**WORLD BANK APPROVES ENVIRONMENTAL CLEAN-UP PROJECT IN CHINA**

The World Bank approved on 27 February 2007 a loan of US\$147 million to fund the Second Shandong Environment Project in China. The project aims to support sustainable improvements in environmental conditions, such as shortages of water, inadequate wastewater collection and treatment, and lack of solid waste management of nine participating municipalities, cities and coun-

ties of Shandong Province on China's eastern coast. The Global Environment Facility (GEF) is also supporting the effort through a grant of US\$5 million for the reduction of land-based pollution by piloting septic tank waste management techniques (<http://web.worldbank.org/WBSITE/EXTERNAL/COUNTRIES/EASTASIAPACIFICEXT/CHINAEXTN/0,,contentMDK:21237786~menuPK:318956~pagePK:2865066~piPK:2865079~theSitePK:318950,00.html>).

► FORESTS, DESERTS AND LAND



UNFF-7 Chair Hans Hoogeveen (the Netherlands)

**BRIEFING ON UNFF-7 PREPARATIONS HELD**

A briefing on preparations for the seventh session of the UN Forum on Forests (UNFF-7) was held at UN headquarters in New York, US, on 5 March 2007. UNFF Chair Hans Hoogeveen (the Netherlands) briefed delegates on a Bureau meeting held earlier in the day, outlining its plans for the organization of UNFF-7's work during its 16-27 April 2007 session. Chair Hoogeveen indicated that two working groups are likely to be formed: one to focus on the non-legally binding instrument (NLBI) on all types of forests, and one to discuss the UNFF Multi-Year Programme of Work (MYPOW). He said the working groups will probably meet in parallel sessions, possibly beginning on 17 April. Chair Hoogeveen also noted that there would be Multi-Stakeholder Dialogues, probably on 18 and 23 April, as well as an event about the future launch of the International Year of Forests in 2011.

UNFF Director Pekka Patosaari then briefed delegates on the documentation that would be used as the basis for UNFF-7 discussions, including a "revised composite draft text" on an NLBI. Chair Hoogeveen indicated that a draft resolution on the MYPOW would probably be circulated at the end of March, and that all documents would be placed on the UNFF website (<http://www.un.org/esa/forests/session.html>).

Delegates were also briefed on the Country-led Initiative on the UNFF MYPOW held in February 2007, in Bali, Indonesia. Responding to the briefing on UNFF-7 preparations, several country representatives noted the importance of efficient organization of

work for UNFF-7, given its heavy workload (IISD sources).

**COUNTRY-LED INITIATIVE ADDRESSES UNFF MULTI-YEAR PROGRAMME OF WORK**

The Country-Led Initiative in Support of the MYPOW of the UNFF: Charting the Way Forward to 2015, met from 13-16 February 2007 in Nusa Dua, Bali, Indonesia. Over 150 experts from governments, international and regional organizations, and Major Groups gathered to explore, elaborate and develop a broader understanding of the possible concepts and elements to be included in the UNFF's new MYPOW. The meeting was also intended to provide UNFF-7 with guidance regarding: the structure and substance of the MYPOW; inter-linkages between the MYPOW and the NLBI on forests; strengthening the regional dimension in the work of the international arrangement on forests through the MYPOW; and possible approaches to accomplishing the global objectives on forests and the new principal functions of the UNFF. A Co-chairs' Summary Report was produced, which aims to provide a starting point for UNFF-7 deliberations on this topic (<http://www.iisd.ca/ymb/mypow>). Other documents recently released in preparation for UNFF-7 include the report of the Secretary-General on the MYPOW and a series of Major Group discussion papers (<http://www.un.org/esa/forests/session.html>).

**UNCCD PREPARES FOR CRIC**

In preparation for the fifth session of the Committee for the Review of the Implementation of the Convention (CRIC-5), which convenes from 12-21 March 2007 in Buenos Aires, Argentina, the Secretariat of the UN Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) has posted several documents, including the provisional agenda and documents related to the work of the *Ad Hoc* Working Group on improving the procedures for communication of information and the Intersessional Intergovernmental Working Group (IIWG). The IIWG-related document is a draft "Ten-Year Strategic Plan and Framework to Enhance Implementation of the UNCCD (2008-2018)" (<http://www.unccd.int/cop/officialdocs/cric5/doclist.php>).

GUEST ARTICLE (*cont.*)

central, provincial and local) and phases of MEA management (planning, negotiation, ratification and implementation), and coordination at one level does not necessarily translate to coordination at other levels.

\* Jerry Velasquez works for the UN. These are his personal views.

Read the Full Article at:  
<http://www.iisd.ca/mea-l/guestarticle22.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](mailto:lynn@iisd.org), for further information.

<sup>1</sup> For example, UNEP has pioneered the Green Customs concept since 2001 (see <http://www.greencustoms.org> for more information).

<sup>2</sup> Expert consultations on International Environmental Governance, 28-29 May 2001, Cambridge, UK (see <http://www.iisd.ca/sd/ieg/> for more information).

<sup>3</sup> Including encouragement to continue functional clustering work by the UN Coherence Panel report, 2006

## ▶ CHEMICALS AND WASTES

**CHEMICALS AND WASTE CONVENTIONS PREPARE FOR JOINT WORKING GROUP MEETING**

The Stockholm, Rotterdam and Basel Convention Secretariats are organizing the first meeting of the *ad hoc* joint working group (AHJWG), which is charged with preparing recommendations on enhanced cooperation and coordination among the three conventions. A dedicated website has been developed for the AHJWG and the provisional agenda for the 26-28 March 2007 meeting in Helsinki, Finland, has been posted (<http://ahjwg.chem.unep.ch/>).

**SAICM DRAFT BUSINESS PLAN PREPARED, CANADA PROPOSES REPORTING PROJECT**

The Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management (SAICM) Secretariat has requested comments by 9 March 2007 on the recently posted draft of the Quick Start Programme (QSP) business plan. The QSP Executive Board will consider the draft business plan at its 23-24 April 2007 meeting ([http://www.chem.unep.ch/saicm/qsp/business\\_plan.htm](http://www.chem.unep.ch/saicm/qsp/business_plan.htm)).

In other SAICM news, Canada has proposed a project to develop guidance for the SAICM Secretariat, in consultation with stakeholders, to assist in the development

of reporting modalities. The project will be a Canadian contribution to SAICM and is intended to inform deliberations and decision-making at the second session of the International Conference on Chemicals Management (ICCM), scheduled for 2009, along with other relevant international forums such as the UN Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD), where toxic chemicals are anticipated to be discussed in 2010-2011. The project will address the preparation of a baseline report, the development of indicators for subsequent progress reports, and arrangements for gathering information from stakeholders, which would be considered at the second session of the ICCM (<http://www.chem.unep.ch/saicm/Reporting/reporting.htm>).

**ROTTERDAM CONVENTION LISTS COUNTRIES WITH NATIONAL ACTION PLANS**

The Secretariat of the Rotterdam Convention has published a list of the 54 countries that have completed their national action plans. These plans define what needs to be done at the national level, by whom and when. They also identify priorities for follow up actions and areas where further technical assistance is required. The plans are available on the website (<http://www.pic.int/home.php?type=t&id=163&sid=1>).

## ▶ WATER, WETLANDS AND COASTS

**RAMSAR STANDING COMMITTEE MEETS, REPORT FROM HIMALAYAN FORUM RELEASED, NATIONAL LEVEL ACTIONS DETAILED**

The 35th meeting of the Ramsar Standing Committee took place from 12-17 February 2007, in Gland, Switzerland, with subgroup sessions convening to discuss the tenth Conference of the Parties (COP-10), Finance, the Strategic Plan, and Management, along with plenary sessions. Participants agreed that the theme for both COP-10, which is scheduled to take place in October-November 2008 in the Republic of Korea, and the 2008 World Wetlands Day will be "Healthy Wetlands, Healthy People." Additional decisions were taken to approve the Secretariat's Work Plan for 2007, endorse the draft Fourth Joint Work Programme with the Convention on Biological Diversity, and hold the 36th meeting of

the Standing Committee from 25-29 February 2008 in Switzerland ([http://www.ramsar.org/sc/35/key\\_sc35\\_decisions\\_e.htm](http://www.ramsar.org/sc/35/key_sc35_decisions_e.htm); [http://www.ramsar.org/sc/35/key\\_sc35\\_report.htm](http://www.ramsar.org/sc/35/key_sc35_report.htm)).

The Ramsar Secretariat has also released the report of the fourth meeting of the Himalayan High Altitude Wetlands Forum, which took place from 27-29 June 2006 in New Delhi, India, with the financial support of WWF International and Danone Evian Group. The Forum was organized around the theme "Capacity building for high altitude wetlands conservation and management" and considered, among other issues, the Andean Regional Initiative; high altitude lakes and wetlands and climate change; and tools and case studies for Ramsar sites management. The Kyrgyz Republic offered to host the next meeting of the Himalayan High Altitude Wetlands forum ([http://www.ramsar.org/mtg/mtg\\_himalaya\\_4th.htm](http://www.ramsar.org/mtg/mtg_himalaya_4th.htm)).

In other Ramsar news, the Secretariat has reported activities by Mali and Mexico to further the implementation of the convention. The government of Mali has established a National Ramsar Committee to oversee the conservation of wetlands in the country. The committee includes senior government representatives, university professors, government organizations and NGOs with expertise in the field of wetlands management. The committee's functions include: implement-

ing the National Wetlands Policy; preparing for the Ramsar COPs' sessions; coordinating fundraising efforts for wetland management; preparing and organizing World Wetlands Day; and establishing a collaborative framework for synergy with other MEAs to which Mali is a party ([http://www.ramsar.org/wn/w.n.mali\\_nrc2007.htm](http://www.ramsar.org/wn/w.n.mali_nrc2007.htm)).

Mexico's president, Felipe Calderón, announced measures to extend and strengthen the existing network of Natural Protected Areas in the country, including an increased budget to that end. The announcement included Mexico's Conservation Strategy 2007-2012, a decree to protect over 4,000 ha of mangroves near Cancún, and a decree to restore the hydrology of and prevent the further extraction of groundwater from the Cuatrociénegas Ramsar site in Coahuila ([http://www.ramsar.org/wn/w.n.mexico\\_compromisos\\_2007.pdf](http://www.ramsar.org/wn/w.n.mexico_compromisos_2007.pdf)).

In addition, new wetland sites have been announced. Hungary and Slovakia announced that two existing Ramsar sites would become transboundary sites in an effort to harmonize their management ([http://www.ramsar.org/wn/w.n.transboundary\\_hungary\\_slovakia.pdf](http://www.ramsar.org/wn/w.n.transboundary_hungary_slovakia.pdf)). Bosnia and Herzegovina has designated its second site, the Bardaca Wetland, which is an Important Bird Area situated in the floodplain of the Sava River near the border with Croatia ([http://www.ramsar.org/index\\_bulletin.htm](http://www.ramsar.org/index_bulletin.htm)).



High Altitude Wetland in the Himalayas (Photo courtesy of Ramsar)

## ► CLIMATE AND ATMOSPHERE

**OZONE SECRETARIAT RELEASES ASSESSMENT PANEL DOCUMENTS, CUSTOMS INITIATIVE YIELDS RESULTS**

The Ozone Secretariat has released several new documents, including a Primer for members of the Implementation Committee under the Non-compliance Procedure of the Montreal Protocol, a provisional agenda for the 27th Open-ended Working Group meeting (OEWG-27), the 2006 Assessments of the Halons and the Medical Technical Options Committees (HTOC and MTOC, respectively), and an advance copy of the 2006 Synthesis Report of the Scientific, Environmental Effects, and Technology and Economic Assessment Panels (TEAP). The HTOC Assessment, *inter alia*, notes the substantial progress made in phasing out halons in developing countries; discusses the need for more information to understand the inventories and emissions of halon 2402; and describes its estimates of halon 1211 and halon 1301 emissions and inventories. The MTOC Assessment discusses the availability of alternatives for metered-dose inhalers (MDIs) and the experience and status of transition to chlorofluorocarbon-free MDIs. The provisional agenda for OEWG-27 shows that the meeting will focus on, *inter alia*: essential-use exemptions; use of ozone-depleting substances as process agents; issues related to methyl bromide; the dialogue on future challenges to be faced by the Montreal Protocol; systems for monitoring transboundary movement of ozone-depleting substances (ODS); and TEAP's report on hydrochlorofluorocarbons (HCFCs). The Synthesis Report emphasizes that, although the Montreal Protocol is working, non-compliance with the Montreal Protocol could put the recovery of the ozone layer at risk and measures, including an accelerated phaseout of HCFCs and tighter controls on methyl bromide, could be taken to heal the ozone layer more quickly (<http://ozone.unep.org/highlights.shtml>).

In other news, an initiative to combat illegal trade in ODS that began in September 2006 has begun to result in the seizure of

illegal ODS across Asia. In a project initiated by China Customs and coordinated by UNEP's Regional Office for Asia and Pacific, customs officials from 18 countries have been trained and have since seized nearly 65 tons of illegally traded ODS in China, India, Thailand and other countries (<http://www.unepie.org/ozonation/information/mmcfiles/4847-e-skyholepatch2007.pdf>; <http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=21726&Cr=environment&Cr1=>).

**INDONESIA CONFIRMED AS UNFCCC COP-13 HOST, FUTURE MEETING SCENARIOS ADDRESSED**

Bali, Indonesia has been confirmed as the location for the thirteenth Conference of the Parties to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC COP-13) and third Meeting of the Parties serving as the Conference of the Parties to the Kyoto Protocol (COP/MOP-3) in December 2007. The COP Bureau accepted the Indonesian Government's offer during a meeting held in mid-February. The Bureau noted that additional investments in infrastructure will be required to hold the conference at the Bali International Conference Center and adjacent Nusa Dua facilities, and welcomed Indonesia's decision to build temporary structures ([http://unfccc.int/files/meetings/cop\\_13/application/pdf/070214\\_cop13\\_infonote.pdf](http://unfccc.int/files/meetings/cop_13/application/pdf/070214_cop13_infonote.pdf)).

In addition to news confirming the Bali conference, the UNFCCC Executive Secretary, Yvo de Boer, issued a document in late February addressing an organizational



UNFCCC Executive Secretary, Yvo de Boer

scenario and elements of the conference's provisional agenda. It also invited guidance on a possible venue for future conferences in 2008 and 2009, and on enhancing the participation of observer organizations. In addition, the document notes the Bureau's recent decision to set the date and venue for intersessional meetings of the fourth workshop under the dialogue on long-term cooperative action to address climate change, and the fourth session of the *Ad Hoc* Working Group on Further Commitments for Annex I Parties under the Kyoto Protocol. These will take place from 3-7 September 2007 in Vienna, Austria, subject to the completion of financial arrangements (<http://unfccc.int/resource/docs/2007/sbi/eng/09.pdf>).



Hans Jürgen Stehr, CDM Executive Board Chair

**CDM BOARD NAMES NEW CHAIR**

The Clean Development Mechanism's (CDM) Executive Board has elected a new chair. Hans Jürgen Stehr of Denmark takes over the role from José Domingos Miguez of Brazil. Stehr previously served as CDM Board Chair following his selection in 2003. Rajesh Kumar Sethi of India was named as Vice-Chair. Following his election, Stehr highlighted the progress made in the two years since the CDM began functioning, adding that the task now is to refine and improve the mechanism to see that it meets its full potential. The Board met from 14-16 February 2007, in Bonn, Germany (<http://cdm.unfccc.int/EB/029/index.html> and [http://unfccc.int/files/press/news\\_room/press\\_releases\\_and\\_advisories/application/pdf/20070207\\_eb29\\_cdm.pdf](http://unfccc.int/files/press/news_room/press_releases_and_advisories/application/pdf/20070207_eb29_cdm.pdf)).

## ► INTERGOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS

**CO-CHAIRS ARTICULATE NEXT STEPS ON UN ENVIRONMENTAL REFORM**

The Co-Chairs of the UN General Assembly consultations on the institutional framework for UN environmental activities, Berruga (Mexico) and Maurer (Switzerland), briefed UN Member States on 15 February 2007 at UN Headquarters, New York, US, discussing their attendance at the Global Ecological Governance Conference (2-3 February 2007, Paris, France) and the UN Environment Programme's (UNEP) Global Ministerial Environment Forum (4-9 February 2007,

Nairobi, Kenya) and indicated that a report will be posted shortly on <http://www.un.org/ga/president/61/follow-up/environmental-governance>. With respect to the subsequent steps in the consultation process and the formulation of an options paper, the Co-Chairs asked delegations to address two key issues: why it has been so difficult, within the present institutional framework, to implement the reforms agreed to in Bali and Cartagena; and what a more effective environmental framework ought to look like. Delegations were requested to submit their comments by 30 March 2007. Three briefing sessions with

leading authorities on UNEP, multilateral environmental agreements, and financing of environmental governance are scheduled to take place during the next few months (<http://www.centerforunreform.org/node/244>).

**UNEP TREE PLANTING CAMPAIGN REACHES HALF WAY MARK, REGISTRATION OPENS FOR E-LEARNING COURSE ON CLIMATE CHANGE**

UNEP's *Plant for the Planet: Billion Tree Campaign*, which seeks to encourage the

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## ▶ INTERGOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS

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planting of one billion trees worldwide during 2007, has reached more than 50% of its target, with 569,347,427 tree planting pledges having been recorded as of 6 March 2007, following a pledge of 250 million trees by the Mexican Ministry of Environment and Natural Resources. (<http://www.unep.org/billiontreecampaign/CampaignNews/Half-WayMark.asp>).

### Target

1,000,000,000

### Pledged

569,347,427

### Planted

3,527,274

Image courtesy of UNEP

On 1 March 2007, registration opened for the UNEP Finance Initiative's (UNEP FI) latest e-Learning course "Climate Change: Risks and Opportunities for the Finance Sector," which will be held from 4-25 June 2007. The course will seek to support staff in financial institutions to enhance their knowledge on, *inter alia*, the effect of climate change on energy financing and energy alternatives; carbon finance; and the Kyoto Protocol flexible mechanisms (<http://www.unepfi.org>; <http://www.unitar.org/unepfi>).



Logo courtesy of UNEP FI

## UNDP AND CHINA PARTNER ON CARBON FINANCE PROJECT

On 6 February 2007, in Beijing, China, the UN Development Programme (UNDP) and the Chinese government announced the launch of a carbon finance project entitled "MDG Carbon: Carbon Finance for Achieving Millennium Development Goals." The initiative seeks to alleviate poverty and develop the renewable energy sector in western China by introducing carbon trading in 12 provinces. The carbon trading will be used as a tool to generate income for impoverished communities by increasing "green" investments (<http://www.undp.org.cn/modules.php?op=modload&name=News&file=article&catid=14&topic=27&sid=369&mode=thread&order=0&thold=0>).

## ▶ COMINGS AND GOINGS

- UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon has named several new senior officials, including Ambassador Sha Zukang, currently China's Permanent Representative to the UN Office at Geneva, as **Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs**. He will succeed José Antonio Ocampo (Colombia) (<http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=21519&Cr=Ki-moon&Cr1=restructure>). The Secretary-General has also appointed Olav Kjærven (Norway), the Director of the Environment and Energy Group of the Bureau for Development Policy since 2005, as **Assistant Secretary-General and Director of the Bureau for Development Policy**.



Ambassador Sha Zukang (Photo courtesy of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the People's Republic of China)



Olav Kjærven (Norway)

- The Ramsar Secretariat has announced the selection of María Rivera (Colombia) as the next **Ramsar Senior Regional Advisor for the Americas**. She will succeed Margarita Astráraga, who will take up the duties of Director of the IUCN Mediterranean Coordination Centre in Spain ([http://www.ramsar.org/w/n.w.n.staff\\_maria.htm](http://www.ramsar.org/w/n.w.n.staff_maria.htm)).

## ▶ KEY UPCOMING MEA MEETINGS

- **OPEN SESSION OF THE THIRD MEETING OF THE COMPLIANCE COMMITTEE UNDER THE BIOSAFETY PROTOCOL:** 5-7 March 2007. Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. <http://www.biodiv.org/doc/meeting.aspx?mtg=BSCC-03>
- **SHARED LEARNING AND REVIEW WORKSHOP: REPUBLIC OF KOREA'S NATIONAL STRATEGY FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT:** 12-16 March 2007. Seoul, Republic of Korea. <http://www.un.org/esa/sustdev/natlinfo/nsds/tmKorea/index.htm>
- **FIFTH SESSION OF THE UNCCD'S COMMITTEE FOR THE REVIEW OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE CONVENTION (CRIC-5):** 12-21 March 2007. Buenos Aires, Argentina. <http://www.iisd.ca/desert/cric5/>
- **18TH SESSION OF THE FAO COMMITTEE ON FORESTRY (COFO):** 13-16 March 2007. Rome, Italy. <http://www.iisd.ca/fao/cof18/>
- **14TH MEETING OF THE CMS SCIENTIFIC COUNCIL:** 14-17 March 2007. Bonn, Germany. [http://www.cms.int/bodies/ScC\\_main-page.htm](http://www.cms.int/bodies/ScC_main-page.htm)
- **ROTTERDAM CONVENTION THIRD CHEMICAL REVIEW COMMITTEE MEETING:** 20-23 March 2007. Rome, Italy. <http://www.pic.int/home.php?type=b&id=134&sid=18&tid=42>
- **MULTILATERAL FUND EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE 51ST MEETING:** 19-23 March 2007. Montreal, Canada. <http://www.multilateralfund.org>
- **AD HOC JOINT WORKING GROUP ON ENHANCED COOPERATION AND COORDINATION AMONG THE BASEL, STOCKHOLM AND ROTTERDAM CONVENTIONS:** 26-28 March 2007. Helsinki, Finland. <http://ahjwg.chem.unep.ch/>