



RECENT MEA ACTIVITIES

► BIODIVERSITY AND WILDLIFE

CITES COP CONCLUDES WITH CONSENSUS ON AFRICAN ELEPHANT



CITES COP-14 President Gerda Verburg, Minister of Agriculture, Nature and Food Quality, the Netherlands, addresses the opening plenary

The fourteenth Conference of the Parties (COP-14) to the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) convened from 3-15 June 2007, in The Hague, the Netherlands. The meeting achieved a hard-won consensus on the Strategic Vision, which sets out three strategic goals on: compliance and enforcement; securing financial resources; and CITES' role in the broader international

environment agenda. Among other highlights, the meeting agreed that no cetacean species should be subject to periodic review while the International Whaling Commission moratorium is in place, and decided to list slender-horned and Cuvier's gazelles and slow loris on Appendix I (species endangered due to international trade, trade permitted only in exceptional circumstances), and Brazil wood, sawfish and eel on Appendix II (species that may become endangered if their trade is not regulated). Following the achievement of a landmark regional consensus on ivory trade by the African elephant range States, the meeting amended the annotation on African elephants to allow a one-off sale of ivory from Botswana, Namibia, South Africa and Zimbabwe with a nine-year resting period for further ivory trade (<http://www.iisd.ca/cites/cop14/>).

MEA Clusters In This Issue

- **Biodiversity and Wildlife**
CGRFA-11 Develops Programme of Work and Draft Interlaken Declaration; Ghana Signs CMS MoU *Page 2*
- **Intergovernmental Organizations**
UN Reform Co-Chairs Present Options Paper; UNDP Launches MDG Carbon Facility *Pages 2-3*
- **Sustainable Development**
UN DESA/DSD Organizes Workshop for Water Utility Managers *Page 3*
- **Climate and Atmosphere**
UNFCCC COP Prospects Boosted; Montreal Protocol Dialogue Considers Accelerated HCFC Phase-Out, OEWG Drafts Decisions *Pages 3-4*
- **Water, Wetlands and Coasts**
UNDOALOS Posts UNICPOLOS-8 and Fish Stocks Conference Documents; IMO Protocol Enters into Force *Pages 4-5*
- **Forests, Deserts and Land**
ITTO Hosts Events on Trade and Bioenergy; UNCCD Marks World Day to Combat Desertification, *Ad Hoc* Group Releases Conclusions *Page 5*
- **Chemicals and Wastes**
Stockholm Requests Comments on Drafts; Rotterdam Releases PIC Circular; Asia-Pacific Region Discusses SAICM *Pages 5-6*
- **Trade, Finance and Investment**
GEF Council Adopts Work Programme and Initiatives on Land Management; World Bank Approves Sustainable Development Funding *Page 6*

RESEARCH AND RESOURCES

SIMPLE RULES FOR CATALYZING COLLECTIVE ACTION IN NATURAL RESOURCES MANAGEMENT CONTEXTS

(Center for International Forestry Research, 2007) Written by Carol Colfer, this booklet is designed to help people working with communities to reach their goals, and builds on the global literature on community based forest management and on experiences catalyzing collective action within communities using Adaptive Collaborative Management (http://www.cifor.cgiar.org/publications/pdf_files/Books/BColfer0701.pdf).

Continued on page 2

GUEST ARTICLE

The Role of Biodiplomacy in Implementing MEAs

*By Balakrishna Pisupati**

Abstract

Biodiplomacy is that area of international negotiations which seeks to find the balance between divergent ethical, cultural, environmental and economic values, and provide inputs into the debates based on data and information that can support better policy making and subsequent implementation. Biodiplomacy is at the heart of multilateral environmental agreements (MEAs) and their implementation.

Continued on page 4

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RESEARCH AND RESOURCES *(cont.)*

**TRADE AND ENVIRONMENT:
A RESOURCE BOOK**

(IISD, ICTSD, RING, 2007) This book, edited by Adil Najam, Mark Halle and Ricardo Meléndez-Ortiz, provides information and analysis on trade and environment discussions while explaining: the key issues from a trade and environment perspective; the most important policy debates around them; and the different policy positions that define these debates (http://www.iisd.org/pdf/2007/trade_and_env.pdf).

**TOURISM IN THE POLAR REGIONS:
THE SUSTAINABILITY CHALLENGE**

(UNEP, June 2007) Launched in advance of World Environment Day, this report states that Polar tourism has grown dramatically in the last ten years, raising concerns about the possible negative impact on the environment and local communities. Noting that appropriate management practices and infrastructure in the Arctic and Antarctica have not matched the rising flows of visitors, the report urges the adoption of relevant sustainable tourism policies (<http://www.proyectoforma.com/Documentos/GuidebooktoMarketsandCommercializationofCDMforestryProjects.pdf>).

**ANNUAL REVIEW AND
ASSESSMENT OF THE WORLD
TIMBER SITUATION 2006**

(ITTO, 2007) The International Tropical Timber Organization has released its annual report, providing data and forecasts on production and trade of tropical forest products and the state of tropical forests in ITTO member countries (http://www.itto.or.jp/live/Live_Server/400/E-AR-06.pdf).

**GLOBAL OUTLOOK FOR ICE AND
SNOW**

(UNEP, June 2007) This report, issued by the UN Environment Programme (UNEP), argues that the futures of hundreds of millions of people will be affected by declines in snow cover, sea ice, glaciers, permafrost and lake ice, noting that that impacts are likely to include significant changes in the availability of water supplies for drinking and agriculture, rising sea levels affecting low lying coasts and islands and an increase in hazards such as subsidence of currently frozen land (http://www.unep.org/geo/geo_ice/PDF/full_report_LowRes.pdf).

► BIODIVERSITY AND WILDLIFE



Chair Visser and members of the Secretariat during the closing session of CGRFA-11, at which the meeting report was adopted

**CGRFA-11 DEVELOPS WORK
PROGRAMME AND DRAFT
INTERLAKEN DECLARATION**

The eleventh regular session of the Commission on Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture (CGRFA-11) was held from 11-15 June 2007, at the headquarters of the UN Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), in Rome, Italy. CGRFA-11 considered agenda items related to the ongoing programmes of the Commission with regard to animal genetic resources (AnGR), plant genetic resources for food and agriculture (PGRFA), and the draft code of conduct on biotechnology. Delegates addressed the establishment and implementation of the multi-year programme of work (MYPOW), and also discussed other biodiversity-related matters under the mandate of the Commission, the FAO's policies, programmes and activities on agricultural biodiversity, and cooperation with other international organizations. Outcomes from the meeting included agreement on most of the major outputs and milestones of a MYPOW for the Commission, which spans its next five regular sessions. Delegates also agreed to forward to the International Technical Conference on AnGR, to be held in September 2007, in Interlaken, Switzerland, a draft Interlaken Declaration on AnGR and the elements of a Global Plan of Action for AnGR, incorporating Strategic Priorities for Action, with some bracketed text.

CGRFA-11 was preceded by a special event on "Emerging Issues in the Management of Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture: Towards a Multi-Year Programme of Work," which convened on 9 June 2007, also at FAO headquarters. This event focused on the possible structure and contents of the MYPOW, with each sectoral and cross-sectoral issue addressed via expert presentations and general discussions (<http://www.iisd.ca/biodiv/cgrfa11/html/yimbvol142num1e.html>; <http://www.iisd.ca/biodiv/cgrfa11/>).

**GHANA SIGNS CMS MOU ON
WEST AFRICAN ELEPHANT**

On 30 May 2007, Ghana signed the Memorandum of Understanding concerning Conservation Measures for the West African Populations of the African Elephant, developed under the Convention on Migratory Species (CMS). Ghana was the thirteenth and final range State to sign the agreement, filling in this way the last gap in its coverage (http://www.cms.int/news/PRESS/nwPR2007/05_May/ae_ghana.htm).



CMS Agreements Officer Lyle Glowka and Ghana's Ambassador to Germany Grant Ohemeng Kesse signing the MoU (Photo courtesy of the UNEP/CMS Secretariat)

► INTERGOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS

**UN REFORM CO-CHAIRS
PRESENT OPTIONS PAPER ON
STRENGTHENING IEG**

The Co-Chairs of the UN General Assembly (UNGA) consultations on the UN's environmental activities, Claude Heller (Mexico) and Peter Maurer (Switzerland), presented their Options Paper at a UNGA meeting on 14 June 2007 at UN headquarters, New York, US. The paper outlines proposals for seven building blocks to strengthen international environmental governance (IEG): scientific assessment, monitoring and early warning capacity; inter-agency coordination and cooperation; multilateral environmental agreements; regional presence and activities at the regional level; the Bali Strategic Plan, capacity building and technology support;

IT, partnerships and advocacy; and financing. In addition, the paper includes a chapter on the broader transformation of the IEG system, including the possibility of transforming the UN Environment Programme into a UN Environment Organization (UNEO). The Co-Chairs announced that they would conduct consultations in the coming weeks with all delegations and are hoping to convene a UNGA plenary meeting in early September 2007, based on the feedback they receive. They also suggested that formal negotiations on IEG should be started before the end of the UNGA's 62nd session (<http://www.centerforunreform.org/node/265>; <http://www.un.org/ga/president/61/follow-up/environment/EG-OptionsPaper.PDF>).

RESEARCH AND RESOURCES *(cont.)*

MDG CARBON FACILITY: LEVERAGING CARBON FINANCE FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

(UNDP, June 2007) This booklet outlines the main features of the UN Development Programme's (UNDP) MDG Carbon Facility, noting that the Facility has been established to help leverage the potentially significant benefits of carbon finance for the developing world, and its main objectives are: broadening access to carbon finance by enabling a wider range of developing countries to participate, and promoting emission reduction projects that contribute to the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) (<http://www.undp.org/mdgcarbonfacility/docs/brochure-eng-29may07.pdf>).

BANKING ON VALUE: A NEW APPROACH TO CREDIT RISK IN AFRICA

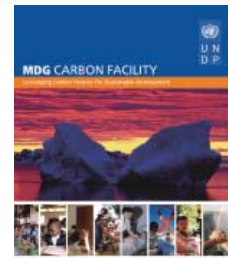
(UNEP FI, 2007) This study, carried out by the UN Environment Programme Finance Initiative (UNEP FI), highlights how banks in South Africa and Nigeria, to an increasing extent, factor environmental, social and governance (ESG) issues into their credit risk assessment for corporate and consumer loans. According to the study, the driving forces behind this development include the requirements of multilateral banks and lending bodies to meet ESG standards, as well as "reputational risks," reflecting concerns by banks over being linked to an environmentally unfriendly or socially damaging projects (http://www.unepfi.org/fileadmin/documents/banking_on_value.pdf).

► INTERGOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS

UNDP LAUNCHES MDG CARBON FACILITY

On 5 June 2007, the UN Development Programme (UNDP) announced the launch of its Millennium Development Goal (MDG) Carbon Facility, as well as an agreement with the banking and insurance company Fortis, designating it to be the financial services provider for the Facility. The MDG Carbon Facility is a mechanism seeking to provide assistance to greenhouse gas reduction projects in the developing world, as well as to harness the resources of the carbon market to deliver real, sustainable benefits to the environment and contribute to achieving the MDGs. Fortis will purchase and sell the emissions-reduction credits generated by these projects, and the profits from the purchases will provide developing countries with resources to finance investment and to

promote development. The MDG Carbon Facility will operate within the framework of the Clean Development Mechanism (CDM) and Joint Implementation, and aims to address the CDM's current limitations in terms



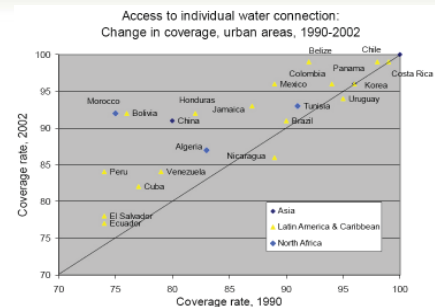
MDG Carbon Facility (Graphic courtesy of UNDP)

of geographical reach and focus on "end of pipe" technologies. The partnership between UNDP and Fortis covers an initial pipeline of projects that is expected to generate 15 million credits during the Kyoto Protocol's first commitment period (2008-2012) (<http://content.undp.org/go/newsroom/2007/june/mdg-carbon-facility-launch.en>).

► SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

UN DESA/DSD ORGANIZES CAPACITY BUILDING WORKSHOP FOR WATER UTILITY MANAGERS IN LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN

The Division for Sustainable Development (DSD) of the UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs (DESA), which serves as the Secretariat for the Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD), has organized a capacity building workshop for senior managers of water utilities of the Latin America and Caribbean (LAC) Region. The meeting was organized in response to the recommendation adopted at CSD-13 regarding the need to strengthen the capacities of water utilities to meet the challenges of service expansion and efficient delivery of services. The 11-13 June 2007 workshop met in Recife, Brazil, and was organized jointly with the government of Brazil and the state government of Pernambuco. Participants adopted a "Recife Statement," in which they endorsed the workshop's conclusions that, *inter alia*: current efforts need to be stepped up to provide water and sanitation services to all; a regional Global Water Operators Partnership (WOP)



Access to individual water connection: Change in coverage, urban areas, 1990-2002 (chart presented by David le Blanc, UN-DESA)

should be established so that less efficient utilities could benefit from the experiences of competent utilities on a regular but not-for-profit basis; and tariff structures should be set in line with the social, economic, and financial priorities of the country, with due consideration to capacity to pay. The Colombian delegation offered to host a follow-up meeting, to advance the operationalization of the regional WOP mechanism, in Santa Marta, Colombia from 10-11 September 2007 (http://www.un.org/esa/sustdev/sdis-sues/water/workshop_lac/index.htm).

► CLIMATE AND ATMOSPHERE

UNFCCC COP PROSPECTS BOOSTED BY G-8, SWEDISH MINISTERIAL MEETING

Two high-level meetings have contributed support for launching negotiations on a post-2012 climate change agreement at the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change's (UNFCCC) meetings scheduled to take place in Bali, Indonesia, in December 2007. The G-8 Summit, which took place in Heiligendamm, Germany, from 6-8 June 2007, resulted in a communiqué that agreed on the UN climate process as the appropriate forum for negotiating future global action on climate change, and called on all

parties to "actively and constructively participate in the UN Climate Change Conference in Indonesia in December 2007 with a view to achieving a comprehensive post 2012-agreement (post Kyoto-agreement) that should include all major emitters." The communiqué also called on the major emitting countries to "agree on a detailed contribution for a new global framework by the end of 2008 which would contribute to a global agreement under the UNFCCC by 2009" (http://www.g-8.de/nsc_true/Content/EN/Artikel/___g8-summit/anlagen/chairs-summary,templateId=raw,property=publicationFile.pdf/chairs-summary).

UNFCCC Executive Secretary Yvo de Boer welcomed the communiqué, stating "This is a breakthrough in terms of making progress towards an enhanced future climate change regime and will send important signals to developing countries on the readiness of industrialized nations and emerging economies to act" (http://unfccc.int/files/press/news_room/press_releases_and_advisories/application/pdf/20070607_g8_press_release_english.pdf).

Following the G-8 Summit, an informal meeting on climate change was held in Riksgränsen, Sweden, attended by environ-

Continued on page 4

GUEST ARTICLE (cont.)

MEAs are focusing now on how to ensure better compliance with and enforcement of the objectives and decisions taken by their Conferences of Parties. As they take on these challenges, one key conclusion is the need to secure better political will, both at the international level as well as the national level, where the authority to implement as well as the responsibility for implementation lies. At the same time, we must recognize that MEAs often emerge from stressful negotiations that settle for compromises on technical, financial and implementation principles. This is understandable, as the needs and interests of many countries must be taken into consideration when designing them. But the compromises necessary to get the initial agreement are causing problems during the implementation phase.

A key way forward is to enhance negotiators' skills as well as their countries' ability to identify options, so that they can diplomatically and effectively secure win-win solutions for MEA implementation. Training and informed participation and decision making during MEA negotiations deserves more attention. While the MEAs use their scientific and technical bodies to provide recommendations to make better decisions, many times these bodies are weakened by political debates and they lack useful information and data. These shortcomings can cause bottlenecks in decision making and implementation.

Another option could be to deal with related MEAs together (such as implementation, compliance and monitoring of biodiversity related MEAs). Biodiplomacy also can contribute to finding better inter-linkages between MEAs. In the absence of synergistic action at national level implementation, MEAs are bound to fail to achieve their targets, as are national development objectives. Biodiplomacy is one tool to enhance such coherence. One area that currently would benefit from more attention to biodiplomacy is to find actions and decisions that combine conservation of ecosystems and their services and dealing with climate variability and change. Now is the best time to influence public opinion along with the highest political levels on the need to link conservation and climate change actions.

Continued on page 5

► CLIMATE AND ATMOSPHERE

Continued from page 3

ment ministers and high level representatives from 28 countries. In his post-meeting report, Swedish Minister of the Environment Andreas Carlgren, who chaired the event, noted broad consensus that the Bali conference should establish a "Road Map" with a timetable and concrete steps for the negotiations with a view to reach an agreement by 2009. Participants indicated broad agreement on intensifying concrete action under the Convention, giving priority to adaptation, and stressing the key role of technology transfer and deployment. The meeting, which took place from 11-14 June 2007, was the third of its kind, with the first being held in Greenland in 2005 and the second in South Africa in 2006. Argentina is expected to host the next informal ministerial meeting in 2008 (<http://www.sweden.gov.se/sb/d/8757>).

MONTREAL PROTOCOL DIALOGUE CONSIDERS ACCELERATED HCFC PHASE-OUT, OEWG DRAFTS DECISIONS

The Dialogue on key future challenges faced by the Montreal Protocol (the Dialogue) was held 2-3 June 2007 in Nairobi, Kenya. Participants offered comments on funding options for continued monitoring and scientific assessment activities, combating illegal trade, and the future of the Multilateral Fund, and considered an accelerated phase-out of hydrochlorofluorocarbons (HCFCs), the possibility of capping the quantity of methyl bromide for quarantine and pre-shipment uses, banks of ozone-depleting substances (ODS), and essential-use exemptions for chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs) and critical use exemptions

for methyl bromide (IISD RS sources; http://ozone.unep.org/Meeting_Documents/dkfc/1dkfc/index.shtml).

The 27th meeting of the Open-ended Working Group of the parties to the Montreal Protocol (OEWG-27) was held 4-7 June 2007 in Nairobi, Kenya. Parties forwarded numerous draft decisions to the nineteenth Meeting of the Parties to the Montreal Protocol (MOP-19), which will convene in Montreal, Canada, from 17-21 September 2007. The draft decisions address, *inter alia*: essential use exemptions, the laboratory and analytical use exemption, process agents, replenishment of the Multilateral Fund, systems for monitoring transboundary movements of ODS, and refinement of the institutional arrangements of the Montreal Protocol. Parties also considered proposals to reduce the frequency of meetings and to adjust the Protocol with respect to the phase-out of HCFCs (IISD RS sources; http://ozone.unep.org/Meeting_Documents/oewg/27oewg/index.shtml; http://ozone.unep.org/Meeting_Documents/oewg/27oewg/OEWG-27-9E.pdf).



OEWG-27 was co-chaired by Marcia Levaggi (Argentina), together with Mikkel Sorensen (Denmark)

► WATER, WETLANDS AND COASTS

EXISTING RAMSAR SITE EXTENDED

The Ramsar Secretariat has announced that the government of Argentina has expanded the Lagunas de Guanacache site from 580,000 hectares to 962,370 hectares, and renamed it "Desaguadero y del Bebedero" (http://www.ramsar.org/index_bulletin.htm).

UNDOALOS POSTS UNICPOLOS-8 AND FISH STOCKS CONFERENCE DOCUMENTS AND ANNOUNCES RATIFICATIONS

In preparation for the eighth session of the UN Open-ended Informal Consultative Process on Oceans and the Law of the Sea (UNICPOLOS-8), which will convene from 25-29 June 2007 in New York, US, the UN Division for Ocean Affairs and the Law of the Sea (UNDOALOS) has posted a number of documents on its website, namely: a tentative list of panellists, abstracts of pre-

sentations, a Co-Chairpersons' composite streamlined list of issues, and the Report of the Secretary-General on oceans and the law of the sea (A/62/66). The latter will serve as a basis for discussion during UNICPOLOS-8 (http://www.un.org/Depts/los/consultative_process/consultative_process_info.htm). In addition, UNDOALOS has released the Report and list of participants to the sixth Informal Consultations of States Parties to the Agreement for the Implementation of the Provisions of the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) relating to the Conservation and Management of Straddling Fish Stocks and Highly Migratory Fish Stocks, which took place from 23-24 April 2007, in New York, US (http://www.un.org/Depts/los/convention_agreements/fish_stocksmeetings/icsp6report.pdf). In related news, UNDOALOS has announced that Lesotho and Morocco have ratified UNCLOS (http://www.un.org/Depts/los/convention_agreements/convention_agreements.htm).

GUEST ARTICLE (cont.)

Joint MEA implementation seems to be the best option before us, but to effectively manage this we need to change our governance systems and break the strong shields of sectoral outlooks and planning processes. These changes can only be possible if we increase the individual, institutional and systemic capacities of our decision makers and public at large. The focus should be more on designing common solutions and increasing ownership and responsibility of MEA implementation and compliance. In the absence of this, we will continue to roll out decisions year-after-year that mean little to both politics and society at large.

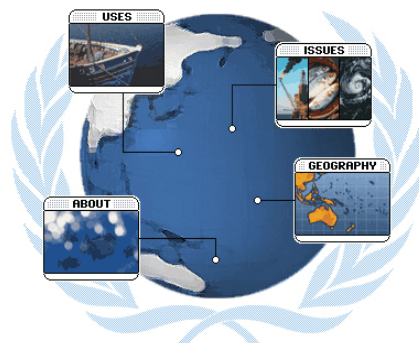
* *Balakrishna Pisupati is the team leader of the Biodiplomacy Programme of the United Nations University-Institute of Advanced Studies based in Japan. The opinions expressed are his own.*

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.

▶ WATER, WETLANDS AND COASTS

IMO CELEBRATES FIFTH ANNIVERSARY OF THE UN ATLAS OF OCEANS, OPRC-HNS PROTOCOL ENTERS INTO FORCE

The International Maritime Organization (IMO) and a group of 14 partner organizations celebrated the fifth anniversary since the launch of the web-based UN Atlas of the Oceans (<http://www.oceansatlas.org>), in June 2002. The Atlas is an Internet portal providing information relevant to the sustainable development of the oceans and is designed for policy-makers who need to become familiar with ocean issues and for



UN Atlas of the Oceans (Graphic courtesy of UN-Oceans)

scientists, students and resource managers who require access to databases and approaches to sustainability. Currently, the Atlas contains over 4,000 entries that, aside from those related directly to maritime transport, range from fisheries biology to ocean law to undersea prospecting for pharmaceuticals and telecommunications (http://www.imo.org/Newsroom/mainframe.asp?topic_id=1472&doc_id=8121).

The IMO has also announced the entrance into force on 14 June 2007 of the Protocol on Preparedness, Response and Co-operation to Pollution Incidents by Hazardous and Noxious Substances (OPRC-HNS Protocol). The Protocol requires ships flying the flag of State parties to carry a pollution emergency plan to deal with incidents involving hazardous and noxious substances, such as chemicals. State parties are required to establish a national system for responding to HNS, provide assistance to other States in the event of a pollution emergency, and endeavour to conclude bilateral or multilateral agreements on preparedness for, and response to, pollution incidents involving HNS (http://www.imo.org/Newsroom/mainframe.asp?topic_id=1472&doc_id=8143).

▶ FORESTS, DESERTS AND LAND

ITTO HOSTS EVENTS ON TRADE AND BIOENERGY

At the 14th meeting of the Conference of Parties to the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES COP-14), the International Tropical Timber Organization (ITTO) co-hosted a side event with CITES entitled "Collaboration for Trade in Sustainably Managed Tropical Timber Species." Held on 7 June 2007 and co-chaired by Steve Johnson (ITTO) and Milena Schmidt (CITES), panel speakers from Cameroon, the EU, Malaysia, Peru and the US discussed collaboration that is being undertaken to build capacity to implement CITES requirements for listed tropical timber species. Participants further examined potential areas for future collaboration and assistance to range States (<http://www.itto.or.jp/live/PageDisplayHandler?pagelid=223&id=3292>). In collaboration with the UN Food and Agriculture Organization, ITTO also hosted an international conference on wood-based bioenergy in Hannover, Germany, from 17-19 May 2007. Approximately 90 participants discussed the use of logging and wood-processing residues and dedicated bioenergy timber plantations for energy generation. They agreed,

inter alia, that the international community should support the development of efficient and cost-effective wood-based bioenergy in tropical countries, and that the wood-based bioenergy sector needs to be developed on the basis of sustainable forest management (<http://www.itto.or.jp/live/PageDisplayHandler?pagelid=223&id=3292>).

ITTO has also announced the 28 new recipients of the Freezaliah Fellowship Fund. The recipients hail from 18 countries and include nine female fellows. ITTO offers fellowships to promote human resource development and strengthen professional expertise in member countries in tropical forestry and related disciplines (<http://www.itto.or.jp/live/PageDisplayHandler?pagelid=175&id=3335>).

UNCCD MARKS WORLD DAY TO COMBAT DESERTIFICATION, AD HOC GROUP ON REPORTS RELEASES CONCLUSIONS

On 17 June, the UN Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) Secretariat called attention to World Day to Combat Desertification and its 2007 theme, "Desertification and Climate Change – One Global Challenge," in recognition of the links be-

tween these two issues (<http://www.unccd.int/publicinfo/june17/2007/menu.php>).

In other UNCCD news, conclusions of the *Ad Hoc* Working Group on the Reporting Process have been released. The Group was tasked with developing a report for consideration at the 3-14 September 2007 meeting of the Conference of the Parties regarding the UNCCD's national reporting process. Among the conclusions are: developed country reports should concentrate on their obligations under the Convention while affected countries must delineate more clearly their problems in order to avoid perception gaps; the Global Mechanism should report to each session of the Committee for the Review of the Implementation of the Convention while the Global Environment Facility could provide a composite report of their Implementing and Executing Agencies; and the reporting process needs to be improved through serious peer review and mutual learning with Africa, civil society review, Secretariat support including through training, and inter-sectoral coordination including for synergizing among multilateral environmental agreements (http://www.unccd.int/cop/ahwg/submissions/17-AHWG/AHWG_Conclusions.pdf).

▶ CHEMICALS AND WASTES

STOCKHOLM CONVENTION REQUESTS COMMENTS ON DRAFTS, POSTS COP-3 REPORT

The Persistent Organic Pollutants (POPs) Review Committee (POPRC) of the Stockholm Convention on POPs has prepared draft risk profiles and risk management evaluations for

the chemicals under its consideration, taking into account information submitted by parties and observers in accordance with Article 8 of the Convention. Draft risk profiles are available for: Alpha-Hexachlorocyclohexane; Beta-Hexachlorocyclohexane; Pentachlorobenzene; Short-Chain Chlorinated Paraf-

fins; and Octabromodiphenyl ether. After examining draft risk profiles for Chlordecone, Hexabromobiphenyl, Lindane, Commercial Pentabromodiphenyl Ether and Perfluorooctane Sulfonate, POPRC concluded that, as a result of their long-range environmental

Continued on page 6

► CHEMICALS AND WASTES

Continued from page 5

transport, the chemicals are likely to lead to significant adverse human health and/or environmental effects, making global action warranted. The Committee has prepared draft risk management evaluations for each chemical, which will be used with the risk profiles by the POPRC as the basis for its recommendation to the fourth Conference of Parties on whether the chemicals should be considered for listing in Annexes A, B and/or C of the Convention. Parties and observers are invited to review the draft profiles and risk management evaluations, and to submit comments by 1 July 2007 (<http://www.pops.int/documents/meetings/poprc/poprc.htm>). The Stockholm Convention has also released an advance, English language version of the report of the third Conference of the Parties of the Stockholm Convention (COP-3) (http://www.pops.int/documents/meetings/cop_3/meetingdocs/report/default.htm).

ROTTERDAM CONVENTION RELEASES PIC CIRCULAR

The Rotterdam Convention Secretariat has released the June 2007 PIC Circular, to

provide all parties through their designated national authorities with the information required to be circulated by the Secretariat, in line with articles 4, 5, 6, 7, 10, 11, 13 and 14. The PIC Circular is published every six months, in June and December. This 333-page Circular contains information related to the period from 31 October 2006 to 30 April 2007, including details of parties' new import responses to chemicals (<http://www.pic.int/en/Circular/CIRC%20XXV-English-June2007.pdf>).

ASIA-PACIFIC REGION DISCUSSES SAICM IMPLEMENTATION, THIRD ROUND FOR QUICK START PROGRAMME TRUST FUND TO CLOSE IN SEPTEMBER

The Asia-Pacific Regional Meeting on the Strategic Approach to Chemicals Management (SAICM) convened in Bangkok, Thailand, from 21-23 May 2007, hosted by Thailand's Pollution Control Department and held in collaboration with the Institute for Global Environmental Strategies (IGES), Japan. This was the first such meeting for the Asia-Pacific region, and it sought to review

progress on implementation of SAICM in the region, to provide guidance on implementation to regional stakeholders and to provide a forum for technical and strategic discussions and the exchange of information. Participants discussed regional coordination mechanisms and national and regional implementation, and prepared for the second session of the International Conference on Chemicals Management (<http://www.chem.unep.ch/saicm/meeting/asiapacific/may%2007/documents/AP1%203%20report.pdf>).

The next round for the SAICM Quick Start Programme (QSP) Trust Fund will close on 14 September 2007. Project approval takes into account geographic and sectoral balance considerations, with particular attention given to the needs of the least developed countries (LDCs) and small island developing States (SIDS). Projects can be valued from US\$ 50,000 to US\$ 250,000, and the Secretariat recommends that an initial concept paper be forwarded to the SAICM Secretariat as early as possible, to permit guidance on compliance with QSP requirements (<http://www.chem.unep.ch/saicm/qsptf.htm>).

► TRADE, FINANCE AND INVESTMENT

GEF COUNCIL ADOPTS WORK PROGRAMME AND INITIATIVES ON LAND MANAGEMENT

The Global Environment Facility (GEF) Council, which met from 12-15 June 2007, in Washington DC, US, has reviewed the first batch of GEF-4 project proposals. The Council considered, with a view toward approval, projects amounting to US\$ 561.73 million in GEF financing. The Council also adopted a Four Year Rolling Work Plan and the 2008 fiscal year budget, and a new project cycle that will permit the processing of a proposal from identification to start of implementation in less than 22 months. The projects approved are part of the GEF's new work program, which includes three flagship initiatives: a US\$ 150 million umbrella program on sustainable land management with 28 countries in Sub-Saharan Africa; a US\$

130 million Small Grants Program to provide grants for small-scale initiatives in communities in 121 developing countries; and a US\$ 50 million Public-Private Partnership to support investment for breakthrough technical and financial solutions to heretofore insoluble environmental problems (<http://www.gefweb.org/default.aspx>).

WORLD BANK APPROVES SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT FUNDING

The World Bank approved, on 7 June 2007, a US\$ 200 million loan for Colombia to integrate the principles of sustainable development into country policies and programmes, as well as to protect the poor from the impacts of environmental degradation, particularly in terms of health and productivity. This policy is part of a three-phase program

that will contribute to reducing the proportion of people without access to safe drinking water and basic sanitation (<http://web.worldbank.org/WBSITE/EXTERNAL/NEWS/0,,contentMDK:21364079~pagePK:34370~piPK:34424~theSitePK:4607,00.html>).

On 29 May 2007, the World Bank also approved a US\$ 4.5 million GEF grant to improve the quality of sanitary services in Soroca, Moldova, and to reduce the discharge of pollutants, including nutrients, from Soroca municipal sources that flow into the Nistru River. The project also is set to demonstrate and disseminate cost-effective nutrient reduction strategies and technologies for municipal wastewater sources (<http://web.worldbank.org/WBSITE/EXTERNAL/NEWS/0,,contentMDK:21351601~menuPK:34468~pagePK:34370~piPK:34424~theSitePK:4607,00.html>).

► COMINGS AND GOINGS

- The **Ramsar Secretariat** has announced two appointments. Alexia Dufour will start in July 2007 as Regional Affairs Officer, a newly-established position (http://www.ramsar.org/archives/archives_trans_alexia.htm), and Yasaman Rajabkhan took up the post of Executive Director of the Ramsar Regional Center for Training and Research on Wetlands in Western and Central Asia at the beginning of June 2007 (http://www.ramsar.org/index_bulletin.htm; <http://www.ramsarcenter-cwa.org/>).

► KEY UPCOMING MEA MEETINGS

- **THE SEVENTEENTH MEETING OF STATES PARTIES TO THE UN CONVENTION ON THE LAW OF THE SEA:** 14 and 18-22 June 2007. New York, US. http://www.un.org/Depts/los/meeting_states_parties/forthcomingmeetingstatesparties.htm
- **EIGHTH MEETING OF THE UNITED NATIONS OPEN-ENDED INFORMAL CONSULTATIVE PROCESS ON OCEANS AND THE LAW OF THE SEA:** 25-29 June 2007. New York, US. <http://www.iisd.ca/oceans/icp8/>
- **THIRD INTERNATIONAL MEETING ON SUSTAINABLE CONSUMPTION AND PRODUCTION:** 26-29 June 2007. Stockholm, Sweden. <http://www.un.org/esa/sustdev/sdissues/consumption/Marrakech/conprod10Ystockholm.htm>
- **CONVENTION ON BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY SBSTTA-12:** 2-6 July 2007. Paris, France. <http://www.iisd.ca/biodiv/sbstta12/>
- **ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL (ECOSOC) 2007 SUBSTANTIVE SESSION:** 2-27 July 2007. Geneva, Switzerland. <http://www.un.org/docs/ecosoc/meetings/2007/>