



RECENT MEA ACTIVITIES

▶ BIODIVERSITY AND WILDLIFE

CBD SBSTTA-12 AND WORKING GROUP ON REVIEW OF IMPLEMENTATION CONCLUDE

The twelfth meeting of the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice (SBSTTA-12) to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) convened from 2-6 July 2007, in Paris, France. SBSTTA-12 adopted a number of recommendations to be forwarded to the ninth Conference of the Parties to the CBD, including on: the application of the ecosystem approach; the Global Strategy for Plant Conservation; dry and sub-humid lands; biodiversity and climate change; and biofuels. A number of issues with regard to climate change and biofuels remained outstanding and as a result, recommendations on these issues contain bracketed language (<http://www.iisd.ca/biodiv/sbstta12/>). During SBSTTA-12, the CBD Secretariat signed a Memorandum of Cooperation with the International Federation of Agricultural Producers on future cooperation between the two organizations (<http://www.cbd.int/doc/press/2007/pr-2007-07-02-ifap-en.pdf>).



L-R: CBD Executive Secretary Ahmed Djoghlaif and Ambassador José Antônio Rezende de Castro at the close of WGRI 2

Immediately following SBSTTA-12, the second meeting of the CBD Working Group on the Review of Implementation convened (9-13 July 2007, Paris, France). The Working Group adopted a series of recommendations on: options and a draft strategy for resource mobilization; streamlining guidance to the Global Environment Facility (GEF); operations of the Convention; Global Biodiversity Outlook; and implementation of goals 2 and 3 of the Strategic Plan (national biodiversity strategies and action plans (NBSAPs), and capacity building, access to and transfer of technology and technology cooperation). National implementation of the Convention was the focus of the meeting, and delegates exchanged experiences in preparation and implementation of national biodiversity strategies and action plans. During the meeting, a dialogue was held between the Bureau of the Convention and the Chief Executive Officer of the GEF (<http://www.iisd.ca/biodiv/wgri2/>). Also during the meeting, the CBD Secretariat and IUCN-The World Conservation Union signed a Memorandum of Understanding aiming to support the integration of biodiversity in European development cooperation (<http://www.cbd.int/doc/press/2007/pr-2007-07-11-iucn-en.pdf>).

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RESEARCH AND RESOURCES

KEY ENVIRONMENTAL INDICATORS 2007

(OECD, July 2007) This report is one of the products of the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development's (OECD) programme on environmental indicators, and it includes key environmental indicators endorsed by OECD Environment Ministers in May 2001. These indicators give a broad overview of environmental issues in OECD countries and are updated every year (<http://www.oecd.org/dataoecd/20/40/37551205.pdf>).

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GUEST ARTICLE

Creating Trading Zones and Expertise for Climate Information

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Abstract

Many kinds of expertise are required in sustainable agriculture, and there is a constant need to develop trading zones in which expert knowledge can be shared between people who often are very different from each other.

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RESEARCH AND RESOURCES *(cont.)*

CLIMATE CHANGE, COMPETITIVENESS AND TRADE

(Chatham House, June 2007) This report, authored by Aaron Cosbey and Richard Tarasofsky, attempts to clarify the nature of tensions between action against climate change and competitiveness on the one hand, and the interface between the Kyoto Protocol and World Trade Organization rules on the other hand. While identifying two types of competitiveness concerns, the report notes that the impacts associated with environmental regulation in most cases are moderate (http://www.euractiv.com/29/images/10020_r0607climatexchange_tcm29-165360.pdf).

ENVIRONMENTAL PERFORMANCE REVIEW OF CHINA (2007)

(OECD, July 2007) This is the first environmental performance review of China carried out by the OECD. Highlighting that rapid economic development, industrialization and urbanization have generated growing pressures on the environment, resulting in significant damage to human health and depletion of natural resources, the review urges Chinese authorities to strengthen effectiveness in implementing environmental laws and to mobilize financing for environmental infrastructure (http://www.oecd.org/document/47/0,3343,en_2649_34307_37809647_1_1_1_1_00.html).

GOVERNANCE MATTERS VI: GOVERNANCE INDICATORS 1996-2006

(World Bank, 2007) This paper, authored by Daniel Kaufmann, Aart Kraay and Massimo Mastruzzi, reports on the latest update of the Worldwide Governance Indicators (WGI) research project, covering 212 countries and territories and measuring six indicators: Voice and Accountability, Political Stability and Absence of Violence, Government Effectiveness, Regulatory Quality, Rule of Law, and Control of Corruption. The data reflect the views on governance of public sector, private sector and NGO experts, as well as thousands of citizen and firm survey respondents worldwide (<http://www.govindicators.org>).

► BIODIVERSITY AND WILDLIFE

CMS AGREEMENT ON THE RUDDY-HEADED GOOSE COMES INTO FORCE

The Memorandum of Understanding on the conservation of the Ruddy-headed Goose, developed under the auspices of the Convention on Migratory Species (CMS) and signed by Argentina and Chile in November 2006, is now in force. The agreement commits both CMS parties to undertake conservation measures for the species, exchange scientific, technical and legal information to implement



Ruddy-headed Goose (Photo courtesy of Alejandro Balbiano/CMS)

the Action Plan, and submit an annual report to the CMS Secretariat. The agreement is the first CMS legal instrument targeting an American migratory bird species (http://www.cms.int/news/PRESS/nwPR2007/07_July/c_colrado.htm).

► TRADE, FINANCE AND INVESTMENT

WORLD BANK SUPPORTS WATER MANAGEMENT AND URBAN TRANSPORT PROJECTS

On 3 July 2007, the World Bank approved a US\$ 500 million loan for the Niger Basin Water Resources Development and Ecosystems Management programme. The project plans to increase water resource productivity, boost hydropower generation and foster economic growth in the Niger Basin by: strengthening the Niger Basin Authority; rehabilitating and developing regional water infrastructure; managing selected degraded ecosystems; and supporting irrigation schemes, watershed restoration and agro-forestry. The first five-year phase will be funded with loans to Benin, Mali and Nigeria, and grants to Guinea and Niger. The second phase will include the remaining four riparian countries, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Chad and Côte d'Ivoire (<http://web.worldbank.org/WBSITE/EXTERNAL/NEWS/0,,contentMDK:21397555~pagePK:34370~piPK:34424~theSitePK:4607,00.html>).

On the same date, the World Bank approved a project to promote sustainable transport in

Hanoi, Vietnam. The Hanoi Urban Transport Development Project will receive a US\$ 155.21 million loan from the World Bank's International Development Association (IDA) and a US\$ 9.80 million grant from the Global Environment Facility (GEF) (<http://web.worldbank.org/WBSITE/EXTERNAL/NEWS/0,,contentMDK:21396901~pagePK:34370~piPK:34424~theSitePK:4607,00+en-USOASBD.html>).

IDB SUPPORTS SUSTAINABLE PRODUCTION CHAINS IN PROTECTED NATURAL AREAS

On 2 July 2007, the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) approved a US\$ 1 million grant to implement a replicable sustainable production-chain model for 1,000 small-scale producers with production capacity in protected natural areas in Peru. It seeks to promote the business and economic development of low-income communities through the creation and consolidation of sustainable production chains (<http://www.iadb.org/news/articledetail.cfm?artid=3913&language=En>).

► CHEMICALS AND WASTES

SAICM QSP PROJECTS APPROVED

The SAICM Newsletter has reported that the Quick Start Programme (QSP) Trust Fund Implementation Committee, which held its third meeting in Geneva, Switzerland, from 29-30 May 2007, approved or conditionally approved 21 projects submitted to the second round



SAICM Newsletter (Image courtesy of UNEP Chemicals)

of the QSP trust fund. The combined total value of these projects was US\$ 1,861,841. These projects included eight in Africa, six in the Asia-Pacific region, one in Central and Eastern Europe, and six in Latin American and Caribbean countries, including nine Least Developed Countries and four small island developing States. The Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management (SAICM) has received pledges from two new donors, Australia and Madagascar, with pledges to the QSP trust fund for 2007 totaling US\$579,000. The third round of ap-

plications to the QSP trust fund will close 14 September 2007 (<http://www.chem.unep.ch/saicm/newsletter/SAICMnewsletter5-June07.pdf>).

STOCKHOLM CONVENTION BEGINS EFFECTIVENESS EVALUATION WORK

To follow-up decision SC-3/19 on effectiveness evaluation, taken by the third Conference of the Parties, the Stockholm Convention Secretariat issued a call to parties for nominations to the regional organization groups for persistent organic pollutant monitoring. The regional organization groups are mandated to facilitate the regional implementation of the global monitoring plan on persistent organic pollutants and an implementation plan for the first effectiveness evaluation. The Bureau is expected to select members by 30 July 2007 (<http://www.pops.int/documents/meetings/effeval/En%20Invitation%20Let%20to%20nominate%20Members%20for%20the%20Regional%20Organization%20Group.pdf>).

GUEST ARTICLE (*cont.*)

Both farmers and conservation scientists have expertise critical to the success of sustainable development, but better linkages between different kinds of knowledge need to be developed. This article uses Western Kenya as an example of a phenomenon occurring elsewhere in sub-Saharan Africa, in which environmental problems that undermine local food security are closely linked to climate change effects.

New information about climate variation and change makes the already overwhelming challenge of food security even more complex – because the information will be continually updated and probabilistic, and because it will implicate the functioning of entwined biophysical, technological, political-economic, social and cultural systems. This calls for the crafting of what historian Peter Galison has called a “trading zone” – a concept designed to explain how scientists from different fields work together despite dramatically different interests, outlooks and practices (Galison 1997). Despite “vast global differences,” trading partners can “hammer out a local coordination” in a manner similar to the way groups that speak different natural languages establish contact languages to enable interaction.

Scientists need local knowledge, yet often speak a different language than local people, have different habits of communication and social interaction, and different ways of assessing the accuracy and usability of knowledge. Local people involved in conservation can often benefit from scientific understanding of soil, water and climate, but often mistrust extension workers responsible for sharing such knowledge, or lack the resources necessary to move from knowledge to investment. The challenge for sustainable development is not a one-way technology transfer or even two-way information flow, but coordinated trade between different forms of knowledge: scientific, technical, sociological, economic, cultural, etc.

Movement from knowledge to practice is not straightforward. Implementation of knowledge depends on political, economic, infrastructure and social institutions. Initiatives in western Kenya illustrate the importance and challenge of expertise in sustainable agriculture. The biannual Climate Outlook Forum for the Greater Horn of Africa is particularly promising.

Continued on page 4

▶ CLIMATE AND ATMOSPHERE

UNFCCC PREPARES FOR VIENNA MEETING, ORGANIZES WORKSHOP ON TECHNOLOGY NEEDS ASSESSMENTS

The UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) Secretariat is preparing for the fourth session of the *Ad Hoc* Working Group on Further Commitments for Annex I Parties under the Kyoto Protocol (AWG-4) and fourth workshop under the Dialogue on long-term cooperative action to address climate change by enhancing implementation of the Convention, both of which are taking place from 27-31 August 2007, in Vienna, Austria. Information for parties, observers and press has been posted online, including a scenario note for the Dialogue and provisional agenda for AWG-4 (http://unfccc.int/meetings/intersessional/awg_4_and_dialogue_4/items/3999.php). In addition, the Secretariat has released a compilation of submissions under the AWG from parties on “information and data on the mitigation potential of policies, measures and technologies.” The compilation is intended to be relevant to the “determination of the mitigation potential and to the identification of possible ranges of emission reduction of Annex I parties.” Parties were invited to submit reports on this topic during AWG-3 by 22 June 2007, with submissions received from Japan, New Zealand, Switzerland and Germany, on behalf of the EU (<http://unfccc.int/resource/docs/2007/awg4/eng/misc04.pdf>). The non-governmental organization Climate Action Network also submitted a report on this topic (http://unfccc.int/parties_and_observers/ngo/items/3689.php). In addition, the Secretariat recently posted a submission from the Group of 77 and China on a timetable to guide the completion of the work of the AWG. The submission proposes that the first part of AWG-4 in Vienna should continue to analyze the potential of Annex I parties to mitigate greenhouse gas emissions, and establish a full range of “indicative commitment levels” for Annex I parties at the resumed AWG-4 session in Bali in December 2007. The submission also suggests establishing in 2008 quantified emission reduction commitments for Annex I parties during the Kyoto Protocol’s second commitment period, with a view to a final agreement in December 2009 (<http://unfccc.int/resource/docs/2007/awg4/eng/misc03.pdf>).

In other UNFCCC news, a workshop on best practices for conducting technology needs assessments (TNAs) was held in Bangkok, Thailand, from 27-29 June 2007. The workshop, which was held at the request of the UNFCCC’s Subsidiary Body for Scientific and Technological Advice, focused on sharing best practices and lessons learned with conducting TNAs. Delegates also discussed the issue of enabling parties to complete their assessments and reports effectively, and identifying needs and actions that could

assist parties in implementing the results of TNAs. The workshop involved presentations of national perspectives from representatives of more than a dozen countries, a session on international and private sector perspectives, and a closing session on the way forward (<http://ttclear.unfccc.int/ttclear/jsp/index.jsp?mainFrame=../html/WshpBangkok.html>).

OZONE SECRETARIAT RELEASES DOCUMENTS; REGIONAL IMPLEMENTATION ACTIVITIES UNDERTAKEN

The Ozone Secretariat has released additional documents in advance of the 19th Meeting of the Parties (MOP-19), to take place from 17-21 September 2007, in Montreal, Canada. The documents released include an information note for participants, information on the 20th Anniversary Celebrations, and a Frequently Asked Questions document pertaining to the 2006 Environmental Effects Assessment (<http://ozone.unep.org/highlights.shtml>).

The following implementation activities have taken place recently: a workshop for customs officers that focused on controlling imports of ozone-depleting substances (ODS) took place from 17-19 July 2007, in Darusalam, Brunei; a Management and Resource Mobilization training workshop was held in Bakau, Gambia, from 13-15 June 2007, with the aim of enabling refrigeration association leaders to mobilize efforts to control the emission and consumption of controlled ODS; a refrigeration reclamation facility has begun to be built in the Philippines to recycle chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs); and farmers in Zimbabwe are reporting difficulty in phasing out methyl bromide, particularly in the post-harvest fumigation of grain and in the tobacco industry (<http://www.brudirect.com/DailyInfo/News/Archive/July07/180707/nite07.htm>; <http://allafrica.com/stories/200706130662.html>; http://www.hoovers.com/free/news/detail.xhtml?ArticleID=200707043010.1_6ac20008c4d9015d; <http://allafrica.com/stories/200707130560.html>). In addition, the UN Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) hosted an expert group meeting in Vienna, Austria, from 2-4 July 2007, addressing the barriers to replacing CFC-based chillers. Discussions focused on the technologies, financial mechanisms, and regulatory support needed to transition to more energy-efficient and ozone-friendly chillers (<http://www.iisd.ca/yimb/unidoegm/>; <http://www.unido.org/doc/69394>).



During the UNIDO Expert Group Meeting, participants visited Austria’s largest cooling plant

GUEST ARTICLE (cont.)

This forum provides regional, near term (six month horizon) climate prediction that can help farmers decide when to plant, what varieties of seeds to plant, and how to strategize during the overall growing season.

Presently, linkages between researchers and policymakers are weak. We need to get a better understanding of: how climate information is shared, whose knowledge is used in designing coping and mitigation measures, and how the linkage between scientists and policymakers and between scientists and local communities can be strengthened. Specifically, there is a need to develop tools to strengthen local capacity to mitigate land degradation concerns arising from extreme climate events.

Reference:
Galison, P 1997. Image & logic: A material culture of microphysics. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.

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.

► SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

DSD BEGINS CSD-16 PREPARATIONS

The Division for Sustainable Development (DSD) of the UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UNDESA), which serves as the Secretariat for the Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD), is preparing for CSD-16, which will focus on agriculture, rural development, land, drought, desertification and Africa. Governments were requested to forward their national reports by 15 July 2007 to provide inputs for the CSD-16 preparations; as of 23 July 2007, 16 reports had been submitted. DSD will post them and others as they are submitted on <http://www.un.org/esa/sustdev/natlinfo/natlinfo.htm>. Major groups are invited to submit, no later than 21 September 2007, input to the Secretary-General's reports for CSD-16 (http://www.un.org/esa/sustdev/csd/csd16/mg/input_sg_reports). The dates for four of the five Regional Implementation Meetings in preparation for CSD-16, which will be organized by the UN Regional Commissions, have been established. The UN Economic Commission for Africa will host the first meeting from 22-25 October 2007 in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, and the UN Economic Commission for Europe will host the

final meeting from 28-29 January 2008 in Geneva, Switzerland (<http://www.un.org/esa/sustdev/csd/csd16/rim.htm>). Finally, DSD has produced the third issue of Innovation Briefs: "Agro-based industries and growth: prospects for Sub-Saharan Africa" (<http://www.un.org/esa/sustdev/publications/innovationbriefs/no3.pdf>).

The image shows the cover of an 'Innovation Briefs' publication. At the top, it says 'SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT INNOVATION BRIEFS Issue 3 July 2007'. The main title is 'Agro-based industries and growth: prospects for Sub-Saharan Africa'. Below the title, there is a small text box with a green background that reads: 'Sub-Saharan Africa's share in world agricultural trade remains low. Exports of high-value added agricultural or agro-based products are still modest, but global demand for these products is highly dynamic and will continue to increase. This brief argues that growth based on the development of agro-based industries in Africa is possible. While creating competitive advantages for the agro-based sector presents special challenges for the continent, lessons from successful experiences in Asia and Latin America could be utilized to promote sustainable development and resource-based growth.' The cover also features the UN logo and a small graphic of a globe.

Innovation Briefs publication (Image courtesy of UNDESA)

► FORESTS, DESERTS AND LAND



Banner courtesy of UNCCD

UNCCD PREPARES FOR COP-8

The Secretariat of the UN Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) has begun posting documents in preparation for the eighth meeting of the Conference of the Parties (COP-8) and two subsidiary bodies from 3-14 September 2007, in Madrid, Spain. Among the documents already released are the agenda, programme and budget, arrangements for regional coordination units, and report of the Intergovernmental Intersessional Working Group, which followed-up the Joint Inspection Unit report considered at COP-7 (<http://www.unccd.int/cop/cop8/menu.php>).

In related news, the African regional meeting in preparation for COP-8 met in Kigali, Rwanda, from 11-13 July 2007. Participants discussed financial resource issues and links between climate change and desertification, as well as the ten-year strategic plan to enhance the implementation of the Convention, arrangements for the regional coordinating units, and the process of selection of the new Executive Secretary (IISD RS sources; <http://allafrica.com/stories/200707120523.html>).

ITTO CO-SPONSORS CONFERENCES ON COMMUNITY FORESTRY AND LAW ENFORCEMENT

The International Tropical Timber Organization (ITTO), Rights and Resources Initiative (RRI) and others sponsored the conference "Community Forest Management and Enterprises: Global Issues and Opportunities," held in Rio Branco, Brazil, from 16-20 July 2007. Conference participants, including leaders of forest communities, public forest agencies, forest industry and conservation groups, shared experiences in community forest management and enterprises from around the world, exploring case studies and debating the best ways of assisting the sustainable development of community-based operations. A new ITTO/RRI report, released during the conference, suggests that community forest enterprises can generate a wide range of goods and services, while reducing poverty among local populations and fostering biodiversity conservation and investments in social infrastructure. To aid community forest enterprises in realizing their potential for growth, the report calls on governments to take action to provide clear rights to forest resources for community enterprises, enforce fewer burdensome taxes, and end indirect subsidies to large-scale producers (http://www.eurekaalert.org/pub_releases/2007-07/bc-rff071107.php;

<http://www.itto.or.jp/live/PageDisplayHandler?pagelid=217&id=3448>).

In other ITTO news, the ITTO and the UN Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) co-sponsored a regional workshop to promote better forest law compliance in the Central American region. The workshop, which convened from 27-29 June 2007, in San Pedro Sula, Honduras, drew together over 60 experts from nine countries to discuss regional experiences in dealing with illegal logging and illegal timber trade, and to develop recommendations of best practices to improve forest law compliance. Honduran President José Manuel Zelaya Rosales addressed the



Honduran President Zelaya addressed the workshop on forest law compliance (Photo courtesy of ITTO)

workshop, stating that social change is needed to improve recognition of the importance of sustainable development and management of forest resources. The ITTO and FAO are organizing four such workshops throughout the tropics (<http://www.itto.or.jp/live/PageDisplayHandler?pagelid=223&id=3387>).

► INTERGOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS

UNEP LAUNCHES BIODIVERSITY INDICATOR PARTNERSHIP, HOMEPAGE IN CHINESE

The UN Environment Programme (UNEP) launched the 2010 Biodiversity Indicator Partnership on 12 July 2007, in Paris, France, during the second meeting of the Working Group on Review of Implementation of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD). The US\$ 8 million initiative, which includes funding from the Global Environment Facility (GEF), among others, seeks to create a set of benchmarks to assess whether measures to protect the world's biodiversity are effective. The partnership will introduce new indicators, such as the level of biodiversity protection in forests, farmlands and fisheries, and the level to which humans are affected by changing biodiversity, to gain greater insight into whether the 2010 Biodiversity Target is on track. The 2010 Biodiversity Target, to achieve a significant reduction of the current rate of biodiversity loss at the global, regional and national level, was established in 2002 by parties to the CBD. The first phase of the Partnership will run from mid-2007 until mid-2010, and activities are underway (<http://www.unep.org/Documents.Multilingual/Default.asp?DocumentID=514&ArticleID=5630&l=en>).

In related news, UNEP has announced the launch of a newly designed Chinese-language homepage of its website (<http://www.unep.org>). The page provides an entry point to information about UNEP. The launch is part of an ongoing effort to make the UNEP website available in all six official UN languages (<http://www.unep.org/Documents.Multilingual/Default.asp?ArticleID=5635&DocumentID=514&l=en>).

Since reaching its target of 1 billion tree-planting pledges in May 2007, UNEP's *Plant for the Planet: Billion Tree Campaign* is focusing on converting these pledges into planted trees. The campaign has, as of 23 July 2007, recorded 37,168,822 planted trees (<http://www.unep.org/billiontreecampaign/>). Meanwhile, the Mexican Ambassador to Kenya, Juan Carlos Cue Vega, hosted a tree-planting ceremony on 12 July 2007, to mark the Mexican Día del Arbol, at which Mexico officially launched a campaign to plant 250 million trees by the end of the year (<http://www.unep.org/billiontreecampaign/CampaignNews/MexicanEmbassy.asp>).

中文

UNEP launches new Chinese-language homepage (Photo courtesy of UNEP)

UNDP LAUNCHES CARBON MARKET PROJECT IN EASTERN EUROPE AND CIS

The UN Development Programme (UNDP) has launched the project *Leveraging Carbon Finance for Sustainable Development* in South-eastern Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS), aiming to develop public and private sector capacities to access carbon finance, identify opportunities, and provide project management services to individual projects to help jump-start a carbon market in the region, according to a press release dated 16 July 2007. Participation in the Kyoto Protocol's flexible mechanisms, the Clean Development Mechanism (CDM) and Joint Implementation (JI), has been limited in many of these countries due to low awareness and understanding of carbon finance. Within the framework of UNDP's carbon finance project, however, capacity-building initiatives have been initiated in Albania, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Serbia and Uzbekistan, as well as pilot efforts in Kyrgyzstan and Ukraine, with Macedonia recently presenting a strategy, developed with UNDP support, to enable Macedonia's participation in CDM. Training was also held recently in Ukraine to build private sector capacity to initiate and develop JI projects. The carbon finance project also will seek to facilitate the flow of expertise and experience within the region through workshops and other networking opportunities (<http://content.undp.org/go/newsroom/2007/july/carbon-finance-europe-160707.en;jsessionid=auKpDmpEm3kf>).

UN GLOBAL COMPACT MEETING CALLS FOR CLIMATE ACTION

The second UN Global Compact Leaders Summit gathered more than 1000 participants from business, government and civil society in Geneva, Switzerland, from 5-6 July 2007. The Leaders Summit, which is the largest event convened by the UN on the issue of corporate citizenship, launched a number of new initiatives and projects, including: a Business Leadership Platform on climate change; a set of Principles for Responsible Management Education; and a CEO Water Mandate. In their statement on climate change, business leaders urged governments to take "urgent and extensive action" to avoid the risk of serious damage to global prosperity. The statement commits more than 150 business leaders to

take on voluntary targets to increase energy efficiency and reduce their carbon burden, and urges governments to provide a "robust global policy framework" for combating climate change. Participants also adopted the 'Geneva Declaration,' pledging to comply with labor, human rights, environmental and anti-corruption standards (http://www.unglobalcompact.org/NewsAndEvents/news_archives/2007_07_06a.html; http://www.unglobalcompact.org/docs/issues_doc/Environment/CaringforClimate_27June.pdf).

ECOSOC HOLDS ANNUAL MINISTERIAL REVIEW, DEBATES FFD FOLLOW-UP

The UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) has gathered in Geneva, Switzerland, for its annual substantive session, which opened on 2 July and will conclude on 27 July 2007. During the high-level segment, which convened from 2-5 July 2007, UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon highlighted the Council's two new initiatives – the Annual Ministerial Reviews (AMR) and the Development Cooperation Forum. During the first AMR, ministers from Bangladesh, Barbados, Ethiopia, Ghana, Cambodia and Cape Verde offered national voluntary presentations, followed by an interactive dialogue. On 10 July, the ministers and heads of delegations participating in the high-level segment adopted a Declaration, in which they "reaffirmed their commitment to prioritize actions and allocate resources to eliminate hunger and malnutrition in all countries and agreed to undertake measures to increase access of malnourished people to food." They also called for, *inter alia*, the promotion and facilitation of access to and the development, transfer and diffusion of technologies, and for all countries to adopt strategies for reducing urban poverty (<http://www.un.org/ecosoc/news.shtml>).

On 19 July 2007, delegates debated the follow-up to the International Conference on Financing for Development, with developing countries noting great challenges for the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals and highlighting the need for full implementation of the Monterrey Consensus. Many countries also emphasized that efforts to promote dialogue among the Bretton Woods Institutions and the UN should continue (<http://www.un.org/News/Press/docs/2007/ecosoc6298.doc.htm>).

► WATER, OCEANS AND WETLANDS

RAMSAR REPORTS ON NATIONAL AND REGIONAL IMPLEMENTATION ACTIVITIES

The Ramsar Secretariat has reported on national implementation activities by Poland, Mali and Peru. Poland has completed updating the Ramsar Information Sheets

for its 13 Wetlands of International Importance and has posted the updated data on its website (http://www.ramsar.org/ris/key_ris_status.htm). The government of Poland has used this occasion to extend the boundaries of four of its Ramsar sites and rename one of them. This country's Ramsar

sites now cover 145,075 hectares (http://www.ramsar.org/profile/profiles_poland.htm). Meanwhile, the Department of Nature Conservation of the Ministry of Equipment, Land-Use and Environment of Mali has developed the first version of the database on

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▶ WATER, OCEANS AND WETLANDS

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the country's wetlands (http://www.ramsar.org/wn/w.n.mali_database.htm). In Peru, the government has designated a complex of high Andean lagoons and ponds as its 12th Wetland of International Importance. The site is habitat for many vulnerable or endangered species, assists in regulation of the local climate, and promotes other hydrological processes (http://www.ramsar.org/archives/archives_trans_peru_arreviatadas.htm).

Regarding regional activities, the Secretariat has reported on the launch of WacoWet, an initiative of West Africa countries that belong to the Gulf of Guinea ecological continuum and that focuses on marine and coastal wetlands in the region. At a meeting on 20-22 June 2007, between representatives from Benin, Guinea, Ivory Coast, Liberia, Nigeria and Togo, WacoWet's charter, protocol, strategic plan and rules of procedure were adopted and the initiative was officially launched (http://www.ramsar.org/wn/w.n.wacowet_launch.htm).

IMO MEPC PROGRESSES ON AIR POLLUTION FROM SHIPS; SCIENTIFIC GROUPS CAUTIOUS OVER IRON FERTILIZATION

The Marine Environment Protection Committee (MEPC) of the International Maritime Organization (IMO) met for its 56th session

from 9-13 July 2007, in London, UK, during which it, *inter alia*: established a working group with the mandate to study issues relating to the prevention of air pollution, including emission of greenhouse gases from ships; made progress on the draft text of a new convention providing globally applicable ship recycling regulations for international shipping and for recycling activities, which is to be adopted by a diplomatic conference in the 2008-2009 biennium; adopted amendments to the International Convention for the Prevention of Pollution from Ships (MARPOL) Annex I (Regulations for the prevention of pollution by oil from ships) and Annex IV (Regulations for the prevention of pollution by sewage from ships); and urged States to ratify the International Convention for the Control and Management of Ships' Ballast Water and Sediments (http://www.imo.org/Newsroom/mainframe.asp?topic_id=1472&doc_id=8273).

In related news, the IMO has reported that the Scientific Group advising the Contracting Parties to the Convention on the Prevention of Marine Pollution by Dumping of Wastes and Other Matter (London Convention) and the 1996 Protocol thereto (London Protocol), which met for their 30th session from 18-22 June 2007 in Santiago de Compostela, Spain, has recommended caution in relation to planned large-scale iron fertilization

of the oceans to sequester carbon dioxide. The Group has discussed the potential environmental impact of large-scale fertilization of ocean waters using micro-nutrients such as iron to stimulate phytoplankton growth in order to sequester carbon dioxide, which is the subject of recent commercial interest. The scientists have concluded that knowledge about the effectiveness and potential impacts of ocean iron fertilization is currently insufficient to justify such operations (http://www.imo.org/Newsroom/mainframe.asp?topic_id=1472&doc_id=8214).

UNDOALOS RELEASES TENTATIVE SCHEDULE FOR UNGA INFORMAL CONSULTATIONS

The UN Division for Ocean Affairs and the Law of the Sea (UNDOALOS) has released a tentative schedule for UN General Assembly (UNGA) informal consultations on the draft resolutions on oceans and the law of the sea and sustainable fisheries for the remainder of 2007. Informal consultations on the draft resolution on oceans and the law of the sea will be held from 1-5 October 2007 and from 26-30 November 2007, and those on the draft resolution on sustainable fisheries from 8-11 October and from 13-21 November 2007 (http://www.un.org/Depts/los/general_assembly/tentative_schedule.pdf).

▶ COMINGS AND GOINGS

- Sha Zukang (China) became the **UN Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs (ESA)** on 1 July 2007. In this position, he heads the UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UNDESA) (<http://www.un.org/esa/desa/ousg/>).
-  Hama Arba Diallo, **Executive Secretary of the UN Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD)**, resigned effective 19 June 2007, following his election as a member of the National Assembly of Burkina Faso. Grégoire de Kalbermatten, the Deputy Executive Secretary, has been designated Officer-in-Charge of the UNCCD. The UN Secretary-General is expected to consult the Bureau of the Conference of Parties, with a view to naming Diallo's successor before the September 2007 COP (<http://www.un.org/News/Press/docs/2007/sgsm11057.doc.htm>).
- Katharina Kummer Peiry (Switzerland) was appointed **Executive Secretary for the Basel Convention** on 4 July 2007. Peiry will assume the position in September 2007 (http://www.basel.int/press/note_ExecSec.doc).



Sha Zukang
(Image courtesy of UNDESA)

▶ KEY UPCOMING MEA MEETINGS

- **ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL (ECOSOC) 2007 SUBSTANTIVE SESSION:** 2-27 July 2007. Geneva, Switzerland. <http://www.un.org/docs/ecosoc/meetings/2007/>
- **MULTILATERAL FUND EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE 52ND MEETING:** 23-27 July 2007. Montreal, Canada. <http://www.multilateral-fund.org>
- **REGIONAL FORUM ON UNCCD IMPLEMENTATION IN THE SADC REGION:** 30 July-1 August 2007. Gaborone, Botswana. <http://www.global-mechanism.org/news--events/events/regional-forum-on-unccd-implementation-in-the-sadc-region/>
- **CLIMATE CHANGE AS A GLOBAL CHALLENGE:** 31 July-1 August 2007. New York, US. <http://www.un.org/ga/president/61/follow-up/thematic-climate.shtml>
- **GEF BIENNIAL INTERNATIONAL WATERS CONFERENCE:** 31 July-3 August 2007. Cape Town, South Africa. <http://www.getf.org/iwc4/index.cfm>
- **XII LATIN AMERICA AND CARIBBEAN REGIONAL MEETING IN PREPARATION FOR UNCCD COP-8:** 31 July-3 August 2007. Trinidad and Tobago. <http://www.unccd.int/regional/lac/meetings/meetings.php#regional>
- **ASIA-PACIFIC TROPICAL FOREST INVESTMENT FORUM: ISSUES AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR INVESTING IN NATURAL TROPICAL FORESTS:** 6-8 August 2007. Bangkok, Thailand. <http://www.itto.or.jp/live/PageDisplayHandler?pageId=223&id=3289>
- **UNFCCC DIALOGUE AND KYOTO PROTOCOL AWG 4:** 27-31 August 2007. Vienna, Austria. <http://www.unfccc.int>