



RECENT MEA ACTIVITIES

▶ CLIMATE AND ATMOSPHERE

PARTIES TO THE MONTREAL PROTOCOL REACH HISTORIC COMPROMISE



A "thumbs up" and applause on the dais after the Preparatory Segment adopted the HCFC adjustment decision

The Nineteenth Meeting of the Parties to the Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer (MOP 19) convened from 17-21 September 2007, in Montreal, Canada. Delegates adopted 29 decisions, including on an accelerated phase-out of hydrochlorofluorocarbons (HCFCs) and on critical and essential-use exemptions from the phase-outs of chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs) and methyl bromide, and a Montreal Declaration (<http://www.iisd.ca/ozone/mop19/>; http://ozone.unep.org/Meeting_Documents/mop/19mop/MOP_19_ReportE.pdf). The agreement on HCFCs, which moved the HCFC phase-out to 2020 for industrialized countries and to 2030 for developing countries, attracted the most attention, as it is seen as an important step in reducing the production of chemicals that are both potent ozone depletors and greenhouse gases. Moreover, the issue attracted broad interest because it highlights the intersection of the Montreal and Kyoto Protocols: a byproduct of HCFC production is a powerful greenhouse gas, the production of which the Kyoto Protocol's Clean Development Mechanism has inadvertently encouraged (<http://www.unep.org/Documents/Multilingual/Default.asp?DocumentID=517&ArticleID=5671&l=en>; [http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=23918&Cr=climate&Cr1=change](http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=23918&Cr=climate&Cr1=change;); <http://ozone.unep.org/Publications/PressReleaseFinal-22Sept2007.pdf>). The final decision on HCFCs included agreement that the Multilateral Fund would support the incremental costs implied by the accelerated phase-out. The agreement on the quantities of methyl bromide allowed under the critical use exemption also attracted attention, as the quantities so far approved for 2008 are less than 60% of the quantities approved for 2007.

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RESEARCH AND RESOURCES

MOTHER EARTH: WOMEN AND SUSTAINABLE LAND MANAGEMENT

(UNDP, August 2007) This publication, based on a review of the portfolio of UN Development Programme-Global Environment Facility projects, provides guidance on mainstreaming gender considerations into sustainable land management and provides examples of women's participation in new sustainable agricultural practices (http://www.undp.org/gef/05/documents/publications/Women&SustLandManagement_web.pdf).

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GUEST ARTICLE

Measuring Policy Coherence among the MEAs and MDGs

By Anantha Kumar Duraiappah, Chief, Ecosystem Services Economics Unit, Division of Environmental Policy Implementation (DEPI), UNEP Former Director, Economic Policy, IISD, and Asmita Bhardwaj, IISD Associate

Abstract

Presently there are about 13 global Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEAs) and/or conventions and about 500 international treaties or other agreements related to the environment.

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RESEARCH AND RESOURCES *(cont.)*

GEF TALKING POINTS NEWSLETTER

(GEF, September 2007) The September edition of the Global Environment Facility (GEF) Talking Points Newsletter features an article by GEF's Chair/CEO Monique Barbut explaining the steps in GEF's new 22-month project cycle. The article also notes updates to focal area strategies, and highlights the development of "Operational Guidelines for the Application of the Incremental Cost Principle," a five-step process to simplify the negotiation of incremental costs (http://207.190.239.143/Outreach/Talking_Points/07/September%2007/Talking_Points_Sept_07_CEO_Letter_English.html).

CLIMATE CHANGE AND TOURISM: RESPONDING TO GLOBAL CHALLENGES

(UNWTO, 2007) This Advance Summary of the report, commissioned by the UN World Tourism Organization (UNWTO), the UN Environment Programme and the UN World Meteorological Organization, attempts to quantify the links between tourism and climate change, listing as key conclusions: that carbon dioxide emissions from the tourism sector are estimated to account for 4-6 % of total emissions; and that changing climate patterns might alter tourism flows in Northern Europe, the Mediterranean and the Caribbean, leaving coastal and mountain-based destinations in least developed countries and small island developing states particularly affected (http://www.unwto.org/media/news/en/pdf/davos_rep_advsn_summ_26_09.pdf).

UPDATE ON MARKETS FOR FORESTRY OFFSETS

(CATIE, September 2007) Written by Till Neeff, Lisa Eichler, Imme Deecke and Jan Fehse, this update to the "Guidebook to markets and commercialization of forestry and clean development mechanism (CDM) projects," gives insights on the development of non-forestry offsets in addition to the CDM, presenting the diversity of non-Kyoto markets (<http://www.proyectoforma.com/Documents/UpdateOnMarkets-ForForestryOffsets.pdf>).

► CLIMATE AND ATMOSPHERE

KYOTO COMPLIANCE COMMITTEE RELEASES REPORT

The Compliance Committee to the Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Kyoto Protocol (CMP) has released its second annual report. The report covers the period from 9 September 2006 to 7 September 2007, and provides information on various organizational matters, the work of the Committee during this period, and various budgetary matters (<http://unfccc.int/resource/docs/2007/cmp3/eng/06.pdf>). This report will be considered during CMP 3, which will take place in Bali, Indonesia, in December 2007.

In late September, the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) Secretariat released a number of other documents that will also be considered in

Bali. One document contains a synthesis of information on economic diversification submitted by parties and relevant organizations, which will be considered by the Subsidiary Body for Scientific and Technological Advice (<http://unfccc.int/resource/docs/2007/sbsta/eng/14.pdf>). Another document contains a synthesis of information on the impacts of response measures taken by parties to address climate change – an issue that will be taken up in Bali by the Subsidiary Body for Implementation (<http://unfccc.int/resource/docs/2007/sbi/eng/23.pdf>). Documents relating to the recent work of the Consultative Group of Experts on national communications from non-Annex I parties (developing countries) has also been published online (<http://unfccc.int/resource/docs/2007/sbi/eng/20.pdf>; <http://unfccc.int/resource/docs/2007/sbi/eng/misc07.pdf>).

► INTERGOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS

UN HOLDS "LARGEST-EVER" LEADERS' MEETING ON CLIMATE CHANGE

UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon has convened the largest-ever meeting of global political leaders on climate change. The event, which took place at UN headquarters in New York, US, on 24 September 2007, was attended by 80 heads of State or government, and representatives from 150 countries. The meeting was entitled, "The Future in our Hands: Addressing the Leadership Challenge of Climate Change," and involved four plenary sessions focused on adaptation, mitigation, technology and financing.

A Chair's summary of the 24 September meeting stressed the "clear call from world leaders for a breakthrough on climate change in Bali" and highlighted the need for swift action. It also noted the need to: make the Adaptation Fund operational as quickly as possible; achieve the Millennium Development Goals; halve emissions by 2050; limit temperature increase to 2°C; make deep emission reductions in industrialized countries; minimize emissions from deforestation; support and scale-up technological solutions and cooperation; improve energy efficiency; ensure that adequate resources are available for developing countries to combat climate change; and strengthen the Clean Development Mechanism. The Chair's summary also emphasized that this event was not intended as an occasion for negotiations, but was meant to express the political will of world leaders at the highest level to tackle the problem. Noting that the upcoming Conference of the Parties to the UNFCCC should be the "starting point for intense negotiations driven by an agreed agenda," the summary stressed that these negotiations should be comprehensive, inclusive, and lead to a single multilateral framework, and that all other processes or initiatives should be compatible with the UNFCCC process and feed into it. The meeting was followed by an event hosted by the US government on 27

September, in Washington, DC (<http://www.un.org/climatechange/2007highlevel/>; <http://www.un.org/climatechange/2007highlevel/summary.shtml>).

WORLD LEADERS RAISE CLIMATE CHANGE ISSUE AT UNGA DEBATE

The General Debate of the 62nd session of the UN General Assembly (UNGA) took place from 25 September-3 October 2007 at UN headquarters in New York, US, gathering more than 190 heads of State and other high-level political leaders of all UN member States. Many speakers discussed the upcoming UNFCCC conference in Bali, Indonesia, in December 2007, urging participants to agree on a clear road map for establishing a future global framework for reducing greenhouse gas emissions, to succeed the Kyoto Protocol in 2012. In addition, Brazil's President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva offered to host in Rio de Janeiro a summit on the environment in 2012, entitled the Rio +20 Conference, two decades after the landmark international UN Conference on Environment and Development (<http://www.un.org/web-cast/ga/62/>).

UNEP AWARDS PRIZE TO LOCAL LEVEL CLIMATE CHANGE ACTIONS, STEPS UP INVOLVEMENT IN DRC

The UN Environment Programme (UNEP) has awarded the Sasakawa Prize 2007 to two non-governmental initiatives in South Africa and Bangladesh for their efforts to combat climate change on the local level: Jeunesse Park for initiating the design of the first carbon calculator in South Africa,



UNEP Sasakawa Prize 2007 recipients (Photo courtesy of UNEP)

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RESEARCH AND RESOURCES *(cont.)***2007 IUCN RED LIST**

(IUCN, September 2007) Widely recognized as the most authoritative assessment of the planet's species, the IUCN Red List for 2007 includes 16,306 species threatened with extinction. Some of the highlights include: the decline of the great apes; the first appearance of corals in the list; the Yangtze River Dolphin listed as critically endangered and possibly extinct; the decline of vultures and the listing of 1,217 birds as threatened; and the listing of 723 North American reptiles (http://www.iucn.org/themes/ssc/redlist2007/index_redlist2007.htm).

▶ INTERGOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS

Continued from page 2

making it easy and affordable for government, institutions and communities to offset carbon emissions; and the organization Shidhulai Swanirvar Sangstha for travelling through Bangladesh's extensive river network to bring environmental education and renewable energy supplies to local communities (<http://www.unep.org/Documents.Multilingual/Default.asp?DocumentID=517&ArticleID=5675&l=en>).

Meanwhile, a UNEP fact finding mission arrived in Kinshasa, the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), on 17 September 2007, to explore conservation efforts in protected areas, institutional capacity building, and ways to mitigate the impact of human activities on environment and natural resources, with a view to improving UNEP's involvement in environmental activities in the DRC. The current

mission is a result of specific recommendations made after the joint UN Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization-UNEP mission to the Virunga National Park in the DRC in August 2007, tasked to investigate the death of a number of mountain gorillas (<http://www.unep.org/Documents.Multilingual/Default.asp?DocumentID=517&ArticleID=5670&l=en>).

On 1 October 2007, UNEP announced that New Zealand, which is one of the first countries to pledge a carbon-neutral future, will be the main host of World Environment Day on 5 June 2008. The global 2008 celebrations will focus on solutions and opportunities for countries, companies and communities to "kick the habit" and de-carbonize their economies and life-styles (<http://www.unep.org/Documents.Multilingual/Default.asp?DocumentID=519&ArticleID=5677&l=en>).

▶ FORESTS, DESERTS AND LAND

ITTO HOSTS MEETINGS ON NON-TIMBER AND TEAK FOREST PRODUCTS

The International Tropical Timber Organization (ITTO) hosted an international conference in Beijing, China, from 23-28 September 2007, to promote the development of tropical non-timber forest products (NTFPs) and services. Through panel discussions and keynote presentations, participants shared experiences in promoting tropical NTFPs in domestic and international trade, and made recommendations on policy and other measures to promote their sustainable production and sustainable provision of forest services.

In addition, ITTO, with the Kerala Forest Research Institute, the International Union of Forest Research Organizations and the government of India, hosted a regional workshop on processing and marketing of teak wood products from planted forests. The workshop, which took place from 25-28 September 2007, in Peechi-Kerala, India, addressed the use of innovative technologies for quicker teak production and processing with value addition for better marketing (<http://www.itto.or.jp>).

UNFF BUDGET CONSULTATIONS CONTINUE, UNFF 8 BUREAU CHAIR SELECTED

Informal consultations on the updated Program and Budget Implication (PBI) of the outcomes of the seventh session of the UN Forum on Forests (UNFF 7) continued at UN headquarters in New York, US, on 1 October 2007, after having first convened earlier in September 2007, under the chairmanship of Hans Hoogeveen, UNFF 7 Chair. The updated PBI, released in July 2007, added several budget implications to the original PBI, which was produced following the adoption of a non-legally binding instrument on all types of forests and a multi-year programme

of work at UNFF 7. The July 2007 updated PBI included the addition of five new posts at the UNFF Secretariat and a number of expert group meetings in preparation for UNFF 8 in 2009. Delegates attending the informal consultations in September expressed the need to strengthen the Secretariat, from existing resources within the UN and the UNFF Trust Fund, to assist in the implementation of the Forum's commitments. Delegates also encouraged the reallocation of posts within the UN to the UNFF Secretariat and secondment of posts from members of the Collaborative Partnership on Forests, thus requesting the Secretariat to "neutralize" the updated PBI. Consultations held on 1 October focused on ensuring that the appropriate UN offices were able to follow the guidance of the member States to offset the July PBI. The UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) will decide on the adoption of the UNFF 7 report on 4 October 2007, after having deferred the matter from its July 2007 session due to the release of the July PBI (IISD RS sources).

In other UNFF news, UNFF 8 Bureau members, at a 6 September 2007 meeting, selected Boen Purnama (Indonesia) to act as the Chair of the Bureau. UNFF 8 will formally elect its Chair on its opening day, in April 2009 (http://www.un.org/esa/forests/pdf/bureau/unff8/minutes_06092007.pdf).

NEW UNCCD EXECUTIVE SECRETARY ASSUMES POSITION, GM SIGNS LETTER OF INTENT WITH MEXICO

The new Executive Secretary of the UN Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD),

Luc Gnacadja (Benin), assumed his position on 1 October 2007.

The Global Mechanism (GM) has posted summaries of several of its activities during the eighth Conference of the Parties to the UNCCD (3-14 September 2007, Madrid, Spain). On 13 September 2007, Juan Elvira, Secretary of Mexico's Secretariat for the Environment and Natural Resources, José Cibrián, Director General of Mexico's National Forestry Commission, and Christian Mersmann, the GM's Managing Director, signed a letter of intent, signaling the signatories' agreement to establish a Memorandum of Understanding to undertake actions such as: mainstreaming sustainable land management (SLM) into national and local programme and budgeting cycles; assessing and harmonizing public policies; promoting compensation for environmental services projects, market access and other innovative financing mechanisms, such as compensation for environmental services; and capacity building at the national and local levels, based on best SLM practices (<http://www.global-mechanism.org/news--events/news/mexico-signs-letter-of-intent-establishing-the-basis-for-cooperation-with-the-gm/>). The GM also organized and participated in a number of side-events during COP 8, including "Progress in Integrated Financial Strategy Formulation in Guatemala and Honduras" and "How to Channel Climate Change Funding into UNCCD Implementation Activities and Outlook." Together with the UN Conference on Trade and Development's BioTrade initiative, the GM presented a new joint initiative that aims to enhance financing for sustainable land management and to improve synergies with biodiversity-related conventions, such as the CBD, the Ramsar Convention, and the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (<http://www.global-mechanism.org/>).



The UNFF 8 Bureau selected Boen Purnama to act as Chair

GUEST ARTICLE (cont.)

This proliferation of agreements has created concern among international and national communities regarding overlap and duplication of goals and programs, in part because lack of coherence results in high transaction costs and inefficiencies in achieving convention objectives. This growing concern has made policy coherence the single most important theme in the dialogue on International Environmental Governance (IEG).

Initiatives flowing out of various environmental conventions have yielded a more integrated approach towards environmental management, fostering more effective policy coherence. However, much remains to be done. There is still little effort being made to find coherence between environmental agreements and development initiatives, especially the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). Drawing on a review of the policy coherence literature, we develop a methodology to quantitatively measure policy coherence, and then use it to evaluate the degree of policy coherence between the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), the UN Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD), the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), the Convention on Wetlands (Ramsar) and the MDGs.

The results show that we have a long way to go before we achieve an acceptable level of policy coherence. The CBD does the best job of representing other MEA issues, while Ramsar does the worst. This is understandable since the CBD has a greater number of synergy instruments and also has a greater mention of other conventions in its documents. One reason that Ramsar shows low levels of coherence with other conventions might be that Ramsar is a much older convention (1971) than the Rio Conventions (1992), and greater synergy efforts have taken place amongst the three Rio Conventions. The rankings also show that the CBD is well-represented in other conventions, while the UNCCD ranks last in this aspect. This is a disturbing finding since arid and semi-arid areas contain a large section of rural poor, especially in developing countries.

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► SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

UNSD ORGANIZES MEETING ON NON-RENEWABLE RESOURCE REVENUES FOR SUSTAINABLE LOCAL DEVELOPMENT

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), has convened an expert group meeting on "The use of non-renewable resource revenues for sustainable local development: challenges and opportunities for developing countries." The meeting, which took place on 21 September 2007, in New York, US, was organized to serve as a first step towards understanding the efficiency and effectiveness of using natural resource revenues at the local level for sustainable development and growth. Six presentations discussed the performance and impacts on the ground of develop-

ment programmes, projects and activities financed by revenues from natural resources in Chad, Nigeria, Ghana and Peru, following which participants discussed the obstacles and the type of international support that would represent the best use of resources, given the local context. To inform CSD 16, DSD will prepare a meeting report, which will summarize the discussions as well as reflect on the prerequisites for and obstacles to the efficient use of revenues for local development, problem trends associated with the evaluation of the use of revenues on the ground, and outline policy options (http://www.un.org/esa/sustdev/sdissues/institutional_arrangements/egm2007/index.htm).

Also related to CSD 16, as of 1 October 2007, 30 countries have submitted their national reports on the CSD 16 and 17 themes (<http://www.un.org/esa/sustdev/natlinfo/natlinfo.htm>).

► TRADE, FINANCE AND INVESTMENT

IDB FINANCES ECOSYSTEM MANAGEMENT IN COSTA RICA AND PANAMA

The Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) will channel a US\$ 3.5 million grant from the Global Environmental Facility (GEF) to improve environmental management in the Sixaola river basin between Costa Rica and Panama. The area contains one of the last large tracts of nearly untouched forest in Central America, as well as coastal ecosystems such as wetlands and mangroves, and also has some of the highest levels of poverty in both countries. The project will promote the adoption of productive practices compatible with the conservation and sustainable use of water, soil and biodiversity (<http://www.iadb.org/news/articledetail.cfm?artid=4034&language=En>).

IDA FINANCES TOAD RECOVERY IN TANZANIA

The World Bank approved, on 27 September 2007, an International Development Agency (IDA) loan of US\$ 3.5 million to enable Tanzania to fill a financing gap caused by additional issues that arose with the unexpected mortality of Kihansi Spray Toads in a captive breeding program and in the wild. A recovery plan for the re-introduction of the Kihansi Spray Toads species into its natural habitat and maintenance of its habitat will be developed (<http://web.worldbank.org/WBSITE/EXTERNAL/NEWS/0,,contentMDK:21490531~pagePK:34370~piPK:34424~theSitePK:4607,00.html>).



Kihansi Spray Toad (Photo courtesy of Dennis Demello)

► BIODIVERSITY AND WILDLIFE

INFORMAL CONSULTATION FOCUSES ON FARMERS' RIGHTS

In preparation for the second session of the Governing Body of the International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture, to be held in Rome, Italy, from 29 October - 2 November 2007, Norway's Ministry of Agriculture, Zambia's Agricultural Research Institute and the Fridtjof Nansen Institute, Norway, co-hosted an informal international consultation on Farmers' Rights from 18-20 September 2007, in Lusaka, Zambia. The consultation gathered 27 participants



Godfrey Mwila, Zambia

from 20 countries to explore the contents of Farmers' Rights, farmers' contribution to the conservation and sustainable use of genetic resources, the state of realization of their rights, and key issues to be addressed in this regard. Participants discussed questions related to the implementation of Farmers' Rights at the national level, with a particular emphasis on how stakeholders can join forces and how resources can be pooled for this purpose. Considerable time was devoted to what the Governing Body can do to promote the realization of Farmers' Rights. The consultation built a broad basis of understanding not only of the contents of Farmers' Rights, but also of action needed to ensure their realization. On this basis, the organizers developed an input paper with broad support of all the participants, to be submitted to the Governing Body for consideration at its second session (IISD RS sources).

GUEST ARTICLE (cont.)

Our results indicate that there is a significant need to improve certain relationships. However, attempts to strengthen these inter-linkages need to be assessed with care. This is so because there are limits to achieving policy coherence. Having overlaps or inter-linkages or strengthening them does not mean we need to achieve 100 per cent policy coherence. Attempting to do so would mean that the identity and objective of an MEA is no different from another MEA or MDG. In reality this is not so. A qualitative analysis along with our quantitative analysis can help us decipher the limits and achieve healthy interlinkages between overlapping conventions and goals.

The full article is available at <http://www.iisd.ca/mea-1/guestarticle33.htm>

Editor's note:

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

► BIODIVERSITY AND WILDLIFE

CBD HOSTS MEETINGS ON INDIGENOUS ISSUES, ANNOUNCES THEME FOR 2008 INTERNATIONAL BIODIVERSITY DAY

From 17-19 September 2007, the Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) hosted in Montreal, Canada, the annual meeting of the UN Inter-Agency Support Group on Indigenous Issues. Comprising several agencies of the UN system, the Inter-Agency Support Group aims to support and promote the mandate of the UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues, as well as support indigenous-related mandates throughout the inter-governmental system. The meeting was held a few days after the adoption of the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples by the UN General Assembly, and addressed how UN agencies and mechanisms can better and collectively support indigenous peoples to respond and adapt to the impacts of climate change, and how the international community can benefit from the traditional knowledge of indigenous peoples (<http://www.cbd.int/doc/press/2007/pr-2007-09-18-indigenous-en.pdf>).

The Inter-Agency Support Group meeting was followed by the International Indigenous

and Local Community Consultation on Access and Benefit-sharing and the Development of an International Regime, which took place in Montreal, from 19-21 September 2007. In preparation for the fifth meeting of the CBD Working Group on Access and Benefit-sharing, to be held in Montreal from 8-12 October 2007, the meeting provided the opportunity for indigenous and local community experts to exchange views on the development of an international regime and address different approaches to access and benefit-sharing (<http://www.cbd.int/doc/speech/2007/sp-2007-09-19-abs-en.pdf>).

In related news, the CBD Secretariat announced that the theme of the International Day for Biological Diversity, to be celebrated on 22 May 2008, will be "Biodiversity and Agriculture" (<http://www.cbd.int/doc/notifications/2007/nf-2007-112-ibd-en.pdf>).

In preparation for the 13th meeting of the Convention's Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice (SB-STTA 13), to be held from 18-22 February 2008, in Rome, Italy, the CBD Secretariat has created a webpage to facilitate peer-review of the draft documents (<http://www.cbd.int/sb-stta-13/review.shtml>).

► WATER, OCEANS AND WETLANDS



IMO Secretary-General Eftimios E. Mitropoulos (Photo courtesy of IMO)

NEW RAMSAR SITES DESIGNATED, COP 10 NATIONAL REPORT FORMS RELEASED

According to the Ramsar Secretariat, Nepal has designated four new Ramsar sites. The four high altitude wetlands are Gokyo of Sagarmatha National Park, Shey-Phoksundo of Dolpa, Rara Lake of Mugu, and Gosaikunda of Rauswa (http://www.ramsar.org/forum/forum_nepal_4new.htm). The Secretariat has also announced that the United Arab Emirates completed the accession formalities on 29 August 2007, and that the Convention will enter into force for the country on 29 December 2007. The new party's first Ramsar site is "Ras Al Khor Wildlife Sanctuary," located in Dubai city, which supports more than 20,000 waterbirds of 67 species and hosts more than 500 species of flora and fauna (http://www.ramsar.org/index_bulletin.htm).

In related news, the Ramsar Secretariat has released the National Report Form for

Contracting Parties to report on Convention implementation to the 10th meeting of the Conference of the Contracting Parties, scheduled to take place in the Republic of Korea from 28 October-4 November 2008 (http://www.ramsar.org/cop10/cop10_nrfom_e.doc).

IMO CELEBRATES WORLD MARITIME DAY, AFS CONVENTION TO ENTER INTO FORCE, STRAITS OF MALACCA AND SINGAPORE AGREEMENT REACHED

On 27 September 2007, the International Maritime Organization (IMO) celebrated World Maritime Day under the theme "IMO's response to current environmental challenges." On this occasion, IMO Secretary-General Eftimios E. Mitropoulos cited IMO's work in improving the environmental awareness and action of the shipping industry, the development of a new convention on the removal of wrecks, and IMO's actions in addressing greenhouse gas emissions (http://www.imo.org/Newsroom/mainframe.asp?topic_id=1472&doc_id=8519).

In addition, the IMO has announced that, following Panama's accession on 17 September 2007 to the International Convention on the Control of Harmful Anti-Fouling Systems on Ships (AFS Convention), the Convention will enter into force in September 2008. Anti-fouling paints are used to coat the bottom of ships to prevent sealife such as algae and mollusks from attaching themselves to the hull. The AFS Convention,

which was adopted on 5 October 2001, bans the application of organotin compounds that act as biocides in their anti-fouling systems, and establishes a mechanism to evaluate and assess other anti-fouling systems and prevent the potential future use of other harmful substances (http://www.imo.org/Newsroom/mainframe.asp?topic_id=1472&doc_id=8473).

The IMO has also reported that a meeting of the States bordering the Straits of Malacca and Singapore (the Straits States - Indonesia, Malaysia and Singapore) has led to agreement on a new cooperation framework. The initiative will provide a regular platform for dialogue between the littoral States, user States and users of the Straits to address issues such as navigational safety and environmental protection in the Straits (http://www.imo.org/Newsroom/mainframe.asp?topic_id=1472&doc_id=8471).

GPA COORDINATION OFFICE REVISES NPA WEBSITE

The Coordination Office of the Global Programme of Action for the Protection of the Marine Environment from Land-Based Activities (GPA) has revived the National Programme of Action (NPA) section of the GPA website. The page now includes the main messages contained in the NPA Guide published in 2006, with detailed information regarding the steps to develop and implement an NPA, guiding principles for NPA processes, as well as examples (<http://www.gpa.unep.org/content.html?id=355>).

► CHEMICALS AND WASTES

**UNEP CHEMICALS POSTS
MERCURY OEWG DOCUMENTS**

The First Meeting of the *Ad Hoc* Open Ended Working Group (OEWG) to review and assess measures to address the global issue of mercury will convene from 12-16 November 2007 in Bangkok, Thailand. The Mercury OEWG will review and assess options for enhanced voluntary measures and new or existing international legal instruments on mercury. UN Environment Programme (UNEP) Chemicals has released various meeting documents including: an annotated provisional agenda; a study on options for the global control of mercury; a report on atmospheric emissions and site-based contamination; a status report on UNEP Mercury Programme partnerships; and submissions

received from governments and non-governmental organizations in response to a call for information relating to UNEP GC Decision 24/3 IV (<http://www.chem.unep.ch/mercury/OEWG/Documents.htm>).

**BASEL CONVENTION REQUESTS
COMMENTS**

The Secretariat of the Basel Convention has invited parties' comments on various decisions taken at the Sixth OEWG in September 2007. Upcoming deadlines for comments include those related to the E-waste Workplan for 2009-2010 (30 November 2007). Parties and stakeholders interested in participating in the working group mandated to revise



Logo
courtesy of
the Basel
Convention

the guidelines on the environmentally sound management of used tires should make their interest known by 31 October 2007 (<http://www.basel.int/convention/rfc/rfcOEWG6.html>).

**ROTTERDAM CONVENTION
INVITES TRADE INFORMATION**

In line with the process for collecting information on ongoing international trade, adopted by the Chemical Review Committee in February 2005, the Secretariat of the Rotterdam Convention has invited parties and interested stakeholders to submit, by 1 February 2008, information on the trade and use of Methyl-Parathion and Mirex (<http://www.pic.int/home.php?type=t&id=194&sid=1>).

► COMINGS AND GOINGS

- The Executive Board of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) appointed by consensus Dominique Strauss-Kahn (France) as **IMF Managing Director and Chairman of the Executive Board**. Strauss-Kahn will succeed Rodrigo de Rato for a five-year term, starting on 1 November 2007 (<http://www.imf.org/external/np/sec/pr/2007/pr07211.htm>).
- Lakshmi Puri (India), who has directed the UN Conference on Trade and Development's (UNCTAD) Trade Division since 2002, has been named **UNCTAD's Acting Deputy Secretary-General**. Her appointment started on 7 September 2007 (<http://www.unctad.org/Templates/Page.asp?intItemID=4337&lang=1>).
- Anjan Datta (Bangladesh) will serve as **Officer in Charge of the Global Programme of Action for the Protection of the Marine Environment from Land-Based Activities (GPA)/Regional Seas of the UNEP GPA Coordination Office** (IISD RS sources).
- Per Bakken (Norway) has been appointed as **Head of the Chemicals Branch, Division of Technology, Industry and Economics (DTIE), UNEP**. Bakken, who succeeds Maged Younes, assumed the position on 1 September 2007 (IISD RS Sources).
- The **Global Environment Facility (GEF) has announced nine new staff members**, including Brennan Van Dyke (Political Advisor to CEO), Sekou Toure (Conflict Resolution Commissioner), Dima Reda (Corporate Operations, Policies and Financial Services), William Ehlers (External Affairs), Maureen Shields Lorenzetti (Spokesperson), Gustavo A. B. da Fonseca (Natural Resources Management), Jaime Cavellier (Senior Biodiversity Specialist), and Chris Briggs (Operations, Policies and Finance) (http://207.190.239.143/Outreach/Talking_Points/07/September%2007/Talking_Points_Sept_07_CEO_Letter_English.html).



Dominique Strauss-Kahn (Photo
courtesy of IMF)



Lakshmi Puri



Anjan Datta

► KEY UPCOMING MEA MEETINGS

- **THIRD MEETING OF THE INFORMAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON THE BIOSAFETY CLEARING-HOUSE:** 4-5 October 2007. Montreal, Canada. <http://www.cbd.int/doc/meeting.aspx?mtg=BCHAC-03>
- **FIFTH MEETING OF THE AD HOC OPEN-ENDED WORKING GROUP ON ACCESS AND BENEFIT-SHARING OF THE CBD:** 8-12 October 2007. Montreal, Canada. <http://www.iisd.ca/biodiv/abs5/>
- **FIFTH MEETING OF THE AD HOC OPEN-ENDED WORKING GROUP ON ARTICLE 8(J) AND RELATED PROVISIONS OF THE CBD:** 15-19 October 2007. Montreal, Canada. <http://www.iisd.ca/biodiv/wg8j-5/>
- **CMS SCIENTIFIC AND WHALE-WATCHING SYMPOSIUM/MEETING ON CONSERVATION AND MANAGEMENT OF SMALL CETACEANS IN TROPICAL WEST AFRICA:** 16-20 October 2007. Santiago del Tenerife, Canary Islands, Spain. <http://www.cms.int/news/events.htm>
- **EXPERT GROUP MEETING: INNOVATIVE FINANCE FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT:** 18-19 October 2007. New York, US. <http://www.un.org/esa/sustdev/sdissues/finance/egm2007/index.htm>