



Published in cooperation with UNEP
Division of Environmental Law and Conventions (DEL/C)

UNEP

iisd | Reporting Services

MEA BULLETIN

A newsletter on the activities of key multilateral environmental agreements (MEAs) and their secretariats
Issue No. 34 | Friday, 19 October 2007 | Published by the International Institute for Sustainable Development (IISD)

RECENT MEA ACTIVITIES

► BIODIVERSITY AND WILDLIFE

CBD WORKING GROUP ON ABS CONCLUDES, ARTICLE 8(j) MEETING IN PROGRESS



Dais at the fifth meeting of the *Ad hoc* Open-ended Working Group and Access and Benefit-sharing (ABS 5) of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD). L-R: Ahmed Djoghlaif, CBD Executive Secretary; ABS Working Group Co-Chairs Fernando Casas, Colombia; and Timothy Hodges, Canada

The fifth meeting of the *Ad hoc* Open-ended Intersessional Working Group on Access and Benefit-sharing (ABS) of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) met from 8-12 October 2007, in Montreal, Canada. The meeting considered elements of an international regime on ABS, including: fair and equitable benefit-sharing; access to genetic resources; compliance with prior informed consent and mutually agreed terms; an international certificate of origin/source/legal provenance of genetic resources; and capacity building. Delegates also discussed two informal documents tabled by Co-Chairs Fernando Casas (Colombia) and Timothy Hodges (Canada): a compendium of proposals made at the meeting; and a document comprising the Co-Chairs' reflections on progress made. Negotiations will resume at the Working Group's sixth session, to be held from 21-25 January 2008, in Geneva, Switzerland (<http://www.iisd.ca/biodiv/abs5/>).

Continued on page 2

MEA Clusters In This Issue

- **Biodiversity and Wildlife**
CMS Prepares for Talks on New Agreements *Page 2*
- **Chemicals and Wastes**
Rotterdam Convention Releases Resources in Arabic and Russian *Page 2*
- **Sustainable Development**
CSD 16 Bureau Holds Informal Consultation *Page 3*
- **Trade, Finance and Investment**
WTO Public Forum 2007 Considers Globalization; China Joins GEF Energy-Efficient Lightbulbs Initiative; World Bank Creates Carbon Finance Facilities *Page 3*
- **Water, Oceans and Wetlands**
UNDOALOS Celebrates 25th Anniversary of UNCLOS *Page 4*
- **Climate and Atmosphere**
IPCC and Gore Awarded Nobel Peace Prize, Ozone Secretariat Posts 2008-2009 Meeting List *Pages 4-5*
- **Forests, Deserts and Land**
UNCCD Participates in Meetings, UNFF 7 Report Decision Deferred by ECOSOC *Page 5*
- **Intergovernmental Organizations**
UN Conferences Consider Tourism Sector and Knowledge Societies' Connections with Climate Change; UNEP-UNCTAD Task Force Organizes Symposium on Link between Environmental Standards and Market Access *Pages 5-6*

RESEARCH AND RESOURCES

REGIONAL DECLINE OF CORAL COVER IN THE INDO-PACIFIC: TIMING, EXTENT AND SUBREGIONAL COMPARISONS

(PLoS ONE, August 2007) This article, authored by John Bruno and Elizabeth Selig, presents the results of the authors' compilation of more than 6,000 independent surveys spanning four decades. The authors found that more than 3,000 square kilometers of living coral reef have been lost each year since 1997 (<http://www.plosone.org/article/lookup?articleURI=info:doi/10.1371/journal.pone.0000711>).

Continued on page 2

GUEST ARTICLE

Management of transboundary waters: Assessing the status of transboundary rivers, lakes and groundwaters

By Francesca Bernardini, Rainer Enderlein and Ella Behlyarova, United Nations Economic Commission for Europe

Abstract

Many rivers crisscross the border between two or more countries, transboundary lakes are shared between two or three countries, and transboundary aquifers underlie two or even three countries.

Continued on page 5

The *MEA Bulletin* © is a publication of the International Institute for Sustainable Development (IISD) <info@iisd.ca>, publishers of the *Earth Negotiations Bulletin* © <enb@iisd.org>. This issue was researched and written by Soledad Aguilar, Melanie Ashton, Alice Bisiaux, Reem Hajjar, Amber Moreen, Renata Rubian, Chris Spence, Elsa Tsoumani, Cecilia Vaverka and Lynn Wagner, Ph.D. The Digital Editor is Diego Noguera. The Editor is Lynn Wagner, Ph.D. <lynn@iisd.org>. The Deputy Director of IISD Reporting Services is Chris Spence and the Director of IISD Reporting Services is Langston James "Kimo" Goree VI <kimo@iisd.org>. The *MEA Bulletin* is published by IISD in cooperation with UNEP's Division of Environmental Law and Conventions (DEL/C). Opinions expressed in *MEA Bulletin* are those of the authors and not the publishers. Excerpts from the *MEA Bulletin* may be used in non-commercial publications with appropriate academic citation. For information on IISD publications, including requests to provide reporting services, contact the Director of IISD Reporting Services at <kimo@iisd.org>, +1-646-536-7556 or 300 East 56th St. Apt 11A, New York, NY 10022, USA.

RESEARCH AND RESOURCES *(cont.)*

NEGOTIATING AND IMPLEMENTING MEAs: A MANUAL FOR NGOs

(UNEP, 2007) This manual attempts to link the areas of multilateral environment agreement (MEA) formulation and civil society participation, with a view to strengthening multi-stakeholder participation and increasing political momentum for effective MEA development, implementation and enforcement. It provides step-by-step background information and approaches, "inside the process" guidance, and expert advice on how stakeholders can effectively engage in developing and implementing MEAs (<http://www.unep.org/delc/docs/MEAs%20Final.pdf>).

A WORLD OF SCIENCE: RETROSPECTIVE ON CLIMATE CHANGE

(UNESCO, October 2007) This fifth anniversary issue of the UN Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization's (UNESCO) journal *A World of Science* offers a retrospective on UNESCO and climate, drawing on previous articles covering UNESCO's programs in water, glaciers, arid lands, renewable energy, global observations, ocean acidification and carbon sequestration, and climate impacts on cultural heritage. The retrospective seeks to illustrate the role UNESCO has played in helping countries to monitor, mitigate and adapt to climate change (<http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0015/001517/151707E.pdf>).

BIOFUELS: IS THE CURE WORSE THAN THE DISEASE?

(OECD, September 2007) Prepared by Richard Doornbosch and Ronald Steenblik for the Round Table on Sustainable Development organized by the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) from 11-12 September 2007, this report cites problems such as a potential conflict between biofuels and food crops, and threats to biodiversity. The report also addresses biofuel subsidies in the North, as well as sustainability certification (http://www.foeeurope.org/publications/2007/OECD_Biofuels_Cure_Worse_Than_Disease_Sept07.pdf).

► BIODIVERSITY AND WILDLIFE



Dais during the Mohawk opening ceremony of the fifth meeting of the *Ad hoc* Open-ended Intersessional Working Group on Article 8(j) (traditional knowledge) and related provisions (Article 8(j) WG) of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD)

Continued from page 1

Immediately following the fifth meeting of the Working Group on ABS, the fifth meeting of the *Ad hoc* Open-ended Working Group on Article 8(j) and related provisions convened, from 15-19 October 2007, at the same location. The agenda of the Working Group on Article 8(j) includes: an action plan for the retention of traditional knowledge; traditional knowledge in the context of an international ABS regime; the development of sui generis systems for the protection of traditional knowledge; mechanisms to promote the participation of indigenous and local communities; and elements of an ethical code of conduct to ensure respect for their cultural and intellectual heritage. The Working Group's recommendations will be submitted to the ninth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the CBD, to be held from 19-30 May 2008, in Bonn, Germany (<http://www.iisd.ca/biodiv/wg8j-5/>).

In addition, the CBD recently organized an expert workshop on ecological criteria and biogeographic classification systems for marine areas in need of protection (2-4 October 2007, Azores, Portugal). The workshop focused on: refining and developing a set of scientific criteria for identifying ecologically or biologically significant marine areas in need of protection in open ocean waters and deep sea habitats; compiling biogeographical and ecological classification systems for delineating ocean regions and ecosystems, and making recommendations for further work to fill gaps; and compiling a consolidated set of scientific criteria for representative networks of marine protected areas. The outcomes will be forwarded to the thirteenth meeting of the CBD Subsidiary Body on Scientific,

Technical and Technological Advice (18-22 February 2008, Rome, Italy), as well as to the UN Secretary-General for the purpose of informing the Informal Working Group of the General Assembly on marine biodiversity beyond areas of national jurisdiction (<http://www.cbd.int/doc/meeting.aspx?mtg=EWSEBM-01&tab=0>; <http://www.cbd.int/doc/speech/2007/sp-2007-10-02-portugal-en.pdf>).

CMS PREPARES FOR TALKS ON NEW AGREEMENTS

The Convention on Migratory Species (CMS) is preparing for a series of important meetings. On 16 October 2007, the Western African Talks on Cetaceans and their Habitats opened a week-long series of meetings in Adeje, Tenerife, including two days of scientific workshops covering cetacean conservation, whale-watching and awareness raising, and a three-day session on a CMS action plan on small cetaceans in the African Eastern Atlantic Basin and the beginning of negotiations for a new agreement. From 22-25 October 2007, negotiations on a wide-ranging agreement covering migratory birds of prey in Africa, Asia and Europe will commence in Loch Lomond, Scotland, UK. In parallel, the French Government will host in Paris a series of primates meetings, including the Congo Basin Forest Partnership and the first negotiation session for a CMS Ngagi (Gorilla) Agreement. Finally, Pacific and Indian Ocean range States will meet from 28-31 October 2007, in Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates, to sign and plan for the implementation of a new CMS Agreement on the dugong (http://www.cms.int/news/PRESS/nwPR2007/10_Oct/CMS_five_new_agreements.htm).

► CHEMICALS AND WASTES

ROTTERDAM CONVENTION RELEASES RESOURCES IN ARABIC AND RUSSIAN

The Secretariat of the Rotterdam Convention has released various resources in Russian and Arabic, including: the Rotterdam Convention and the steps towards ratification; the Prior Informed Consent (PIC) Cir-

cular User's Guide; the Guide on the Development of National Laws to Implement the Rotterdam Convention; and the Guidance to Designated National Authorities (<http://www.pic.int/home.php?type=s&id=36&sid=36>).



Image courtesy of the Rotterdam Convention

RESEARCH AND RESOURCES *(cont.)***PUBLIC CONSULTATION ON
"ADDITIONAL OPTIONS TO
COMBAT ILLEGAL LOGGING"
ANALYSIS AND REPORT**

(European Commission, 2007) This report summarizes the responses received during the Commission's consultation on additional legislative options to combat the import of illegal timber into the EU. The consultations were conducted between December 2006 and March 2007 (<http://www.illegal-logging.info/uploads/addoptionssynthfinal.pdf>).

**MORE RICE WITH LESS WATER –
SYSTEM OF RICE INTENSIFICATION**

(WWF, 2007) This report highlights the relationship between rice, food security and water scarcity, and examines the contribution that the System of Rice Intensification can make to address various challenges. According to this study, this new method to grow rice could save hundreds of billions of cubic meters of water while increasing food security (http://assets.panda.org/downloads/wwf_rice_report_2007.pdf).

**CHEMICALS MANAGEMENT:
THE WHY AND HOW OF
MAINSTREAMING GENDER IN
CHEMICALS MANAGEMENT**

(UNDP, September 2007) This publication provides a checklist that can serve as a basis for a multi-stakeholder approach to mainstreaming gender considerations at each step of a national process to develop or strengthen a sound chemicals management regime (<http://www.energyandenvironment.undp.org/undp/indexAction.cfm?module=Library&action=GetFile&DocumentAttachmentID=2314>).

EU WATER SAVING POTENTIAL

(Ecologic, 2007) By analyzing Europe's water saving potential by 2030, this study seeks to support the impact assessment of the EU's Communication on Water Scarcity and Droughts (July 2007). The study addresses the savings that can be achieved via technical measures without major changes in human behavior or production patterns. Depending on the sector analyzed, including agriculture, tourism, households, energy and industry, the study identifies potential water savings up to 90% (<http://www.ecologic.de/modules.php?name=News&file=printpdf&sid=2175>).

► SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

**CSD 16 BUREAU HOLDS
INFORMAL CONSULTATION,
UNDESA OPENS WATER FOR LIFE
OFFICE**

The Bureau for the sixteenth session of the Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD 16) held an informal consultation on 25 September 2007, in New York, US. Francis Nhema (Zimbabwe), Chair of CSD 16, chaired the consultation, which was attended by Vice-Chair Juan Mario Dary (Guatemala) and a representative of Vice-Chair Daniel Carmon (Israel). Participants were informed that consultations were ongoing in the Asian and East European Groups regarding their nominations for Vice-Chairs. The temporary Officer-in-Charge of the Division for Sustainable Development (CSD Secretariat), Kui-Nang Mak, also attended the consultation. CSD 16 will include a review of



CSD 16 Chair Nhema

overall progress in implementation; thematic discussions, including regional perspective discussions based on the outcomes of regional implementation meetings; a SIDS day; a review of CSD 13 decisions on water and sanitation; and a High-level Segment. The Bureau is tentatively scheduled to meet again in December, to consider options for organizing CSD 16 (http://www.un.org/esa/sustdev/csd/csd16/bureaumtg_2509.pdf). The Asian Group is reported to have agreed to nominate Indonesia to serve as Vice-Chair.

The UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UNDESA) will manage the recently opened UN office to support the International Decade for Action "Water for Life" 2005-2015 in Zaragoza, Spain. The office was opened on 5 October 2007, and will facilitate implementation of UN-Water's work on water and sanitation, especially in the areas of communication and advocacy to raise awareness of the challenges and opportunities to solve global water and sanitation issues (http://www.un.org/esa/sustdev/sdissues/water/zaragoza_news.pdf).

► TRADE, FINANCE AND INVESTMENT



WTO Director-General Pascal Lamy

**WTO PUBLIC FORUM 2007
CONSIDERS HOW THE WTO CAN
HELP HARNESS GLOBALIZATION**

The World Trade Organization's (WTO) annual forum with civil society was held on 4-5 October 2007, in Geneva, Switzerland. WTO Director-General Pascal Lamy opened the forum, highlighting successful participation by civil society in the WTO and providing as examples the 2003 agreement on cheaper medicines for developing countries and the inclusion of subjects like fisheries subsidies, environmental goods and services, and food aid in the Doha negotiations. During the two-day forum, 39 roundtable sessions convened on issues including trade as a vehicle for growth and development, and the interaction of trade and sustainable development. Several roundtables focused on trade and climate change, with sessions on this topic organized by the WTO, the Inter-Parliamentary Union and European Parliament, and NGOs including the Center for International Environmental Law (CIEL), Friends of the Earth Europe, Greenpeace, and the International Forum on Globalization (http://www.wto.org/english/forums_e/public_forum2007_e/programme_e.htm).

**CHINA JOINS GEF ENERGY-
EFFICIENT LIGHTBULBS
INITIATIVE**

China is the first developing country to join a Global Environment Facility (GEF) programme to phase out incandescent bulbs in favor of more energy-efficient ones. The GEF will provide about US\$ 25 million to support the initiative in China, where 70% of the world's light bulbs are produced. The initiative could mitigate 500 million tonnes of the greenhouse gas carbon dioxide annually, and will be formally announced in December at the Climate Meetings in Bali, Indonesia (<http://www.reuters.com/article/GlobalEnvironment07/idUSN0132741220071001?pageNumber=1>).

**WORLD BANK CREATES TWO
NEW CARBON FINANCE
FACILITIES**

The World Bank has announced that it will establish two new carbon finance facilities, to help increase the world's ability to tackle global climate change and deforestation. The Forest Carbon Partnership Facility will compensate developing countries for carbon dioxide reductions realized by maintaining their forests. In addition, the Forest Carbon Partnership Facility will support programmes targeting the drivers of deforestation and develop activities to reach out to poor people who depend on forests to improve their livelihoods. The Carbon Partnership Facility will be used in areas such as power sector development, energy efficiency, gas flaring, transport, and urban development, including integrated waste management systems (<http://web.worldbank.org/WBSITE/EXTERNAL/NEWS/0,,contentMDK:21506175~pagePK:34370~piPK:34424~theSitePK:4607,00.html>).

RESEARCH AND RESOURCES (cont.)

ESTABLISHING MARINE PROTECTED AREA NETWORKS

(World Commission on Protected Areas/ IUCN, 2007) This report seeks to improve the understanding of the requirements for building successful marine protected areas (MPA) networks and to guide the entities involved in building the capacity they need to deliver such networks (<http://www.iucn.org/themes/wcpa/biome/marine/mpanetworks/nsmail.pdf>).

A QUICK GUIDE TO CONDUCTING MARINE ECOLOGICAL GAP ASSESSMENTS

(The Nature Conservancy, 2007) This report offers advice on analyzing gaps in conservation coverage for use in planning marine protected area (MPA) networks (<http://conserveonline.org/workspaces/patools/resources/gapassessment/gapdocs/marinegapquick-guide>).

UNDERMINING COMMUNITIES AND THE ENVIRONMENT: A REVIEW OF IFC'S ENVIRONMENTAL, HEALTH AND SAFETY GUIDELINES FOR MINING

(The Center for Science in Public Participation, 2007) This report, which was produced by a coalition of nongovernmental organizations with experience monitoring the mining sector, criticizes the International Finance Corporation's (IFC) draft set of guidelines for managing the environmental and public health impacts of large-scale mining projects. The report highlights the lack of specificity of the performance standards, and failure to stipulate appropriate measures to prevent contamination of local water sources by toxic chemicals, ensure proper disposal of mine waste or guarantee prior community consultation on the design of mine closure plans (http://www.earthworksaction.org/pubs/IFC%20Mining%20Guidelines_20070904.pdf).

BIORES REVIEW

(ICTSD, 2007) The International Centre for Trade and Sustainable Development (ICTSD) has launched a new publication on the interface of trade, environment and natural resources: Bridges Trade BioRes Review. This publication will feature analysis, research updates, signed articles and opinion pieces both in electronic format and in print copy (<http://www.ictsd.org/cyberlaunch/biores-web.pdf>).

▶ WATER, OCEANS AND WETLANDS

UNDOALOS CELEBRATES 25th ANNIVERSARY OF UNCLOS, INFORMAL CONSULTATIONS HELD

The UN Division for Ocean Affairs and the Law of the Sea (UNDOALOS) has organized a briefing on the occasion of the 25th anniversary of the opening for signature of the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) as well as the annual deliberation by the General Assembly of the agenda item "Oceans and the law of the sea," which was held on 17 October 2007 at UN headquarters in New York, US. The briefing addressed: sustainable fisheries; the implementation of the 1995 UN Fish Stocks Agreement; issues related to the work of the Commission on the Limits of the Continental Shelf;

marine biodiversity; maritime security and safety; and ocean governance (http://www.un.org/Depts/los/convention_agreements/convention_25years/unclos25years_info.pdf).

In addition, UNDOALOS organized two rounds of informal consultations of the General Assembly on the law of the sea resolution as well as on fisheries, at UN headquarters in New York, US. Participants to the law of the sea informals, which took place from 1-5 October 2007, addressed, *inter alia*: the issue of genetic resources in areas beyond national jurisdiction, and the competence of the Convention on Biological Diversity in this respect; and climate change. The fisheries informals were held from 8-12 October 2007 (IISD RS sources).

▶ CLIMATE AND ATMOSPHERE

IPCC AND AL GORE AWARDED NOBEL PEACE PRIZE

The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) and former US Vice-President Al Gore are the joint recipients of the 2007 Nobel Peace Prize. The Prize was awarded to recognize their efforts "to build up and disseminate greater knowledge about man-made climate change, and to lay the foundations for the measures that are needed to counteract such change" (http://nobelprize.org/nobel_prizes/peace/laureates/2007/). The IPCC, which was established in 1988 by UNEP and the World Meteorological Organization, involves more than 2000 scientists and other experts who review the latest findings and studies on climate change. The IPCC is set to adopt its fourth assessment report in November 2007 at a meeting in Valencia, Spain. Al Gore has long been known as an advocate for environmental action, most recently through his award-winning documentary, *An Inconvenient Truth*. The IPCC Secretariat expressed its "surprise and gratitude" at the award, and called Chair R.K. Pachauri the "backbone of the IPCC" (<http://www.ipcc.ch/press/prpnp12oct07.htm>, http://www.ipcc.ch/Initial_comments_Patchy.pdf). Yvo de Boer, Executive Secretary of the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), said: "Today's announcement is a sign that there is growing awareness not only with regard to the science and impacts of climate change, but for the need for political action. What we need to do now is to get started on the negotiations of a post-2012 framework in Bali [in December] this year. We urgently need a new agreement or a set of agreements under the umbrella of the UN which can deliver the greenhouse gas emission reductions in line with what science is telling us is needed - 50% by 2050 - along with significant funding for adaptation" (<http://unfccc.int/2860.php>).



Rajendra Pachauri,
Chair of the IPCC

UNFCCC CONTINUES PREPARATIONS FOR BALI CONFERENCE

Preparations for the major UN climate change conference in Bali in December 2007 are continuing, with the release of a number of relevant reports by the UNFCCC Secretariat. The latest documents posted online include compilations of additional views on the limit established for small-scale afforestation and reforestation activities under the Clean Development Mechanism (<http://unfccc.int/resource/docs/2007/sbsta/eng/misc19a01.pdf>) and on the scope and content for a second review of the Kyoto Protocol under Article 9 (<http://unfccc.int/resource/docs/2007/cmp3/eng/misc01a01.pdf>, <http://unfccc.int/resource/docs/2007/cmp3/eng/inf01.pdf>). A submission from Saudi Arabia on the Russian proposal relating to voluntary commitments under the Kyoto Protocol has also been published by the UNFCCC (<http://unfccc.int/resource/docs/2007/cmp3/eng/misc02a01.pdf>).

MEETING ON BUNKER FUEL EMISSIONS NOTES INSTITUTIONAL RATHER THAN TECHNICAL BARRIERS

Norway has hosted a technical workshop on emissions from aviation and maritime transport as a government initiative. The workshop brought together more than 90 participants, representing government, business, academia, and UN agencies, in Oslo, Norway, from 4-5 October 2007. Participants discussed technical and other barriers related to greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions from aviation and maritime transport and concluded, *inter alia*, that accurate data is available in both sectors, however, institutional and resource-based barriers exist to the monitoring and reporting of GHG emissions from international shipping, and policy measures are needed to implement technical requirements in the aviation sector (<http://www.iisd.ca/YMB/sdosl/>).

GUEST ARTICLE (cont.)

The sustainable management of such shared resources requires knowledge about the current status of water bodies, pressures in the basins that cause transboundary impact, and predictions about water resources development. For transboundary waters, however, such information is usually not readily available as it is dispersed over many institutions.

A concerted effort of UN Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) governments as well as international organizations and national agencies, involving more than 150 experts, has developed the first ever in-depth assessment of transboundary rivers, lakes and groundwaters in the UNECE region. This assessment, which has been released on the occasion of the sixth Ministerial Conference "Environment for Europe" (Belgrade, Republic of Serbia, 10–12 October 2007), was drawn up under the leadership of Finland, within the framework of the Convention on the Protection and Use of Transboundary Watercourses and International Lakes (Water Convention, <http://www.unece.org/env/water>). Entitled "Our waters: joining hands across borders – first assessment of transboundary rivers, lakes and groundwaters," it covers all major surface water bodies in the European and Asian parts of the UNECE region and transboundary aquifers located in South-Eastern Europe, Caucasus and Central Asia.

The assessment highlights the achievements of over ten years' work under the Water Convention to prevent, control and reduce transboundary impact. It serves as a point of reference for measures by governments, international river basin organizations (joint bodies), other international organizations and relevant non-governmental organizations to improve the status of transboundary waters and agree on joint measures related to integrated water resources management. It also underlines the challenges that countries face in implementing further measures to counteract pressures and improve the ecological and chemical status of transboundary waters.

The assessment reveals that, among other findings: in almost all of the analyzed river basins, the effects of climate change have become increasingly pronounced; in transboundary river basins, water sharing among riparian countries is often a major water-quantity issue, and continues to cause upstream-downstream conflicts; in transboundary aquifers, increasing

Continued on page 6

► CLIMATE AND ATMOSPHERE

OZONE SECRETARIAT POSTS 2008-2009 MEETING LIST, REPORT ON DECISIONS RELATED TO NON-COMPLIANCE

The Secretariat for the Montreal Protocol has posted an "indicative" list of meetings for 2008-2009. The confirmed dates for that period include the 41st Meeting of the Implementation Committee under the Non-compliance Procedure for the Montreal Protocol, the first Meeting of the Bureau of the 19th Meeting of the Parties and the 20th

Meeting of the Parties to the Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer, all of which will take place in Doha, Qatar, in November 2008 (<http://ozone.unep.org/Events/meetings2008and2009.pdf>). A report entitled "Decisions of the Parties Related to the Non-Compliance Procedure of the Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer" has also been posted (http://ozone.unep.org/Meeting_Documents/impcom/MOP_decisions_on_NCP.pdf).

► FORESTS, DESERTS AND LAND

UNCCD PARTICIPATES IN TWO EUROPEAN MEETINGS

The Secretariat of the UN Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) has participated in two meetings in Europe. On 3 October 2007, the new UNCCD ten-year strategic plan was presented to the European Parliament's public hearing entitled "To live! Stop desertification: together we can! Listening to the voice of Africa" (http://www.europarl.europa.eu/comparl/deve/hearings/20071003/programme_en.pdf). On 12 October, Deputy Executive Secretary Grégoire de Kalbermatten addressed the Sixth Ministerial Conference "Environment for Europe," which convened in Belgrade, Serbia, from 10-12 October 2007. He highlighted the need to give land degradation the attention it deserves, and suggested that the Environment for Europe process could be activated to develop a cooperative



UNCCD Deputy Executive Secretary Grégoire de Kalbermatten

framework on land and soil management (<http://www.iisd.ca/yimb/efeb/>).

UNFF 7 REPORT DECISION ADOPTED BY ECOSOC

The UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC), at its meeting on 17 October 2007, adopted the report of the seventh session of the UN Forum on Forests, following informal consultations facilitated by UNFF 7 Chair Hans Hoogeveen, held on 16 October 2007. ECOSOC had deferred adoption of the report at its session earlier in October, after having already deferred the matter from its July 2007 session, to allow the UN Secretariat more time to accurately reflect changes made to the Program and Budget Implications. The Council also adopted decisions establishing two-year terms for UNFF Bureau members and setting the dates for the eighth session of the Forum (20 April to 1 May 2009), to be held at UN headquarters in New York, US (<http://www.un.org/News/Press/docs/2007/ecosoc6311.doc.htm>, IISD RS Sources).

► INTERGOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS

UN CONFERENCES CONSIDER CONNECTIONS BETWEEN TOURISM SECTOR, KNOWLEDGE SOCIETIES AND CLIMATE CHANGE

Several UN fora have addressed the climate change issue recently. The second International Conference on Climate Change and Tourism, organized by the UN World Tourism Organization, the UN Environment Programme and the UN World Meteorological Organization, convened in Davos, Switzerland, from 3-5 October 2007. The meeting sought to determine future action on mitigation, adaptation, the global carbon market and financing responses to climate change for the post-2012 period. Participants adopted a Davos Declaration, which states that "the tourism sector must rapidly respond to climate change, within the evolving UN framework, if it is to grow in a sustainable manner." The Davos Declaration will be presented at the UNFCCC conference in Bali, Indonesia, in December 2007 (http://www.unwto.org/media/news/en/press_det.php?id=1411&idioma=E).

In addition, a thematic debate on "The Construction of Knowledge Societies and Climate Change," organized by the UN Education, Scientific and Cultural Organization's (UNESCO) Executive Board, took place in Paris, France, on 2 October 2007. Speakers included, among others, Environment and Technology Ministers from France and Portugal, as well as a representative from the UN Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC). Several speakers insisted that the development of knowledge societies required "close cooperation among the members of the United Nations family," and emphasized UNESCO's rare capacity to act in an interdisciplinary fashion and target both institutions and people (http://portal.unesco.org/en/ev.php-URL_ID=39786&URL_DO=DO_TOPIC&URL_SECTION=201.html).

IEG FOCUS OF CIVIL SOCIETY CONSULTATION AND BRAZILIAN CONFERENCE

French Foreign Minister Bernard Kouchner addressed civil society and business com-

Continued on page 6

GUEST ARTICLE (*cont.*)

abstraction for agricultural purposes and drinking water supply is often a major water-quantity issue, and leads to overuse in some cases; organic and nutrient pollution, pollution by hazardous substances and – in the case of rivers – hydromorphological alterations are the most important issues for further action to improve the chemical and ecological status of transboundary waters; plans for integrated water resources management still need to be developed for almost all basins; and proper attention should be devoted to land-use planning and the joint management of surface waters and groundwaters.

This Assessment is the first step in a long-term process. Future assessments will provide periodic reviews, continuously updated and designed to give an authoritative picture of the state of the transboundary water resources in the UNECE region, as well as provide the basis for continuous bilateral and multilateral cooperation under the Water Convention.

Read the Full Article at: <http://www.iisd.ca/mea-l/guestarticle34.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.

▶ INTERGOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS

Continued from page 5

munity representatives on the topic of international environmental governance (IEG) at an informal meeting in New York, US, on 26 September 2007, hosted by the UN Non-Governmental Liaison Service (UN-NGLS). The overall aim of the meeting was for participants to share their visions on the way civil society and the private sector could engage in the formulation of a new IEG architecture. Reiterating the need to establish a UN Environment Organization (UNEO), Kouchner suggested that a formal working group within the UN General Assembly be formed to advance this matter. To achieve progress on IEG, Peter Maurer, Co-chair of the UN General Assembly consultations on IEG, said progress is necessary on issues such as financing for development and UN reform. Representatives from non-governmental organizations noted the need to mainstream work on the environment and discuss if a UNEO can help achieve this, and stressed the importance of maintaining an open dialogue between governments and civil society on the UNEO issue (<http://www.un-ngls.org/site/IMG/pdf/Reportmtgaveckouchner260907.pdf>).

In other IEG news, the Brazilian government hosted a "Ministerial meeting on Environment and Sustainable Development: Challenges for International Governance," from 3-4 September 2007, in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. The event gathered ministers of foreign affairs and the environment from more than 20 countries, and sought to provide an opportunity to informally discuss issues related to IEG in the context of sustainable development. Among other areas of convergence, participants agreed that: a clear mandate, appropriate

and stable financial resources, and political authority is vital for an effective institutional structure of IEG; developing a new paradigm for cooperation (North-South-South) could facilitate international environmental action; and the Global Environment Facility (GEF) is an insufficient financing source. On next steps to take collectively, the meeting noted the need to identify means and modalities for the progress of this dialogue, and to set a long-term objective for the discussion on environmental governance in the context of sustainable development. In a letter dated 24 September 2007, Brazil forwarded a summary of the meeting to UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon (http://www.sustentavel.mre.gov.br/index_english.html; <http://www.un.org/Docs/journal/asp/ws.asp?m=A/62/356>).

UNEP-UNCTAD TASK FORCE ORGANIZES SYMPOSIUM ON LINK BETWEEN ENVIRONMENTAL STANDARDS AND MARKET ACCESS

The symposium "Environmental Requirements and Market Access: Turning Challenges into Opportunities," organized by the UN Environment Programme - the UN Conference on Trade and Development (UNEP-UNCTAD) Capacity-Building Task Force on Trade, Environment and Development, took place on 3 October 2007 in Geneva, Switzerland. Discussions focused on how developing countries can benefit from the market opportunities and technologies created by new environmental standards and requirements in export markets, and explored proactive policies to support these opportunities, focusing particularly on organic agricultural products (<http://www.unep-unctad.org/cbtf/openGeneva5.htm>).

▶ COMINGS AND GOINGS

- Kui-Nang Mak is serving as Officer in Charge (OIC) of the **UN Division for Sustainable Development (DSD)**. Anne Rogers is the OIC of the Water, Natural Resources and SIDS Branch, DSD (http://www.un.org/esa/sustdev/about_us/organigram.htm).
- The Ramsar Secretariat has announced that Devendra Rana (Nepal) will replace Lei Guangchun as **Senior Regional Advisor for the Asia/Pacific region** (http://www.ramsar.org/wn/w.n.staff_devendra_rana.htm).



Devendra Rana (Photo courtesy of Ramsar)

▶ KEY UPCOMING MEA MEETINGS

- **FIRST NEGOTIATION MEETING ON A CMS NGAGI GORILLA AGREEMENT:** 22-24 October 2007. Paris, France. <http://www.cms.int/news/events.htm>
- **CMS MEETING TO IDENTIFY AND ELABORATE ON OPTIONS FOR INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION ON AFRICAN-EURASIAN MIGRATORY RAPTORS:** 22-25 October 2007. Loch Lomond, Scotland, UK <http://www.cms.int/news/events.htm>
- **CSD REGIONAL IMPLEMENTATION MEETING FOR AFRICA:** 22-25 October 2007. Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. <http://www.iisd.ca/africa/acsd/>
- **THIRD MEETING OF THE PARTIES TO ACCOBAMS:** 22-25 October 2007. Dubrovnik, Croatia. <http://www.accobams.org/2006.php/parties/show/5>
- **FOURTH MEETING OF THE AD HOC OPEN-ENDED WORKING GROUP OF LEGAL AND TECHNICAL EXPERTS ON LIABILITY AND REDRESS IN THE CONTEXT OF THE CARTAGENA PROTOCOL ON BIOSAFETY:** 22-26 October 2007. Montreal, Canada. <http://www.iisd.ca/biodiv/wglr4/>
- **HIGH-LEVEL DIALOGUE ON FINANCING FOR DEVELOPMENT:** 23-24 October 2007. New York, US <http://www.un.org/esa/ffd/>
- **NINTH GLOBAL MEETING OF THE REGIONAL SEAS CONVENTIONS AND ACTION PLANS:** 29-31 October 2007. Jeddah, Saudi Arabia. http://www.unep.org/regionalseas/RS_Global_Meetings/default.asp
- **FIFTH TRONDHEIM CONFERENCE ON BIODIVERSITY:** 29 October - 2 November 2007. Trondheim, Norway. <http://www.iisd.ca/sd/tcb5/>