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RECENT MEA ACTIVITIES

BIODIVERSITY AND WILDLIFE

WORKING GROUP ON LIABILITY AND REDRESS MAKES PROGRESS

The fourth meeting of the Open-ended *Ad Hoc* Working Group of Legal and Technical Experts on Liability and Redress in the context of the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety met from 22-26 October 2007, in Montreal, Canada. The Working Group focused on the elaboration of options for rules and procedures referred to in Article 27 of the Protocol, based on a



ferred to in Article 27 of L-R: Working Group Co-Chairs René Lefeber (the Netherlands) and Jimena Nieto (Colombia)

working draft compiled by Co-Chairs René Lefeber (the Netherlands) and Jimena Nieto (Colombia), synthesizing submissions of operational texts with respect to approaches and options identified. During the week, delegates addressed most sections in the Co-Chairs' synthesis, focusing on streamlining options for operational text related to damage, administrative approaches and civil liability. As a result, the working document was reduced from 80 pages, in the Co-Chairs' synthesis, to 53 pages, in Annex II of the meeting's report. The Co-Chairs were also given a mandate to streamline specific parts of Annex II during the intersessional period. Many participants expressed satisfaction over the results, while indicating that expeditious progress is essential given that only one more meeting is scheduled for the Working Group before reporting to the fourth Meeting of the Parties in May 2008, in Bonn, Germany (http:// www.iisd.ca/biodiv/wglr4/).

RESEARCH AND RESOURCES

ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY IN SOUTH EAST EUROPE

(UNDP, October 2007) This UN Development Programme (UNDP) report reviews progress in the development and implementation of environmental and sustainability policies in South East Europe, revealing that national environmental action plans and strategies have been developed and adopted, while implementation is still in its early stages (http://www.unece.org/env/ documents/2007/ece/ece.belgrade. conf.2007.inf.22.e.pdf).

Continued on page 2

RESOURCE FOCUS

Multilateral Environmental Agreement Negotiator's Handbook

The second edition of *Multilateral Environmental Agreement Negotiator's Handbook* offers an introduction to negotiating or working on Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEAs) for those with little or no background, as well as a reference tool for experienced negotiators. It contains technical information and advice in an accessible format, making no assumptions that the reader has any specific knowledge.

Continued on page 5

MEA Clusters In This Issue

- Biodiversity and Wildlife
 CMS Holds Series of Meetings, Finalizes New
 Agreements
 Page 2
- Water, Oceans and Wetlands
 Ramsar Secretariat Releases COP 10 Agenda,
 Signs MoU with UNEP-GRASP; Global
 Meeting of the Regional Seas Conventions
 Discusses Strategic Directions
 Pages 2-3
- **Trade, Finance and Investment** UN High Level Dialogue Sets Tone for Summit on Financing for Development; World Bank and IMF Address Poverty Reduction Strategies and Climate Change Page 3
- Chemicals and Wastes
 Stockholm Convention Convenes Discussion
 on DDT Alternatives
 Page 4
- Climate and Atmosphere
 Kyoto Boards Meet in Bonn, Ministers Discuss
 Future Commitments; IPCC Gears Up for
 Valencia Meeting; Ozone Secretariat Releases
 MOP 19 Documents
 Page 4
- Forests, Deserts and Land UNFF 7 Report Recommended for Adoption by UNGA; New ITTO Programme Receives US\$ 3 Million; UNCCD Sets Date for ESCOP Page 5
- Intergovernmental Organizations
 UNEP Report Assesses Current State of Global
 Environment; IEG Consultations Resume; EMG
 Considers Current Work Programme Pages 5-6
- Sustainable Development
 UNDSD Organizes Meeting on Innovative
 Finance, African RIM meets
 Page 6

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RESEARCH AND RESOURCES (cont.)

COP DECISION SEARCH TOOL

(CIESIN, 2007) This searchable database of the Conference of the Parties (COP) decisions of a number of global environmental conventions has been developed by Columbia University's Center for International Earth Science Information Network (CIESIN). The database can be searched by term or phrase for all of the COP decisions of the Basel Convention on the Control of Transboundary Movements of Hazardous Wastes and their Disposal, the Convention on Biological Diversity, the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species, the Convention on Migratory Species, the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change and its Kyoto Protocol, the Vienna Convention for the Protection of the Ozone Layer and its Montreal Protocol, the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands, and the UN Convention to Combat Desertification (http://sedac.ciesin.columbia.edu/ gsametasearch/cop start.jsp).

TREATED AS TRASH

(Oceana, 2007) Oceana, a nongovernmental organization dedicated to marine conservation and protection, has released a report that highlights the levels of shark by-catches and discards in EU fisheries, and stresses the need to eliminate shark discards and reduce shark by-catches through effective management measures (http://oceana. org/fileadmin/oceana/uploads/europe/ reports/Treated As Trash.pdf).

EUROPE'S ENVIRONMENT – THE FOURTH ASSESSMENT

(EEA, October 2007) The latest in a series of assessments of the pan-European environment, this report, published by the European Environment Agency (EEA), evaluates environmental progress in 53 countries, highlighting priority areas such as: environment-related health concerns: climate change: biodiversity loss; overuse of marine resources; and current patterns of consumption and production. The report recommends improved implementation of existing policies and the setting of clear, realistic targets (http://reports.eea.europa.eu/ state of environment report 2007 1/ en/Belgrade EN all chapters incl cover.pdf).

BIODIVERSITY AND WILDLIFE

CMS HOLDS SERIES OF MEETINGS, FINALIZES NEW AGREEMENTS

A new Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) for the protection of the Eastern Atlantic Populations of the Mediterranean Monk Seal was concluded under the auspices of the Convention on Migratory Species

(CMS). During the Western African Talks on Cetaceans and



their Habitats Monk seal (Photo courtesy of CMS) (16-20 October 2007, Tenerife, Spain), Mauritania, Morocco, Portugal and Spain signed the MoU, which is open for signature to all the Atlantic range States. The meeting also discussed a preliminary text of a new agreement for the conservation of small cetaceans and manatees in the region, as well as two draft action plans for small whales and manatees under the agreement (http://www. cms.int/news/PRESS/nwPR2007/10_Oct/ CMS_Press_Release_Monk_Seal.pdf; http:// www.cms.int/news/PRESS/nwPR2007/10

▶ WATER, OCEANS AND WETLANDS

RAMSAR SECRETARIAT RELEASES COP 10 AGENDA, SIGNS MOU WITH UNEP-GRASP, ANNOUNCES IRAQ'S ACCESSION

The Ramsar Secretariat has released the provisional agenda for the tenth meeting of the Conference of the Contracting Parties (COP 10). The text will be reviewed and developed further by the Standing Committee at its 36th meeting, scheduled to take place from 25-29 February 2008 (http://www.ramsar.org/cop10/cop10_doc01_e.pdf).

In addition, the Ramsar Secretariat has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the UN Environment Programme (UNEP)-Great Apes Survival Project (GRASP) to produce a documentary film to highlight the correlations between the sustainable management of wetlands and the great apes. This awareness-raising tool, which will be funded equally by UNEP and Ramsar, will focus on Petit Loango, a Wetland of International Importance hosting great apes in the Republic of Gabon (http://www.ramsar.org/ wn/w.n.grasp film.htm).

According to the Secretariat, Iraq's Ministry of Foreign Affairs completed the necessary formalities for its accession as the 157th Contracting Party to the Convention on 17 October 2007. As a result, the Ramsar Convention will come into force for Iraq on 17 February 2008. Iraq designated Hawizeh Marsh (Haur AI-Hawizeh), a part of the Mesopotamian marshlands complex, as its first Wetland of International Importance (http:// www.ramsar.org/index bulletin.htm).

The Secretariat has also announced the UK has designated Magheraveely Marl Loughs, a complex of six loughs in Northern Ireland, as its 166th Wetland of International Importance

Oct/Watch.htm; http://www.cms.int/news/ PRESS/nwPR2007/10_Oct/Watch_Largest-Agreement.htm).

Meanwhile, during a series of primates meetings held in Paris, France, three days of negotiations resulted in the finalization of the Paris Agreement on the conservation of gorillas and their habitats (the Gorilla Agreement), which aims to conserve and restore gorilla populations in Central and West Africa through an action plan covering education, research and forest protection. The talks, from 22-24 October 2007, were held under the auspices of the CMS. David Banzoukou, Minister for the Environment, Water, Forests, Hunting and Fishing, Central African Republic, and Henri Djombo, Ministry of Forestry Economy, Republic of Congo, were among those who signed the Agreement on 26 October (http://www.iisd.ca/cms/brief/ CMS_Gorilla_Agreement_Brief.html; http:// www.cms.int/news/PRESS/nwPR2007/10 Oct/%20Mini%20Treaty%20on%20 Gorillas%20Agreed%20at%20Paris%20 Primates%20meetings.-205.pdf)



Hawizeh Marsh (Photo courtesy of the Ramsar Secretariat)

and has renamed and significantly extended the area of the Ramsar site designated in 1994 as "Humber Flats, Marshes & Coast (Phase 1)" (http://www.ramsar.org/index_ bulletin.htm).

GLOBAL MEETING OF THE REGIONAL SEAS CONVENTIONS DISCUSSES STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS

The Ninth Global Meeting of the Regional Seas Conventions and Action Plans took place from 29-31 October 2007 in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia. Participants to this closed meeting addressed, inter alia: key global challenges that could guide the global Strategic Directions of the Regional Seas for the next four years (2008-2012); approaches to mainstream the Regional Seas into national development planning and budgeting; and the implementation of the current global Strategic Directions (2004-2007) and the focus of the next global Strategic Directions (2008-(http://www.unep.org/regionalseas/ 2012) RS Global Meetings/9th Global Meeting/ (DEPI)_RS9-1/wp.01_Provisional_Agenda. pdf).

RESEARCH AND RESOURCES (cont.)

REPORT FROM THE FIRST EUROPEAN MEETING OF STRP NATIONAL FOCAL POINTS NETWORKING AND COMMUNICATION

(Ramsar Convention, 2007) This document contains the proceedings from a meeting of a number of National Focal Points (NFP) of the Ramsar Convention's Scientific and Technical Review Panel (STRP), in Mittersill, Austria, from 17-19 September 2007, during which they discussed ways in which the NFPs can become better networked and more involved in the Convention's scientific and technical work (http:// www.ramsar.org/strp/strp nfp austria2007.pdf).

MARINE PROTECTED AREAS AS A TOOL FOR FISHERIES MANAGEMENT WEBSITE

(FAO, 2007) This UN Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) website offers guidance on Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) as a fisheries management tool and is part of the organization's project to increase knowledge on the contribution of MPAs to fisheries management. One section of the website presents guidelines being prepared by FAO on the design, implementation and testing of MPAs as a fisheries management tool (http://www. fao.org/fi/website/FIRetrieveAction. do?dom=org&xml=mpas.xml&xp nav = 1).

POLICIES FOR A BETTER ENVIRONMENT – PROGRESS IN EASTERN EUROPE, CAUCASUS AND CENTRAL ASIA

(OECD, October 2007) This Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD)-led study has examined the recent environmental performance of 12 eastern European and central Asian countries, concluding that while the region's economy is growing at 7% per year, progress on environmental policy reforms is slow. Noting that the legal and policy frameworks exist in the region, the study notes that regulations are not enforced and too little is spent on environmental investments (http://www.oecd.org/ dataoecd/33/27/39271802.pdf).

▶ WATER, OCEANS AND WETLANDS

FORMER CHAIRMAN OF IMO'S LEGAL COMMITTEE RECEIVES **INTERNATIONAL MARITIME PRIZE**

The International Maritime Organization (IMO) has awarded the International Maritime Prize for 2006 to Alfred Popp (Canada), the former chairman of IMO's Legal Committee. The prize ceremony was held on 22 October 2007 in Panama City, Panama, during that Committee's 93rd session. Popp received the Prize in recognition of his work for maritime safety and security, and the protection of the marine environment, in particular when representing Canada at the IMO and his chairmanship of the IMO Legal Committee from 1993 to 2006 (http://www.

TRADE, FINANCE AND INVESTMENT

UN HIGH LEVEL DIALOGUE SETS TONE FOR SUMMIT ON FINANCING FOR DEVELOPMENT

The UN General Assembly held a High Level dialogue among finance ministers, senior officials from the Bretton Woods institutions and other stakeholders, on 23-24 October 2007, to reinvigorate the Monterrey Consensus, a five-year-old pledge by UN member States to create investment opportunities, institutions and policies to foster sustainable development for all. Participants in the dialogue addressed progress in implementing agreements, such as those on official development assistance (ODA) made at the first International Conference on Financing for Development held in Monterrey, Mexico, in 2002, and presented their views on the key issues that should be addressed by the 2008 Review Conference in Doha, Qatar (http://www.un.org/News/Press/docs/2007/ ga10644.doc.htm).

WORLD BANK AND IMF ANNUAL MEETINGS ADDRESS POVERTY **REDUCTION STRATEGIES AND CLIMATE CHANGE**

The Development Committee, a joint ministerial committee of the Boards of Governors of the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF), met on 21 October 2007 in Washington, DC, US, during the annual meetings of the World Bank and IMF. Among the issues highlighted by the Committee were the "need to sharpen the focus of poverty reduction strategies on stronger, shared, private sector-led growth, to link these strategies better to budgetary frameworks, and to implement them effectively." The meeting also emphasized the importance of relying on country-based models and strong country ownership for improving aid effectiveness and harmonization, and called on donors to meet their respective commitments to scale up aid for development, improve aid predictability and address financing gaps for meeting the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

Regarding clean energy and climate change, the Committee asked the World imo.org/Newsroom/mainframe.asp?topic id=1472&doc id=8591).

PROGRESS REPORT OF THE COMMISSION ON THE LIMITS OF THE CONTINENTAL SHELF RELEASED

The UN Division for Ocean Affairs and the Law of the Sea has released the Statement by the Chairman of the Commission on the Limits of the Continental Shelf on the progress of work in the Commission at its 20th session, which convened at UN headquarters in New York, US, from 27 August to 14 September 2007 (http://www.un.org/Depts/los/clcs_new/ commission documents.htm#CLCS $\overline{56}$).

Bank to increase its support for access to modern, cost-effective, clean energy, especially among the poorest and in Sub-Saharan Africa, and to develop a strategic framework for Bank Group engagement in climate change, including support for developing countries' efforts to adapt to climate change and to achieve low-carbon growth while reducing poverty (http://siteresources. worldbank.org/DEVCOMMINT/Resources/ DCCommunique(E)Final.pdf).

EGYPT TACKLES WASTE WATER TREATMENT THROUGH GEF, **UNDP WETLANDS PROJECT**

The UN Development Programme (UNDP) has reported that Egypt completed a five-year

Global Environment Facility (GEF) project, implemented by UNDP, on engineered wetlands technology Lake



in Transportation at Lake Manzala Manzala. (Photo courtesy of UNDP)

and

The project addresses the problem of polluted drainage water that enters the lake from nearby urban centers such as Cairo and industrial. domestic



Water cells at Lake Manzala (Photo courtesy of UNDP)

wetlands system costs just ten percent of traditional. chemical-intensive wastewater treatment systems, maintenance.



agricultural

sources, through a

simple system that

allows the majority

of the water to be

used for irrigation,

and requires lower Fish production at Lake Manzala t (Photo courtesy of UNDP)

also improves local livelihoods through support services and small-scale manufacturing ventures (http://www.undp.org/gef/05/spotlight/lake manzala.html).

donors

laria vector control

RESEARCH AND RESOURCES (cont.)

GUIDELINES FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE NATURA 2000 NETWORK IN THE MARINE ENVIRONMENT

(EC, 2007) These European Commission (EC) guidelines deal with the implementation of its goal of establishing a Europe-wide network of conservation areas (the Natura 2000 network) in inshore and offshore marine environments. The auidelines include best practices on site selection and management issues, as well as case examples of implementation (http://ec.europa.eu/ environment/nature/natura2000/marine/ index en.htm).

► CLIMATE AND ATMOSPHERE

KYOTO BOARDS MEET IN BONN. **MINISTERS DISCUSS FUTURE COMMITMENTS IN BOGOR**

The Executive Board of the Kyoto Protocol's Clean Development Mechanism (CDM) has convened for its 35th session in Bonn, Germany. The Board, which met from 15-19 October 2007, focused on its work plan, including the accreditation of operational entities, methodologies for baselines and monitoring plans, afforestation and reforestation project activities, small-scale project activities, and the issuance of certified emission reductions. The meeting also considered a management plan and various resource issues, as well as a variety of other matters, such as relations with relevant stakeholders (http://cdm.unfccc.int/ EB/035/index.html).

The Supervisory Committee of the Joint Implementation (JI) mechanism convened its eighth meeting, from 18-19 October, at the same venue. In discussions on its work plan, the Committee considered the accreditation of independent entities, project design documents, and a management plan and resource issues. The Committee also considered its report to the December 2007 Conference of the Parties serving as the Meeting of the Parties to the Kyoto Protocol, and collaboration with other relevant groups (http://ji.unfccc.int/Sup Committee/Meetings/008/index.html).

In other news from the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and Kyoto Protocol, the UNFCCC Secretariat has published its report from the workshop on adaptation planning and practices held in Rome, Italy from 10-12 September 2007 (http://unfccc.int/resource/docs/2007/sbsta/eng/15.pdf). The Secretariat has also released a number of reports that will be considered at the December meeting in Bali, including: a compilation of submissions on "ways to contribute to climate

STOCKHOLM CONVENTION CONVENES DISCUSSION ON DDT **ALTERNATIVES**

The Secretariat of the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants (POPs) convened a meeting to discuss the preparation of a business plan for developing and deploying alternatives to DDT, on 11 October 2007, in Geneva, Switzerland. The meeting was attended by representatives of governments, intergovernmental organizations, nongovernmental organizations and research institutions and heard presentations from the Stockholm Convention Secretariat and the World Health Organization. The outcomes of the meeting included an agreement to prepare a comprehensive background paper on DDT including: regional analysis of DDT use for vector control; an analysis of global efforts to control vector borne disease; results of stakeholder consultation in malaria en-



David Ogden, Coordinator of the Stockholm Convention, offered opening remarks

and to convene a meeting in October 2008 to discuss the partnership (IISD RS Sources).

The Stockholm Convention has also posted documents for the upcoming third meeting of the POPs Review Committee (POPRC) (19-23 November 2007, Geneva, Switzerland) (http://www.pops.int/documents/meetings/ poprc 3/meetingdocs/default.htm).

modeling, scenarios and downscaling;" a note on national greenhouse gas inventory data for the period 1990–2005; a synthesis of ongoing and planned adaptation research and adaptation research needs; a report on the implementation of the framework for capacity building in developing countries; and a compilation of submissions on "consideration of carbon dioxide capture and storage as CDM project activities" (http://unfccc. int/resource/docs/2007/sbsta/eng/misc24. pdf, http://unfccc.int/resource/docs/2007/ sbi/eng/30.pdf, http://unfccc.int/resource/ docs/2007/sbsta/eng/12.pdf, http://unfccc. int/resource/docs/2007/sbi/eng/30.pdf, http://unfccc.int/resource/docs/2007/sbsta/eng/misc18a01.pdf).

UNFCCC Executive Secretary Yvo de Boer attended a meeting of environment ministers held in Bogor, Indonesia, on 25 October 2007, to discuss the need to conclude negotiations by 2009 on a deal for the post-2012 period. The informal meeting was attended by almost 40 countries, and is considered one of several key meetings in the lead up to the thirteenth Conference of the Parties to the UNFCCC and the third Conference of the Parties serving as the Meeting of Parties to the Kyoto Protocol. Participants were reported to have generally agreed that the building blocks of mitigation, adaptation, technology, and investment and finance are at the core of a post-2012 framework, that they need to be built upon and expanded, and that equal weight must be given to adaptation and mitigation and special issues such has deforestation and forest degradation. Other issues discussed included the need to: be guided by a shared vision based on the findings of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change's (IPCC) Fourth Assessment Report; continue to work within the current framework; give content to the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capabilities

in the design of the post-2012 framework; have Annex I Parties accept that they should continue to take the lead; respect economic growth objectives; aim at broader engagement by developing countries through incentives and further developing the concept of sustainable development policies and measures; agree to aim at completing work on a post-2012 framework by 2009; and assure the continuation of the CDM beyond 2012 (IISD RS sources; http://www.antara. co.id/en/arc/2007/10/26/countries-readyfor-serious-negotiation-in-bali-un/, http:// www.enn.com/climate/article/24074).

IPCC GEARS UP FOR VALENCIA MEETING

The IPCC is set to host its next session in Valencia, Spain, from 12-17 November 2007. The meeting is expected to result in the release of the Synthesis Report, which forms the final part of the IPCC's Fourth Assessment Report. Three other related reports were released earlier this year: the Physical Science Basis (February); Impacts, Adaptation and Vulnerability (April); and Mitigation of Climate Change (May). The Secretariat has posted additional information on the Valencia meeting for participants and media (http:// www.ipcc.ch/meet/27session.htm, http:// www.ipcc.ch/more info 100407.htm).

OZONE SECRETARIAT RELEASES MOP 19 DOCUMENTS

The Ozone Secretariat has released documents coming out of the nineteenth Meeting of the Parties to the Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer (MOP 19), including the adjustment on production and consumption of hydrochlorofluorocarbons (HCFCs) and decisions relating to non-compliance, and the report of the meeting of the Bureau of the eighteenth MOP (http://ozone.unep.org/highlights. shtml).

RESOURCE FOCUS (cont.)

The Handbook was prepared by Environment Canada, the UN Environment Programme and Joensuu University.

Maurice Strong, in his introductory message in the Handbook, writes that "It strikes me that it would have been very helpful to have had access to this Handbook back in 1972 [the Stockholm Conference]. At that time we still had to work out the ideas, tools and approaches you can now find in the following pages of this Handbook.'

The Handbook offers a brief history of MEAs and major conferences. It lays out the elements of MEAs, common provisions and how they work together, reviews the rules of the game, from the basics of treaty law to rules of procedure and finance, and gives an overview of the playing field and the players. The Handbook also looks at structures and roles; provides approaches to drafting and strategic issues; surveys international cooperation issues; provides a synthesis perspective; and looks at a typical day in negotiations, negotiation products, and a checklist. Appendices provide reference tools, including a glossary.

The Handbook begins with "Twelve essentials" for negotiators, including reminders that representing your country in a multilateral negotiation is a serious undertaking and a major responsibility, not to be entered into lightly, and to prepare as much as possible to understand the subject of the negotiations, your country's interests, and the interests of other countries. It suggests that negotiators learn about the forum and its rules of procedure, both formal and informal, support the process and participate constructively even in difficult situations, and look for win-win situations. It offers hints for how to look for opportunities to support countries with different interests where possible, and to treat other participants courteously and honestly, underscoring that good relationships and trust are invaluable assets in negotiations. It suggests that humor and diplomacy can be very persuasive, and negotiators should focus on substantive objectives and be flexible on wording when their instructions allow. It proposes that negotiators consider workshops or informal groups as mechanisms that may help to resolve an impasse,

Continued on page 6

▶ FORESTS. DESERTS AND LAND

UNFF 7 REPORT RECOMMENDED FOR ADOPTION BY UNGA

The UN Economic and Social Council, at its resumed substantive session on 17 October 2007, approved a draft resolution by which it recommended that the UN General Assembly adopt the non-legally binding instrument on all types of forests, as contained in the report of the seventh session of the UN Forum on Forests (UNFF 7). The Council also approved the Forum's provisional agenda for its next session, scheduled for 2009 (http://www. un.org/News/Press/docs/2007/ecosoc6312. doc.htm).

NEW ITTO PROGRAMME RECEIVES US\$ THREE MILLION, AFRICAN TROPICAL FOREST INVESTMENT FORUM DOCUMENTS AVAILABLE

The International Tropical Timber Organization (ITTO) announced that the Netherlands has donated US\$ three million to a new ITTO programme on tropical forest law enforcement and trade (TFLET). The new programme seeks to: enhance civil society's capacity to contribute to forest law enforcement; enhance the capacity of small- and mediumsized enterprises to produce and trade timber from legal and sustainable sources; support and increase international trade in legally/ sustainably produced tropical timber; and enable local forest-dependent communities

▶ INTERGOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS

UNEP REPORT ASSESSES CURRENT STATE OF GLOBAL ENVIRONMENT

The UN Environment Programme (UNEP) launched its Global Environment Outlook: environment for development (GEO-4) report on 25 October 2007, highlighting that climate change, the extinction of species and the deterioration of fisheries are among the major global threats that require urgent action. GEO-4 offers the most comprehensive UN report on the environment, and was prepared by

about 390 experts across the world. It assesses the current state of the global atmosphere, land, water and biodiversity, describ-ing changes in the past two



decades, and offers an outlook using four scenarios to explore futures to the year 2050 (http://www.unep.org/Documents.Multilingual/Default.asp?DocumentID=519&Article ID=5688&I=en; http://www.unep.org/geo/ geo4/report/GEO-4 Report Full en.pdf).

IEG CONSULTATIONS RESUME, SYSTEM-WIDE COHERENCE **REPORT CIRCULATED**

On 4 October 2007, the President of the UN General Assembly (UNGA), Srgjan Kerim, re-appointed Claude Heller (Mexico) and to sustainably manage their forests to alleviate poverty. Several TFLET activities have already been included in ITTO's 2008-2009 work programme (http://www.itto.or.jp/live/ PageDisplayHandler?pageId=217&id=362 2).

In other ITTO news, presentations and papers from the conference "West and Central African Tropical Forest Investment Forum" are now available online. The conference, organized by the ITTO, the World Bank, the Ghana Forestry Commission, the African Development Bank and the UN Food and Agriculture Organization, was held in Accra, Ghana, from 28-30 August 2007. Participants addressed issues and opportunities for investment in natural tropical forests in West and Central Africa, with a focus on small and medium enterprises in the promotion of sustainable forestry (http://www.itto.or.jp/live/PageDispl ayHandler?pageId=223&id=3280).

UNCCD SETS DATE FOR ESCOP

The Secretariat of the UN Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) has set 26 November 2007 as the date for the first Extraordinary Session of the Conference of the Parties (ESCOP) (http://www.unccd.int/cop/ e-cop8/menu.php). COP 8 did not complete consideration of the programme and budget item on its agenda, and agreed to convene an ESCOP in New York, US, at UN headquarters before the end of 2007.

Peter Maurer (Switzerland) as Co-Chairs for the UNGA consultations on international environmental governance (IEG) (http://www. un.org/ga/president/62/letters/IEG.pdf). The IEG consultations resumed on 26 October 2007, at UN headquarters in New York, US, to provide member States a second opportunity to respond to the Co-chairs' Options Paper. In the Options Paper, it was proposed that delegations make a decision on strengthening IEG before December 2007, followed by an agreement on the terms of reference for negotiations on a broader transformation of the IEG system before September 2008. Negotiations could then start by the beginning of the 63rd session of UNGA, in September 2008 (http://www.un.org/ga/president/61/followup/environment/EG-OptionsPaper.PDF).

In other UN reform news, UNGA President Kerim has forwarded the Report of the Co-Chairs of the UNGA consultations on System-Wide Coherence. The report's conclusions include, *inter alia*: that the Secretary-General should commission an independent assessment of the current UN system of IEG; and that member States should agree on the composition and mandate of the Sustainable Development Board by September 2007, and the Board should convene its first session by June 2008 (http://www.un.org/ga/ president/62/letters/swcreport.pdf).

and reminds them that responsible judgment is essential, they should listen carefully to what is said and, just as importantly, to what is not said, and they should prepare carefully for interventions, with a clear focus on objectives. Finally, it suggests being prepared for practical necessities, including alternative transportation, alternative meals, and local currency, because a negotiator's life is unpredictable, and meals do not always happen when planned!

The Handbook can be accessed at: http://www.unep.org/DEC/docs/MEAs_ Negotiator's Handbook.pdf

Editor's note:

<u>MEA Bulletin</u> 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

UNDSD ORGANIZES MEETING ON INNOVATIVE FINANCE FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT, FIRST RIM MEETS IN AFRICA

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), organized an expert group meeting on innovative finance for sustainable development to inform the discussions at CSD 16, which will consider agriculture, desertification, drought, and rural development, with a special focus on Africa. The 18-19 October 2007 meeting involved presentations from academics, development institutions, practitioners in the field and the private sector, following which participants discussed

• KEY UPCOMING MEA MEETINGS

- UNEP CIVIL SOCIETY REGIONAL CONSULTATION MEETINGS: 31 October 2 November 2007, Geneva, Switzerland. 1-2 November, Washington, DC, US. 11-13 November 2007, Manama, Bahrain. http://www.unep.org/civil_society/GCSF/index.asp
- CSD REGIONAL IMPLEMENTATION MEETING FOR WESTERN ASIA: 4-6 November 2007, Cairo, Egypt. http://www.escwa.org. lb/divisions/main.asp?division=sdpd
- 32ND MEETING OF THE CMS STANDING COMMITTEE: 8-9 November 2007, Bonn, Germany. http://www.cms.int/news/events. htm
- WORKSHOP ON INTERNATIONAL EXCHANGE OF EXPERIENCE IN UNDERGROUND COAL GASIFICATION TECHNOLOGIES AND SUSTAINABLE ENERGY DEVELOPMENT: 12-13 November 2007, Almaty, Kazakhstan. http://www.un.org/esa/sustdev/sdissues/ energy/op/ucg_workshop/ucg.htm
- INTEGRATING CLIMATE CHANGE INTO NATIONAL SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIES EXPERT GROUP MEETING: 12-13 November 2007, New York, US. http://www.un.org/esa/sustdev/natlinfo/nsds/egm_ClimateChange/index.htm
- FIRST MEETING OF THE OPEN-ENDED WORKING GROUP ON MERCURY: 12-16 November 2007, Bangkok, Thailand. http:// www.chem.unep.ch/mercury/default.htm
- 27TH SESSION OF THE IPCC: 12-16 November 2007, Valencia, Spain. http://www.ipcc.ch/
- TOURISM MINISTERIAL SUMMIT ON CLIMATE CHANGE: 13 November 2007. London, UK. http://www.unwto.org/climate/davos/ en/davos.php?op=1
- GEF COUNCIL MEETING AND NGO CONSULTATION: 13-16 November 2007, Washington DC, US. http://www.thegef.org/interior. aspx?id=268

EMG ANNUAL MEETING CONSIDERS CURRENT WORK PROGRAMME, ROLE IN IEG PROCESS

The annual meeting of the Environment Management Group (EMG) was hosted by the World Health Organization (WHO) and took place at WHO headquarters in Geneva, Switzerland, on 8 October 2007. The meeting sought to review and discuss the EMG's work as well as progress made in the areas of a climate-neutral UN system and sustainable procurement, and to address the role and contribution of the EMG to the ongoing IEG process. The meeting adopted the "Strategy for a climate-neutral UN," approved the plans for work in the area of sustainable procurement, and concluded that it was premature for the EMG to establish a formal Issue Management Group on IEG, given the open-ended nature of the IEG process. Participants agreed on four key areas of interest in relation to IEG, including: i) initiating issue- or theme-based cooperation

the challenges of implementing innovative financial concepts and approaches in practice (http://www.un.org/esa/sustdev/sdissues/finance/egm2007/index.htm).

The first Regional Implementation Meeting (RIM) for CSD 16 took place in the context of the fifth meeting of the African Committee on Sustainable Development (22-25 October 2007, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia). The meeting convened under the theme "Transforming African Agriculture and Rural Economy for Sustainable Development." Participants revised and accepted four reports to forward to CSD 16 for consideration and adopted the African Regional Statement to CSD 16 on Agriculture and Rural Development, Land, Drought and Desertification, and Africa (http://www.iisd.ca/ africa/acsd/). that could result in enhanced systemic coherence; ii) developing an issue-based approach to enhance synergies among Multilateral Environment Agreements (MEAs); iii) clarifying the mandates and roles of the different intergovernmental institutions dealing with environment and sustainable development; and iv) identifying ways to increase policy coherence between the three pillars of sustainable development, as well as between the environmental and economic/trade agendas. On structural issues, it was agreed that the experience with implementing the current work programme, through the issue management groups on the climate-neutral UN and sustainable procurement, would provide a good foundation for developing ideas in relation to the EMG's terms of reference, to be considered at the next annual meeting (http://www.unemg.org/download pdf/ Annual%20EMG%20meeting2007/Report/ EMG07%20Report.pdf).

In addition, the DSD has released the report from an expert meeting it organized on 21 September 2007, on the Use of Non-Renewable Resource Revenues for Sustainable Local Development: Challenges and Opportunities for Developing Countries (http://www.un.org/ esa/sustdev/sdissues/institutional arrangements/egm2007/report). It has also posted the newest issue of Innovation Briefs, with the fourth issue addressing "Providing water to the urban poor in developing countries: the role of tariffs and subsidies" (http://www. un.org/esa/sustdev/publications/innovationbriefs/no4.pdf). A "Status of National Reporting" statement has been posted, indicating that as of October 2007, 25 reports for CSD 16/17 had been received (http://www.un.org/ esa/sustdev/csd/csd16/status natlreport.

pdf).