



RECENT MEA ACTIVITIES

▶ FORESTS, DESERTS AND LAND

ITTO COUNCIL COMMITS \$10.1 MILLION FOR TROPICAL FORESTS

The forty-third session of the International Tropical Timber Council (ITTC 43) took place from 5-10 November 2007, in Yokohama, Japan. This was the first Council session to be held during the tenure of the new Executive Director, Emmanuel Ze Meka. Delegates discussed issues concerning operational, project and policy work for 2008-2009, including, *inter alia*: Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES) listing proposals by members; annual review and assessment of the international timber situation; and preparations for entry into force of the International Tropical Timber Agreement (ITTA), 2006. The Council approved 15 projects and three pre-projects, and pledged US\$ 5.6 million in project financing. The Council also approved the International Tropical Timber Organization (ITTO) Biennial Work Programme for 2008-2009, with a total budget of US\$ 9.2 million. Part of the funding announced at this session included US\$ 4 million targeted at Tropical Forest Law Enforcement and Trade, provided by a major contribution by the Netherlands coupled with Japan, the US, Australia, Norway and the Japan Lumber Importers Association. The Council also reviewed the status of ITTA, 2006, which has only been ratified by the US, Malaysia Switzerland and Poland, but which must be ratified by ten consumer and twelve producer countries before it enters into force (<http://www.itto.or.jp/live/PageDisplayHandler?pagelid=217&id=3693>; <http://www.iisd.ca/forestry/itto/ittc43/>).



Incoming ITTC Chair Katharina Kuehmayer presents outgoing Chair Amb. Luis Macchiavello a framed gavel in appreciation for his service

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RESEARCH AND RESOURCES

HALF FULL OR HALF EMPTY?

(UNEP FI, October 2007) This study, compiled by the UN Environment Programme Finance Initiative (UNEP FI) Water and Finance Work Stream, aims to provide lenders and investors with guidance on how to identify, assess and integrate water-related risks into existing due-diligence procedures within different industries. The study also gives an overview of emerging opportunities in the water/sanitation sector for financial institutions (http://www.unepfi.org/fileadmin/documents/half_full_half_empty.pdf).

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GUEST ARTICLE

What Could a Global Forest Partnership Look Like? Rooting a Global Forest Partnership in stakeholder capabilities and needs

By Steve Bass, International Institute for Environment and Development

A Consultation: 1 October - 30 November 2007

In pursuing its Forest Strategy (2002), the World Bank is proposing a new Global Forest Partnership to bring together many organizations for greatly accelerating progress in managing forests, in ways

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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 Tsioumani, 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's 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.)

OUR WATERS: JOINING HANDS ACROSS BORDERS – FIRST ASSESSMENT OF TRANSBOUNDARY RIVERS, LAKES AND GROUNDWATERS IN THE UNECE REGION

(UNECE, 2007) This publication offers in-depth information on all major surface water bodies in the European and Asian parts of the UN Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) region and transboundary aquifers located in South-Eastern Europe, Caucasus and Central Asia. It describes the hydrological regime of these water bodies, pressure factors in their basins, their status and transboundary impact, as well as trends, future developments and envisaged management measures (http://www.unece.org/env/water/publications/assessment/assessmentweb_full.pdf).

PARTICIPATORY WETLANDS MANAGEMENT IN THE CARIBBEAN

(CANARI Policy Brief no.9, 2007) This policy brief summarizes the findings of a project entitled “Policies and institutions for wetlands management: Training for managers from the insular Caribbean,” which was implemented by the Caribbean Natural Resources Institute (CANARI) in 2006. The document summarizes the project’s key findings, which looked at the policies and institutions for wetlands management in Jamaica, Saint Lucia, and Trinidad & Tobago (<http://www.canari.org/policybrief9.pdf>).

CEO BRIEFING - BIODIVERSITY AND ECOSYSTEM SERVICES, BLOOM OR BUST?

(UNEP FI, October 2007) This briefing paper, issued by the UN Environment Programme Finance Initiative (UNEP FI) Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services Work Stream, emphasizes the increasing importance that the benefits provided by biodiversity are valued and accounted for within traditional business risk frameworks. It recommends that the financial sector should clearly define the risks and opportunities associated with biodiversity and ecosystem services (http://www.unepfi.org/fileadmin/documents/CEOBriefing_biodiversity_01.pdf).

► FORESTS, DESERTS AND LAND



European ministers during the Ministerial Conference on the Protection of Forests in Europe (MCPFE)

UNFF’s DIRECTOR ADDRESSES EUROPEAN MINISTERIAL FOREST CONFERENCE

Pekka Patosaari, Director of the UN Forum on Forests (UNFF) Secretariat, addressed the fifth Ministerial Conference on the Protection of Forests in Europe (MCPFE), which convened from 5-7 November 2007, in Warsaw, Poland. Patosaari said the implementation of the Non-legally Binding Instrument (NLBI) for the Sustainable Management of



Pekka Patosaari, UNFF Director

All Types of Forests would need adequate financing, and noted that the NLBI has a strong focus on inter- and intra-regional cooperation and provides countries with a number of policy proposals intended to steer and assist SFM implementation. Several European ministers and high-level representatives at the meeting expressed their support for the UNFF, its regional processes, and the NLBI. Several delegates urged strengthened European regional cooperation in contributing to the UNFF, and called for the MCPFE Work Programme to contribute to UNFF efforts. Sirkka-Liisa Anttila, Finnish Minister of Agriculture and Forestry, expressed willingness to organize a pan-European meeting on forests and the changing environment in 2008, as a regional contribution to UNFF. Andrey Kushlin, Senior Forestry Specialist of the World Bank, said the Bank would assist in elaborating a financial mechanism for implementation of the NLBI (<http://www.iisd.ca/ymb/mcpfe5/>).

UNCCD’s GNACADJA ADDRESSES UNGA SECOND COMMITTEE, GM HIGHLIGHTS REGIONAL AND COUNTRY-LEVEL ENGAGEMENT

Luc Gnacadja, Executive Secretary of the UN Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD), addressed the 62nd session of the UN General Assembly (UNGA) Second Committee on 29 October 2007, in New York, US, during which he reported on recent UNCCD activities. He said he intends to convene a high level policy dialogue during the March-May period in 2008 to foster awareness among relevant policy decision makers, and will use opportunities provided by the 16th and 17th sessions of the Commission on Sustainable Development to harness support for implementing the Convention’s new ten-year strategic plan (<http://www.unccd.int/publicinfo/docs/lg62ge.pdf>).

The Global Mechanism (GM) of the UNCCD has reported on several ongoing activities, including the Designing Integrated Financing Strategies to Combat Desertification Initiative, which is being developed under the Regional Programme for Sustainable Development of the Drylands of West Asia and North Africa. The GM is supporting the development of a South-to-South and North-to-South cooperation strategy for implementing the UNCCD in member States of the Community of Portuguese-speaking Countries (CPLP), which includes Angola, Brazil, Cape Verde, Guinea-Bissau, Mozambique, Portugal, Sao Tome e Principe and Timor Leste. Finally, Guatemala’s Ministry of the Environment and Natural Resources has created a Unit to Combat Desertification and Drought, in part through technical assistance from the GM (<http://www.global-mechanism.org/initiatives/difs>; <http://www.global-mechanism.org/news--events/news>).

► SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

SECOND CSD RIM CONVENES IN WEST ASIA

The second Regional Implementation Meeting (RIM) in preparation for the sixteenth session of the Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD 16) convened in Cairo, Egypt, from 4-6 November 2007. The meeting took place in the context of the ninth session of the Joint Committee on Environment and Development in the Arab Region (JCEDAR), during which participants synthesized background papers on the CSD’s thematic areas of agriculture,

rural development, land, drought and desertification into major reports, which will be forwarded as the Arab region’s input to CSD 16. (<http://www.un.org/esa/sustdev/csd/csd16/rim.htm>).

The CSD Secretariat has posted the Africa Regional Statement to CSD 16 on Agriculture and Rural Development, Land, Drought and Desertification and “Africa,” which was developed at the first RIM (22-25 October 2007, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia) (http://www.un.org/esa/sustdev/csd/csd16/africa_rim.pdf).

RESEARCH AND RESOURCES (cont.)

FAIR DEALS FOR WATERSHED SERVICES IN INDIA: DEVELOPING MARKETS FOR WATERSHED SERVICES AND IMPROVED LIVELIHOODS

(International Institute for Environment and Development and Winrock International India, October 2007) In this publication, Chetan Agarwal *et al.* share field experiences and lessons in developing incentive-based mechanisms for watershed protection services and improved livelihoods at micro- and macro-scales at three locations in Himachal Pradesh and Madhya Pradesh (<http://www.iied.org/pubs/pdf/full/13538IIED.pdf>).

► CHEMICALS AND WASTES

FIRST MEETING OF THE AD HOC OEWG ON MERCURY CONVENES

The First Meeting of the *Ad Hoc* Open-ended Working Group (OEWG) to Review and Assess Measures to Address the Global Issue of Mercury is meeting from 12-16 November 2007, in Bangkok, Thailand. The meeting is being convened in response to decision GC 24/3 IV taken at the 24th Session of the UNEP Governing Council (GC), calling for the development of an overarching policy framework for the UNEP Global Mercury Partnership. The OEWG is reviewing and assessing options for enhanced voluntary measures and new or existing international legal instruments on



John Roberts, UK, was selected to chair the OEWG on Mercury

mercury, and will also consider a report on activities under the UNEP Mercury Programme and provide guidance on furthering its activities. The meeting is expected to narrow the range of options for international co-operation on the issue of mercury, which will be considered at the OEWG's second meeting, tentatively scheduled for September 2008 (<http://www.iisd.ca/chemical/merc1>).

SAICM ANNOUNCES FOURTH ROUND FOR QSP TRUST FUND

The Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management (SAICM) Secretariat has announced that the fourth round of funding through the Quick Start Programme (QSP) Trust Fund is now open. Applicants are encouraged to submit application packages as early as possible, and no later than 7 March 2008 (<http://www.chem.unep.ch/saicm/qsptf.htm#Applications%20to%20QSP>).

► INTERGOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS

UNEP ESTABLISHES SCIENCE PANEL, CONVENES CIVIL SOCIETY CONSULTATIONS; UNEP FI ROUNDTABLE ADDRESSES SUSTAINABLE FINANCE CHALLENGES

The UN Environment Programme (UNEP) announced the establishment of an International Panel for Sustainable Resource Management on 9 November 2007, at the World Science Forum in Budapest, Hungary. The Panel's overall aim is to provide scientific assessments on the use intensity, security of supplies and environmental impacts of selected products and services on a global level. It will be supported by a Secretariat hosted by the Sustainable Consumption and Production Branch of UNEP's Division of Technology, Industry and Economics, based in Paris, France (<http://www.unep.org/Documents.Multilingual/Default.asp?DocumentID=521&ArticleID=5700&I=en>).



Logo courtesy of UNEP

UNEP has convened six regional civil society consultations in preparation for the 9th UNEP Global Civil Society Forum (GCSF) and the Governing Council/Global Ministerial Environment Forum, which will take place on 19 and 20-22 February 2008, respectively, in Monaco. Participants at the two or three-day consultations, which took place in October and November 2007, discussed "Globalization and the Environment: Mobilizing Finance to meet the Climate Challenge," considered proposed changes for the Global Civil Society Forum Steering Committee, and heard a report on the UNEP Medium Term Strategy. John Scanlon, Special Advisor to the Executive Director, UNEP, said the UNEP Medium Term Strategy for

the period 2010-2013 was prepared at the request of the Governing Council in February 2007 in consultation with a Committee of Permanent Representatives (CPR). It identifies six areas for UNEP leadership – climate change, ecosystem management, environmental governance, hazardous substances, natural disasters, and resource efficiency – and will be released as part of the documentation for the Governing Council meeting (http://www.unep.org/civil_society/GCSF/index.asp).

Two UNEP-led projects, funded by the Global Environment Facility (GEF) and aiming to develop new forms of indigenous energy, were announced on 8 November 2007. *Cogeneration for Africa* seeks to use waste from the sugar industry to generate electricity, and *Greening the Tea Industry* entails a small-scale hydro initiative to deliver power to tea plantations across East Africa. The projects are expected to cut greenhouse gas emissions, reduce energy costs and enhance the sugar and tea industries' global competitiveness (<http://www.unep.org/Documents.Multilingual/Default.asp?DocumentID=521&ArticleID=5697&I=en>).

Following a mission to the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) in September 2007, UNEP announced on 26 October 2007 that it will assist the DRC government in drafting and developing national environmental laws, regulations and guidelines. One of the objectives of the initiative is to assist in the conservation of gorillas and sustainable livelihoods in the Virunga National Park. It also calls for posting a UNEP expert in the country to provide environmental support to the UN Mission in the DRC (MONUC) and the UN Country Team (<http://www.unep.org/Documents.Multilingual/Default.asp?DocumentID=519&ArticleID=5689&I=en>).

The UNEP Finance Initiative (UNEP FI) Global Roundtable, entitled "Awareness

to Action: Sustainable Finance for Today's Global Markets," brought together more than 450 participants from 24-25 October 2007 in Melbourne, Australia, to discuss ideas and challenges in relation to sustainable finance. Among other things, participants agreed that, given the extensive range of sustainability issues that financial institutions face and are expected to deal with, the UNEP FI's greatest ongoing challenge is to mainstream the sustainable development culture across the financial services spectrum (<http://www.unepfi.org/events/2007/roundtable/index.html>).

UNGA SECOND COMMITTEE STARTS CONSIDERING SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

The UN General Assembly (UNGA) Second Committee (Economic and Financial) convened a debate on sustainable development from 29-30 October 2007 at UN headquarters in New York, US, to mark the start of its consideration of this agenda item. In relation to sustainable development, the Committee will consider resolutions on: implementation of Agenda 21, the programme for the Further Implementation of Agenda 21 and the outcomes of the World Summit on Sustainable Development; the Mauritius Strategy for the Further Implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States; the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction; the protection of global climate; the implementation of the UN Convention to Combat Desertification and the Convention on Biological Diversity; the report of the Governing Council of UNEP on its twenty-fourth session; sustainable mountain development; and the promotion of new and renewable sources of energy (<http://www.un.org/News/Press/docs/2007/gaef3189.doc.htm>; <http://www.un.org/ga/second/62/documentslist.shtml>).

GUEST ARTICLE (cont.)

that better meet social, environmental and economic needs. Its focus would be on joint action with developing countries.

The Bank is looking for feedback and ideas on this proposal from a wide range of different stakeholders before deciding how best to proceed. It has asked the International Institute for Environment and Development (IIED) to carry out an independent assessment and to do this we need your views.

The Idea

The idea is for a new inclusive partnership involving multiple partners - to include international and national NGOs, indigenous groups, ODA donors, philanthropic foundations, financial institutions, the private sector, the research community, and international bodies including members of the Bank's existing forest programmes.

It is hoped that the partnership will encompass a wide range of activity-knowledge generation, cross-country sharing of knowledge and experience, capacity building, technical assistance, mainstreaming policy and financial innovations across forest livelihoods, forest markets and forest-based environmental services.

Possible Benefits

A Global Forest Partnership could bring a number of interesting benefits:

- Enabling conditions for partners' initiatives in forestry, carbon, poverty etc. by pooling partner organizations' resources to raise the profile of forests
- Improved availability of financial resources - helping donors match their contributions with country needs, pooling and coordinating World Bank Group and ODA resources, reducing transaction costs, leveraging both public and private sector investment and delivering new financial instruments
- Empowered communities and small-holders - through capacity development, improving their negotiating position and access to markets, and innovating financing mechanisms like avoided deforestation payments

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▶ TRADE, FINANCE AND INVESTMENT

INFORMAL HEARINGS WITH CIVIL SOCIETY AND BUSINESS ON FINANCING FOR DEVELOPMENT

In preparation for the High-level Dialogue on Financing for Development, the UN General Assembly held informal hearings with civil society and the business sector on 11 October 2007 at UN headquarters in New York, US. Civil society participants highlighted the need for a sovereign debt workout mechanism involving all creditors, and fair burden-sharing between the public and private sectors and among debtors, creditors and investors. Regarding the organization of the Review Conference in Doha in 2008, they noted it would be most effective if it took place at the Summit level. Speakers also highlighted the role of business in combating climate change and the need to ensure that foreign direct investment leads to technology transfer and modernization (<http://www.un.org/esa/ffd/indexNewsletter.htm>).

WTO MEA NEGOTIATIONS LOOKING FOR COMMON GROUND

During an informal meeting of the World Trade Organization (WTO) Committee on Trade and Environment Special Session (CTE-SS) (2 November 2007, Geneva, Switzerland), members continued negotiations on the Doha mandate. Regarding the relationship between WTO rules and specific trade obligations (STOs) set out in multilateral environmental agreements (MEAs), work proceeded on the basis of an informal

compilation document prepared by the WTO Secretariat. The document seeks to find common ground among ideas presented by Australia, Argentina, the EU, Taiwan, and the US and is divided into four sections: the Doha mandate; observations drawn from discussions in the CTE-SS; the importance of domestic coordination in the implementation of MEAs; and dispute settlement. Issues for which differences persist include whether a dispute settlement panel should seek and defer to MEA expertise while examining environment-related issues (IISD RS Sources; ICTSD Bridges, 7 November 2007, <http://www.ictsd.org/weekly/07-11-07/wtoinbrief.htm#1>).

WORLD BANK SUPPORTS INTEGRATED NUTRIENT POLLUTION CONTROL IN ROMANIA

The World Bank approved, on 30 October 2007, an "Integrated Nutrient Pollution Control" project in Romania, awarding a 50 million Euro loan and a US\$ 5.5 million Global Environment Facility (GEF) grant. The project will support Romania's commitments to meet EU environment standards through an integrated programme demonstrating links with other environmental investments, especially sanitation and waste management, and will help reduce nutrient discharges to water bodies (<http://web.worldbank.org/WBSITE/EXTERNAL/NEWS/0,,contentMDK:21530564~pagePK:34370~piPK:34424~theSitePK:4607,00.html>).

▶ CLIMATE AND ATMOSPHERE



L-R: Rajendra Pachauri, IPCC Chair, and María Teresa Fernández de la Vega, Spain's Vice President

IPCC FOCUSING ON SYNTHESIS REPORT IN VALENCIA

The 27th session of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) is underway in Valencia, Spain. The meeting, which is taking place from 12-17 November 2007, is focusing on the Synthesis Report of the Fourth Assessment Report, with a view to adopting both the Summary for Policymakers and the Longer Report of the Synthesis Report. Participants are also discussing the future of the IPCC, the IPCC programme and

budget 2008-2010, and membership of the IPCC Bureau and the Task Force Bureau. In addition, progress reports are scheduled on the IPCC Task Force on National Greenhouse Gas Inventories, Future Work on Scenarios, Technical Paper on Climate Change and Water, Task Group on Data and Scenario Support for Impact and Climate Assessment, and Outreach (<http://www.iisd.ca/climate/ipcc27/>).

WORKSHOP CONSIDERS CLIMATE INVESTMENT; DE BOER PRESSES FOR BALI DEAL

A UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) workshop on "finance and investment flows to address climate change: the way forward," was held in Bonn, Germany, on 31 October 2007. The workshop was attended by more than 100 experts from governments, the private sector, and intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations. The meeting was part of an initiative to consider the investment flows that will be needed by 2030 to meet global mitigation and adaptation requirements.

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GUEST ARTICLE (cont.)

- Effective implementation of national policy and programmes by building cross-sector support for forests and integrating forestry into Poverty Reduction Strategies and strengthening civil society and investor participation.

Join the Debate

IIED has developed 15 key questions, which can be answered directly online at <http://www.iiedgfpconsultation.org> or downloaded and submitted by email or post. Documentation is available in English, French and Spanish. Responses are requested by 30 November 2007.

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.

► CLIMATE AND ATMOSPHERE

Continued from page 4

Participants were briefed on an analysis of the issue, which found that additional financial flows needed by 2030 could be large compared with current amounts available under the UNFCCC and Kyoto Protocol, but still small as a percentage of global GDP (about 0.3-0.5%). The analysis also found that mitigation measures will require about US\$ 200 billion in 2030, while adaptation flows will need to be "several tens of billions" of dollars, most of which will need to be directed at developing countries. (http://unfccc.int/cooperation_and_support/financial_mechanism/financial_mechanism_gcf/items/4112.php).

In other UNFCCC news, UNFCCC Executive Secretary Yvo de Boer told participants at the Carbon Forum Asia meeting in Singapore, on 6 November 2007, that negotiators should agree in Bali to launch formal talks and set a clear timetable for a future framework (http://unfccc.int/files/press/news_room/press_releases_and_advisories/application/pdf/20071106_carbon_forum_english.pdf).

INDONESIA HOSTS OZONE MEETINGS, ANNOUNCES EARLY PHASE-OUT OF CFCs

At a Special Dialogue on Actions for Controlling and Monitoring ODS Trade in South Asia (SA)/South East Asia and the Pacific (SEAP) (8-10 November 2007, Bali, Indonesia), Indonesia announced it plans to phase out chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs) and methyl bromide, two ozone depleting substances (ODS) controlled under the Montreal Protocol, two years ahead of the 2010 phase-out date agreed to under the Protocol. The Dialogue was followed by a Joint Meeting of the SEAP and SA Networks of ODS Officers, on 12-14 November 2007, with the theme of "Sustaining compliance: Are we really there yet?" (<http://www.unep.org/Documents.Multilingual/Default.asp?DocumentID=521&ArticleID=5701&l=en>; <http://www.uneptie.org/ozonaction/>; <http://www.antara.co.id/en/arc/2007/11/11/international-environmental-crimes-earn-us-31-bl/>).

► WATER, OCEANS AND WETLANDS



Laguna de Korbam, one of Tunisia's 19 new Wetlands of International Importance. (Photo courtesy of Hichem Azafza/Ramsar)

RAMSAR RELEASES STRP AND SC DOCUMENTS, HOLDS TECHNICAL WORKSHOPS AND REPORTS ON NATIONAL ACTIVITIES

The Ramsar Secretariat has released a summary of the progress and anticipated products during this triennium being pursued under the Scientific and Technical Review Panel (STRP) 2006-2008 Work Plan (http://www.ramsar.org/strp/strp14_progress2007.pdf). These outputs will be further reviewed and finalized at its 14th session, scheduled to take place from 28 January to 1 February 2008, in Gland, Switzerland (http://www.ramsar.org/strp/strp14_agenda.pdf). Progress will be further reported by the STRP Chair to the 36th meeting of the Standing Committee (SC), scheduled to take place from 25-29 February 2008, also in Gland, Switzerland (http://www.ramsar.org/sc/36/key_sc36_doc01_e.htm).

In related news, the STRP has held three technical meetings, hosted by the Republic of Korea at the venue of the upcoming COP 10, to kick-start attention to COP 10's theme "Healthy Wetlands, Healthy People" from a

technical viewpoint. The meetings included: a specialist expert meeting on Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza (following-up the COP 9 Resolution on this subject); a STRP intersessional workshop on the technical report being produced on wetlands and human health; and a public symposium day on COP 10's theme (http://www.ramsar.org/index_bulletin.htm and IISD RS Sources).

The Ramsar Secretariat has also reported on various national implementation activities. The government of Tunisia has designated 19 new Wetlands of International Importance, which are spread all over its territory and cover a wide variety of wetland types, including: peatbogs; a major delta; coastal lagoons; North African salt depressions on the desert edge; karstic, oasis and artificial wetlands; and tidal sites (http://www.ramsar.org/wn/w.n.tunisia_19.htm). Poland has completed the formalities to remove two Ramsar sites that have been on the Montreux Record of sites, which highlights those Wetlands of International Importance that require urgent conservation attention (http://www.ramsar.org/wn/w.n.poland_monreux2007.htm). Finally, the Chinese government is reported to have established a Wetland Conservation Network along the Central and Lower Yangtze River, with a memorandum of cooperation endorsed by 20 wetland reserves (http://www.ramsar.org/wn/w.n.china_yangtze_network.htm).

IMO LEGAL COMMITTEE ADDRESSES CARRIAGE OF HAZARDOUS SUBSTANCES

The International Maritime Organization's (IMO) Legal Committee held its 93rd session in the City of Panama, Panama, from 22-26 October 2007. The Committee requested

the Secretariat to prepare a model insurance certificate that may be issued by States parties in respect of each ship under the relevant IMO conventions, for consideration at its 94th session. The decision followed the adoption of a resolution on Compulsory insurance certificates under existing maritime liability conventions, including the Nairobi International Convention on the Removal of Wrecks, 2007. In addition, participants reviewed the status of the International Convention on Liability and Compensation for Damage in Connection with the Carriage of Hazardous and Noxious Substances by Sea (http://www.imo.org/includes/blastDataOnly.asp/data_id%3D19752/1-Rev-1.pdf; IISD RS sources).

UNDOALOS RELEASES REPORTS

The UN Division for Ocean Affairs and the Law of the Sea (UNDOALOS) has released two reports of the Secretary-General: on Oceans and the Law of the Sea (A/62/66/Add.1); and on sustainable fisheries (A/62/260). The first provides an overview of developments relating to the implementation of the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea and the work of the Organization, its specialized agencies and other institutions in the field of ocean affairs and the law of the sea since the preparation of the main report in February 2007. The report on sustainable fisheries contains information on steps and initiatives taken or recommended by the international community to improve the conservation and management of fishery resources and other marine living resources with a view to achieving sustainable fisheries and protecting marine ecosystems and biodiversity (http://www.un.org/Depts/los/general_assembly/general_assembly_reports.htm).

► BIODIVERSITY AND WILDLIFE

CMS STANDING COMMITTEE CONCLUDES SESSION, OTHER MEETINGS FOCUS ON BIRDS OF PREY, SEA COWS AND CETACEANS

The 32nd meeting of the Standing Committee of the Convention on Migratory Species (CMS) convened from 8-9 November 2007, in Bonn, Germany. The meeting welcomed the accession of Cuba and Iran to the Convention, raising the number of parties to 106, and heard reports on the Convention's conservation programme, the budget, fundraising activities, progress made in the development of partnerships, and a special presentation on the Task Force on Avian Influenza. Members also considered papers on the future organization of CMS and on the strategic review of flyways, and established a working group to map the way forward on CMS organization for COP 9, to be held in November 2008, in Rome, Italy. The 33rd meeting of the CMS Standing Committee will meet in Rome, immediately prior CMS COP 9 (http://www.cms.int/news/PRESS/nwPR2007/11_Nov/32StC_Meeting.htm).

In other CMS-related news, a Memorandum of Understanding concerning the conservation of dugongs (sea cows) in the Indian Ocean entered into force on 31 October 2007. The agreement is designed to facilitate national and transboundary actions to conserve dugong populations and their habitats. The signing ceremony took place on the final day of the range States' meeting (28-31 October 2007, Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates). Another CMS meeting (22-25 October 2007, Loch Lomond, Scotland, UK) sought to identify and elaborate on options for cooperation on African-Eurasian migratory raptor conservation. Negotiations on the agreement and associated action plan will continue (http://www.cms.int/news/PRESS/nwPR2007/10_Oct/Dugong_MoU.htm; <http://www.cms.int/>

[news/PRESS/nwPR2007/10_Oct/Birds_of_prey.htm](http://www.cms.int/news/PRESS/nwPR2007/10_Oct/Birds_of_prey.htm)).

Finally, the third meeting of the parties to the Agreement on Conservation of Cetaceans of the Black Sea, Mediterranean Sea and contiguous Atlantic Area (ACCOBAMS), developed under the auspices of CMS, convened from 22-25 October 2007, in Dubrovnik, Croatia. The meeting agreed to a new conservation plan for cetaceans in the Black Sea region and adopted a resolution on the highly endangered Mediterranean common dolphin. Parties also agreed to include the prohibition of drift net use and presence on board of fishing boats in the text of the agreement, and to create a working group to address the issue of noise as a threat to cetaceans (http://www.cms.int/news/PRESS/nwPR2007/10_Oct/ACCOBAMS_press_release.pdf).

ITPGR GOVERNING BODY CONCLUDES SECOND SESSION

The second session of the Governing Body of the International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture (ITPGR) was held from 29 October-2 November 2007, at UN Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) headquarters, in Rome, Italy. The meeting addressed items including the implementation of the funding strategy, the material transfer agreement for non-Annex I crops, cooperation with the Commission on Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture (CGRFA), and sustainable use of plant genetic resources. Following difficult budget negotiations, the meeting adopted the work



The dais during the second session of the ITPGR

programme and budget for 2008/09. It also adopted a resolution on farmers' rights, as well as a joint statement of intent for cooperation with the CGRFA. Consideration of procedures on compliance was deferred to the Governing Body's next session (<http://www.iisd.ca/biodiv/itpgrgb2/>).

CBD SIGNS COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS

The Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) recently entered into cooperative agreements with other international organizations. On 25 October 2007, a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) geared towards enhancing collaboration with the UN regional economic and social commissions for Africa (ECA), Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP), Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), and Western Asia (ESCWA) was signed at UN headquarters in New York, US. On 30 October, during the 2007 Trondheim Conference on Biodiversity, the CBD Secretariat signed an MoU with the GRID-Arendal Centre of UNEP. Finally, during the second session of the Governing Body of the ITPGR (29 October-2 November 2007, Rome, Italy), CBD Executive Secretary Ahmed Djoghlaif discussed with FAO Director General Jacques Diouf ways and means to enhance collaboration between FAO and the CBD, and to prepare for upcoming meetings of the CBD Working Group on Protected Areas and the thirteenth meeting of the CBD's Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice (SBSTTA), to be held in Rome in February 2008 (<http://www.cbd.int/doc/press/2007/pr-2007-10-25-rec-en.pdf>; <http://www.cbd.int/doc/press/2007/pr-2007-10-30-grid-arendal-en.pdf>; <http://www.cbd.int/doc/press/2007/pr-2007-11-05-genetic-en.pdf>).

► COMINGS AND GOINGS

- UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-Moon has announced his appointment of Angela Cropper (Trinidad and Tobago) as the next **Assistant Secretary-General and Deputy Executive Director for the UN Environment Programme (UNEP)**. She is expected to take up this post in February 2008 (<http://www.unep.org/Documents.Multilingual/Default.asp?DocumentID=521&ArticleID=5696&I=en>).
- Aslam Chaudhry has been appointed **Chief of the Water, Natural Resources and Small Island Developing States Branch, UN Division for Sustainable Development**, effective 5 November 2007 (IISD RS Sources).



Angela Cropper

► KEY UPCOMING MEA MEETINGS

- **STOCKHOLM CONVENTION POPRC-3:** 19-23 November 2007. Geneva, Switzerland. <http://www.iisd.ca/chemical/pops/poprc3/>
- **FOURTH MEETING OF THE COMPLIANCE COMMITTEE UNDER THE BIOSAFETY PROTOCOL:** 21-23 November 2007. Montreal, Canada. <http://www.cbd.int/meetings/default.shtml>
- **FIRST EXTRAORDINARY SESSION OF THE UNCCD COP:** 26 November 2007. New York, US. <http://www.unccd.int/cop/e-cop8/menu.php>
- **CSD REGIONAL IMPLEMENTATION MEETINGS:** 26-27 November 2007, Jakarta, Indonesia; 28-29 November 2007, Santiago, Chile. <http://www.un.org/esa/sustdev/csd/csd16/rim.htm>