



## RECENT MEA ACTIVITIES

### ▶ CLIMATE AND ATMOSPHERE

#### UNFCCC HOLDS EVENTS ON NAIROBI WORK PROGRAMME



Dais during the opening of the Expert Group Meeting

An Expert Group Meeting under the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) has discussed issues related to the Nairobi Work Programme on Impacts, Vulnerability and Adaptation to Climate Change (NWP). The meeting, which convened from 4-7 March 2008 in Mexico City, Mexico, focused on two areas of the NWP - methods and tools, and data and observations.

On methods and tools, the workshop resulted in recommendations on assisting in their use and application, advancing dissemination and sharing experiences, and promoting their development and improvement. Regarding data and observations, the meeting produced recommendations on promoting implementation and improvements, improving capacity for data collection, and the management, use and exchange of, and access to, such material. The report of the workshop will be forwarded to the 28th session of the UNFCCC Subsidiary Body for Scientific and Technological Advice (SBSTA), scheduled to convene in June 2008. SBSTA 28 is expected to consider further activities and the appropriate timing and modalities for inclusion in the next phase of the NWP (<http://www.iisd.ca/climate/wnwp/>).

A second meeting on the NWP convened in Port of Spain, Trinidad and Tobago, from 10-12 March 2008. This meeting focused on the socioeconomic aspects of the NWP (<http://www.iisd.ca/climate/seinwp/>).

#### MEA Clusters In This Issue

- **Climate and Atmosphere**  
UNFCCC and IPCC Issue Meeting Documents; Ozone Implementation Activities Continue *Page 2*
- **Sustainable Development**  
Preparations for CSD 16 Continue *Page 3*
- **Intergovernmental Organizations**  
System-wide Coherence Co-Chairs Present Programme of Work; UNEP Launches Climate Neutral Network and Green Passport Campaign *Page 3*
- **Biodiversity and Wildlife**  
Global Initiative on Protected Areas to be Launched at CBD COP 9; CITES Publishes Caviar Quotas *Page 4*
- **Trade, Finance and Investment**  
FfD Review Sessions on Monterrey Consensus Begin *Page 4*
- **Forests, Deserts and Land**  
UNCCD Signs MOU with ECA, GM Announces Forest Programme; ITTO Funds Seedling Production in Brazil; UNFF Co-Hosts Event on Regional Cooperation *Page 5*
- **Chemicals and Wastes**  
Basel Posts Comments on Regional Centers; Stockholm Seeks Comments on New Chemicals *Page 5-6*
- **Water, Oceans and Wetlands**  
Ramsar Standing Committee Meeting Concludes; UNDOALOS and UNITAR Hold Joint Briefing *Page 6*

#### GUEST ARTICLE

##### The Bern Convention: A tool for nature conservation and implementing international biodiversity obligations in Europe

By Carolina Lasén Díaz,  
Secretary of the Bern Convention

#### Abstract

The Convention on the Conservation of European Wildlife and Natural Habitats (Bern, Switzerland, 1979) is the regional treaty for the conservation of biodiversity in Europe.

*Continued on page 2*

#### RESEARCH AND RESOURCES

##### GENDER, POVERTY AND ENVIRONMENTAL INDICATORS ON AFRICAN COUNTRIES 2007

(African Development Bank, 2007) This resource presents information on broad development trends relating to gender, poverty and environmental issues in the 53 African countries, including comparative cross-country tables and a special feature article on "The poverty-environment nexus in Africa" ([http://www.afdb.org/portal/page?\\_pageid=473,18884240&\\_dad=portal&\\_schema=PORTAL](http://www.afdb.org/portal/page?_pageid=473,18884240&_dad=portal&_schema=PORTAL)).

*Continued on page 3*

The *MEA Bulletin* © is a publication of the International Institute for Sustainable Development (IISD) <[info@iisd.ca](mailto:info@iisd.ca)>, publishers of the *Earth Negotiations Bulletin* © <[enb@iisd.org](mailto:enb@iisd.org)>. This issue was researched and written by Soledad Aguilar, Melanie Ashton, Alice Bisiaux, Reem Hajjar, Amber Moreen, Ph.D., 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](mailto: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](mailto: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 IISDRS publications, including requests to provide reporting services, contact the Director of IISD Reporting Services at <[kimo@iisd.org](mailto:kimo@iisd.org)>, +1-646-536-7556 or 300 East 56th St., 11A, New York, NY 10022, USA.

**GUEST ARTICLE (cont.)**

In 2008 it will have 47 contracting parties, including the 27 member States of the European Union, the European Community, other European countries, and four African States.

The Bern Convention aims to conserve Europe's wild flora and fauna and their natural habitats, especially those requiring the cooperation of several States. The Convention places particular importance on the need to protect endangered natural habitats and vulnerable species, including migratory ones.

The Bern Convention was a very innovative biodiversity convention at the time of its adoption, with many features and provisions that were 'unique' at the time, as it incorporates important principles such as those of precaution, integration, participation, and cooperation, long before they were mainstreamed. This regional treaty recognizes the value of wild flora and fauna that needs to be preserved and passed to future generations, as it constitutes a "natural heritage of aesthetic, scientific, cultural, recreational, economic and intrinsic value."

Bern Convention Parties work together with observer countries and or-

ganizations such as other biodiversity conventions and non-governmental organizations, operating from the local to the global level. The Secretariat of the Bern Convention, provided by the Council of Europe, has signed several memoranda of cooperation with institutions such as the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), the European Environment Agency, IUCN-the World Conservation Union, and Planta Europa. The CBD has acknowledged the important role that regional and sub-regional mechanisms and networks play to promote the implementation of the CBD. In this light, the Secretariats of the Bern Convention and the CBD signed a Memorandum of Cooperation in 2001, which was revised and enhanced in 2007 and will be formally signed during the ninth Conference of the Parties (COP 9) to the CBD, scheduled to convene in Bonn, Germany, in May 2008.

The Bern Convention has tackled critical issues long before they were included in legally binding policy instruments across Europe. Many species action plans and targeted recommendations have been agreed over the years, as the Standing Committee has endorsed close to 130 recommendations ranging from the sites-specific protec-

tion of a single species, to wider species protection and habitat conservation.

The Bern Convention continues to work on 'traditional' conservation action while exploring new and emerging issues such as invasive plants, climate change, and ecological networks. Current hot topics in preparation under the Bern Convention are:

- Specific guidance on species and habitats conservation management to adapt to climate change;
- The new European Strategy for Plant Conservation, 2008-2014, prepared by Planta Europa, which will be submitted to CBD COP 9;
- A draft Code of Conduct on horticulture and invasive alien plants; and
- A European Action Plan for the Conservation of the Common hamster (*Cricetus cricetus*), which will be submitted to the Standing Committee in 2008.

To read the full article, visit: <http://www.iisd.ca/mea-1/guestarticle43.html>

*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](mailto:lynn@iisd.org), for further information.*

**► CLIMATE AND ATMOSPHERE****UNFCCC ISSUES MEETING DOCUMENTS**

The UNFCCC Secretariat has published provisional agendas for several upcoming meetings, including the: *Ad Hoc* Working Group on Long-Term Cooperative Action under the Convention (AWGLCA); *Ad Hoc* Working Group on Further Commitments for Annex I Parties under the Kyoto Protocol (AWG); Subsidiary Body for Implementation (SBI); and Subsidiary Body for Scientific and Technological Advice (SBSTA). The AWGLCA and AWG are meeting in Bangkok, Thailand, from 31 March to 4 March, while all four bodies will convene in Bonn, Germany, from 2-12 June 2008 (<http://unfccc.int/resource/docs/2008/awglca1/eng/01.pdf>, <http://unfccc.int/resource/docs/2008/awg5/eng/01.pdf>, <http://unfccc.int/resource/docs/2008/sbi/eng/01.pdf>, <http://unfccc.int/resource/docs/2008/sbsta/eng/01.pdf>).

The Secretariat has also recently published a compilation of submissions from parties and intergovern-

mental organizations on the "means to achieve the mitigation objectives of Annex I parties" (<http://unfccc.int/resource/docs/2008/awg5/eng/misc01.pdf>, [http://unfccc.int/parties\\_and\\_observers/igo/items/3714.php](http://unfccc.int/parties_and_observers/igo/items/3714.php)).

**IPCC POSTS DOCUMENTS FOR 28th SESSION**

The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) has posted a number of new documents in preparation for its upcoming 28th session. The documents include a scoping paper related to a Special Report in renewable energy sources and climate change mitigation, a progress report on the National Greenhouse Gas Inventories Programme, a list of observer organizations, and a compilation of comments on the "future of the IPCC." The IPCC's 28th session will convene in Budapest, Hungary, from 9-11 April 2008 (<http://www.ipcc.ch/meetings/session28/doc3.pdf>, <http://www.ipcc.ch/meetings/session28/doc4.pdf>, <http://www.ipcc.ch/meetings/session28/doc5.pdf>, <http://www.ipcc.ch/meetings/session28/infl.pdf>).

[www.ipcc.ch/meetings/session28/infl.pdf](http://www.ipcc.ch/meetings/session28/infl.pdf)).

**OZONE IMPLEMENTATION ACTIVITIES CONTINUE**

In implementation news, in Kuala Belait, Brunei, the UN Environment Programme's (UNEP) Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific, along with Brunei's Department of Technical Education, Ministries of Education and of Development, and Department of Environment, put on a train-the-trainers workshop from 25-29 February 2008 aimed at decreasing emissions of ozone depleting substances from refrigeration equipment (<http://www.brudirect.com/DailyInfo/News/Archive/Feb08/260208/nite42.htm>).

In Wellington, New Zealand, MAF Biosecurity New Zealand organized a meeting on 27 February 2008 aimed at identifying an alternative to quarantine and pre-shipment applications of methyl bromide that is acceptable to New Zealand and its trading partners (<http://www.biosecurity.govt.nz/media/28-02-08/methyl-bromide>).

**RESEARCH AND RESOURCES**

**UNEP 2007 ANNUAL REPORT**

(UNEP, 2008) This report summarizes the activities carried out by the UN Environment Programme (UNEP) in 2007 and, among others, provides an overview of UNEP's contribution to combating climate change ([http://www.unep.org/PDF/AnnualReport/2007/AnnualReport2007\\_en\\_web.pdf](http://www.unep.org/PDF/AnnualReport/2007/AnnualReport2007_en_web.pdf)).

**PLANT FOR THE PLANET – THE BILLION TREE CAMPAIGN**

(UNEP, 2008) This booklet introduces some of the stories behind the success of UNEP's Billion Tree Campaign ([http://www.unep.org/Billiontreecampaign/informationmaterial/resources/BILLIONTREE\\_LOW\\_RES\\_2.pdf](http://www.unep.org/Billiontreecampaign/informationmaterial/resources/BILLIONTREE_LOW_RES_2.pdf)).

**PROTECTED AREAS IN TODAY'S WORLD: THEIR VALUES AND BENEFITS FOR THE WELFARE OF THE PLANET**

(CBD Technical Series No. 36, 2008) This edition includes chapters on: the links between conservation and poverty reduction; the contribution of protected areas to human well-being and to water resources; protected areas and agrobiodiversity; protected area governance; spiritual dimensions; improved finance through tourism; and the UNESCO Biosphere Reserves (<http://www.cbd.int/doc/publications/cbd-ts-36-en.pdf>).

**PROTECTED LANDSCAPES AND AGROBIODIVERSITY VALUES**

(IUCN-The World Conservation Union, 2008) Edited by Thora Amend, Jessica Brown, Ashish Kothari, Adrian Phillips and Sue Stolton, this book presents case studies from around the world on the role of protected landscapes in sustaining agricultural biodiversity and related knowledge and practices. The volume is the first in a series on the *Values of Protected Landscapes and Seascapes*, a project of the IUCN World Commission on Protected Areas Protected Landscapes Task Force in cooperation with several partners (<http://www.iucn.org/themes/wcpa/pubs/pdfs/Agrobiodiv.pdf>).

**► SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT**

**PREPARATIONS FOR CSD 16 CONTINUE**

The UN Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD) Secretariat has recently released a draft table for the organization of work at the upcoming CSD 16, which will take place at UN headquarters in New York, US, from 5-16 May 2008. In addition to the priority themes of Africa, land, agriculture and rural development, drought and desertification, and inter-linkages, del-

egates are scheduled to hold dialogues with major groups and representatives of partnership initiatives, discuss small island developing States (SIDS), review the CSD 13 decisions on water and sanitation, and convene for roundtable discussions on "Investing in Africa to Achieve MDGs and Sustainable Development" and "Water, Agriculture and Climate Change" ([http://www.un.org/esa/sustdev/csd/csd16/documents/org\\_work\\_annex.pdf](http://www.un.org/esa/sustdev/csd/csd16/documents/org_work_annex.pdf)).

**► INTERGOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS**

**SYSTEM-WIDE COHERENCE CO-CHAIRS PRESENT PROGRAMME OF WORK**

In a letter to UN member States on 26 February 2008, Co-Chairs Augustine Mahiga (Tanzania) and Paul Kavanagh (Ireland) have put forward a preliminary programme of work for the UN General Assembly consultations on System-wide Coherence. They suggest holding consultations on 28 March regarding the topic of coherence on the country level, and on 7 and 17 April to discuss issues relating to funding and governance, respectively. Furthermore, Co-Chairs Mahiga and Kavanagh express their intention to invite the UN Secretary-General to brief delegations on the efforts toward greater coherence being made under the auspices of the Secretary-General and the Chief Executives Board in early May 2008 (<http://www.un.org/ga/president/62/issues/resolutions/workprogramme.pdf>).



Co-Chair Augustine Mahiga (Photo courtesy of the UN)

[http://www.un.org/esa/sustdev/csd/csd16/documents/org\\_work\\_annex.pdf](http://www.un.org/esa/sustdev/csd/csd16/documents/org_work_annex.pdf)).

Meanwhile, UNEP announced the start of a "Green Passport" campaign at the Berlin Tourism Fair, on 7 March 2008. This internet-based campaign will seek to raise tourists' awareness of their ability to contribute to sustainable development by, for example, choosing responsible service providers, reducing energy consumption and buying locally-made, environmentally-friendly souvenirs. The "Green Passport" campaign launch was co-sponsored by the French Ministry of Ecology, Sustainable Development and Spatial Planning, and the Brazilian Ministries of Environment and Tourism (<http://www.unep.org/Documents.Multilingual/Default.asp?DocumentID=528&ArticleID=5757&l=en>).



Green passport logo (Image courtesy of UNEP)

**MDG AFRICA STEERING GROUP HOLDS SECOND MEETING**

The second meeting of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) Africa Steering Group was held at UN headquarters in New York, US, on 10 March 2008. Immediately following the meeting, a briefing was held for media and other observers. The briefing involved high-level members of the Steering Group and was opened by UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon, who explained that the Steering Group had reviewed recommendations for future action and had approved a plan for Africa to work towards a "green revolution" to achieve the MDGs across a range of issues and sectors, including economic growth, hunger and malnutrition, education, gender parity, water and sanitation, and infectious diseases. He announced that a high-level meeting on the MDGs would bring together world leaders, civil society and the private sector at UN headquarters on 25 September 2008, to "translate commitments into action" (IISD sources).

**RESEARCH AND RESOURCES**

**GLOBAL FOREST PARTNERSHIP: CONSULTATION AND ASSESSMENT**

(International Institute for Environment and Development, February 2008) Written by Steve Bass and James Mayers, this report is a summary of results from the first stage of consultations about the World Bank's preliminary idea of a "Global Forest Partnership." Consultations confirmed that such a partnership should be more bottom-up, cross-sectoral and centered on primary forest stakeholders than most previous international forest programmes. The report also outlines a tentative design for the partnership (<http://www.iied.org/pubs/pdfs/G02223.pdf>).

**THE LEGALITY OF PPMS UNDER THE GATT: CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR SUSTAINABLE TRADE POLICY**

(IISD, 2008) This article by Jason Potts analyses the divisive issue of process and production methods (PPMs) within the World Trade Organization's (WTO) legal regime. PPMs include, for example, organic production methods, use of environmental fishing devices to prevent unwanted by-catch of endangered species, and sustainable forest management. They have been the object of several international trade disputes, as import barriers based on PPMs may violate the WTO principle that prevents discrimination among 'like-products.' The paper provides a brief overview of the current state of General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) case law with respect to PPM issues and reviews the technical legality of PPM policy under the GATT. It concludes with a number of strategic recommendations for policy-makers aimed at improving the effectiveness of PPM measures for promoting sustainable development within the context of the Doha Agenda (<http://www.iisd.org/publications/pub.aspx?pno=950>).

**► BIODIVERSITY AND WILDLIFE**

**GLOBAL INITIATIVE ON PROTECTED AREAS TO BE LAUNCHED AT CBD COP 9**

At the initiative of the German Government, "Life Web Initiative," a voluntary global initiative on protected areas, has been announced. The initiative aims to support the implementation of the programme of work on protected areas of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) by matching voluntary commitments for the designation of new protected areas and the improved management of existing areas with commitments for dedicated financing of these areas. CBD parties are expected to make concrete commitments to the initiative during the High Level Segment of the ninth Conference of the Parties to the CBD, to be held in May 2008, in Bonn, Germany (<http://www.cbd.int/doc/meetings/cop/hls-cop-09/other/hls-cop-09-lifeweb-de-en.pdf>).

**CITES PUBLISHES CAVIAR QUOTAS**

The Secretariat of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered

Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) has published the export quotas for caviar and other sturgeon products from the Caspian Sea, as set by the range States for 2008. In line with a recommendation made at the 14th



Caviar courtesy of CITES



Sturgeon courtesy of CITES

meeting of the Conference of the Parties in June 2007, the quotas are at or below 2007 levels. Iran's caviar quota for Persian sturgeon has been reduced by 1000

kg as a conservation measure ([http://www.cites.org/eng/news/press\\_release.shtml](http://www.cites.org/eng/news/press_release.shtml); [http://www.cites.org/common/quotas/2008/Sturgeon\\_quotas2008.pdf](http://www.cites.org/common/quotas/2008/Sturgeon_quotas2008.pdf)).

**► TRADE, FINANCE AND INVESTMENT**

**FFD REVIEW SESSIONS ON MONTERREY CONSENSUS BEGIN**

Review Sessions on Chapters I and II of the Monterrey Consensus on Financing for Development (FFD) have taken place at UN headquarters in New York, US. The first in a series of events scheduled for the coming months in the lead-up to the Follow-up International Conference to Review the Implementation of the Monterrey Consensus (Doha, Qatar, 29 November-2 December 2008), the first two Review Sessions were held from 14-15 February 2008. Ambassadors Adbelaziz of Egypt and Løvald of Norway chaired the Sessions, which featured panel discussions and interactive debates. During the first session, speakers discussed "Mobilizing domestic financial resources for development" and highlighted improvements in domestic finance in developing countries since the adoption of the Monterrey Consensus in 2002,



Mansoor Dailami, World Bank, was a panelist in the session on "Mobilizing international resources for development: foreign direct investment and other private flows" (Photo courtesy of The World Bank)

including governance reforms, better macroeconomic management and domestic savings and investments. They expressed concern over persistent income inequalities and unemployment, as well as the growth of poverty in sub-Saharan Africa, and emphasized the role of governments in addressing these key development challenges.

During the Review Session on Chapter II, entitled "Mobilizing international resources for development: foreign direct investment (FDI) and other private flows," participants reviewed the positive effects of FDI on developing countries, while noting the need to sequence financial liberalization to prevent destabilizing short-term capital flows. Some expressed concern about the expected decline in capital flows due to the current global financial turmoil, while others noted that FDI remains concentrated in a few countries and emphasized the importance of improving the stability and quality of capital flows. The outcomes of the sessions will be summarized by the President of the 62nd session of the UN General Assembly, Srgjan Kerim, and will be used as a basis for the outcome document that will be prepared for negotiation during the second semester of 2008 (<http://www.un.org/esa/ffd/newsletter/index.htm>).

## ► FORESTS, DESERTS AND LAND

### UNCCD CALLS FOR PARTNERS TO ORGANIZE CST CONFERENCE, SIGNS MOU WITH ECA; GM ANNOUNCES FOREST PROGRAMME

As proposed by the Committee on Science and Technology (CST) of the UN Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD), the CST meeting to take place during the last quarter of 2009 will be held in a scientific conference format and consider the priority theme of "Biophysical and socio-economic monitoring and assessment of desertification and land degradation to support decision making in land and water management." The CST further decided that a lead institution or consortium of institutions should assist the Bureau to organize the conference. The UNCCD has recently issued a call for expressions of interest from institutions or consortiums to assist in this way, with a deadline for submissions of 30 April 2008 ([http://www.unccd.int/science/docs/call\\_expression\\_of%20interest.pdf](http://www.unccd.int/science/docs/call_expression_of%20interest.pdf)).

In other UNCCD news, UN Economic Commission for Africa's (ECA) Executive Secretary Abdoulie Janneh and Luc Gnacadja, UNCCD Executive Secretary, signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) covering a number of issues, including science, technology, knowledge management, capacity building, financing and technology transfer, advocacy, awareness raising and education. Both institutions will also work with African Ministers of Finance, Planning and Economic Development in mainstreaming issues of land degradation, desertification and drought into national sustainable development strategies, poverty reduction strategy papers and other sectoral and cross-sectoral policies and programmes ([http://www.uneca.org/eca\\_resources/news/2008/080306climateagreement.htm](http://www.uneca.org/eca_resources/news/2008/080306climateagreement.htm)).

In addition, the UNCCD has selected "Combating Land Degradation for Sustainable Agriculture" as the theme for the 2008 celebration of World Day to Combat Desertification (17 June), in keeping with the themes of the 16th and 17th sessions of the UN Commission on Sustainable Development (agriculture, rural development, land, drought, desertification and Africa) (<http://www.unccd.int/publicinfo/june17/2008/menu.php?newch=11>).

The Global Mechanism (GM) of the UNCCD has announced its forestry strategic programme, which centers on the rehabilitation of degraded forests outside protected areas in developing countries. In announcing its programme, the GM noted that, despite the potential of these areas for improving the livelihoods of poor rural communities and reducing poverty through the provision of forest-related goods and services, investment remains low, particularly in regions outside the humid tropics. The GM highlighted that the acknowledged environmental and developmental benefits of forest rehabilitation and afforestation demonstrate that forestry is not a sectoral issue, but an integral part of development programming and an entry point for harnessing synergies between the MEAs. The GM will seek to use the comparative advantage of its country engagement modalities and knowledge management initiatives to increase investment flows towards degraded forests, and is working closely with the UNCCD Secretariat as a member of the UNFF's Collaborative Partnership on Forests to promote deliberations on drylands and degraded forests outside protected areas as well as land degradation, particularly debates leading to financing and investment ([http://news.global-mechanism.org/u/gm.php?prm=H2XdsZUKXF\\_110986870\\_89219\\_2820](http://news.global-mechanism.org/u/gm.php?prm=H2XdsZUKXF_110986870_89219_2820); <http://www.global-mechanism.org>).

The International Tropical Timber Organization (ITTO) has provided funds for the expansion of the production of the Seed and Seedling Laboratory of the Association of Timber Exporting Companies of Pará, Brazil. Providing seeds and seedlings of various Amazonian tree species at a cost lower than the market price, the Laboratory aims to stimulate plantations in Pará, where



GM Managing Director Christian Mersmann (Photo courtesy of GM)

### ITTO FUNDS EXPANSION OF SEEDLING PRODUCTION IN BRAZIL

successful implementation. Parties will consider issues related to BCRCCs at the ninth Conference of the Parties, which is scheduled to convene in Bali, Indonesia, from 23-27 June 2008 (<http://www.basel.int/centers/decision-OEWGVI28/index.html>).

13% of the total state area is degraded, as well as in other states. The Laboratory also provides environmental education programmes on its property ([http://www.itto.or.jp/live/Live\\_Server/3901/mis20080216.pdf](http://www.itto.or.jp/live/Live_Server/3901/mis20080216.pdf)).

### UNFF CO-HOSTS SIDE EVENT ON REGIONAL COOPERATION, UNGA RESOLUTION ON FORESTS INSTRUMENT AVAILABLE

The UN Forum on Forests (UNFF), along with the UN Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) and the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), co-hosted a side event entitled "Regional forest cooperation – Reaching the 2010 Biodiversity Target and the UNFF Global Objectives on Forests by 2015," during the 18th meeting of the CBD's Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice, in Rome, Italy. Representatives from FAO, UNFF, the CBD and other organizations made presentations addressing regional forestry commissions and forest biodiversity, and lessons from Central and Meso-America on integrating forest biodiversity considerations into regional cooperation. Participants then identified challenges and opportunities for improving the linkages between the international policy agenda and relevant regional processes and initiatives for the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity (IISDRS Sources; [http://www.un.org/esa/forests/pdf/SBSTTA13\\_sideevent.pdf](http://www.un.org/esa/forests/pdf/SBSTTA13_sideevent.pdf)).

In other UNFF news, the UN General Assembly (UNGA) resolution on the adoption of the Non-Legally Binding Instrument on All Types of Forests is now available. Along with the adoption of the Instrument, the resolution invites member organizations of the Collaborative Partnership on Forests to implement the Instrument and governments, financial institutions and others to contribute to the UNFF Trust Fund. The resolution further states that the UNFF will carry out an assessment of the Instrument when reviewing the overall effectiveness of the international arrangement on forests. The Instrument, which was adopted by UNGA on 17 December 2007, is annexed to the resolution (<http://www.un.org/Docs/journal/asp/ws.asp?m=A/RES/62/98>).

## ► CHEMICALS AND WASTES

### BASEL POSTS COMMENTS ON REGIONAL CENTERS

The Secretariat of the Basel Convention has posted comments received from parties on decision OEWG VI/28, pertaining to the developments and obstacles in the implementation of the

strategic plan for the implementation of the Basel Convention Regional Coordinating Centers (BCRCCs). In the comments received, parties cited the lack of funding for developing countries, controlling illegal traffic and geographical isolation as some of the challenges to

successful implementation. Parties will consider issues related to BCRCCs at the ninth Conference of the Parties, which is scheduled to convene in Bali, Indonesia, from 23-27 June 2008 (<http://www.basel.int/centers/decision-OEWGVI28/index.html>).

## ► CHEMICALS AND WASTES

### STOCKHOLM SEEKS COMMENTS ON NEW CHEMICALS

The Stockholm Convention's Persistent Organic Pollutant Review Committee (POPRC) has completed its review of available documents, considered possible control measures, available social and economic information, and comments and information submitted by parties and observers related to the considerations specified in Annex F of the Conven-

tion (information on socioeconomic considerations). Following POPRC's review, the Secretariat of the Stockholm Convention is seeking comments from parties on issues related to the five chemicals, commercial pentabromodiphenyl ether, chlordecone, hexabromobiphenyl, lindane and perfluorooctane sulfonate (PFOS), to be considered for scheduling at the fourth Conference of the Parties in 2009. Parties are requested to provide ad-

ditional information on PFOS to the Secretariat by 30 April 2008. POPRC has also invited parties and observers to provide additional information for the consideration of endosulfan by 30 June 2008. The consideration of endosulfan was suspended at POPRC 3, as all information required had not been provided to the Committee, but the chemical will be considered at POPRC 4 (<http://www.pops.int/documents/meetings/poprc/request.htm>).

## ► WATER, OCEANS AND WETLANDS

### RAMSAR STANDING COMMITTEE MEETING CONCLUDES

The 36th session of Ramsar's Standing Committee (SC 36) met from 25-29 February 2008, in Gland, Switzerland. Over 80 participants attended the meeting and convened in plenary sessions and sub-groups on Management, the Strategic Plan, Finance and the tenth Conference of the Parties (COP 10), which will be held in November 2008, in the Republic of Korea. Among other decisions, SC 36 welcomed the report of the Chair of the Scientific and Technical Review Panel (STRP), which included a review of the first meeting of the chairs of the biodiversity-related conventions' subsidiary bodies in July 2007 and a planned second meeting in May 2008. On cultural guidelines, SC 36: decided there should be no draft Resolution bringing the cultural guidelines forward to COP 10; invited parties with concerns about the current draft to propose text to the Cultural Working Group by 31 March 2008; requested the STRP to review the revised document and determine how to make it available; and confirmed that the work of the Culture Working Group should continue after COP 10. SC 36 also requested the Secretariat to prepare for SC 37 consideration

budget proposals for "zero nominal" and "zero real" growth and noted work in progress regarding the legal status of the Convention and urged continued dialogue with Switzerland, IUCN, UNEP and UNESCO. SC 36 paid tribute to Dave Pritchard, who was attending his last Standing Committee meeting as a representative of BirdLife ([http://www.ramsar.org/sc/36/key\\_sc36\\_report.htm](http://www.ramsar.org/sc/36/key_sc36_report.htm)).

### UNDOALOS AND UNITAR HOLD JOINT BRIEFING

On 3 March 2008, the UN Division for Ocean Affairs and the Law of the Sea (UNDOALOS) and UN Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR) held a joint briefing on "Developments in Ocean Affairs and Law of the Sea: Marine Biological Diversity beyond Areas under National Jurisdiction" in New York, US. This briefing brought together around 50 participants, most of them delegates from almost 40 UN member States, and provided them with background information to prepare for the second meeting of the *Ad Hoc* Open-ended Informal Working Group to study issues relating to the conservation and sustainable use of marine biological diversity beyond areas of national jurisdiction, scheduled to take

place at the same venue from 28 April-2 May 2008. After an introduction by Peter Rona, Rutgers University, who presented on biodiversity at seafloor hot springs in the deep ocean, UNDOALOS experts briefed participants on: UNGA's mandate in ocean affairs and law of the sea; the outcomes of the first meeting of the Working Group; the Secretary-General's report for the second meeting of the Working Group; and developments in other fora (<http://www.unitaryn.org/en/doalos.html>).

### IMO CELEBRATES 60TH ANNIVERSARY

On 6 March 2008, the International Maritime Organization (IMO) celebrated the 60th anniversary of the adoption of its constitutive international convention. On this occasion, IMO Secretary-General Efthimios Mitropoulos recalled that the theme for this year's World Maritime Day would be "IMO: 60 years in the service of shipping" and underlined the organization's work in regulating shipping safely and efficiently while displaying "a caring attitude vis-à-vis the environment, both marine and atmospheric" ([http://www.imo.org/Newsroom/mainframe.asp?topic\\_id=1709&doc\\_id=9062](http://www.imo.org/Newsroom/mainframe.asp?topic_id=1709&doc_id=9062)).

## ► COMINGS AND GOINGS

- On 29 February 2006, Jeff Price was appointed as Senior Fellow for Climate Change and Biodiversity at the UNEP World Conservation Monitoring Centre (UNEP-WCMC) in Cambridge, UK. Price, who was a lead author for the Intergovernmental Panel for Climate Change's (IPCC) Third and Fourth Assessment Reports, will work with UNEP-WCMC during 2008 to assist the Centre to assimilate the most recent information and research on climate change and its impacts on biodiversity (<http://www.unep.org/Documents.Multilingual/Default.asp?DocumentID=528&ArticleID=5755&l=en>).

## ► KEY UPCOMING MEA MEETINGS

- **AD HOC JOINT WORKING GROUP ON ENHANCED COOPERATION AND COORDINATION BETWEEN THE BASEL, STOCKHOLM AND ROTTERDAM CONVENTIONS:** 25-28 March 2008, Rome, Italy. <http://ahjwg.chem.unep.ch/>
- **AD HOC WORKING GROUP ON LONG-TERM COOPERATIVE ACTION UNDER THE UNFCCC AND AWG UNDER THE KYOTO PROTOCOL:** 31 March-4 April 2008, Bangkok, Thailand. [http://unfccc.int/files/meetings/awg/application/pdf/un\\_climate\\_change\\_talks\\_bangkok\\_web.pdf](http://unfccc.int/files/meetings/awg/application/pdf/un_climate_change_talks_bangkok_web.pdf)
- **57TH SESSION OF THE IMO'S MARINE ENVIRONMENT PROTECTION COMMITTEE:** 31 March-4 April 2008; London, UK. [http://www.imo.org/includes/blastDataOnly.asp/data\\_id%3D20804/1.pdf](http://www.imo.org/includes/blastDataOnly.asp/data_id%3D20804/1.pdf)
- **UNEP GLOBAL MERCURY PARTNERSHIP MEETING:** 1-3 April 2008, Geneva, Switzerland. <http://www.chem.unep.ch/mercury/default.htm>