



## RECENT MEA ACTIVITIES

### ▶ CLIMATE AND ATMOSPHERE

#### IPCC AGREES TO PREPARE FIFTH ASSESSMENT REPORT



L-R: Renate Christ, IPCC Secretary, and IPCC Chair Rajendra Pachauri at IPCC 28

The 28th session of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), which met from 9-10 April 2008, in Budapest, Hungary, discussed the future of the IPCC, including key aspects of its work programme such as Working Group structure, main type and timing of future reports, and the future structure of the IPCC Bureau and the Bureau of the Task Force on National Greenhouse Gas Inventories (TFB). The IPCC plenary agreed to prepare a Fifth Assessment Report (AR5) and to retain the current structure of its Working Groups. To enable significant use of new scenarios in the AR5, the Panel requested the Bureau of the Fifth Assessment cycle to ensure delivery of the Working Group I report by early 2013 and complete the other Working Group reports and the Synthesis Report at the earliest feasible date in 2014. The Panel also agreed to the preparation of a Special Report on Renewable Energy to be completed by 2010 and was presented with the Technical Paper on Climate Change and Water. It deferred discussion on the use of its Nobel Peace Prize funds until IPCC 29 (1-4 September 2008, Geneva, Switzerland) (<http://www.iisd.ca/climate/ipcc28/>).

### MEA Clusters In This Issue

- **Climate and Atmosphere**  
Bangkok Climate Talks Establish Work Programme; Multilateral Fund Executive Committee Meets *Page 2*
- **Intergovernmental Organizations**  
UN Member States Discuss "Delivering as One;" UNEP Co-Organizes Seminar on Tourism-Climate Change Links; UNDP Joins Sanitation Partnership *Page 3*
- **Chemicals and Wastes**  
Working Group Proposes Joint Ex-COP; UNEP Mercury Partnership Meeting Finalizes Framework *Page 3*
- **Biodiversity and Wildlife**  
CITES Scientific Committees Convene; CMS Gorilla Agreement Enters into Force *Page 4*
- **Water, Oceans and Wetlands**  
IMO Committee Considers Emissions Regulations; Ramsar Reports Designation of 54 Sites; GPA Addresses Mainstreaming and Valuation Issues *Page 4-5*
- **Trade, Finance and Investment**  
World Bank/IMF Discuss Rising Food and Energy Prices; World Bank Convenes Meeting on Climate Fund; ECOSOC Meets with BWIs, WTO and UNCTAD *Page 5-6*
- **Sustainable Development**  
UNDESA Organizes Roundtable on Cooperation for Sustainable Development in Caribbean SIDS *Page 6*
- **Forests, Deserts and Land**  
UNFF Country-Led Initiative Discusses Decentralization and Forest Governance; UNCCD Drafts Paper on Human Rights and Desertification *Page 6*

### GUEST ARTICLE

#### How Information and Communications Technologies Can Support Education for Sustainable Development: Current uses and trends

By Leslie Paas, IISD Associate, with Heather Creech, Director, Knowledge Communications, IISD

#### Abstract

An essential step in the journey to sustainable development is educating citizens to recognize the problems facing the world today (natural resource depletion, increasing pollution, poverty and so forth), as

*Continued on page 2*

### RESEARCH AND RESOURCE

#### INTERLINKAGES AND THE EFFECTIVENESS OF MULTILATERAL ENVIRONMENTAL AGREEMENTS

(UN University, April 2008) This book seeks to fill gaps in knowledge and policy-making regarding the need for greater coordination and synergies among environmental institutions, policies and legal instruments (<http://www.unu.edu/unupress/sample-chapters/1149-InterlinkagesAndEffectivenessOf-MultilateralEnvironmentalAgreements.pdf>).

The *MEA Bulletin* © is a publication of 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.)

well as the opportunities for innovation and progress (such as new energy technologies and full-cost accounting systems) and empowering them to act responsibly towards a sustainable future. Recognizing the importance of such education, the drafters of multilateral environmental agreements (MEAs) have included clauses related to education, public awareness and training as key implementation mechanisms for these instruments. Nonetheless, educational systems have not succeeded in influencing choices and behaviors that would support sustainable development. This paper identifies ways in which many changes called for in education for sustainable development (ESD) could be supported through greater integration of information and communication technologies (ICTs) in the learning environment

ICTs are important tools for reaching greater numbers of learners as well as facilitating new ways of learning and understanding that will be required to implement the complex solutions required for sustainability. The continued expansion of

networks technologies, bandwidth, and computer capacity, coupled with increasing user familiarity with the tools, social networking applications, and the acceptance of innovative pedagogical methods in the educational system offer new and exciting possibilities for ESD. Based on a review of the history of ICTs in ESD, current uses and trends, the authors suggest that additional work is needed in the following areas:

1. Further exploration of the connection between ICTs and ESD. This paper has found that there is little research available that demonstrates and confirms the synergies between these areas of practice. Although there is a wealth of research on educational technology, a further step needs to be taken to link ICTs for ESD. This line of enquiry may ultimately lead to recommendations for educational policy development that more explicitly encourage the incorporation of ICTs into an ESD oriented curriculum.

2. Exponential increases in the quantity of information and knowledge management and sharing tools will generate two needs:

- a. the need to help students (and educators) assess the quality of information and opinions to which they are increasingly exposed, especially taking into account the tendency for a greater emphasis on peer learning, interaction and the tendency for social networking tools to quickly create a "critical mass"; and

- b. the need for educators to learn how to use these same tools to track advances and keep up-to-date in their knowledge area.

3. Finally, there is a need to devise new measures for learning outcomes in an ICT-supported and connected learning environment, as well as to determine whether educational pedagogies, tools and learning environments are really helping to educate citizens to live sustainably.

Link to the full article: <http://www.iisd.ca/mea-1/guestarticle45.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



Bird's eye view of the plenary room of the Bangkok Climate Change Talks

### BANGKOK CLIMATE TALKS ESTABLISH 2008 WORK PROGRAMME

The first session of the *Ad Hoc* Working Group on Long-term Cooperative Action (AWGLCA 1) and the fifth session of the *Ad Hoc* Working Group on Further Commitments for Annex I Parties under the Kyoto Protocol to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (AWG 5) attracted over 1000 participants, including more than 100 media representatives, to their "Bangkok Climate Change Talks" in Thailand from 31 March to 4 April 2008. The AWGLCA developed its work programme for 2008, which aims to further discussions on all elements of the Bali Action Plan at every session of

the AWGLCA in a coherent, integrated and transparent manner. It establishes a timetable and elements to be addressed, as well as eight in-session workshops to be held during 2008. The AWG convened an in-session workshop on analyzing the means for Annex I parties to reach their emissions reduction targets. In its conclusions, AWG 5 indicated that emissions trading and the project-based mechanisms under the Protocol should continue in the post-2012 period, and be supplemental to domestic actions in Annex I countries. The next round of discussions will convene in Bonn, Germany, beginning on 2 June 2008 (<http://www.iisd.ca/climate/ccwg1/>).

In other UN Framework Convention on Climate Change news, the Kyoto Pro-

ocol's Clean Development Mechanism (CDM) has registered its 1000th project, an energy efficiency project in Andhra Pradesh, India, which is expected to reduce carbon dioxide emissions by more than 34,000 tons annually ([http://unfccc.int/files/press/news\\_room/press\\_releases\\_and\\_advisories/application/pdf/pressrel\\_080414\\_1000.pdf](http://unfccc.int/files/press/news_room/press_releases_and_advisories/application/pdf/pressrel_080414_1000.pdf)).

### MULTILATERAL FUND EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETS

The 54th Meeting of the Executive Committee of the Multilateral Fund for the Implementation of the Montreal Protocol met on 7-11 April 2008, in Montreal, Canada ([http://www.multilateralfund.org/54th\\_meeting\\_of\\_the\\_executive\\_.htm](http://www.multilateralfund.org/54th_meeting_of_the_executive_.htm)). Agenda items included availability of resources, business plans of the Multilateral Fund and the implementing agencies for 2008 through 2010, evaluation of national phase-out plans, and project proposals. The Executive Committee also considered the Draft Guidelines for the Preparation of the hydrochlorofluorocarbon (HCFC) Phase-out Management Plans and cost considerations surrounding the financing of HCFC phase-out.

► INTERGOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS

**UN MEMBER STATES DISCUSS “DELIVERING AS ONE” AND FUNDING**

Within the framework of the UN General Assembly consultations on UN System-wide Coherence, member States met on 28 March 2008, at UN headquarters in New York, US, to consider the issue of Delivering as One at Country Level, and on 7 April 2008, to discuss the UN funding structure. On 28 March, UN Deputy Secretary-General Asha-Rose Migiro noted that significant progress had been achieved on the “One budgetary framework,” as well as on increased accountability and national ownership, while cautioning that new priorities must be set for 2008, including closing the funding gap. Several members of the Non-Aligned Movement and the Group of 77 also drew attention to the funding gap, underlining that savings must be channeled back into the system. Discussions on funding on 7 April focused on achieving a better balance between non-core and core funding, resource mobilization and reviewing funding mechanisms (<http://www.centerforunreform.org/node/324>; <http://www.un.org/ga/president/62/issues/resolutions/Consultations200308.pdf>; <http://www.un.org/ga/president/62/issues/resolutions/letteronFunding4408.pdf>).



UN Deputy Secretary-General Asha-Rose Migiro

**UNEP CO-ORGANIZES SEMINAR ON TOURISM-CLIMATE CHANGE LINKS**

On 11 April 2008, a three-day international seminar entitled “Climate Change Adaptation and Mitigation in the Tourism Sector: Frameworks, tools and practices,” primarily focusing on developing countries and small island developing States (SIDS), concluded in Oxford, UK. The event was jointly organized by the UN Environment Programme (UNEP), Oxford University’s Centre for the Environment and the UN World Tourism Organization, and brought together some 30 high-level tourism and environmental officials to discuss capacity building and pragmatic adaptation and mitigation methods for developing countries and SIDS to meet the climate change challenge (<http://www.geog.ox.ac.uk/news/events/ccamts/>).

In other UNEP news, in March 2008, 3000 indigenous tree seedlings were planted in the Karura forest, Kenya, marking the beginning of UNEP’s Private Sector tree-planting initiative under the Nairobi River Basin Programme. The tree planting partnership



UNEP Executive Director, Achim Steiner, and Nobel Laureate, Wangari Maathai participated in the tree-planting (Photo courtesy of UNEP)



Photo courtesy of UNEP

aims to establish long-term cooperation with the private sector on tree-planting activities, to contribute to UNEP’s Plant for the Planet: Billion Tree Campaign, Climate Neutral Strategy and catchments protection (<http://www.unep.org/billiontreecampaign/CampaignNews/huruma.asp>).

**UNDP JOINS SANITATION PARTNERSHIP IN CHINA**

The first public-private partnership to improve water access and sanitation in China was launched on 20 March 2008. The “Water Resources Management and Drinking Water Safety in Rural Regions of China” project is a joint initiative between the UN Development Programme (UNDP), the Chinese Ministry of Water Resources, China International Center for Economic and Technical Exchange and the Coca-Cola Company. The project aims to improve policy mechanisms by demonstrating sound water resource management approaches on water resource allocation and drinking water safety technologies, such as rebuilding drainage pipelines and using ecologically sustainable agricultural technologies for water conservation (<http://www.undp.org.cn/modules.php?op=modload&name=News&file=article&catid=14&topic=43&sid=4277&mode=nocomments&order=0&thold=0>).

► CHEMICALS AND WASTES

**WORKING GROUP PROPOSES JOINT EX-COP**

The Third Meeting of the *Ad Hoc* Joint Working Group (AHJWG) on Enhanced Cooperation and Coordination between the Basel, Stockholm and Rotterdam Conventions convened from 25-28 March 2008, in Rome, Italy. The AHJWG reached agreement on all recommendations laid out in the co-chair’s paper (UNEP/FAO/CHW/RC/POPS/JWG.3/2). The key outcome of the meeting was the proposal to convene a joint Extraordinary Conference of the Parties (Ex-COP) of the three Conventions. The Ex-COP would be held in conjunction with the next special session of the UNEP Global Ministerial Environment Forum (GMEF) in February 2010. The meeting would seek to organize the joint



AHJWG Co-chair Osvaldo Alvarez Pérez (Chile)

recommendations, as well as the recommendation to synchronize the three Convention budgets. Before the Ex-COP is confirmed, the AHJWG recommendations must be agreed by the three COPs: the Basel Convention in June 2008; the Rotterdam Convention in October 2008; and the Stockholm Convention in May 2009 (IISD RS Sources; [http://ahjwg.chem.unep.ch/index.php?option=com\\_frontpage&Itemid=49](http://ahjwg.chem.unep.ch/index.php?option=com_frontpage&Itemid=49)).

**UNEP MERCURY PARTNERSHIP MEETING FINALIZES FRAMEWORK**

In accordance with UNEP Governing Council decision 24/3 paragraph 27, UNEP Chemicals convened a meeting from 1-3 April 2008, in Geneva, Switzerland, to finalize the overarching framework for the Global Mercury Partnership. The meeting was attended by over 70 participants from more than 30 countries, intergovernmental organizations, nongovernmental organizations and industry groups. Participants agreed

on a framework for the Global Mercury Partnership that outlines the goal, organizational arrangements (including a Partnership Advisory Group), and operational guidelines for the individual partnership areas (IISD RS Sources; <http://www.chem.unep.ch/mercury/UGMP/Meeting.htm>).

**SAICM INVITES TESTING OF INDICATORS**

The Secretariat for the Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management (SAICM) has announced that proposed indicators for progress under SAICM have been prepared for countries, nongovernmental organizations, industry groups and intergovernmental organizations. The SAICM Secretariat is piloting the indicators to test their feasibility, enable modifications and determine the appropriateness of associated guidance. All stakeholders are invited to participate and should contact the Secretariat by 21 April 2008 (<http://www.chem.unep.ch/saicm/Reporting/Pilot/Pilot%20testing.htm>).

## ► BIODIVERSITY AND WILDLIFE

### CITES SCIENTIFIC COMMITTEES CONVENE

The 17th meeting of the Plants Committee of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) is convening from 15-19 April 2008, in Geneva, Switzerland, and will be followed by the 23rd meeting of the Animals Committee, which will meet from 19-24 April. On 19 April, the two Committees will hold a joint meeting. Approximately 300 delegates are expected to attend, as the Committees take up the programme of work established at the 14th Conference of the Parties held in The Hague, the Netherlands, in June 2007. The Plants Committee's agenda includes CITES-listed timber species such as the bigleaf mahogany, South American cedar and rosewood. This Committee is likely to focus on the effects of international trade on timber species. It will hear details of a joint CITES-International Tropical Timber Organization project aimed at ensuring that international trade in CITES-listed timber species is consistent with their sustainable management



The Chairs-elect of the CITES Plants and Animals Committees – Margarita Clemente Muñoz and Thomas Althaus

and conservation. The four-year project is funded through a grant from the European Community and other donors.

The Animals Committee will examine reports on efforts to improve monitoring of the catch of and trade in sharks and to implement the Food and Agriculture Organization International Plan of Action-Sharks. It will also examine key shark species for possible listing under CITES. Concerning sturgeons, the Committee will begin an evaluation of the assessment and the monitoring methodologies used for stocks shared by several countries, such as those of the Caspian Sea.

Both committees will examine recent trade in CITES-listed species to identify those that may be being traded at unsustainable levels. This process, known as the 'Review of Significant Trade,' is a key peer review and compliance mechanism under the Convention. Trade in the bigleaf mahogany and in Indian Ocean bottlenose dolphins is expected to attract particular attention (IISDRS sources; <http://www.iisd.ca/cites/ac23pc17/>; [http://www.cites.org/eng/news/press\\_release.shtml](http://www.cites.org/eng/news/press_release.shtml)).

### CMS GORILLA AGREEMENT ENTERS INTO FORCE

The Gorilla Agreement, negotiated in October 2007 by representatives of nine African range States under the auspices of the Convention on Migratory Species (CMS), has been signed by three range States and will enter into force on 1 June 2008. The Central African Republic and

the Republic of Congo signed the agreement during the meeting of the Congo Basin Forest Partnership on 26 October 2007, while Nigeria signed on 9 April 2008. The first Meeting of the Parties will take place on 29 November 2008, in Rome, Italy, immediately prior to the ninth Conference of the Parties to CMS (<http://www.cms.int/>).

In preparation for World Migratory Bird Day, to be celebrated on 10-11 May 2008 under the theme "Migratory Birds – Ambassadors for Biodiversity," the African Eurasian Migratory Waterbird Agreement (AEWA) and CMS have launched a website, to promote the event and this year's theme, as well as to provide information on migratory birds ([www.worldmigratorybirdday.org](http://www.worldmigratorybirdday.org)).

The website of the Wings Over Wetlands (WOW) project has also recently been launched. The WOW project aims to foster international collaboration along the African-Eurasian flyways, build capacity for monitoring and conservation, and demonstrate best practices in conservation and wise use of wetlands in selected countries. It supports the implementation of both AEWA and the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands and is a collaborative effort between Wetlands International and BirdLife International, with support from the UN Office for Project Services and UNEP/Global Environment Facility (<http://www.wingsoverwetlands.org/>; [http://www.unep-aewa.org/news/news\\_elements/2008/wow\\_project\\_website.htm](http://www.unep-aewa.org/news/news_elements/2008/wow_project_website.htm)).

## ► WATER, OCEANS AND WETLANDS

### IMO ENVIRONMENTAL COMMITTEE CONSIDERS REVISED REGULATIONS ON SHIP EMISSIONS

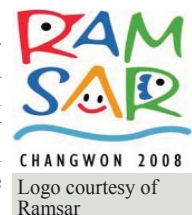
The International Maritime Organization's (IMO) Marine Environment Protection Committee (MEPC) finalized and approved proposed amendments to the International Convention for the Prevention of Pollution from Ships (MARPOL) Annex VI regulations to reduce harmful emissions from ships, as well as to the NOx technical Code, when it met for its 57th session from 31 March-4 April 2008, in London, UK. The draft amendments had been agreed by IMO's Sub-Committee on Bulk Liquids and Gases (BLG) at its 12th session in February, and are to be adopted at MEPC 58 (London, 6-10 October 2008). In addition, MEPC endorsed a proposal from the IMO Secretary-General to expedite the work on greenhouse gas emissions ahead of schedule. The Committee found the prospect of establishing a global levy scheme on

marine bunker fuel to achieve greenhouse gas emission reductions promising. Under the proposed scheme, all ships engaged in international voyages would be subjected to a bunker levy established at a given cost level per ton of fuel bunkered. It was agreed that the Greenhouse Gas Working Group will hold an intersessional meeting in Oslo, Norway, from 23-27 June 2008. Finally, MEPC made significant progress in developing the draft text of the International Convention for the Safe and Environmentally Sound Recycling of Ships. This draft is to be approved by the Committee at its next meeting in October 2008, with a view to holding a diplomatic conference to adopt the Convention in Hong Kong, China, in May 2009 (subject to endorsement by the IMO Council in June 2008) ([http://www.imo.org/Newsroom/mainframe.asp?topic\\_id=1709&doc\\_id=9123](http://www.imo.org/Newsroom/mainframe.asp?topic_id=1709&doc_id=9123); [http://www.imo.org/Newsroom/mainframe.asp?topic\\_id=1709&doc\\_id=9129](http://www.imo.org/Newsroom/mainframe.asp?topic_id=1709&doc_id=9129)).

### RAMSAR NATIONAL REPORTS POSTED, 54 NEW SITES DESIGNATED

The Ramsar Secretariat has posted some of the national reports submitted by parties to the tenth Conference of the Parties (Changwon, Republic of Korea, 28 October - 4 November 2008). More will be posted as they are finalized ([http://www.ramsar.org/cop10/cop10\\_natlrpts\\_index.htm](http://www.ramsar.org/cop10/cop10_natlrpts_index.htm)).

The Ramsar Secretariat has reported that the governments of Mexico and Nigeria have designated new Wetlands of International Importance. The 45 Mexican sites are to be dated as of World Wetlands Day 2008 (2 February) ([http://www.ramsar.org/wn/w.n.mexico\\_april08.htm](http://www.ramsar.org/wn/w.n.mexico_april08.htm)). The nine Nigerian sites include an array of wetland types and provide ecosystem services to the local communities ([http://www.ramsar.org/wn/w.n.nigeria\\_nine.htm](http://www.ramsar.org/wn/w.n.nigeria_nine.htm)).



## ► WATER, OCEANS AND WETLANDS

### GPA ADDRESSES MAINSTREAMING AND VALUATION ISSUES AT THE FOURTH GLOBAL OCEANS CONFERENCE

During the Fourth Global Conference on Oceans, Coasts, and Islands, which took place from 8-11 April 2008, in Hanoi, Viet Nam, the UNEP/Global Programme of Action for the Protection of the Marine Environment from Land-Based Activities (GPA) Coordination Office organized two discussion sessions, chaired by Anjan Datta (UNEP/GPA). The first of these sessions, organized with UNEP/GEF South China Sea Project, took place on 8 April and aimed to facilitate the exchange of knowledge on the economic value of the goods and services that ecosystems, such as mangroves, coral reefs, seagrass and other coastal wetland habitats of critical ecological importance, pro-

vide for coastal communities. Participants heard presentations on: regional and national values of mangroves, seagrass and coral reefs bordering the South China Sea; cost-benefit analysis of action for sustainable use of coastal ecosystems compared with non-action; and the contribution of coastal and marine resources in the GDP (case study of Sri Lanka).

The second session, which took place on 9 April, was organized in collaboration with the Stockholm Environment Institute (SEI) on the theme, "Mainstreaming of Marine and Coastal Issues into National Planning and Budgetary Processes." This session aimed to explore the links between the management of coastal and marine resources, poverty reduction and economic growth, based on country experiences, with a particular focus on policy development. Participants heard presentations on na-

tional experiences in mainstreaming coastal and marine issues into national planning in Viet Nam, the Philippines, Indonesia and Sri Lanka, as well as in the Mediterranean region. Also in collaboration with the SEI, the UNEP/GPA has released a guide for the mainstreaming of marine and coastal issues (IISDRS Sources; [http://www.gpa.unep.org/documents/analytical\\_framework\\_for\\_mainstreaming\\_feb\\_08\\_1\\_english.pdf](http://www.gpa.unep.org/documents/analytical_framework_for_mainstreaming_feb_08_1_english.pdf); <http://www.iisd.ca/yimb/sdoh4/>).

### UNDOALOS RELEASES OCEANS AND LAW OF THE SEA RESOLUTION

The UN Division for Ocean Affairs and the Law of the Sea (UNDOALOS) has released Resolution 62/215 on Oceans and the Law of the Sea ([http://www.un.org/Depts/los/general\\_assembly/general\\_assembly\\_resolutions.htm](http://www.un.org/Depts/los/general_assembly/general_assembly_resolutions.htm)).

## ► TRADE, FINANCE AND INVESTMENT

### WORLD BANK/IMF DISCUSS RISING FOOD AND ENERGY PRICES

The annual World Bank Group (WBG) and International Monetary Fund (IMF) Spring Meetings took place on 12-13 April 2008, in Washington DC, US. At the joint Development Committee, countries reviewed progress toward the Millennium Development Goals, as reflected in the fifth Global Monitoring Report, and urged donors to increase their support for the poorest countries' own development priorities. They highlighted the issue of rising food and energy prices and their impact in developing countries and welcomed the call by the World Bank President to combat hunger and malnutrition through a "New Deal for Global Food Policy," combining immediate assistance with medium and long-term efforts to boost agricultural productivity in developing countries. Regarding the Concept and Issues Note on the Strategic Framework on Climate Change and Development for the WBG (SFCCD), they asked for the SFCCD to elaborate further on the additional financing needs for addressing climate change, the mobilization of private sector funding and the complementarities between existing and new financing mechanisms, as well as the proposed role of the WBG under a division of labor vis-à-vis the UN, and other key international players, including



World Bank President Robert B. Zoellick. (Photo courtesy of WBG)

the private sector. Countries also recognized that access to energy remains key to development, and supported WBG goals of promoting clean technology and renewable energy deployment, technology transfer, and research and development. They acknowledged the work underway on the design, governance and financing of the new Climate Investment Funds, including the Clean Technology Fund, and welcomed the ongoing consultative process for developing a client-oriented SFCCD ([http://siteresources.worldbank.org/DEV/COMMINT/Resources/Communiques/Apr\\_2008\\_DC\\_Communique\\_E.pdf](http://siteresources.worldbank.org/DEV/COMMINT/Resources/Communiques/Apr_2008_DC_Communique_E.pdf)).

### WORLD BANK CONVENES MEETING ON CLIMATE FUND

The World Bank, in conjunction with the Inter-American Development Bank, met with donor countries from 14-15 April 2008 in Washington DC, US, to discuss the design of new financing aimed at accelerating climate sensitive investments in developing countries. Representatives from developing countries, the UNFCCC, the GEF, the UN system's Chief Executives Board, UNEP, UNDP and the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development also attended. The meeting came one month after an initial session in Paris, France, where donor countries sketched out how the new financing might function. As currently proposed, the largest portion of the Climate Investment Funds would channel, through various multilateral development banks, short-to-medium term financing for rapid deployment of low-carbon tech-

nologies. The funds would build on and scale up pilots and prototypes supported under the GEF, as well as complement activities under the CDM. The meeting is expected to be followed by a session in May, with approval for establishment of the new funds by the World Bank's Board of Executive Directors expected in early July (<http://web.worldbank.org/WBSITE/EXTERNAL/NEWS/0,,contentMDK:21721668~pagePK:34370~piPK:34424~theSitePK:4607,00.html>).

### ECOSOC MEETS WITH BWIS, WTO AND UNCTAD

The annual meeting of the UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) with the Bretton Woods Institutions, the World Trade Organization (WTO) and the UN Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) convened on 14 April 2008, in NY, US. Under the overall theme of "Coherence, coordination and cooperation in the context of the implementation of the Monterrey Consensus, including new challenges and emerging issues," participants engaged in a dialogue on five sub-themes: new initiatives on financing for development; supporting development efforts and enhancing the role of middle-income countries, including in the area of trade; supporting development efforts of the least developed countries, including through trade capacity-building; building and sustaining solid financial markets: challenges for international cooperation; and financing of climate change adaptation and mitigation (<http://www.un.org/esa/ffd/ecosoc/springmeetings/2008/index.htm>).

### ► TRADE, FINANCE AND INVESTMENT

#### **IDB MEETING GARNERS TEN MILLION FOR ENERGY AND CLIMATE INITIATIVE**

During the Annual Meeting of the Board of Governors of the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB), held on 4-8 April 2008, in Miami, US, Spain signed a letter of intent pledg-

ing to contribute US\$ 10 million to IDB's Sustainable Energy and Climate Change Initiative, which provides support to Latin American and Caribbean countries for renewable energy, energy efficiency, biofuel development, carbon financing and climate change adaptation. The IDB also ap-

proved 20 environmental loans totaling US\$ 1.1 billion, primarily for water and sanitation projects (<http://www.iadb.org/news/articledetail.cfm?artid=4543&language=En>; <http://www.iadb.org/news/articledetail.cfm?Language=En&parid=2&artType=PR&artid=4478>).

### ► SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

#### **UNDESA ORGANIZES ROUNDTABLE ON COOPERATION FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT IN CARIBBEAN SIDS**

The UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UNDESA) organized a High-level Roundtable on International Cooperation for Sustainable Development in Caribbean SIDS, which took place on 25-27 March 2008, in Bridgetown, Bar-

bados. The Roundtable was organized in response to a request by the Government of Iceland for DESA to facilitate enhanced development cooperation between Iceland and the Caribbean SIDS. The meeting identified areas of mutual interest to increase cooperation, including in the areas of sustainable use of natural resources, climate change, renewable energy resources, fisheries management,

capacity building and the advancement of women ([http://www.un.org/esa/sustdev/sids/2008\\_roundtable/index.htm](http://www.un.org/esa/sustdev/sids/2008_roundtable/index.htm)).

The Bureau for the 16th session of the Commission on Sustainable Development met on 10 April 2008, to discuss the programme of work, hear updates on preparations and discuss emerging issues, such as the current food crisis (IISDRS sources).

### ► FORESTS, DESERTS AND LAND

#### **UNFF CLI DISCUSSES DECENTRALIZATION AND FOREST GOVERNANCE IN AFRICA**

A country-led initiative (CLI) in support of the UN Forum on Forests (UNFF) on decentralization and forest governance in Africa convened from 8-11 April 2008, in Durban, South Africa. This workshop brought together stakeholders, policy makers and experts to share experiences and explore opportunities for generating concrete gains from governance reforms and decentralized forest management. Keynote speakers drew links between conservation and democratization, arguing that decentralization in the forest sector could be an important lever for democratization and for strengthening mechanisms for representation and accountability. Working group sessions and paper presentations addressed country experiences with: decentralized forest management and livelihoods; conservation, SFM and governance; and international trade, finance and forest sector governance reform, particularly in the context of earlier structural adjustment reforms undertaken by many African countries. Proposed recommendations and lessons that emerged included the necessity of strengthening institutional adaptive capacities and mechanisms for nego-

tiation among interest groups, conflict resolution, and collaboration to achieve common goals. Participants proposed recommendations to improve equity in forest revenue sharing and enhance re-investment in the forest sector and local social services for forest communities. Participants also recognized the need for new analytical tools with which to understand and respond to the market and global trends in Africa for the benefit of local people and forests (IISDRS sources; <http://www.turnersconferences.com/conferences/forestgovernance/index.asp>; [http://www.un.org/esa/forests/pdf/notes/durban\\_080408.pdf](http://www.un.org/esa/forests/pdf/notes/durban_080408.pdf)).

#### **ITTO CO-HOSTS FORESTRY INVESTMENT FORUM IN BOLIVIA**

The Forest Industry Division of the International Tropical Timber Organization (ITTO) co-hosted with the Bolivian Forestry Chamber an Investment Forum to analyze investment opportunities in the Bolivian tropical forestry sector. Participants at the 26-27 March 2008, session in Santa Cruz de la Sierra, Bolivia, discussed investment incentives, analysis of the major international markets for tropical wood, industrial plantations, bioenergy, carbon markets, and investment opportunities in the region. The Forum ran in parallel to the EXPOFOR-

EST international wood and wood technology trade fair, which was attended by over 9,500 people (<http://www.itto.or.jp/live/PageDisplayHandler?pageId=223&id=3880>, IISDRS sources).

#### **UNCCD AND UN SPECIAL RAPPORTEUR ON THE RIGHT TO FOOD DRAFT PAPER ON HUMAN RIGHTS AND DESERTIFICATION**

The Secretariat of the UN Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) and the UN Special Rapporteur on the Right to Food have drafted a paper entitled "Human Rights and Desertification: Exploiting the Complementarity of International Human Rights Law and the UNCCD." The paper notes that, at a time when the UNCCD is moving toward concrete implementation, the rights-based approach to drought, desertification and land degradation "can trigger the development of national normative frameworks and tools whose enforcement and implementation can be monitored through the ten-year strategic plan of the Convention." In a forward, UNCCD Executive Secretary Luc Gnacadja indicates that the study will be submitted to the UN Commission on Sustainable Development (<http://www.unccd.int/publicinfo/docs/humanrights-desertificationmar08.pdf>).

### ► KEY UPCOMING MEA MEETINGS

- **CITES PLANTS AND ANIMALS COMMITTEES:** 15-24 April 2008. Geneva, Switzerland. <http://www.iisd.ca/cites/ac23pc17/>
- **UNCTAD XII:** 20-25 April 2008. Accra, Ghana. <http://www.unctad.org/Templates/Meeting.asp?intItemID=4287&lang=1>
- **GEF COUNCIL MEETING AND NGO CONSULTATION:** 21-25 April 2008. Washington DC, US. <http://www.thegef.org/interior.aspx?id=17146>
- **AD HOC OPEN-ENDED INFORMAL WORKING GROUP ON MARINE BIODIVERSITY BEYOND NATIONAL JURISDICTION:** 28 April-2 May 2008. New York, US. <http://www.iisd.ca/oceans/marinebiodiv2/>