



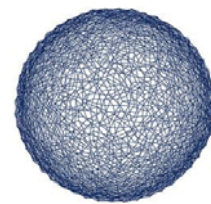
## RECENT MEA ACTIVITIES

### ▶ CLIMATE AND ATMOSPHERE

#### UNFCCC RECEIVES EMISSION REDUCTION PLEDGES FROM 55 COUNTRIES

In the run up to the 31 January 2010 deadline for communicating information relating to the Copenhagen Accord, the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) Secretariat published a notification inviting parties who wish to be associated with the Accord to transmit this intention to the Secretariat by 31 January by way of a simple letter from a relevant government officer to the Executive Secretary or a note verbale. The notification also provided clarification on how parties could provide information on quantified economy-wide emission targets for 2020 and, for non-Annex I parties, information on mitigation actions ([http://unfccc.int/files/parties\\_and\\_observers/notifications/application/pdf/notification\\_to\\_parties\\_20100118.pdf](http://unfccc.int/files/parties_and_observers/notifications/application/pdf/notification_to_parties_20100118.pdf)). In a subsequent clarification, the Secretariat indicated that the phrase “in light of the legal character of the Accord,” which appears in the initial notification, did not imply that the provisions of the Accord have any legal standing since the Conference of the Parties neither adopted or endorsed the Accord but merely took note of it ([http://unfccc.int/files/parties\\_and\\_observers/notifications/application/pdf/100125\\_noti\\_clarification.pdf](http://unfccc.int/files/parties_and_observers/notifications/application/pdf/100125_noti_clarification.pdf)). By 31 January, 55 countries, accounting for 78% of global emissions from energy use, had formally communicated submissions of national pledges to cut and limit greenhouse gases by 2020 to the UNFCCC Secretariat. Quantified economy-wide emission targets, to be reflected in Appendix I of the Copenhagen Accord, were received from Australia, Canada, Croatia, the EU, Japan, Kazakhstan, New Zealand, Norway, the Russian Federation and the US. Developing countries including Brazil, China, India, South Africa, the Republic of Korea and Indonesia submitted nationally appropriate mitigation actions, to be included in Appendix II of the Copenhagen Accord ([http://unfccc.int/files/press/news\\_room/press\\_releases\\_and\\_advisories/application/pdf/pr\\_accord\\_100201.pdf](http://unfccc.int/files/press/news_room/press_releases_and_advisories/application/pdf/pr_accord_100201.pdf)).

The Secretariat has also invited views from parties on whether to convene additional meetings to those scheduled before the 16th session of the Conference of the Parties in November-December 2010 ([http://unfccc.int/files/parties\\_and\\_observers/notifications/application/pdf/information\\_note\\_20100202.pdf](http://unfccc.int/files/parties_and_observers/notifications/application/pdf/information_note_20100202.pdf)).



COP15  
COPENHAGEN  
UN CLIMATE CHANGE CONFERENCE 2009  
Logo courtesy of the  
UNFCCC Secretariat

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#### GUEST ARTICLE

##### Multi-stakeholder Dialogue on Implementing Sustainable Development Monday, 1 February 2010, UNHQ-NY

By the United Nations Division for Sustainable Development

#### Abstract

As the international community gears up for a conference marking the twentieth anniversary of the historic Earth Summit and Agenda 21, the world's blueprint on Sustainable Development, the Commission on Sustainable Development

*Continued on page 3*

#### RESEARCH AND RESOURCES

##### TROPICAL FOREST UPDATE: GETTING A LOCK ON GOVERNANCE

(ITTO, January 2010) The latest issue of the International Tropical Timber Organization's newsletter focuses on governance in tropical forests. Articles address, *inter alia*: strengthening weak governance as a prerequisite for sustainability; an ITTO project on detecting illegal logging in Guyana; making natural forests more competitive than oil palm plantations with REDD; and moving from approving forest management plans to implementation in Cameroon (<http://www.itto.int/en/tfu/>).

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## ► CLIMATE AND ATMOSPHERE



Cover courtesy of the IPCC Secretariat

### IPCC ACKNOWLEDGES UNFOUNDED CLAIM ON MELTING OF HIMALAYAN GLACIERS

The Chair, Vice-Chairs and Co-chairs of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) have issued a statement in response to allegations appearing in the international press concerning the veracity of claims on the melting of the Himalayan glaciers, which appeared in the Synthesis report, the concluding document of the IPCC's Fourth Assessment Report (AR4). The statement acknowledges that a paragraph in Working Group II's (Impacts, adaptation and vulnerability) contribution to the underlying assessment refers to poorly substantiated estimates of rate of recession and date for the disappearance of Himalayan glaciers. The IPCC states that "in drafting the paragraph in

question, the clear and well-established standards of evidence, required by the IPCC procedures, were not applied properly." The statement goes on to say that this episode demonstrates that the quality of the assessment depends on absolute adherence to the IPCC standards, including thorough review of "the quality and validity of each source before incorporating results from the source into an IPCC Report" (<http://www.ipcc.ch/pdf/presentations/himalaya-statement-20january2010.pdf>).

In a separate development, the IPCC has also issued a statement on Trends in Disaster Losses, in response to an article appearing in the UK *Sunday Times* on 24 January 2010. The statement describes the article titled "UN Wrongly Linked Global Warming to Natural Disasters" as a "misleading and baseless story attacking the way

the AR4 handled an important question concerning recent trends in economic losses from climate-related disasters." The IPCC states that the article incorrectly assumes that a brief section on trends in economic losses from climate-related disasters reflects the totality of AR4 discourse on changes in extremes and disasters. The IPCC also states that the section on the IPCC report on trends in economic losses from disasters reflects a "balanced treatment of a complicated and important issue," containing many important qualifiers, contrary to what was reported in the *Sunday Times* ([http://www.ipcc.ch/pdf/presentations/statement\\_25\\_01\\_2010.pdf](http://www.ipcc.ch/pdf/presentations/statement_25_01_2010.pdf)). The IPCC has also published its first newsletter, "IPCC News," which includes a message from IPCC Chair Rajendra Pachauri that reflects on the Panel's work in January related to the Fifth Assessment Report (AR5). Chair Pachauri also responds to recent media developments around the IPCC ([http://www.ipcc.ch/pdf/Newsletter/IPCC\\_newsletter\\_2010\\_issue\\_1.pdf](http://www.ipcc.ch/pdf/Newsletter/IPCC_newsletter_2010_issue_1.pdf)).

### HAITI REQUESTS APPLICATION OF MONTREAL PROTOCOL DECISION IX/9

Haiti has requested the application of Decision IX/9 of the Montreal Protocol as a measure to avoid obsolete ODS technologies being imported into Haiti during its recovery period, or in the future ([http://ozone.unep.org/Data\\_Reporting/Parties\\_not\\_wishing\\_to\\_receive\\_products.shtml](http://ozone.unep.org/Data_Reporting/Parties_not_wishing_to_receive_products.shtml)).

## ► CHEMICALS AND WASTES

### MERCURY PROGRAMME CONVENES INCEPTION WORKSHOP ON ARTISANAL AND SMALL SCALE GOLD MINING PROJECT

The UN Environment Programme (UNEP) Mercury Programme is working to develop national strategic plans for artisanal and small scale gold mining (ASGM) in South East Asia and South America, with funding from the Quick Start Programme of the Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management (SAICM) in cooperation with the Global Mercury Partnership. An inception workshop for the Asian region took place from 19-21 January 2010, in Manila, the Philippines. In its initial stages, the project is focusing on the development of strategic plans in the Philippines and Cambodia, and will be expanded to other countries towards the end of 2010. Both projects aim to strengthen capacity at the national level to address ASGM and

help build regional solutions. A similar project is being initiated in Africa through funding from the US Government. Initial results will be presented to the first Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee on Mercury, scheduled to convene from 7-11 June 2010 (IISD RS sources).

### REGIONAL AWARENESS RAISING WORKSHOP ON NEW POPS CONVENES

The Stockholm Convention Secretariat convened the "Regional Awareness Raising Workshop on New POPs and Reviewing/Updating National Implementation Plans Under the Stockholm Convention" in Kuwait City, Kuwait, from 14-16 December 2009. A key objective of the workshop, which was organized for Arab speaking parties, was to raise awareness on the properties and uses



Logo courtesy of the Stockholm Convention Secretariat

of the nine new persistent organic pollutants (POPs) added to Annexes A, B and C of the Stockholm Convention. The workshop resulted in recommendations on the need to: promote public awareness of POPs; enhance availability of information on new POPs; build capacity and training tools for new POPs, including a toolkit for the identification and quantification of perfluorooctane sulfonate (PFOS); identify resources and assistance for national coordination; enhance the role of regional centers; and strengthen collaboration with the Basel Convention, Rotterdam Convention, SAICM and Montreal Protocol (IISD RS sources).

In Stockholm Convention news, Belize ratified the Convention on 25 January 2010, bringing the number of contracting parties to 169 (<http://www.un.org/Docs/journal/En/20100126e.pdf>, <http://chm.pops.int/Countries/StatusofRatification/tabid/252/language/en-US/Default.aspx>).

**GUEST ARTICLE (cont.)**

(CSD) is taking a fresh look on how it can accelerate the pace by which its decisions are turned into action – ensuring a more effective and coordinated approach to global policy on sustainable development.

In support of this initiative, the Division for Sustainable Development of the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UN-DESA), convened the first meeting to support ‘*Multistakeholder Dialogue on Implementing Sustainable Development.*’ This innovative event brought former (Netherlands) and current (Guatemala) CSD Chairs together with international and regional financial institutions, foundations, the Major Groups, partnerships and Member States to debate how best to improve the efficacy and reach of the policy decisions negotiated bi-annually by the Commission, and how to increase synergies among all stakeholders.

Though the meeting focused on the 278 decisions relevant to agriculture, rural development, land, drought, desertification and sustainable development in Africa – recent CSD 17 themes - its prescriptions were also meant to hasten implementation across the numerous priorities detailed in the Agenda 21 and the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation frameworks.

Tariq Banuri, Director of the Division for Sustainable Development, described the innovation as part of a longer-term effort to advance progress on the internationally agreed sustainable development agenda. He pointed out that the meeting was timely for informing ongoing responses to the global financial meltdown, the food crisis and the climate crisis. Stakeholders agreed, noting that the Commission’s work had been critically important to policy-making, especially where it had enhanced awareness and coordination on food, water and energy security, especially in Africa.

The meeting also provided a forum for highlighting what CSD modalities have been largely successful in advancing development. Participants stressed that the most effective and sustainable actions have been country-led and country-owned, pointing to the importance of reinforcing national capacity with human, financial and technological resources. Partnerships, like the Farming First coalition, SARD Initiative and the CGIAR Challenge Program on Water and Food were cited as excellent examples on how also to meet this need. Fruitful partnerships were noted to fortify local capacity and help build communities more able to cope with environmental changes in sustainable ways. They can also, like the Sustainable Development

Knowledge Partnership, lay the groundwork for advanced thinking, knowledge dissemination and coordinated research.

Such stocktaking and discourse went on to shape the most salient output of the meeting - a Seven Point Strategy meant to fast-track implementation of CSD decisions. The Strategy calls for the use of new modalities, as well as the scaling-up of successful practices, like partnerships. Under its auspices, periodic reviews, greater collaboration, work on indicators and national sustainable development round tables will all be pursued. ICT technologies were also highlighted to be a key component; for instance use of virtual online extension networks to improve information sharing on agriculture. Participants called for the mobilization of additional resources in support of the Strategy as well as of other novel approaches to implementation brought out in the discussions.

For more information on this discourse, background documentation and webcast, please visit [http://www.un.org/esa/dsd/csd/csd\\_csd17\\_followup.shtml](http://www.un.org/esa/dsd/csd/csd_csd17_followup.shtml)

*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.*

► **SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT**

**UN DESA/DSD CONVENES SIDSNET STRATEGIC PLANNING MEETING, MULTISTAKEHOLDER DIALOGUE**

The UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs (DESA), Division for Sustainable Development (DSD), convened a two-day strategic planning meeting, from 26-27 January 2010, at UN Headquarters, New York, US, under the theme “Revitalizing the Small Island Developing States Network (SIDSNet).” Participants included experts on knowledge management systems and from international organizations currently involved in information systems related to islands and vulnerability of small island developing States (SIDS). The meeting reviewed the rationale for SIDSNet, identified new opportunities to revitalize SIDSNet in light of recent technological



Logo courtesy of SIDSNet

advances, considered the design of a SIDSNet knowledge management framework, and provided strategic input into the SIDSNet three and five year strategy being developed by DESA. SIDSNet is being revitalized under funding provided by the Government of Spain (IISD RS sources).

DESA/DSD also organized a Multi-stakeholder Dialogue on Implementing Sustainable Development on 1 February 2010 (see the guest article for more information). In his opening remarks to the Dialogue, Sha Zukang, Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs, highlighted that the CSD 17 and CSD 18 Bureau were both represented at the event. He anticipated that the Dialogue would offer informa-

tion about how development partners are engaged in implementation of CSD 17 decisions, and would reveal opportunities to build stronger partnerships among all stakeholders. He also said that “DESA is committed to facilitating the implementation process by ensuring that CSD decisions are communicated to all stakeholders in a timely manner, and by fostering a more coordinated, coherent and consultative approach both within the UN system, and with stakeholders” ([http://www.un.org/esa/desa/ousg/statements/2010/20100201\\_dialogue\\_development.html](http://www.un.org/esa/desa/ousg/statements/2010/20100201_dialogue_development.html)).



Sha Zukang, Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs

## ► BIODIVERSITY AND WILDLIFE

### CMS PREPARES FOR SHARKS MEETING

In preparation for the meeting on international cooperation on migratory sharks under the Convention on Migratory Species (CMS), to be held from 10-12 February 2010, in Manila, the Philippines, and the preceding technical meeting for the elaboration of a conservation and management plan for migratory sharks (8-9 February 2010), the CMS Secretariat has posted the working documents on its website ([http://www.cms.int/bodies/meetings/regional/sharks/sharks\\_Mtg\\_Manila.htm](http://www.cms.int/bodies/meetings/regional/sharks/sharks_Mtg_Manila.htm)).

In other CMS-related news, the Secretariat of the Indian Ocean-South-East Asian (IOSEA) Marine Turtle Memorandum of Understanding has published its "2009 Year-End Review and Look Ahead." The document summarizes key events that took place in each of the four IOSEA sub-regions (Western Indian Ocean, Northwest Indian Ocean, Northern Indian Ocean and South-East Asia) during 2009, notes news regarding environmental calamities and habitats at risk, and reports on IOSEA institutional progress, among other topics ([http://www.cms.int/news/PRESS/nwPR2010/01\\_jan/iosea\\_2009\\_review.pdf](http://www.cms.int/news/PRESS/nwPR2010/01_jan/iosea_2009_review.pdf)).

Finally, in January 2010, Borja Heredia (Spain) joined the CMS Secretariat as its new Scientific and Technical Officer ([http://www.cms.int/news/PRESS/nwPR2010/01\\_jan/borja\\_heredia.htm?DocumentID=606&ArticleID=6430&l=en&t=long](http://www.cms.int/news/PRESS/nwPR2010/01_jan/borja_heredia.htm?DocumentID=606&ArticleID=6430&l=en&t=long)).



Cover courtesy of the CBD Secretariat

### CBD CELEBRATES BIOSAFETY PROTOCOL TENTH ANNIVERSARY, HOLDS MEETING ON ABS

The Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) has recently published the "Year in Review 2009," including key biodiversity and biosafety developments in 2009 (<http://www.cbd.int/doc/reports/cbd-report-2009-en.pdf>). It has also published a special issue of its flagship magazine "Gincana" devoted to the 2010 International Year of Biodiversity (<http://www.cbd.int/doc/newsletters/gincana/cbd-gincana-07-en.pdf>).

On the occasion of the tenth anniversary of the adoption of the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety, CBD Executive Secretary Ahmed Djoghlaoui outlined achievements under the Protocol and paid tribute to its 157 parties, urging remaining States to become parties as soon as possible (<http://www.cbd.int/doc/speech/2010/sp-2010-01-29-biosafety-en.pdf>).

The Friends of the Co-Chairs meeting on access and benefit-sharing (ABS), organized in the framework of the negotiations for an international regime on ABS, was held from 26-29 January 2010, in Montreal, Canada. Working in a positive atmosphere, participants addressed: several issues related to access, benefit-sharing, and compliance, and the relationship between the three items; derivatives; traditional knowledge; and implementation questions ([http://www.cbd.int/doc/?meeting=ABS-FOCC-01;IISD\\_RS\\_sources](http://www.cbd.int/doc/?meeting=ABS-FOCC-01;IISD_RS_sources)).

The Bureau of the ninth session of the Conference of the Parties (COP) to the CBD held its ninth meeting from 11-12 January 2010, in Dessau, Germany. The Bureau discussed developments related to: ABS; celebration of the International Year of Biodiversity; and preparations of the high-level segment of the 65th session of the UN General Assembly to focus on biodiversity, and the tenth meeting of the CBD COP (<http://www.cbd.int/doc/meetings/cop-bureau/cop-bur-2010/cop-bur-2010-01-11-minutes-en.pdf>).

## ► FORESTS, DESERTS AND LAND

### UNCCD PARTICIPATES IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY FOR GLOBAL DONOR PLATFORM FOR RURAL DEVELOPMENT

UN Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) Executive Secretary Luc Gnacadja highlighted the importance of matching global pro-poor policies and the climate change agenda to optimally deliver aid in his opening remarks to the Global Donor Platform for Rural Development Annual General Assembly, which convened from 26-27 January 2010, in Rome, Italy. In a statement titled "Beyond Paris and Accra: Achieving harmonization and alignment from the multilateral and bilateral perspectives," Gnacadja underlined the important role the Platform plays in agriculture and rural development, and urged it to assess and advise on how official development assistance could also serve as a tool to orient private investments towards country-based priority-setting for the sector (<http://www.unccd.int/publicinfo/announce/2601.php>). The Global Donor Platform for



Participants during the Global Donor Platform for Rural Development Annual General Assembly (photo courtesy of the Donor Platform)

Rural Development was established in 2003. The Annual General Assembly considered issues related to agriculture and rural development in working sessions addressing agriculture and climate change, aid for trade and development, land and development, and lessons from the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme, and was hosted by the Global Mechanism (GM) of the UNCCD and the International Fund for Agricultural Development (<http://www.donorplatform.org/>). The GM co-organized a session on Aid for Trade, which explored cross sec-

toral linkages and identified possibilities to close gaps between trade and agriculture and rural development donors' agendas (<http://global-mechanism.org/news--events/events>).

Among other activities, the GM also participated in a workshop in Addis Ababa on 28 December 2009, on the role that civil society organizations (CSO) have in Ethiopia's Strategic Investment Framework (ESIF) for sustainable land management. Participants discussed ways that NGO and their networks could coordinate their engagement in the process, and formulate a roadmap for this involvement (<http://global-mechanism.org/news--events/news>).

The UNCCD is also seeking a consultant to assess the preparation process, format and outcome of the UNCCD first Scientific Conference, using a participatory approach, and to make recommendations for the preparation of the next scientific conference ([http://www.unccd.int/secretariat/vacancies/docs/ToR\\_webpage\\_format\\_final.pdf](http://www.unccd.int/secretariat/vacancies/docs/ToR_webpage_format_final.pdf)).

## ► INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

### UNEP ASSISTS IN HAITI, INVESTOR SUMMIT CALLS FOR CLIMATE ACTION

The UN Environment Programme (UNEP) has announced it will lead the environmental recovery effort in Haiti, which was struck by an earthquake on 12 January 2010, by ensuring that environmental issues are integrated into the respective cluster response plans. The UN is appealing for US\$562 million, covering a period of six months, with US\$1 million earmarked for environmental interventions (<http://www.unep.org/Documents.Multilingual/Default.asp?DocumentID=608&ArticleID=6448&l=en>). UNEP is providing technical assistance and support on environmental matters to the Humanitarian Country Team and to the local government, including through emergency environmental assessments of affected sites and active participation in the humanitarian cluster system. Key issues identified to date include: increasing medical waste and lack of safe disposal options; tens of millions of tons of demolition material; the danger of secondary spills of hazardous chemicals; and the environmental impact of massive population displacements (<http://www.unep.org/Documents.Multilingual/Default.as>

[p?DocumentID=608&ArticleID=6454&l=en&t=long](http://www.unep.org/Documents.Multilingual/Default.asp?DocumentID=608&ArticleID=6454&l=en&t=long)).

In other UNEP news, the Investor Summit on Climate Risk convened under the theme “Developing a Low-Carbon Economy: Leveraging Private Investment,” on 14 January 2010, at UN Headquarters in New York, US. At the conclusion of the Summit, four groups representing more than 190 investors, namely the Investor Network on Climate Risk (INCR), the Institutional Investors Group on Climate Change (IIGCC), the Investor Group on Climate Change (IGCC) and the UNEP Finance Initiative (UNEP FI), endorsed the Investor Statement on Catalyzing Investment in a Low-Carbon Economy ([http://www.unepfi.org/fileadmin/documents/14jan\\_investor\\_statement\\_pressrelease.pdf](http://www.unepfi.org/fileadmin/documents/14jan_investor_statement_pressrelease.pdf)).

UNEP has also released several documents in advance of the 11th Special Session of the Governing Council/Global Ministers Environment Forum, scheduled to convene in Bali, Indonesia, from 24-26 February 2010. These include documents on: enhanced coordination across the UN system, including the Environment Management Group (UNEP/GCSS.XI/3); international environmental governance and

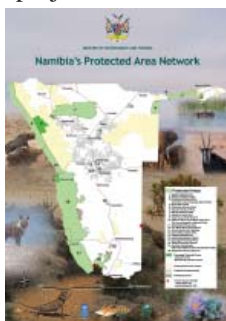
the outcome of the work of the consultative group of ministers or high-level representatives (UNEP/GCSS.XI/4); comments by the Executive Director on the management review of environmental governance within the UN system carried out by the Joint Inspection Unit (UNEP/GCSS.XI/5); progress on mercury (UNEP/GCSS.XI/6); and the intergovernmental science-policy platform on biodiversity and ecosystem services (UNEP/GCSS.XI/7) ([http://www.unep.org/gc/gcss-xi/working\\_docs.asp](http://www.unep.org/gc/gcss-xi/working_docs.asp)).

In other UNEP news, the agency convened a workshop on the Green Economy Report (GER) from 17-18 November 2009, in Geneva, Switzerland. The Green Economy Initiative (GEI) seeks to mobilize the global economy towards investments in key sectors of the economy and in ‘natural’ infrastructure such as forests and soils. The GER, a key component of the GEI, will seek to make a macroeconomic case for increasing public and private investments in “green sectors.” At the workshop, the coordinating authors and contributors presented the progress made and discussed pending issues. The report is expected to be finalized in June 2010 (IISD RS sources).

## ► TRADE, FINANCE AND INVESTMENT

### GEF HIGHLIGHTS REVENUE RAISING POTENTIAL OF PROTECTED AREAS IN NAMIBIA

The Global Environment Facility (GEF), through UNDP, has highlighted the results of a project it funded to strengthen Namibia’s protected areas systems. The project undertook to evaluate the contribution of protected areas to the Namibian economy. A comprehensive analysis of the protected area system indicated that protected areas contributed



Map of Namibia's Protected Areas (image courtesy of the GEF Secretariat)

3.1-6.3% of the country’s GDP through park-based tourism only, without including other ecosystem services values, and the economic rate of return on the government investment over 20 years would be as much as 23% if the tourism concession potential were fully realized. Using these study results, the Government increased the annual budget for park management and development by 300% in the last four years.

The Ministry of Finance also agreed to earmark 25% of park entrance revenue to be reinvested in park and wildlife management through a trust fund, providing up to US\$2 million in additional sustainable financing per year ([http://gefweb.org/interior\\_right.aspx?id=27864](http://gefweb.org/interior_right.aspx?id=27864)).

In other GEF news, the World Bank approved, on 21 January 2010, a US\$5 million GEF grant to assist the Government of Sierra Leone in improving the management of priority biodiversity conservation sites and replicating best biodiversity conservation practices. The project components include updating Sierra Leone’s Wildlife Protection Act and Forestry Act, and establishing participatory management plans for key conservation areas (<http://go.worldbank.org/F14VGX4QR0>).

### ADB SUPPORTS PROJECTS TO ADDRESS CLIMATE CHANGE CHALLENGES IN ASIA

The Asian Development Bank (ADB) is providing support to several projects in Asia, through its Climate Change Fund, to address this region’s needs in confronting the climate challenges. It will fund, for example, an evaluation of the potential to reduce greenhouse gas emis-

sions in five energy-intensive industries, namely iron and steel, power generation, chemicals, building materials and non-ferrous metals in the Yunnan Province, China. It will also fund the establishment and feasibility studies for large-scale concentrated solar thermal plants in China. Together with the Government of Japan, ADB will also strengthen the capacity of Bhutan’s National Environment Commission for developing mitigation and adaptation measures that can counter climate change by promoting hydropower and other renewable energy projects suitable for participating in the Clean Development Mechanism (CDM) under the Kyoto Protocol, and for potential carbon trading. With the Government of Australia, ADB will also provide funding to assess climate change threats and adaptation needs in the Mekong Delta region in Viet Nam (ADB Press Releases: <http://www.adb.org/Media/Articles/2010/13142-chinese-environmental-protections/>, <http://www.adb.org/Media/Articles/2010/13147-chinese-solar-power-developments/>, <http://www.adb.org/Media/Articles/2010/13144-bhutanese-climate-change-initiatives/>, and <http://www.adb.org/Media/Articles/2010/13136-vietnamese-climate-change-adaptations/>).

## ► WATER, OCEANS AND WETLANDS

### WORLD WETLAND DAY CELEBRATED, NEW RAMSAR SITES DESIGNATED

The Ramsar Secretariat celebrated World Wetlands Day, on 2 February 2010, around the theme “Wetlands, Biodiversity and Climate Change,” with the slogan “Caring for wetlands: an answer to climate change” ([http://www.ramsar.org/cda/ramsar/display/main/main.jsp?zn=ramsar&cp=1-63-78%5E24106\\_4000\\_0\\_\\_](http://www.ramsar.org/cda/ramsar/display/main/main.jsp?zn=ramsar&cp=1-63-78%5E24106_4000_0__)). In a message to mark the Day, Anada Tiéga, Secretary General of the Ramsar Secretariat, explained that the Day provides an opportunity to raise awareness about the importance of these vital ecosystems for our common future and that this year’s theme “captures the sense of urgency we all feel about the need to address the potentially disastrous consequences of global climate change as quickly as possible, particularly in the wake of the Copenhagen meeting of the UNFCCC” ([http://www.ramsar.org/cda/ramsar/display/main/main.jsp?zn=ramsar&cp=1-63-78^24351\\_4000\\_0\\_\\_](http://www.ramsar.org/cda/ramsar/display/main/main.jsp?zn=ramsar&cp=1-63-78^24351_4000_0__)).

In other Ramsar news, the Secretariat has announced that the Governments of the US, South Africa, Cameroon and Seychelles have designated new Wetlands of International Importance, the three latter to coincide with World Wetlands Day. Cameroon designated its portion of Lake Chad as a Ramsar site, thus completing the Ramsar coverage of this lake ([http://www.ramsar.org/cda/ramsar/display/main/main.jsp?zn=ramsar&cp=1-26-45-437^24338\\_4000\\_0\\_\\_](http://www.ramsar.org/cda/ramsar/display/main/main.jsp?zn=ramsar&cp=1-26-45-437^24338_4000_0__)). South Africa has designated Ntsikeni Nature Reserve as its 20th Wetland of International Importance

([http://www.ramsar.org/cda/ramsar/display/main/main.jsp?zn=ramsar&cp=1-26-45-437^24342\\_4000\\_0\\_\\_](http://www.ramsar.org/cda/ramsar/display/main/main.jsp?zn=ramsar&cp=1-26-45-437^24342_4000_0__)); the US listed its 26th Wetland of International Importance, the Upper Mississippi River Floodplain Wetlands ([http://www.ramsar.org/cda/ramsar/display/main/main.jsp?zn=ramsar&cp=1-26-45-437^24318\\_4000\\_0\\_\\_](http://www.ramsar.org/cda/ramsar/display/main/main.jsp?zn=ramsar&cp=1-26-45-437^24318_4000_0__)); and Seychelles has designated a small wetland on Mahé Island ([http://www.ramsar.org/cda/ramsar/display/main/main.jsp?zn=ramsar&cp=1-26-45-437^24346\\_4000\\_0\\_\\_](http://www.ramsar.org/cda/ramsar/display/main/main.jsp?zn=ramsar&cp=1-26-45-437^24346_4000_0__)).

### GPA PARTICIPATES IN REVIEW OF RAPID ASSESSMENT REPORT ON WASTEWATER MANAGEMENT

The Coordination Office of the Global Programme of Action for the Protection of the Marine Environment from Land-Based Activities (GPA) participated in the Review of the Rapid Assessment Report (RAR) on Wastewater Management, from 21-22 January 2010, at the UN Environment Programme (UNEP) offices in Nairobi, Kenya. The preparation of the RAR responds to the call by the Prince of Orange, in his capacity on the UN Secretary General’s Advisory Board on Water and Sanitation and in his conversations with UNEP and UN-HABITAT, for exploring how and where the UN can enhance its cooperation and further contribute to wastewater management. The RAR will be launched on 22 March 2010, on World Water Day. The January meeting brought together experts from UN-Water and GRID-Arendal to: review the draft report and provide additional input; identify and discuss key messages, recommenda-

tions and summary; and discuss details relating to the launch and promotion of the publication (<http://www.gpa.unep.org/news.html#74>).

### MARINE BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY MEETING OPENS

The third 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 opened on 1 February 2010, at UN Headquarters in New York, US. The week-long meeting is organized by the UN Division for Ocean Affairs and the Law of the Sea (UNDOALOS), and will examine the scientific, technical, economic, legal, environmental, socioeconomic and other aspects of the conservation and sustainable use of marine biodiversity beyond areas of national jurisdiction. It is expected to: indicate, where appropriate, possible options and approaches to promote international cooperation and coordination for the conservation and sustainable use of marine biodiversity beyond areas of national jurisdiction; identify key issues and questions for more detailed background studies; and provide recommendations to the General Assembly. In particular, the meeting is expected to continue discussions of the legal regime on marine genetic resources, as well as marine protected areas and environmental impact assessment processes in areas beyond national jurisdiction (<http://www.iisd.ca/oceans/marinebiodiv3/>; <http://www.un.org/Depts/los/biodiversityworkinggroup/biodiversityworkinggroup.htm>).



Upper Mississippi River Floodplain Wetlands (photos courtesy of the Ramsar Secretariat)

## ► KEY UPCOMING MEA MEETINGS

- **Pacific High Level Dialogue:** 8-9 February 2010. Port Vila, Vanuatu. [http://www.un.org/esa/dsd/dsd\\_aofw\\_sids/sids\\_milema-jomeetmsi5\\_paci.shtml](http://www.un.org/esa/dsd/dsd_aofw_sids/sids_milema-jomeetmsi5_paci.shtml)
- **Second Meeting of the Co-Chairs on Liability and Redress under the Biosafety Protocol:** 8-12 February 2010. Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. <http://www.iisd.ca/biodiv/bs-gflr2/>
- **Third Meeting on International Cooperation on Migratory Sharks under the Convention on Migratory Species (CMS):** 8-12 February 2010. Manila, Philippines. <http://www.iisd.ca/cms/sharks3/>
- **CSD-18 Thematic Seminar Series: Mining:** 11 February 2010. UN Headquarters, New York, US. [http://www.un.org/esa/dsd/susdevtopics/sdt\\_mini\\_ss0210.shtml](http://www.un.org/esa/dsd/susdevtopics/sdt_mini_ss0210.shtml)