



CCD COP-2 HIGHLIGHTS

WEDNESDAY, 9 DECEMBER 1998

During morning and afternoon sessions of the Special Segment, delegates heard statements from 6 ministers, 31 governmental officials and 3 IO representatives. Delegates also negotiated draft decisions in non-groups throughout the day and met in the COW during the afternoon to review the non-groups' progress. The implementation non-group met into the evening.

SPECIAL SEGMENT

Many speakers outlined national activities and efforts related to NAPs and RAPs. KENYA outlined activities to elaborate its NAP, including establishment of a multistakeholder forum and assessment of NGOs and community-based organizations' capacity building needs. BRAZIL noted the extent to which it is affected by desertification, including economic losses that amount to US\$800 million per year. His country has launched a national awareness campaign on the consequences of desertification. SAUDI ARABIA's national activities include efforts to promote drought resistant crops and use treated salinated water in the agricultural sector. The GAMBIA outlined national activities to fulfill obligations under the FCCC, CCD and CBD. NIUE said synergy between the three Rio Conventions will make it easier for his country to tackle land degradation and deforestation issues.

TURKEY discussed policy coordination at the national level, in particular reforestation. CHAD highlighted the increasing involvement of more and more actors. GHANA is building the capacity of local governing institutions and seeks to forge closer links with the international community. ZIMBABWE has taken steps to establish a national desertification fund and set up a national task force for education and awareness raising, and is helping communities identify and implement projects. LIBYA highlighted a project to transfer drinking water from the south to the north. NIGERIA described its National Coordination Committee for Desertification Control, which consists of representatives of government and NGOs. MONGOLIA said that, while in transition to a new system, it must also follow ecologically sustainable and economically profitable principles. BOLIVIA discussed a sub-regional action programme aimed at solving the desertification problem in the South America plateau area. He also highlighted the need for coordination between NAPs and subregional and regional endeavors. ECUADOR noted his country's active participation in regional and subregional programmes. MOZAMBIQUE noted its national legislation for environmental protection and national funding program for implementing the CCD.

Several speakers outlined priority issues for attention and action. Priority areas for participants at UGANDA's first national forum included information exchange, capacity development, soil and water conservation and management, alternative energy sources, development of appropriate technologies and institutional support. ARGENTINA stressed that development must be sustainable and underscored the coordination of policies at the national level. MADAGASCAR presented an overview of its three phase national environmental action plan. He underscored participatory approaches in making local communities responsible for the conservation and sustainable management of resources. SOUTH AFRICA highlighted the importance of capacity building at all levels and underscored women's vital role in implementing the CCD.

Priority areas for BOTSWANA's NAP are: poverty alleviation and community empowerment by promoting viable and sustainable alternative livelihoods; partnership building and networking between stakeholders; capacity building; developing mechanisms for mobilizing and channeling financial resources; education and technology development; and strengthening capacity for research, information collection, analysis and dissemination. The ANNEX IV COUNTRIES called for, *inter alia*: cooperation between the CCD Secretariat and EU agencies on pilot projects; a network to monitor desertification at the national and Mediterranean basin scale; the identification, elaboration and use of a common set of impact indicators; and the sharing of traditional knowledge. ISRAEL suggested exploring ways to exploit the drylands' advantages including: the warmth of dryland winters, making cold-sensitive crops competitive; the year round abundance of photosynthetic light, making aquaculture a profitable alternative livelihood; and the abundance, intensity and constant supply of solar energy. TUVALU and the COOK ISLANDS highlighted the needs of the South Pacific region and requested Secretariat attention to the region.

The Chair of Monday's Interparliamentary Round Table delivered the Declaration by Members of Parliaments. The Declaration appealed to civil society, academic institutions, the Interparliamentary Union and the CCD Secretariat to mobilize financial resources to support the fight against desertification, publicize and transmit the Declaration to all national parliaments for their attention and organize similar meetings at future COPs. LESOTHO has challenged her Parliament members to rehabilitate two sites per year within their constituencies. The UK said practical action should remain the focus of delegates' work.

Several IOs discussed ways through which they could facilitate implementation. UNEP said it could offer the CCD support based on four main areas of expertise: GEF projects; assessment, including work on indicators and benchmarks, evaluating the

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capacity of institutions and networks that can support the Convention, evaluating best practices, establishing "knowledge registers," assisting in addressing scientific and technical issues and helping to promote global awareness of the Convention; synergies with other conventions and among environmental and socio-economic development concerns; and support to regional coordination through UNEP's six regional offices, which he plans to strengthen further, particularly in Africa. The FAO can support implementation by, *inter alia*, acting as a mediator and technical assistant in support of NAPs and through the identification and dissemination of best practices. UNCTAD can play a role by, *inter alia*, providing information about preferential trade arrangements to ensure their better utilization.

International cooperation and developed country actions were also stressed. TUNISIA highlighted developing countries' efforts to ratify and implement the FCCC and CBD and called on developed countries to support CCD implementation. He noted that the socio-economic consequences of desertification transcend borders, making it a global concern. MYANMAR called for international financial and technical support to facilitate affected developing countries' projects against desertification. CHAD noted the importance of international cooperation stating that, "were all the ants to unite, they could pick up an elephant." The UK said it is increasing its development assistance over the coming years and recognizes the need to raise its citizens' awareness of the CCD's objectives. DENMARK discussed its continuous support to affected developing countries and called for the international donor community's further cooperation.

Speakers also discussed issues related to CCD instruments and bodies. ARGENTINA called for the definition of instruments to facilitate the GM, stressed institutional cooperation with other conventions and called for commitment to sustain technical and financial support to the CST. The GAMBIA, BOTSWANA and PERU, among others, underlined the necessity for the GM's operationalization. EGYPT called for the implementation of the GM in 1999 and for countries to provide the financial and technical resources to achieve this.

BURKINA FASO supported establishing a committee to review implementation, noting that Parties should use the same criteria for implementation assessment. ANGOLA and the COOK ISLANDS supported Italy's call on Tuesday for a Dakar mandate for a protocol with precise commitments.

Some delegates also discussed issues related to ratification. RUSSIA described its experience with monitoring systems and training experts and supported a fifth annex to the CCD, which he said would speed his country's accession to the CCD. The REPUBLIC OF KOREA will submit the CCD to its national assembly in the coming year. BANGLADESH called for countries that have not yet done so to accede to the CCD, in particular donor countries.

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

The COW considered progress reports from the informal groups. John Ashe (Antigua and Barbuda), chair of the contact group on budget and programme for 1999, presented and recommended for adoption a consensus text. Among its provisions are: approval of the revised core budget for 1999 amounting to US\$6.1 million; approval of the creation of a new trust fund for the special annual contribution from the German government; a request to the Executive Secretary to submit at COP-3 a proposed programme budget for 2000/2001; and adoption of an indicative scale of contributions by Parties to the general fund of the Convention. The COW adopted the text.

Non-Chair David Johansson (Finland) said the group dealing with legal and institutional issues reached agreement on five draft decisions: administrative arrangements and support for the Secre-

tariat, including interim arrangements; headquarters agreement for the permanent Secretariat; review of implementation of the Convention; annexes on arbitration and procedures; and collaboration with other conventions. A draft decision on the MOU between the COP and IFAD on the GM is still pending.

Reacting to the draft decision on administrative and support arrangements, the US clarified the difficulties it had in accepting operative paragraph 3, on financing of conference servicing from the regular programme budget, stating that as a matter of principle Parties to conventions meet the costs. She stressed parity with the sister conventions and noted that similar language was not adopted during FCCC COP-4. The COW adopted the headquarters agreement draft decision, which approves the agreement signed on 18 August 1998 subject to its ratification by the Federal Republic of Germany.

On proposed text on review of implementation of the Convention, the EU said a paragraph proposed by the G-77/China indicating that the COP should transmit to COP-3 the draft decision contained in document ICCD/COP(2)/L.9, which establishes a Committee on the Review of the Implementation of the Convention, should be bracketed as it had not been agreed. The text was referred to the non-group for further discussion. Draft decisions on resolution on questions, annexes on arbitration and conciliation procedures and collaboration with other conventions were adopted.

The COW adopted text for Rules of Procedure 22(1) and 31 (composition of the Bureau). In both Rules, after "the need to ensure equitable geographic distribution and adequate representation of affected country Parties, particularly those in Africa," the COW agreed to insert "while not neglecting affected country Parties in other regions." Regarding Rule 47 (majority voting absent consensus), which still contains brackets, the COW agreed to reflect in the report of the meeting that the Bureau will consider this matter intersessionally.

The COW adopted one draft decision from the implementation non-group on ordinary sessions of the COP, subject to one amendment. On Thursday the COW will consider revised draft decisions on regional implementation annexes and interregional programmes and platforms of cooperation and regional cooperation between countries of Central and Eastern Europe. Non-Chair Harold Acemah (Uganda) said that, after a first reading of the three-page draft decision on the GM, the non-group had many unresolved issues and agreed to hold further discussions. He also reported that the non-group had not had time to consider text on the Secretariat's medium-term strategy and implementation of the Convention, but will do so Thursday. The COW adopted unanimously a resolution expressing solidarity with Central America.

NON-GROUP ON IMPLEMENTATION

During the evening meeting of the non-group on implementation, delegates adopted text that contained merged elements from the G-77/CHINA and the EU on the programme work for the COP and procedures for the communication of information and review of implementation. Participants reported that the final issues resolved referred to the level of detail and direction of what was to be reviewed at COP-3.

THINGS TO LOOK FOR TODAY

PLENARY: During a morning meeting, the Plenary is expected to hear statements by Parties and observers and to take action on draft decisions from the CST and COW. Delegates are expected to dialogue with NGOs during the afternoon.

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE: The COW is expected to meet during the afternoon to consider the outstanding draft decisions, which the non-groups were instructed to complete by Thursday morning.