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Delegates at the Ad Hoc Intersessional Working Group (ISWG) on Oceans and Seas and the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States (SIDS) met in the afternoon to consider the Co-Chairs’ draft elements for a draft CSD decision on oceans and seas.

ELEMENTS FOR A DRAFT CSD DECISION ON OCEANS AND SEAS

GENERAL COMMENTS ON THE TEXT: The NGO CAUCUS ON OCEANS recommended that the CBD Jakarta Mandate on marine biodiversity be included in the list of achievements on oceans and seas since 1992. He welcomed the inclusion of sustainable fisheries as a major priority for discussion and stressed the need for effective fisheries management systems to ensure the indefinite availability of fish resources. He noted the need to examine the impact of subsidies on national fishing patterns and to consider the reduction and progressive elimination of subsidies that contribute to over-capacity and unsustainable fishing practices. He asked the CSD to allow full participation of all stakeholders, including NGOs, when building on existing arrangements.

The EU said the text provided a good starting point but identified issues that had not been sufficiently covered, including, *inter alia*, the need for: a national integrated approach; sustainable fisheries; international coordination and cooperation; a scientific basis for ocean and coastal zone management; and major group involvement. She said the CSD should encourage governments to strengthen domestic action to develop integrated approaches to oceans and coastal zone management. She stressed that environmental issues must be an integral part of sustainable fisheries management and highlighted the outcome of the recent FAO Committee on Fisheries’ work on illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing. On the question of international coordination and cooperation, she requested the Secretary-General to bring additional views to CSD-7 on improving the operation of existing UN structures.

AUSTRALIA, supported by NORWAY and CANADA, called for inclusion of a reference to marine protected areas (MPAs) under the section on living marine resources. Supported by NORWAY, he recommended separate sections for marine science and climate change. The G-77/CHINA proposed changing the document’s title to “Possible” Elements for a Draft CSD Decision and suggested that the document state that the CSD “could” rather than “should” undertake the actions proposed throughout the text. Responding, CANADA said he hoped delegations would not go to CSD-7 pretending that the ISWG had not happened.

ICELAND, supported by JAPAN, NORWAY and CANADA, requested sub-headings on action at national, regional and international/global (US) levels. The RIO GROUP welcomed references to El Niño. NEW ZEALAND called for text on coordination and integration of governmental and inter-agency approaches in the section identifying priority areas. Supported by CANADA, he suggested that CSD-7 recommendations include references to previous CSD decisions on these issues. The US called for concrete and specific language for CSD recommendations on sustainable fisheries, entry into force and implementation of relevant agreements and further consultations on institutional issues. The IMO asked for CSD-7 support for international guidelines, recommendations or best practices on land-based sources of marine pollution. The WMO requested a reference to his organization.

GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS: The G-77/CHINA and the RIO GROUP requested text noting that Agenda 21 “remains the fundamental programme of action.” The EU proposed that action be taken based on the precautionary and polluter pays principles and an ecosystem approach. ICELAND preferred noting that oceans and seas provide vital resources to be used “sustainably” to eradicate poverty, ensure food security and “support economic prosperity and wellbeing.”

MAJOR CHALLENGES AT THE NATIONAL, REGIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL LEVELS: On international cooperation to ensure that all States can benefit from the rational use of oceans and seas, the EU proposed replacing “rational” with “sustainable” use. The G-77/CHINA, supported by ICELAND, requested adding “with full respect for the sovereign rights of coastal States.” The EU proposed text encouraging the establishment of institutional arrangements for implementing UNCLOS and Agenda 21 at national, regional and international levels. The RIO GROUP and REPUBLIC OF KOREA broadened conservation and management of “fisheries” to “marine living resources.” The EU proposed broadening a reference to pollution prevention from land-based activities to include shipping and offshore activities. On national action, ICELAND requested encouraging governments to establish and implement sustainable fisheries management systems. CANADA proposed adding a section on inte...
grated management with text calling on the CSD to encourage integrated and ecosystem-based approaches to management and noting that fully functioning natural ecosystems provide long-term benefits.

National Capacity-Building: The EU proposed adding the need to assist coastal and island States to sustainably manage their marine resources. NORWAY recommended noting the need to enhance coordination and cooperation in developed countries.

Regional Capacity-Building: Regarding cooperation for regional seas management, the G-77/CHINA stressed that cooperation among regional seas programmes be “in the framework of compliance with existing legal regimes.” NORWAY and others preferred not limiting references to regional monitoring systems to those “for climatic variability.”

International Agreements: The G-77/CHINA proposed that the CSD invite relevant UN bodies “in accordance with their respective mandates” to review lack of progress in implementation and propose “possible” actions. The RIO GROUP called for review of obstacles that hinder effective implementation. The EU specified reviewing lack of progress in ratification of international agreements. The US advocated a specific call for ratification and entry into force of the Fish Stocks Agreement before the end of 1999.

AREAS OF CONCERN: Living Marine Resources: On improving the rational use and management of living marine resources and calling on fisheries conservation and management organizations to apply FAO and UN agreements, the G-77/CHINA proposed adding a paragraph on over-fishing caused by highly industrialized fleets, including a reference to the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities. She proposed emphasizing better consumer information on catches and financial returns to SIDS. The EU specified reviewing lack of progress in ratification of international agreements. The US advocated a specific call for ratification and entry into force of the Fish Stocks Agreement before the end of 1999.

Coral Reefs and Protected Areas: CANADA proposed replacing text inviting the CBD to accelerate the development of a global representative system of MPAs with language encouraging the application of MPAs and other appropriate tools to ensure biodiversity conservation and marine ecosystem health. AUSTRALIA supported this proposal and added text on encouraging States and regional intergovernmental organizations to continue developing a system of MPAs consistent with the CBD Jakarta Mandate. JAPAN also supported a more general reference to MPAs. The US preferred supporting MPAs as a management tool undertaken within the context of UNCLOS and recommended emphasizing the particular impact of land-based sources of marine pollution on reefs and MPAs.

IN THE CORRIDORS
Concerted attempts are to be made to build a bridge between the preparation of issues at the ISWG and negotiations at CSD-7. Observers report that the Secretariat is planning to maintain informal consultations on preparing issues at the ISWG and negotiations at CSD-7.

THINGS TO LOOK FOR TODAY
ISWG: The ISWG will meet at 10:00 am in Conference Room 4 to complete its discussion on elements for a draft CSD decision on oceans and seas, consider the Co-Chairs’ summary of discussion on oceans and seas, and hear general comments on the draft Co-Chairs’ proposals for the CSD’s contribution to the Special Session to review implementation of the Barbados Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of SIDS.

INFORMAL CONSULTATIONS: Informal consultations on the draft Co-Chairs’ proposals for the CSD’s contribution to the Special Session will be held at 3:00 pm in Conference Room 6.