



CBD COP-5 HIGHLIGHTS

TUESDAY, MAY 23 2000

On the seventh day of COP-5, the Working Groups met throughout the day and a Ministerial Roundtable on capacity-building to implement the Cartagena Protocol convened in the morning. Working Group I (WG-I) considered the Global Taxonomy Initiative (GTI), the global strategy for plant conservation, and outstanding matters. Working Group II (WG-II) addressed impact assessment, liability and redress, and outstanding matters. WG-I and the contact group on Article 8(j) met in the evening.

WORKING GROUP I

GLOBAL TAXONOMY INITIATIVE: The Secretariat introduced document UNEP/CBD/COP/5/12. SBSTTA-5 Chair Cristián Samper (Colombia) reviewed SBSTTA Recommendations IV/2 and V/3. AUSTRALIA introduced, and many supported, a non-paper including: deadlines for submission of projects and designation of national GTI focal points; an interim Coordination Mechanism; and funding for the GTI programme officer. ETHIOPIA called for relaxation of deadlines. NORWAY and the SEYCHELLES supported including GTI projects in national reports. CANADA and the NETHERLANDS expressed reservation on the financial provisions.

On the coordination mechanism, NORWAY asked for Party involvement and for its integration into the Secretariat structure. INDIA stressed that it reflect geographic balance and biodiversity richness. BELGIUM and SWEDEN suggested including a GEF representative. The EU stressed its importance for prioritizing actions, regional workshops and training activities.

NIGERIA, speaking for the G-77/CHINA, said the GTI is essential for identification, monitoring and assessment. SOUTH AFRICA, supported by the COMMONWEALTH SECRETARIAT, MALAWI and the UNITED KINGDOM, highlighted the Species Plantarum Project as a GTI pilot project. Many delegations urged strengthening national and regional taxonomic capacity, and information-sharing among Parties. The BAHAMAS called for early national and regional initiatives to facilitate developing country participation, and stressed that taxonomic data on developing countries held in developed countries should be made available to avoid duplication. PERU called for private sector participation, and, with BOTSWANA and ETHIOPIA, for indigenous and local community involvement. ARGENTINA requested guidelines based on implementation experiences with Article 7 (Identification and Monitoring). PAKISTAN called for national and regional rosters of experts. KENYA called for the creation of taxonomic reference centers. CANADA proposed facilitation of national capacity-building activities, including national needs assessments, in the short-term activities. UNESCO stressed the role of traditional taxonomies and traditional knowledge. ARGENTINA and the COMMONWEALTH SECRETARIAT urged GEF to support GTI activities.

DRYLAND BIODIVERSITY: Sem Shikongo (Namibia), contact group Chair, introduced a Conference Room Paper (CRP) on dry and sub-humid ecosystems. AUSTRALIA noted the need for greater focus within the work programme and clarity within the Annexes. COLOMBIA requested deleting references to SBSTTA-7 to allow SBSTTA flexibility. With this and other minor amendments, the CRP was adopted by the working group.

INLAND WATER ECOSYSTEMS: Delegates considered and accepted a CRP on inland water ecosystems. Delegates agreed to delete the preamble, only retaining reference to cooperation with other relevant conventions.

MARINE AND COASTAL BIODIVERSITY: In considering a CRP, ICELAND suggested that it be consolidated, as it repeated elements of Decision IV/5. Delegates agreed to urge implementation of the work programme in Decision IV/5, noting that the programme elements on coral reefs were enabled at COP-5 and would last for three years minimum. The SEYCHELLES requested GEF funding for capacity-building to address coral-bleaching. TURKEY requested deleting reference to a study on the relationship between the CBD and the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea, and NEW ZEALAND requested deleting reference to taxonomy inventories. COLOMBIA introduced a draft decision on cooperation between the CBD and Regional Seas Conventions and Actions Plans to be annexed to the Decision.

GLOBAL STRATEGY FOR PLANT CONSERVATION:

A draft decision was presented for discussion. The EU requested limiting the decision to SBSTTA-6's consideration of the work programme and the Gran Canaria Declaration, which would be forwarded to COP-6. CANADA suggested that a proposal be forwarded to the CBD Executive Secretary, including its integration into other work programmes, which could be reviewed by SBSTTA-6. COLOMBIA and NEW ZEALAND disagreed. A drafting group provided revised text requesting: the Executive Secretary to solicit the views of Parties, SBSTTA to make recommendations on its development and COP-6 to consider the establishment of a global strategy. The text was adopted with minor textual amendments.

ALIEN SPECIES: Delegates considered a Chair's draft text. Regarding language prioritizing Global Invasive Species Programme (GISP) activities for geographically and evolutionarily isolated ecosystems, CHINA, the EC and SENEGLA requested, and SAMOA and the SEYCHELLES opposed, including other vulnerable ecosystems. The EU proposed that such activities incorporate the biogeographical approach. CANADA, supported by AUSTRALIA, NEW ZEALAND and the US, called to delete language on considering the development of an international instrument. NORWAY suggested leaving such consideration to a future SBSTTA meeting. The EC questioned whether GISP had the financial resources to undertake the suggested work. The Chair produced a revised draft text with sections on interim guiding principles, actions and future work. After discussion on options for implementing Article 8(h), a list including further



developing the guiding principles, developing an international instrument and other options was retained. With other minor textual changes, the text was adopted.

AGRICULTURAL BIODIVERSITY: Contact group Chair Elzbieta Martyniuk (Poland) introduced a revised draft decision, noting that it includes the programme of work and sustainable use of pollinators, but not Genetic Use Restriction Technologies (GURTS). Delegates agreed not to open discussion until considering GURTS. WG-I will discuss the complete draft text on Thursday.

WORKING GROUP II

LIABILITY, IMPACT AND REDRESS: The Secretariat introduced documents: UNEP/CBD/COP/5/2, 16 and 1/Add.2 and UNEP/CBD/COP/5/INF/34. Regarding impact assessment, the EU and many others called for integrating biodiversity into environmental impact assessment (EIA). INDIA, supported by JORDAN, KENYA, SUDAN and ZAMBIA, called for information-sharing and capacity-building for developing countries. NORWAY stressed the balance between responsible sectors and environmental management in EIA. CANADA expressed concerns over the feasibility of policy guidelines. AUSTRALIA supported development of guidelines and case studies. The US noted that EIA related activities can be done through the CHM. TANZANIA stated that EIA is best addressed at the national level.

Regarding liability and redress, the EU suggested that SBSTTA further study the issue and report to COP-6. SWITZERLAND and AUSTRALIA preferred considering it at COP-7. ETHIOPIA, INDONESIA, IRAN, KENYA, MALI, NAMIBIA, PERU, SOUTH AFRICA, TANZANIA and ZAMBIA opposed postponing discussion and supported establishing a technical group for substantive evaluation. NORWAY suggested this issue be addressed by a technical group or the next ISOC, and called for case studies. The EUROPEAN COMMISSION stressed coherence between the CBD and the Cartagena Protocol, and called for consideration of the Basel Convention's regime.

FINANCIAL RESOURCES AND MECHANISM, ADDITIONAL FINANCIAL RESOURCES: Delegates considered a CRP, dealing exclusively with additional financial resources. CANADA suggested coordination of information on biodiversity-related funding and requested including a proposal inviting the GEF to operate a CHM for this. COLOMBIA and the NETHERLANDS said this task should be assigned to the existing CHM. In light of budgetary constraints, the UNITED KINGDOM, with the NETHERLANDS and URUGUAY, supported, and JAPAN opposed, inviting the GEF to convene a workshop on biodiversity finance. COLOMBIA asked for stronger recommendations and facilitative instruments. GERMANY underscored private sector involvement as essential to the Convention's implementation. KENYA reiterated the need for information and guidelines for biodiversity-related funding and asked for internationally accepted guidelines for tax exemptions. CHINA, SWEDEN and the US opposed adopting such guidelines, due to differences in taxation systems and policies.

REVIEW OF THE FINANCIAL MECHANISM: Delegates considered a CRP and made minor editorial amendments. With proposals from COLOMBIA and the UNITED KINGDOM, delegates agreed that the review should cover the mechanism's activities from November 1999 to December 2001. The NETHERLANDS stated that the review should cover all operations of the mechanism's programmes. SWITZERLAND said it should only cover those related to the Convention. The US requested language permitting non-Party participation in the review. A revised draft decision will be available on Thursday.

NATIONAL REPORTING: Delegates considered a CRP. The Secretariat noted a new recommendation stating that the GEF shall provide financial resources to developing country Parties for the consultative processes to assist them in preparing their second national reports. PERU, supported by FINLAND, requested specifying a time period for developing the format and suggested the deadline of July 2000. ETHIOPIA cautioned against a standard format. The BAHAMAS, supported by COSTA RICA, FINLAND,

NEW ZEALAND, NORWAY and the UNITED KINGDOM, underscored the need for a format, reasoning that non-formatted information would be difficult to analyze.

SCIENTIFIC AND TECHNICAL COOPERATION AND THE CHM: Delegates considered a revised CRP. NEW ZEALAND and the UNITED KINGDOM, supported by others, stressed that the Informal Advisory Committee (IAC) is an informal body, not a standing committee under the CBD, and requested flexibility on its work. Some countries proposed deleting the Operational Procedures for the IAC. With proposals from the BAHAMAS and CANADA, delegates agreed to add a phrase reflecting the IAC's flexibility to monitor and review the CHM's operations.

CONTACT GROUP

ARTICLE 8(j): Discussion on the implementation of Article 8(j) moved forward on the basis of a revised Chair's paper, which suggests deleting operative paragraphs covered by the work programme. Most delegations welcomed this streamlining effort. Considerable time was spent discussing the work programme's elements and prioritizing its tasks, especially with regard to the legal elements.

MINISTERIAL ROUNDTABLE

CBD COP-5 President Nyenze opened discussion on capacity-building to facilitate implementation of the Cartagena Protocol. Klaus Töpfer, UNEP Executive Director, cautioned that the best international framework is worthless unless it is able to close the gap between developed and developing countries. Simon Barber, EuropaBio, identified the need for capacity-building to provide research infrastructure, risk assessment evaluators, and information on local and regional environments. Lim Li Lin, Third World Network, suggested that developing countries conduct cost-benefit analysis to determine the need for GMOs and that they should have access to GMO detection facilities.

Developed and developing countries underscored the need for improved technical and scientific capacity and identified capacity-building areas, including: regulation; risk assessment; risk management; enforcement; information sharing; institutional strengthening; and legislation development. Several delegates expressed support for the UNEP/GEF enabling pilot project. MALAWI requested training for awareness on safe use and handling of GMOs. NIGER stressed combating desertification and poverty alleviation. TURKEY called for national assessments to identify needs. UGANDA requested assistance in creating a biodiversity inventory. NIGERIA suggested establishing a database on biodiversity financing. KIRIBATI advocated public awareness campaigns. SWITZERLAND, URUGUAY and others supported regional collaboration. SWITZERLAND called for improved collaboration among ongoing capacity-building initiatives. AUSTRALIA cautioned against using biotechnology for market protectionism. The NETHERLANDS identified the need to balance protection of IPR and farmers' rights.

IN THE BREEZEWAYS

With tentative agreement on a decision for the operations of the Convention, discussions have been focusing on the CBD's effectiveness. Some delegates noted a fragmentation of the CBD's umbrella approach into sectoral activities championed by various Party interest groups, which has hampered issue prioritization, agenda streamlining and GEF guidance. Others noted the CBD's relative youth, stressing the need to establish the basic work programmes first and then to build ecosystem integration into their further elaboration.

THINGS TO LOOK FOR TODAY

HIGH-LEVEL SEGMENT: The High-Level Segment on the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety will begin at 10:00 am in Room 2. Approximately 60 delegations are expected to sign the Protocol.