



CBD COP-7 HIGHLIGHTS: FRIDAY-SUNDAY, 13-15 FEBRUARY 2004

COP-7 delegates met throughout Friday in two Working Groups (WGs). WG-I considered the work programmes on inland water ecosystems and marine and coastal biodiversity. WG-II discussed: scientific and technical cooperation and the Clearing-house Mechanism (CHM); communication, education and public awareness (CEPA); Article 8(j) (traditional knowledge); financial resources and mechanism; and national reporting. A brief Plenary was held in the afternoon. Contact groups on the budget, and on access and benefit-sharing (ABS) met on Friday. The contact group on protected areas (PAs) convened on Friday and Sunday.

WORKING GROUP I

THEMATIC PROGRAMMES OF WORK: Inland water ecosystems: The Secretariat introduced relevant documents (UNEP/CBD/COP/7/3, 12 and 12/Add.1, and INF/27).

Several participants called for capacity building and financial resources, and linkages with other issues, particularly mountain biodiversity and climate change. The RAMSAR CONVENTION stressed the need for integrating inland water and coastal management and, with NORWAY, for awareness raising.

Senegal, on behalf of the AFRICAN GROUP, stressed the need for inventories, and FRANCE highlighted their high costs. Ireland, for the EU and Acceding Countries, Bulgaria and Romania (EU), supported the Ramsar Convention's wetlands classification. VENEZUELA expressed concern over the goals' tight timeframes. Colombia, for GRULAC, stressed the need for realistic goals and targets. KENYA called for alternative livelihoods for local communities and, with INDONESIA, emphasized removal of perverse incentives. BRAZIL and ARGENTINA, opposed by the EU and NORWAY, supported references to trade agreements.

BRAZIL and AUSTRALIA opposed references to decision VI/23 on invasive alien species (IAS). THAILAND requested references to exotic stocks of natively occurring species. SWITZERLAND stressed integrated water resource management and, with CANADA and FAO, harmonizing national reporting.

TURKEY and HAITI suggested greater emphasis on human needs and roles. BOTSWANA urged indigenous participation in inland water assessments. NORWAY called for impact assessments of cumulative effects. LIBERIA suggested addressing shared rivers. The INTERNATIONAL INDIGENOUS FORUM ON BIODIVERSITY (IIFB) urged greater focus on ecosystem fragmentation.

Marine and coastal biodiversity: The Secretariat introduced relevant documents (UNEP/CBD/COP/7/12, 12/Add.2, and INF/24 to 26).

Many delegates stressed the need for consistency with international law and coastal States' consent regarding biodiversity protection in areas beyond national jurisdiction, and emphasized regional cooperation. Several delegates called for support to

implement the work programme, with the GAMBIA requesting innovative and equitable financial mechanisms. AUSTRALIA, supported by the SEYCHELLES, JAMAICA and FRANCE, called for increasing resilience to coral bleaching. COSTA RICA opposed referencing areas beyond national jurisdiction. GHANA, opposed by the RUSSIAN FEDERATION, called for a moratorium on deep-sea trawling.

Several delegates pointed to knowledge gaps, with JAPAN, TANZANIA and SENEGAL requesting that the establishment of marine PAs (MPAs) be science-based. GRULAC and the UK emphasized a bottom-up approach to a global PA network. COSTA RICA opposed a global MPA network, with ARGENTINA noting this should be addressed by the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea. CHILE underscored that marine and coastal biodiversity can be protected by other means than PAs. KIRIBATI stressed community-based conservation. THAILAND highlighted the role of local and traditional practices. PALAU and the PHILIPPINES emphasized indigenous and local participation.

The GAMBIA and INDIA noted the need for research priorities. PERU stressed the need for short and long-term activities. SLOVENIA prioritized implementing integrated marine and coastal area management. The UKRAINE called for risk assessments regarding military activity. THE PHILIPPINES, SLOVENIA and HAITI stressed the urgency of addressing IAS from ballast waters. ARGENTINA, opposed by the RUSSIAN FEDERATION, suggested removing reference to the positive effects of mariculture. TOGO and CAMEROON highlighted adverse effects of foreign activities in their coastal waters.

GREENPEACE called for addressing unregulated fishing, including through a moratorium on bottom trawling in the high seas, with IUCN suggesting that the UN General Assembly address this issue. UNESCO proposed a new programme element on emerging issues. The IIFB stressed that indigenous fishing rights extend into the high seas.

WORKING GROUP II

SCIENTIFIC AND TECHNICAL COOPERATION AND THE CHM: Many delegates highlighted national and regional activities. Several Parties from the ASIA AND THE PACIFIC REGION requested the Executive Secretary to organize their regional CHM meeting. SWITZERLAND called for applying the experience gained in building the Biosafety Clearing-house to improve the CHM's efficiency.

CANADA requested an explanatory document on the linkages between the CHM and taxonomic databases and, supported by many, expressed concern over disparities between Parties regarding electronic communication capacities and national focal points. Many developing country Parties called for additional efforts in this regard.



PERU prioritized improving national focal points, while THAILAND called for designating regional ones. JAMAICA recommended developing a web portal on island biodiversity. BURKINA FASO acknowledged Belgium's funding for activities on the CHM's use in his country.

COMMUNICATION, EDUCATION AND PUBLIC

AWARENESS: The Secretariat introduced relevant documents (UNEP/CBD/COP/7/17/Add.4 and INF/10). Questioning the need to maintain the Consultative Group of Experts (CGE), COLOMBIA, PERU and BRAZIL called for support of national and local initiatives. Antigua and Barbuda, on behalf of GRULAC, called for country-driven approaches. Palau, for the SMALL ISLAND DEVELOPING STATES (SIDS) emphasized information and training materials in local languages, noting limited access to internet-based tools. JAMAICA and BELIZE emphasized locally adapted tools, and CUBA national education strategies.

The EU stressed cooperation among national focal points, and between focal points and the CGE. CANADA suggested compiling thematic reports on CEPA. NORWAY and IUCN called for including CEPA in the CBD thematic areas and work programmes, with NORWAY proposing to fund CEPA under the CBD core budget. UNESCO stressed mainstreaming CEPA into development strategies.

FINANCIAL RESOURCES AND MECHANISM: The Secretariat introduced relevant documents (UNEP/CBD/COP/7/18, 9, 17/Add.5 and INF/1). The EU recognized the need for sustained support and long-term financing from public and private sources. JAPAN suggested avoiding duplication of efforts to achieve effective use of resources. NORWAY stressed donor coordination and linkages between national biodiversity and development plans.

SENEGAL, supported by many, highlighted the need for a flexible financial mechanism and for timely financial support. CANADA, PERU, the US and AUSTRALIA called for engaging the private sector. Colombia, for GRULAC, expressed concern over the lack of consistency between COP guidance and the GEF's funding decisions. CUBA, supported by GRULAC, said the Caribbean region was not represented at the GEF Council meeting because of the US' refusal to issue a visa to the Cuban representative.

ABS: WIPO presented its technical study on disclosure requirements, requested by COP-6 (UNEP/CBD/COP/7/INF/17).

ARTICLE 8(j): The EU reported that informal consultations had not resulted in agreement on a preambular reference to international law. WG-II Chair Desh Depaak Verma (India) said the decision does not require preambular references, but the EU requested their inclusion.

NATIONAL REPORTING: The Secretariat introduced relevant documents (UNEP/CBD/COP/7/5 and 17/Add.2, and INF/6, 7, 8, 9 and 22). Many delegates called for streamlining reporting under relevant conventions. The EU and CANADA called for outcome-oriented reporting, and welcomed the question regarding the 2010 target. CANADA requested to maintain the four-year reporting cycle and to consider questions regarding overview and priority setting as optional. NEW ZEALAND called for an alternative reporting format focusing on implementation problems and reflecting the multi-year programme of work. AUSTRALIA noted that indicators are not the only means of assessing progress. ANTIGUA AND BARBUDA noted lack of national biodiversity data. Many delegates called for capacity building. MALAYSIA, with many, called on the GEF to streamline the procedures for access to funds for national reports.

PLENARY

WG-I Chair Hans Hoogeveen (The Netherlands) and WG-II Chair Verma reported on progress in their respective WGs.

AUSTRALIA reaffirmed its willingness to resolve the IAS issue, underlining that the IAS question will not affect decisions on other matters.

Delegates elected regional representatives to the Bureau: Karen Brown (Canada) and Philip Buckley (Ireland) for WEOG; Moustafa Fouda (Egypt) and Sem Taukondjo Shikongo (Namibia) for the African Group; delegates from Kiribati and Mongolia for the Asia and the Pacific Group; Alexander Shestakov (Russian Federation) and Zamir Dedej (Albania) for CEE; and Dalia Salabarria Fernandez (Cuba) for GRULAC.

Qatar, for the G-77/CHINA, called on Parties to implement the CBD's objectives in the context of poverty eradication.

CONTACT GROUPS

BUDGET: On determining the shared costs of the CBD and the Biosafety Protocol, delegates decided to postpone establishing a principle until enough experience with the separate budgets has been gathered. Regarding the procedure for adopting the respective budgets, delegates decided to consult a legal advisor.

ABS: Delegates discussed user measures without reaching consensus on bracketed references to the work of, and relation with, WIPO. On an international ABS regime, delegates considered a revised working document including a draft decision and annexed terms of reference (ToR) for the ABS Working Group. Regarding the ToR, they approved language on process resulting from discussions in a drafting group. A Friends of the Chair group was established to resolve differences regarding scope, including whether the regime should focus on benefit-sharing, or also address access and traditional knowledge. On the ToR's elements, delegates agreed on language regarding disclosure requirements in patent applications. Agreement was also reached on language in the decision regarding community participation.

PAs: Regarding targets, delegates agreed to secure indigenous and local communities' full and effective participation by 2008 for PA establishment and management, in full respect of their rights and recognition of their responsibilities, consistent with national law and applicable international obligations. They also agreed to establish national and regional monitoring systems by 2010. Delegates addressed suggested activities regarding: assessment and monitoring; enabling activities; and governance, participation, equity and benefit-sharing. A Friends of the Chairs group was established to consider definitions.

IN THE CORRIDORS

As illustrated by Australia's strong statement in Friday's plenary, the IAS issue is still occupying many a mind. Regional groups were kept busy over the weekend attempting to reach internal agreement and exploring drafting options. While one delegate noted with concern that trade interests appear to remain a decisive factor, another remarked that the moment might have come for a more "formal" setting to address the issue. This may well be an indication of the willingness to solve the issue at this COP.

Besides IAS, COP-7's second week is expected to be dominated by negotiations on marine and coastal biodiversity, ABS and PAs. Many delegates noted that progress on ABS and PAs will most certainly be achieved through mutual trade-offs. In light of calls by developing country Parties in Friday's ABS contact group to focus exclusively on benefit-sharing, delegates are bracing themselves for arduous negotiations this week.

THINGS TO LOOK FOR TODAY

WORKING GROUP I: WG-I will convene at 10:30 am in the Dewan Nerdeka Hall to consider: identification, monitoring, indicators and assessments; biodiversity and climate change; and the ecosystem approach. Look for revised Chair's texts on inland water ecosystems, and marine and coastal biodiversity.

WORKING GROUP II: WG-II will convene at 10:30 am in Room TR4 to discuss liability and redress, incentive measures and cooperation with other conventions. Look for CRPs on the CHM, financial resources, CEPA, national reporting and Article 8(j).

CONTACT GROUPS: Contact groups on the budget, PAs and ABS are expected to meet throughout the day.