



WORKING GROUP HIGHLIGHTS: TUESDAY, 14 JUNE 2005

Delegates to the first meeting of the *Ad Hoc* Open-ended Working Group on Protected Areas (PAs) of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) convened in two sub-working group sessions. In the morning, Sub-Working Group I (SWG-I) considered toolkits for the identification, designation, management, monitoring and evaluation of national and regional PA systems. SWG-I established a contact group, which met in the afternoon to discuss criteria for site identification for high seas PAs. Sub-Working Group II (SWG-II) met in the afternoon to address a conference room paper (CRP) on options for mobilizing financial resources.

In a message to the Working Group, the President of the Italian Republic Carlo Azeglio Ciampi noted that the meeting is a renewal of Italy's pledge towards preserving the ecosystem and protected areas. He highlighted the call for shared strategies aiming at establishing a coordinated course of action to establish a new humanism, combining environmental policies with ethics and economic development in a single model of constructive integration between peoples and nations. His full statement is available at: <http://www.iisd.ca/biodiv/wgpa/13June.html>

SUB-WORKING GROUP I

HIGH SEAS PROTECTED AREAS: SWG-I Chair Karen Brown (Canada) suggested establishing a contact group to address criteria for site identification. The Netherlands, on behalf of the EU, BULGARIA and ROMANIA, presented a proposal listing: ecological criteria, such as the area's importance for threatened, declining and other species and habitats, ecological significance, high natural biodiversity, representativity, sensitivity of species and habitats, and naturalness; and practical considerations, including the area's size, potential for restoration and scientific value, degree of political acceptability, potential for success of management measures and potential damage from human activities.

TOOLKITS: The Secretariat introduced the document on further development of toolkits for the identification, designation, management, monitoring and evaluation of national and regional PA systems (UNEP/CBD/WG-PA/1/4).

Noting that the toolkits should offer voluntary guidance which Parties may develop further, the EU said they should be user-friendly, action-oriented and, supported by many delegates, adapted to the needs of Parties and specific situations. INDIA cautioned against setting up a universal PA legal framework. COLOMBIA suggested developing tools at the regional level. CUBA highlighted toolkits developed under the Cartagena

Convention for the Protection and Development of the Marine Environment in the Wider Caribbean Region. LIBERIA said toolkits should respect national laws. ARGENTINA and others noted that the list is not exhaustive, and called on Parties to supplement it. PANAMA requested special guidance on toolkits at the local level. CANADA proposed a demand-driven approach, and offered to host a workshop, with the Secretariat, IUCN and representatives of indigenous and local communities, on cooperative management.

MALAYSIA emphasized practical application of the toolkits and monitoring of their use through the clearing-house mechanism (CHM) and, with EGYPT, CANADA and TANZANIA, the need for training and capacity building. He also proposed adding fisheries, agriculture and forestry organizations to the list of partners. CHINA stressed the need for a feedback mechanism. TUNISIA called for technical and financial support, as well as regional and bilateral cooperation. CAMEROON called for toolkits targeting regional needs, regional workshops to evaluate progress, local population involvement to ensure sustainability and donor support.

On identification of gaps, the EU proposed addressing, *inter alia*, marine sites protection and financial planning. Recalling the Indian Ocean tsunami disaster, THAILAND and INDIA underlined the importance of developing toolkits for ecosystem restoration. TANZANIA requested further work on benefit sharing to include non-biodiversity values.

NEW ZEALAND said that ecosystem classification is a prerequisite for a gap analysis. ECUADOR proposed development of specific tools to carry out gap analysis, particularly on freshwater ecosystems. SWITZERLAND requested a compilation of existing toolkits for economic valuation of ecosystem services provided by PAs to be made available through the CHM.

AUSTRALIA highlighted its national bioregional approach and the first International Marine Protected Areas Congress to be held in October 2005, in Geelong, Australia, where funding will be made available to facilitate developing country PA managers' participation. GUINEA-BISSAU presented on a marine national park protecting a sea turtle habitat.

UNESCO presented its Man and the Biosphere Programme. UNEP drew attention to the regional Cartagena Convention, which has developed a number of tools for PA management in the Caribbean, including MPAs. The INTERNATIONAL INDIGENOUS FORUM ON BIODIVERSITY (IIFB) said indigenous peoples' aspirations are not reflected in the proposed toolkits, and called for support to indigenous peoples in developing their own toolkits focusing on biocultural, spiritual



and other values. She recalled language in Decision VII/28 on PAs on full and effective participation, and full respect for the rights, of indigenous and local communities, noting that it should be an integral part of PA identification, designation, and monitoring. The ARCTIC COUNCIL presented on its working group on conservation of Arctic flora and fauna and highlighted its tools for PAs, most notably the Circumpolar Biodiversity Monitoring Programme, which includes community monitoring by indigenous and local communities and the protection of sacred sites.

IUCN stressed the need to ensure relevance of the toolkits to users for effective application, and better coordination among different tools. He suggested a more thorough survey to capture the full range of tools used by Parties and indigenous and local communities. The NATURE CONSERVANCY suggested an explicit tool delivery or application mechanism to raise awareness about existing tools, including a technical focal point contact list, a PA newsletter and regional workshops.

SUB-WORKING GROUP II

FINANCIAL RESOURCES: Delegates discussed a CRP containing draft recommendations on options for mobilizing financial resources, submitted by SWG-II Chair Orlando Santos (Cuba). CANADA, AUSTRALIA and the EU questioned chapeau language stating that the Working Group is making recommendations to Parties, rather than requesting the COP to do so. The Secretariat explained that this aimed to expedite actions that need to take place prior to COP-8. Delegates agreed to revert to standard text requesting the COP to call on Parties, while still identifying recommendations to be forwarded directly to Parties.

On organizing regional financing roundtables, NICARAGUA suggested, and delegates agreed, that the recommendation be directed to Parties. CANADA, supported by TUNISIA, proposed that the recommendation on effectively addressing the issue of PA financing at the Millennium Review Summit in 2005 also be directed to Parties.

On undertaking a national PA values and benefits initiative, TUNISIA called for involving donor countries. CARE INTERNATIONAL, opposed by CANADA, proposed a reference to costs in addition to values and benefits. On designing financial sustainability plans, GRENADA requested reference to regional financial plans. COTE D'IVOIRE called for technical, financial and methodological support to developing countries to implement these plans.

On options for implementing comprehensive financial plans for ensuring long-term financial support for PA systems, PERU, supported by MEXICO and PANAMA, favored reference to national trust funds rather than environmental or conservation ones.

On funding mechanisms related to tourism and other high-revenue industries that have direct links to PAs, MADAGASCAR and AUSTRALIA, supported by many, emphasized that these mechanisms should not compromise PA integrity. BRAZIL, ECUADOR, the EU and others opposed a reference to environmental compensation payments linked to petrochemical operations. MEXICO, supported by LIBERIA and the IIFB, opposed a reference to resource extraction, and drew attention to the distinction between small-scale subsistence extraction and large-scale resource extraction. With COLOMBIA, he suggested emphasizing the importance of tourism revenue. Delegates agreed to replace references to tourism, resource extraction and other industries with a general reference to commercial activities.

On funding mechanisms that channel the economic values of ecosystem services, MEXICO proposed language acknowledging local and regional benefits derived from these services.

BRAZIL, NEW ZEALAND and ARGENTINA opposed language on redirection of perverse subsidies to support PAs, while MEXICO, MADAGASCAR and INDONESIA favored retaining it, and offered to reformulate the text.

On exploring innovative international financial mechanisms, GUATEMALA, supported by ECUADOR, GRENADA and CANADA, proposed deleting reference to specific initiatives. He also suggested deleting text on using "business approaches" for institutional strengthening and improved governance of PA management authorities, stating this may have negative connotations in some countries. PERU, supported by GABON but opposed by CANADA, recommended separating text on institutional strengthening and governance from the list of financial options. CANADA suggested additional text on retention by local or national PA management authorities of revenue generated from PAs.

CONTACT GROUP ON HIGH SEAS PROTECTED AREAS

The contact group on criteria for site identification for high seas PAs, chaired by Alfred Oteng-Yeboah (Ghana), considered proposals tabled by the EU and Canada, the latter focusing on the identification of ecologically and biologically sensitive areas, as well as other existing criteria, including those prepared by the International Maritime Organization (IMO) and IUCN. Some delegates expressed reservations regarding the level of detail that the contact group may address, while others sought clarification on the overall mandate of the Working Group with regard to high seas PAs.

Delegates then discussed ways to proceed with consideration and possible integration of different proposals and established a Friends of the Chair group. The Friends of the Chair group agreed to a proposal by Canada to host a workshop of technical experts to review methodologies and criteria for identifying marine areas requiring protection, with a view to developing internationally recognized and scientifically rigorous criteria for identification of potential high seas PAs. Addressing the expert group's terms of reference, delegates discussed whether it should focus on purely scientific issues or also consider other selection criteria. Some stressed that the line between scientific and other selection criteria is sometimes artificial, while others argued that selection criteria relate to policy making and would be better dealt with by the Working Group at its second meeting. Discussion will continue in SWG-I on the basis of revised draft terms of reference. Delegates also agreed to forward to the expert group criteria drafted by the EU, Canada, IUCN and IMO, as well as any other submitted criteria used at the national level.

IN THE BREEZEWAYS

A Canadian proposal to host an expert workshop on criteria for identifying potential high seas PAs seems to have generated an initial degree of consensus on the issue. At the very least, some participants were confident that this proposal sets the ground rules for a process towards achieving a tangible outcome, thus giving the Convention an opportunity to make a valuable contribution where it is most needed. Others, however, were less satisfied, and looked forward to Wednesday's discussions on the draft recommendations, particularly regarding an option on promoting an UNCLOS implementing agreement to address the establishment and management of high seas PAs, and the lone time-bound goal to establish five to 10 high seas PAs by 2008.