



IPBES Bulletin

A Report of the *Ad hoc* Intergovernmental and Multi-Stakeholder Meeting on an Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES)
Published by the International Institute for Sustainable Development (IISD)

ONLINE AT [HTTP://WWW.IISD.CA/YIMB/IPBES/](http://www.iisd.ca/yimb/ipbes/)
VOLUME 158, ISSUE NO. 1, SATURDAY, 15 NOVEMBER 2008



SUMMARY OF THE *AD HOC* INTERGOVERNMENTAL AND MULTI-STAKEHOLDER MEETING ON AN INTERGOVERNMENTAL SCIENCE-POLICY PLATFORM ON BIODIVERSITY AND ECOSYSTEM SERVICES: 10-12 NOVEMBER 2008

The *Ad hoc* Intergovernmental and Multi-Stakeholder Meeting on an Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES) met from 10-12 November 2008, in the Putrajaya International Convention Center in Putrajaya, Malaysia. The meeting was attended by 176 participants from close to 100 countries and more than 20 organizations. Over the three-day meeting, participants exchanged views on the core mandate and functions, focus areas, governance structure, and proposed work programme and budget of an IPBES, as laid out in a concept note based on the follow-up to the Millennium Ecosystem Assessment (MA) and the Consultative Process Towards and International Mechanism of Scientific Expertise on Biodiversity (IMoSEB).

Participants adopted a Chairs' Summary of the meeting, which highlights areas of agreement and reflects differing views expressed during the meeting. In the document, the meeting recommends that the UN Environment Programme (UNEP) Executive Director report the meeting's outcomes to the 25th session of the UNEP Governing Council, and requests the Executive Director to convene a second meeting. The Summary further contains two recommendations by the meeting Chairs: to continue exploring mechanisms to improve the science-policy interface on biodiversity and ecosystem services for human well-being and sustainable development; and that UNEP undertake a preliminary gap analysis to facilitate the discussions, to be made available to the UNEP Governing Council.

Most delegates commended the usefulness of an exchange of views during the meeting while pointing to numerous areas in which governments have divergent opinions regarding the ways in which the science-policy interface for biodiversity and ecosystem services can be strengthened, and whether there is a need to establish a new mechanism. While many developed countries agreed that a new, independent mechanism should be established to synthesize existing assessments, issue early warnings, deliver policy options and coordinate future global and sub-global assessments, a number of developing countries were of the opinion that a new mechanism should focus on building science and research capacity in developing countries.

A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE MILLENNIUM ECOSYSTEM ASSESSMENT, THE IMOSEB PROCESS AND IPBES

The initiative to hold consultations regarding the establishment of an IPBES emerged from the MA follow-up process and the outcomes of the IMoSEB process. The decision of the UNEP Executive Director to hold an *ad hoc* intergovernmental and multi-stakeholder meeting was welcomed by the ninth Conference of the Parties (COP) to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD).

MILLENNIUM ECOSYSTEM ASSESSMENT: From 2001 to 2005 the MA assessed the consequences of ecosystem change for human well-being, involving the work of more than 1,360 experts worldwide. Published in 2005, the MA outcomes provide the first state-of-the-art scientific appraisal of the condition and trends in the world's ecosystems and the services they provide, as well as the scientific basis for action to conserve and use them sustainably. The MA also established the link between ecosystem services and human well-being.

In 2006, CBD COP 8 adopted a decision on the MA's implications for the work of the CBD, in which it encourages parties, *inter alia*, to use the MA framework for sub-global and national assessments. In 2007, UNEP conducted an evaluation of the MA and initiated the MA follow-up process, including activities to support the implementation of MA response activities, developing sets of operational tools and methods that can be adopted and applied by practitioners, and a process to explore the feasibility of a second global assessment.

IN THIS ISSUE

A Brief History of the Millennium Ecosystem Assessment, the IMoSEB Process and IPBES	1
Report of the Meeting	3
Opening Plenary	3
Consideration of an IPBES	4
Closing Plenary	10
Upcoming Meetings	10
Glossary	11

The *IPBES Bulletin* is a publication of the International Institute for Sustainable Development (IISD) <info@iisd.ca>, publishers of the *Earth Negotiations Bulletin* © <enb@iisd.org>. This issue was written and edited by Reem Hajjar and Stefan Jungcurt, Ph.D. The Digital Editor is Anders Gonçalves da Silva, Ph.D. The Editor is Elsa Tsioumani <elsa@iisd.org>. The Director of IISD Reporting Services is Langston James "Kimo" Goree VI <kimo@iisd.org>. Funding for coverage of this meeting has been provided by the UNEP Division of Environmental Policy Implementation. IISD can be contacted at 161 Portage Avenue East, 6th Floor, Winnipeg, Manitoba R3B 0Y4, Canada; tel: +1-204-958-7700; fax: +1-204-958-7710. The opinions expressed in the *Bulletin* are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the views of IISD. Excerpts from the *Bulletin* may be used in other publications with appropriate academic citation. Electronic versions of the *Bulletin* are sent to e-mail distribution lists (in HTML and PDF formats) and can be found on the Linkages WWW-server at <http://www.iisd.ca/>. For information on the *Bulletin*, including requests to provide reporting services, contact the Director of IISD Reporting Services at <kimo@iisd.org>, +1-646-536-7556 or 300 East 56th St., 11A, New York, New York 10022, USA.

THE IMOSEB PROCESS: The proposal for a Consultative Process Towards an IMoSEB was initiated at the Paris Conference on Biodiversity, Science and Governance, held in January 2005 (see IISD Reporting Services' report: <http://www.iisd.ca/sd/icb/>). The proposal focused on a consultation to assess the need, scope and possible form of an international mechanism of scientific expertise on biodiversity. The proposal received political support from Jacques Chirac, President of the French Republic at the time, and the French Government.

A consultative process was launched, with an International Steering Committee, an Executive Committee and an Executive Secretariat entrusted to the Institut Français de la Biodiversité (IFB), established to support and facilitate discussions.

The International Steering Committee met for the first time in Paris, France, in February 2006. Participants concurred that the current system for linking science and policy in the area of biodiversity needed further improvement. They agreed that a consultation should identify gaps and needs at the science-policy interface and gaps, if any, in existing processes, and formulate appropriate steps forward. They also decided that the consultation should begin with the development of relevant case studies and feedback, and be followed by a broader consultation.

A number of case studies were developed in 2006, while the idea for an IMoSEB was discussed at a number of events, including CBD COP 8 (March 2006, Curitiba, Brazil), and a workshop on "International Science-Policy Interfaces for Biodiversity Governance" (October 2006, Leipzig, Germany).

At its second meeting, in December 2006, the Executive Committee discussed the results of the case studies, and identified a series of "needs and options." These needs and options were circulated to members of the International Steering Committee for input, and a document outlining the ideas, entitled "International Steering Committee Members' Responses: 'Needs and Options' Document," was prepared by the Executive Secretariat and distributed in January 2007. The document was designed to assist participants during a series of regional consultations.

Six meetings of regional consultations were held between January 2007 and May 2008. The North American Regional Consultation was held from 30-31 January 2007, in Montreal, Canada. Participants heard presentations, exchanged views and discussed various options for a possible IMoSEB. The meeting did not result in consensus on the need for a new mechanism, but generated a number of views and proposals that formed the basis of subsequent discussions.

The African Regional Consultation was held from 1-3 March 2007, in Yaoundé, Cameroon. In addition to discussing options for a possible IMoSEB, participants considered expertise needed in Africa and potential users of an IMoSEB, as well as its institutional and financial aspects. There was general consensus on the need for an IMoSEB, with a range of views and proposals expressed as to how to make progress, including establishing a pilot project in Africa and taking into account traditional knowledge.

The European Regional Consultation was held from 26-28 April 2007, in Geneva, Switzerland. Participants identified ten needs for an IMoSEB, a possible "network of networks"

structure that could enable an IMoSEB to meet these needs, and goals and guiding principles for a strategy to communicate scientific information on biodiversity.

The Asian Regional Consultation was held from 24-25 September 2007, in Beijing, China. Participants discussed various options for a possible IMoSEB, its structure and governance, and issues relevant to the Asian region, in the context of the science-policy interface. Participants agreed on an IMoSEB in the form of an independent intergovernmental panel serving the five biodiversity-related conventions, including a multi-stakeholder component affiliated with a UN body.

The South American Regional Consultation was held from 2-3 October 2007 in Bariloche, Argentina. Participants reached broad agreement on the needs for an IMoSEB, and put forward two options for such a mechanism: an international panel of scientists, political figures and other biodiversity actors, supported by a "network of networks" for exchanging and building scientific information; and a strengthening of existing scientific information networks and mechanisms, with a focus on enhancing national and regional level decision making on biodiversity issues.

The Pacific Regional Consultation was held from 19-20 October 2007 in Alotau, Papua New Guinea. Participants supported the establishment of a civil society-driven IMoSEB that would synthesize and communicate a knowledge base on biodiversity, and provide scientific advice to support decision making at all levels. They designed a structure and governance system for such a mechanism that would include representatives from indigenous and local communities and the business sector.

The final meeting of the IMoSEB Steering Committee was held from 15-17 November 2007, in Paris, France. The meeting reviewed the outcomes of the regional consultations and further discussed the needs and options for an IMoSEB, as well as how to improve the science-policy interface for biodiversity at all levels. In its final Statement, while not recommending the formation of a new institution, the Steering Committee agreed to invite donors and governments to provide support for the further and urgent consideration of the establishment of a science-policy interface. It further invited the Executive Director of UNEP and others to convene a meeting to consider establishing such an interface.

IPBES CONCEPT: In response to the IMoSEB outcome, UNEP decided to convene the *Ad hoc* Intergovernmental and Multi-Stakeholder Meeting on an IPBES. The government of France, in close consultation with experts in their personal capacity, drafted a concept note on the rationale, core mandate, expected outcomes, focus areas and operational modalities of a possible IPBES, which was made available for peer review and was subsequently revised.

The IMoSEB outcome and the IPBES concept note were also considered by CBD COP 9 (May 2008, Bonn, Germany). In Decision IX/15 (Follow-up to the MA), the COP welcomed the decision of the UNEP Executive Director to convene the *Ad hoc* Intergovernmental and Multi-Stakeholder Meeting on an IPBES, and requested the CBD *Ad hoc* Working Group on Review of Implementation of the Convention to consider the outcomes at its third meeting, to be held in May 2010.

REPORT OF THE MEETING

Delegates convened in plenary sessions from Monday to Wednesday, 10-12 November 2008. During the opening plenary on Monday morning, delegates heard speeches and made opening statements. In the afternoon and the following days, delegates considered a concept note on an Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES), a proposed work programme and budget, and options for the governing structure of an IPBES. On Wednesday, delegates discussed the Chairs' Summary and its recommendations. The closing plenary convened on Wednesday evening.

The following report summarizes discussions on these issues in the order in which they were addressed.

OPENING PLENARY

Achim Steiner, UN Environment Programme (UNEP) Executive Director, welcomed participants and urged them to agree on a clear articulation of the purpose and rationale for creating a platform before deciding on its form. He outlined aspects of global biodiversity loss and ecosystem services degradation, stressing that it is possible to reconcile economic development with conservation. He said that the IPBES is the missing piece in linking the plethora of available scientific data to the political process, which would enable and compel governments to act on these data. He underlined the need to act collectively and cooperatively to address this intergovernmental problem.



Jochen Flasbarth, German Federal Ministry of the Environment, Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety, on behalf of the CBD COP president

Jochen Flasbarth, German Federal Ministry of the Environment, Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety, on behalf of the president of the Conference of the Parties (COP) of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), said that the 2010 target to significantly reduce the rate of biodiversity loss will not be met because of inadequate decision making, internationally and locally,

due to the inability to provide adequate information to decision makers and the private sector. He stressed that plenty of scientific information exists, but that this information is not streamlined to be of use to policy makers. He noted that the work of an IPBES would not weaken or undermine existing scientific bodies of the biodiversity-related conventions. He urged participants to clarify different options regarding the possible architecture of this new institution.



Achim Steiner, UNEP Executive Director, during the opening ceremony

A. Hamid Zakri, Director of the Institute of Advanced Studies, United Nations University, said it is imperative for the scientific and political communities to be engaged in a true dialogue. He explained that human beings have become geological agents whose activities change the climate and the composition of the atmosphere and present an imminent threat to biodiversity, and stressed the need to mobilize knowledge and resources to understand the impacts of human activities



A. Hamid Zakri, Director of the Institute of Advanced Studies, United Nations University

and the consequences of suboptimal policies. Pointing to the success of other scientific mechanisms, such as the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) and its impact on the policy making of multilateral environmental agreements (MEAs), he called upon participants to create a central scientific body to coordinate and target future assessments.

Valérie Pécresse, Minister of Higher Education and Research, France, called the meeting a testimony for action towards a new scientific tool of utmost importance for ending the litany of disappearing species. She stressed that loss of biodiversity means not only loss of wealth but also of insurance for survival and of options to defend human well-being against new threats, such as avian influenza. She underlined that the IPCC should not serve as model for an IPBES, but rather be seen as a benchmark for its success. Reiterating France's commitment to supporting the new mechanism, she conveyed her government's offer to host the IPBES secretariat.

Datuk Douglas Uggah Embas, Minister of Natural Resources and Environment, Malaysia, stressed the need to work together as one community, due to the complexity of the problem and interrelatedness of actions, while also underlining national sovereignty. He outlined Malaysia's initiatives and policies that recognize the importance of biodiversity and ecosystem services while promoting development, including a commitment



Datuk Douglas Uggah Embas, Minister of Natural Resources and Environment, Malaysia

to sustainable forest management and maintenance of forest cover. He called for a holistic and multi-disciplinary approach that is inclusive of traditional knowledge to help countries strengthen their capacity to guide policies. He then declared the meeting officially open.

ORGANIZATIONAL MATTERS: Delegates elected Datuk Suboh Mohd Yassin (Malaysia) as Chair of the meeting, and Hesiquio Benítez (Mexico), Alfred Oteng-Yeboah (Ghana), Robert Watson (UK) and Nicolae Manta (Romania) as Vice-Chairs. Vice-Chairs Benítez and Manta were also elected as rapporteurs.

On the rules of procedure, after initial opposition by Brazil to the possibility of voting, delegates agreed to adopt the rules of procedure of the UNEP Governing Council, with the understanding that consensus would be sought for decisions. After initial objections by Brazil and China on the need for contact groups, delegates decided to conduct the meeting in plenary, leaving open the possibility of forming contact groups for further consultations. Delegates also decided that the meeting should be of a consultative nature and not conduct negotiations. Delegates then adopted the meeting's agenda (UNEP/IPBES/1/1).

CONSIDERATION OF AN IPBES

CONCEPT NOTE: Ibrahim Thiaw, Director of the UNEP Division of Environmental Policy Implementation, provided an overview of the revised IPBES concept note (UNEP/IPBES/1/2), noting it was based on the Millennium Ecosystem Assessment (MA) follow-up process and consultations on an International Mechanism of Scientific Expertise on Biodiversity (IMoSEB). He said that the MA's limited impact on policy making shows the need for a new interface between the scientific and policy-making communities. He suggested that an IPBES should:



Ibrahim Thiaw, Director of the UNEP Division of Environmental Policy Implementation

cover several biodiversity-related conventions and treaties; be demand-driven by MEAs; have recognized world-wide authority; and ensure that its results are scientifically credible, understandable for policy makers and not challengeable.

Many delegates and participants recognized the need for strengthening the science-policy interface and stressed that an IPBES should: complement and not duplicate the work of existing MEA subsidiary bodies; and provide policy-relevant but not policy-prescriptive advice. Several delegates cited the negative impacts of biofuel production as an example for an area in which an IPBES could have delivered an early warning and provided information for better policy making.

While many stressed that an IPBES should be independent, Brazil supported creating a multi-disciplinary, intergovernmental panel within the CBD and subordinate to its Subsidiary Body on Scientific Technical and Technological Advice (SBSTTA), to improve the scientific basis for CBD implementation. Brazil also said the fundamental goal of the proposed panel should be strengthening the capacity of developing countries to support decision making related to biodiversity, such as through training courses and scholarships for scientists. Colombia and Kenya underlined the need to strengthen SBSTTA's work. Mexico said the platform cannot replace SBSTTA and its added value should be carefully defined, proposing as possible examples a type of clearing-house or a forum for dialogue among policy-makers. He said there was a need for integrated proposals for solutions, not just more information.

UN Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) underlined the need for continued harmonized and organized research efforts on biodiversity. On the modalities for a platform's design, he favored establishing a distinct body with links to international organizations, and supported a four-



Walter Erdelen, UNESCO

year cycle approach for the implementation of its work programme. China urged delegates to consider other ways besides an IPBES to enhance the interface between science and policy, such as more effective use of existing mechanisms, stating that a new mechanism would be burdensome and taxing on resources. He called for more time to study existing national and international mechanisms, and cautioned against comparison with the IPCC, noting that unlike climate change issues, actions on biodiversity issues largely occur at the national and local level.

Noting the need to use resources effectively, Côte d'Ivoire queried the role of the CBD Secretariat within a future mechanism. Turkey requested clarifying that IPBES will not compete with MEA subsidiary bodies for funding. Noting that there is no consensus among governments to move towards establishing a new mechanism and cautioning against acting hastily, the US put forth discussion questions on the added value of a mechanism, availability of resources, avoiding duplication, and the issues the mechanism will consider.

Switzerland called for establishing priorities through scientific consensus at the global level, and suggested that the platform should, *inter alia*: take advantage of existing scientific expertise through institutional links with other groups; provide information for all biodiversity-related conventions; and publish opinions reached by scientific consensus, without



Julia Marton-Lefèvre, IUCN Director General

being prescriptive. IUCN said the platform must respond directly to the needs of MEA subsidiary bodies and tap into the knowledge of civil society actors.

The CBD advocated a lean system combining cutting-edge science with wide stakeholder involvement. Malaysia said the platform should foster exchange among countries. France, on behalf of the EU, said that the primary missions of an IPBES should be to compile and disseminate existing information and to translate this information into policy options that are understandable for policy makers.

Norway said an IPBES should focus on sustainable use of biodiversity and ensure collaboration with the UN Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO). The International Council for Science (ICSU) said that the IPBES format should be determined by the underlying science, and highlighted the need to ensure credibility within the scientific community. Diversitas said activities during the next four years should focus on early warning and catalyzing knowledge development, particularly regarding better understanding the links between ecosystem services and human well-being and poverty eradication.

FAO reported on its activities and work plan in assessing biodiversity for food and agriculture, emphasized country-driven assessments, and said that FAO would also consider

hosting an IPBES secretariat. The Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) described the work of its scientific committees, noting its limitations due to lack of data, which could be eased by an IPBES. The Ramsar Convention described the contributions of its Scientific and Technical Review Panel, and called for an efficient platform that collects the best available knowledge and feeds it back to parties.

The UN Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) highlighted initiatives and programmes of the Convention that seek to strengthen the scientific basis of its actions and, with UN Development Programme (UNDP), expressed readiness to cooperate and play a role in a new mechanism. UNDP also stressed the need for a framework for the inclusion of civil society. On behalf of a partnership of 100 NGOs, Birdlife International said that a new mechanism should be complimentary to existing ones, efficient and cost-effective.

Main focal areas: After general statements, delegates discussed the main focal areas of a mechanism, as outlined in the concept note. The US called for the involvement of new actors, such as the Society for Conservation Biology, and action-oriented NGOs that have experience on the ground. He questioned the appropriateness of the proposed monitoring function of the mechanism, and of using a single framework for generating policy-relevant information for all topical areas. Vice-Chair Watson clarified that a consistent framework would aid in compiling sub-global assessments. He also said that looking at emerging scientific trends would be an added value for a mechanism. The Scientific and Technological Advisory Panel of the Global Environment Facility (GEF) said it was important to always question frameworks, and called attention to the lack of mention of uncertainty in the concept note.

Mexico said that focusing on assessments and early warning should be supplemented with a framework to address local and regional actions. The EU stressed the need to define the mission of an IPBES prior to discussing its form and function, stating that the mission should be to compile, assess and synthesize existing scientific information and provide policy options to decision makers.

On Tuesday morning, Vice-Chair Watson invited participants to express views regarding the types of activities to be conducted by an IPBES and how these would support existing bodies. In particular, he asked for: comments regarding global and sub-global assessments; how the platform would synthesize these assessments; and whether the platform should also conduct foresight studies and horizon-scanning. Ibrahim Thiaw, UNEP, called for comments on the gaps in the existing system of subsidiary bodies, and cautioned against placing an IPBES under the CBD since this would complicate delivering advice to other MEA bodies.

Many called for analyzing gaps in the work of the CBD SBSTTA and other MEA subsidiary bodies and suggested exploring how an IPBES could support the work of these bodies



Vice-Chair Robert Watson (UK)



Participants during Tuesday morning plenary

and create synergies between biodiversity-related conventions. Saint Lucia expressed its full support for the concept note. Brazil requested considering alternative options for an IPBES. He reiterated that an IPBES should be established under the CBD to strengthen the CBD's SBSTTA, stating that its purpose should be to compile, examine, inventory and disseminate existing knowledge, and to primarily focus on building research and scientific capacity in developing countries. Haiti questioned whether all aspects of biodiversity could be addressed by a single platform.

The EU said an IPBES should promote consistency between existing MEA subsidiary bodies, without contradicting or duplicating their work, and with many others, stated that an IPBES must be independent from SBSTTA. Mexico and Switzerland, called for an independent platform incorporated into the general framework of UNEP.

Gabon said that the new platform should take into account ongoing regional processes on biodiversity monitoring. Norway called for optimizing the use of assessment results and, with the US, for a structure for sub-global studies and lessons learned to inform the global level. The Republic of Korea called for the inclusion of policy experts in the platform and expressed willingness to host it.

Germany stressed that an IPBES will strengthen existing scientific bodies of conventions, not weaken them, and clarified that its function would be more fundamental than that of SBSTTA. Canada, the US, Mexico and the Republic of Korea underlined the importance of defining the platform's clients and involving them within the platform. Canada added that the proposed early-warning function was not a critical strategic need, and prioritized building an assessment framework, if the platform will conduct assessments.

Mexico said the platform should support consultations to enable local decision making. Algeria called for, *inter alia*: equitable geographical representation; fast implementation; creation of knowledge databases; inclusion of NGOs; and sharing of best practices. Mali suggested that reports be created every few years, to raise awareness of biodiversity degradation and suggest ways of safeguarding biodiversity.

Sweden said an IPBES should address economic aspects of biodiversity and aspects relating to synergies between biodiversity and climate change mitigation and adaptation. The European Commission noted the current lack of a platform that brings together research findings and transforms them into coherent assessments and policy options that can be considered by MEAs. He added that an IPBES can have an impact on national and regional policy discussions and enhance public awareness, and stressed the importance of its independence.

The US said that an IPBES should cover all biodiversity-related conventions and focus on ecosystem services and their economic valuation. While affirming the importance of capacity building, she opposed making it a core component of an IPBES. China asked for further discussion on which aspects of the science-policy interface should be strengthened and whether IPBES reports should be based on geographical scale, ecoregions, ecosystems or species. He also called for a global monitoring network as part of an IPBES.

The Global Biodiversity Information Facility (GBIF) said any platform should leverage existing investments and initiatives, and called for an in-depth study of the causes of the failure of current biodiversity-related policy making. He also pointed to a severe lack of data at the national and local levels. Malaysia supported an independent, scientifically credible platform, stressing that it should focus on providing advice for national-level actions.

Vice-Chair Watson summarized the discussion, noting support for: conducting a gap analysis; identifying, at multiple scales, the implications of scientific knowledge for policy making and actions for implementation; synthesizing information from different assessments; giving advice to multiple MEA bodies; and that the IPBES should not be an advocacy body.

WORK PROGRAMME AND BUDGET: Charles Perrings, Arizona State University, provided an overview



Charles Perrings,
Arizona State
University

of the proposed work programme and budget for an IPBES (UNEP/IPBES/1/3), noting that the work programme details activities in three focal areas. He said the work programme covers a four-year trial period and accounts for the need to anticipate ecosystem changes, coordinate large-scale global efforts in assessment and monitoring, and provide users with accessible

and relevant information. On the budget, he said costs for secretariat and governance structure are estimated at US\$18.4 million and costs for time and efforts by scientists at US\$15.9 million.

Brazil stressed that the main purpose of an IPBES should be to enable developing countries to build their own scientific capacities, and suggested achieving this through, *inter alia*, courses, fellowships and grants, and technology transfer. He noted that it was premature to focus on specific themes in the work programme, as these should be mandated by the CBD COP, and said the budget would be addressed under the CBD's budget. He noted that the Secretariat's documents lack mention of the eradication of poverty.

The EU, Switzerland and the US said that discussion on the work programme and budget was premature, with the EU adding that it was prepared to contribute financially to setting up the platform. Switzerland said that the work programme should include an analysis of why policy makers do not take advantage of assessments that cover individual sectors, and work on economic aspects of biodiversity and ecosystem services for human well-being. He added that the budget looked reasonable at first glance.

Reiterating that the platform's work should be targeted to clients, Mexico expressed concerns with making concrete proposals on these themes. He noted that the proposed budget was beyond what can be administered by a single convention and, both Mexico and the US said they were prepared to provide experts.

GOVERNANCE, STRUCTURE AND SECRETARIAT FUNCTIONS: Anantha Duraiappah, UNEP, presented on governance structure and secretariat functions for an IPBES



Anantha Duraiappah,
UNEP

(UNEP/IPBES/1/4). He outlined possible options for the platform's legal status: an intergovernmental body, not linked to any institution; a distinct intergovernmental body that is institutionally linked to one or more existing international organizations; an intergovernmental body that is subsidiary to an existing organization; a body distinct from existing organizations that combines

intergovernmental and non-governmental entities; or an intergovernmental and non-governmental platform that is subsidiary to an existing organization. He also outlined options for the organization's structure of plenary, executive board, scientific advisory group and secretariat.

Legal status: Many delegates noted that this discussion was premature, with Malaysia saying the body's legal status should be decided after determining its functions, and Canada and China adding that a gap analysis should be conducted first. The US, the EU, Switzerland, Mexico, Mali, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Congo, Malaysia, Canada and the Republic of Korea preferred to have a distinct intergovernmental body that is institutionally linked to one or more existing organizations. Brazil and Colombia preferred that it be a subsidiary body within the CBD. Mexico said the body should be in a position to service several institutions, and should be small and flexible. The US, Switzerland and Norway favored linking it to UNEP, with the US suggesting taking advantage of the UNEP Division of Early Warning and Assessment and the Bali Strategic Plan for Technology Support and Capacity Building. Norway called for close cooperation with FAO and other organizations involved in relevant research.

Plenary: Brazil suggested that the CBD SBSTTA serve as plenary for an IPBES, while the US requested deleting references to voting rights. Delegates generally felt it was premature to address this matter and discussion was deferred.

Executive body: Brazil suggested using the IPCC model of establishing a bureau with broad representation, noting that its composition would have to be adjusted to reflect regional representation under the CBD. Mali requested replacing the term "platform" with "panel of experts," suggesting it should be convened by and receive instructions from UNEP. Tanzania expressed general support for the IPCC model, but requested that further studies be conducted prior to deciding on the executive body. France underlined the need for a narrow, independent and efficient executive body composed of experts. Côte d'Ivoire called for regional representation among scientific experts.

Scientific advisory group: Brazil questioned the need for a scientific advisory group, stating that the new body should implement requests from CBD parties and that its reports should be approved by plenary. The Democratic Republic of Congo inquired how the IPCC model would work in practice, suggesting that scientific studies could be carried out by existing bodies. Vice-Chair Watson explained the IPCC structure, noting that the function of an IPBES should be decided upon first. Mexico proposed a flexible scientific advisory body which could be adapted to the tasks at hand. Côte d'Ivoire cautioned against overlaps between the scientific advisory group and the executive body.

Secretariat: UNESCO reiterated its offer to host the secretariat. Brazil suggested that the secretariat's functions be provided by the CBD Secretariat. Mali said the secretariat should be linked to UNEP, UNESCO or FAO, expressing preference for UNEP, and urged for linkages with NGOs. Mexico suggested that UNEP host the secretariat with an independent budget, reports and autonomy regarding its work.



Fernando Coimbra (Brazil)

Recalling the need for an independent IPBES, Haiti cautioned against the secretariat being hosted by any other organization except the CBD. Haiti, the EU and Senegal said the issue should be discussed after the body's functions have been determined. The Democratic Republic of Congo cautioned against linking the Secretariat to institutions that might interfere with its administrative operations. Sweden, Canada and Switzerland suggested developing guiding principles for secretariat selection. Sweden suggested linking the secretariat to a research institution with a good reputation regarding research on biodiversity and development. Mexico suggested working in coordination with the UNEP World Conservation Monitoring Center. Côte d'Ivoire inquired whether there would be a physical secretariat or whether the secretariat function would be delegated to the host institution. Vice-Chair Oteng-Yeboah responded that this depends on the functions of the secretariat, but clarified that its physical location would be decided upon later.

The Democratic Republic of Congo cautioned against dividing decision making under more than one international organization. France called for a small secretariat.

RULES AND PROCEDURES: Delegates decided against addressing rules and procedures (UNEP/IPBES/1/5), given the status of discussions.

CHAIRS' SUMMARY: On Tuesday evening, after concluding consideration of all agenda items, UNEP Executive Director Achim Steiner offered comments on the proceedings so far. He noted the clear message emerging from this meeting was that the science-policy interface needed enhancement. He welcomed the sharing of different available options on how to move the situation forward, and called attention to the 25th Session of the Global Ministerial Environment Forum and UNEP Governing Council as a possible option.



The dais during Wednesday plenary

On Wednesday morning, Vice-Chair Watson presented a Chairs' Summary of the meeting. He underscored that the Summary intended to highlight the key messages of the meeting. Delegates first made general comments followed by discussions paragraph by paragraph.

Norway called for references to the challenges of mainstreaming biodiversity. China and Brazil commented that the document did not reflect the diversity of opinions expressed at the meeting. The US cautioned against overstating the consensus reached at the meeting, supporting a recommendation to UNEP Governing Council to establish a "process" to improve the science-policy interface, rather than "mechanism."

The EU requested references to the processes and activities that led to this meeting and to the strong support from the scientific community. He added that the next meeting should not be of a consultative nature. Canada requested reflecting some countries' reservations on creating a new platform, pending a gap analysis or an analysis of alternative options.

IMoSEB, supported by ICSU, reminded delegates of the IMoSEB outcome that recommends creating an overarching mechanism, which was based on an extensive gap analysis. He underscored the importance of scientific independence, noting that some governance options on the table do not allow for this. IMoSEB and Diversitas requested that the early warning function of a mechanism be further considered.

The Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) Center for Biodiversity highlighted the role of regional intergovernmental institutions. Mexico called for consulting the scientific bodies of the various conventions on their information needs. ICSU, supported by Brazil, requested reflecting the role of biodiversity and ecosystem services in improving human well-being. ICSU also noted the importance of addressing biodiversity issues at multiple scales. China requested clarifying that the meeting's objective was not to consider the establishment of an IPBES, but how to strengthen the science policy-interface, including the possible need for an IPBES and, if so, its modalities.

Brazil suggested specifying that the main purpose of an IPBES should be promoting sustainable development and poverty eradication by supporting the CBD's three objectives. In response, the US requested clarifying that the primary objective is biodiversity conservation, which can contribute to poverty eradication. On stating that the platform should use multi-disciplinary knowledge, Brazil proposed including associated traditional knowledge.

On conducting a gap analysis, many said it should cover all MEAs and their subsidiary and advisory bodies, with Norway adding reference to “other relevant UN organizations.” Brazil and Turkmenistan asked to reflect that some delegations also felt that the main gap was building research capacity in developing countries, which would not require a gap analysis. The EU said the gap analysis should also analyze remedies to overcome weaknesses

of the current science-policy interface. China said it should help parties understand the benefits of existing MEA bodies and identify which of these need to be strengthened. CITES stated that the gap analysis should consider



Laurent Stéfani (France, on behalf of the EU)

the potential added value of an IPBES to its committees on plants and animals. Switzerland suggested that it include needs assessments, and the World Resources Institute proposed it also cover threats and opportunities. Mexico called for reference to improving communication among existing bodies and improving science capacities in developing countries.

On reflecting support for a new and independent mechanism, China considered it is too early to draw such a conclusion, while Brazil noted that there was no agreement on it being an “independent” body. France requested mention of the need for a “network of networks.”

On the role of an IPBES, Brazil noted that there was no consensus that it would provide policy-relevant options to multiple stakeholders and MEAs, nor on the platform identifying gaps and uncertainties, stating that the platform would work on what the CBD parties request. China and Mexico suggested providing policy-relevant “information.” On capacity building, the US acknowledged broad agreement on the need for capacity building for science and research worldwide, but that there was a wide range of views on how the platform would address this. IMoSEB said that activities of the platform should not only be demand driven, as participants in previous processes had agreed that it should also take on a more proactive role in identifying issues and holding dialogues with policy makers. On the organizational structure, Switzerland stated that there had been no opposition to the involvement of stakeholders in the platform. Vice-Chair Watson clarified that if the SBSTTA were to be the platform’s plenary, this would affect the involvement of stakeholders. Colombia clarified its preference for SBSTTA to be the plenary of the platform.

On whether the platform would be independent but linked to an existing organization, or a subsidiary body to the CBD, Mexico argued that UNEP should be mentioned as a possible organization in the former option if the CBD was to be mentioned in the latter. Switzerland clarified that the platform should be “hosted” by an existing organization rather than “linked.” Panama requested reference to an evaluation or assessment of the advantages and disadvantages of creating an independent body.

On text stating that some countries noted that if the platform were subsidiary to a single convention it would be difficult to serve other stakeholders and conventions, Brazil

requested adding that some countries noted the governance difficulties of serving many conventions. The Scientific and Technical Review Panel of the Ramsar Convention, supported by Turkmenistan, Iran, Germany, the US and Norway, underscored that the platform should serve the needs of other conventions besides the CBD.

Recommendations: On the meeting’s recommendations, Grenada, supported by many developing countries, requested specific reference to exploring mechanisms for capacity building in developing countries to improve the science-policy interface. The US, the EU and Switzerland argued that a mechanism for capacity building was one of the ways to improve the interface, and did not wish to single it out, with the EU suggesting adding reference to providing assessments and policy options as well. After lengthy debate, Vice-Chair Watson produced compromise text stating that such mechanisms could include components of early warning, multiple-scale assessments, policy information and capacity development. Brazil, supported by Grenada, but opposed by the EU, stated that the compromise text was not an accurate representation of the meeting’s discussions, and Vice-Chair Watson amended the text to state that this was a Chairs’ recommendation and not a recommendation by the meeting.

On the recommendation to undertake a gap analysis and present it at the 25th session of the UNEP Governing Council, Canada requested that the analysis be made available for review by participants prior to the Council meeting. Switzerland, with Norway, suggested that, given the short timeframe, the analysis presented to the Council be preliminary. Mexico, supported by Spain, suggested a two-pronged approach whereby formal requests would be made to the scientific bodies of the MEAs, as well as to



Cheng Weixue (China)

parties, asking them to indicate their specific information needs and capacities. China proposed text stating that the gap analysis be undertaken for the purpose of facilitating consultations for strengthening the science-policy interface,

to be made available as an information document at the UNEP Governing Council. The EU preferred referring to facilitating “ongoing work” or “negotiations,” and after lengthy debate, delegates agreed the gap analysis would “facilitate ongoing discussions on how to strengthen the interface.”

On the meeting’s recommendation that the UNEP Governing Council request the Executive Director to convene a second consultative meeting, China, supported by the US and France, requested that the meeting be convened with a view to strengthening and improving the science-policy interface, with the EU adding reference to the consideration of establishing a new science-policy platform. The EU requested that the meeting be “intergovernmental” and not “consultative,” and Diversitas



Anne Larigauderie, Diversitas

requested that it also be a multi-stakeholder meeting. Brazil, opposed by the US, preferred retaining reference to a “consultative” or “*ad hoc*” meeting. Participants eventually agreed to convene a second intergovernmental and multi-stakeholder meeting.

Brazil requested an additional paragraph noting that the outcome of this meeting would be submitted to the *Ad Hoc* Working Group on the Review of Implementation (WGRI) of the CBD, as mandated by the CBD COP Decision IX/15 (Follow-up to the MA). Vice-Chair Watson suggested that Decision IX/15 be added as a footnote to the Chairs’ Summary, but Brazil, with Colombia, requested retaining this reference as a separate paragraph within the text. The US and the EU opposed, stating that this did not belong in the Summary in more than just a footnote, as the subject had not been brought up during the meeting. The EU and Norway also stressed that this process will have progressed by the next WGRI meeting in 2010. After lengthy debate, delegates agreed to refer to the COP Decision, and not add a separate paragraph on this.

Final Outcome: The Chairs’ Summary states, *inter alia*, that:

- there was uniform recognition of the importance of biodiversity and ecosystem services which are currently undergoing significant losses, and this would in particular, but not exclusively, negatively impact on development processes in developing countries;
- delegates met to discuss needs and modalities to strengthen the science-policy interface on biodiversity and ecosystem services, including the potential of an IPBES;
- there was a highly constructive exchange of views on the concept, content and structure of a potential IPBES, with this meeting being viewed as the first step towards strengthening the science-policy interface; and
- there was broad recognition that there is a need to improve the science-policy interface which should use existing relevant assessments and the best available multi-disciplinary knowledge.

The Chairs’ Summary also states that: most delegates expressed the need for a gap analysis of the strengths and weaknesses of the numerous existing science-policy interfaces for biodiversity and ecosystem services and coordination among them at all spatial scales; the gap analysis should also assess the potential for strengthening existing interfaces and the added value of a potential new mechanism that would fill the recognized weaknesses in the current system; and delegations had differing views as to which gaps in the science-policy interface were most significant, with some countries noting the lack of an effective assessment process that provides policy-relevant information and advice to multiple biodiversity-related conventions, while most developing country delegates viewed the greatest gap as being capacity building.

The Summary adds that many delegates supported the need for an IPBES distinct and independent from existing institutions or mechanisms, but others considered that it is too early to conclude whether there is a need for a new and independent body, awaiting the results of the gap analysis.

It continues that:

- there was broad agreement that the platform should be intergovernmental, but there was a range of views on how to involve other stakeholders;

- any new body must complement existing mechanisms and have added value and therefore strengthen existing mechanisms, with some suggesting that a network of networks could enhance current capabilities; and
- many delegates agreed that the role of a science-policy platform should be to compile, assess and synthesize existing scientific knowledge, thereby identifying areas of science requiring further development, and to provide policy-relevant information to multiple stakeholders including MEAs without being policy prescriptive, with one delegation suggesting that a framework for contextualizing existing and future assessments could be useful.

The Summary states that: many delegates supported the proposal that the platform be independent but linked to an existing organization or organizations (e.g., UNEP with other UN organizations such as UNESCO), and also said that the platform should serve a range of stakeholders including multiple biodiversity-related conventions; some countries supported the platform being a subsidiary body to the CBD SBSTTA, but most delegates noted that if the platform were to be subsidiary of a single convention it would be difficult to serve other stakeholders and conventions; and, one delegation noted that it would be difficult for a single body to serve many different fora.

On assessments, the Summary reflects that: many delegates stated that assessments should be independent, but policy-relevant, in order to provide credible, evidence-based knowledge; most delegations noted that the assessments and other activities should be demand-driven depending on user’s requests, with some noting the importance of input from the scientific community; assessments at the local, national, and regional levels would be promoted, catalyzed and synthesized, but not necessarily undertaken, by the platform; and, there was broad agreement that assessments must be rigorously peer-reviewed.

The Summary says that there was broad agreement that the discussions on the detailed programme of work, budget, legal status and governance issues concerning the plenary, and scientific and executive bodies were premature, while adding that:

- on structure, there was some support that the platform could use the structure of an IPCC-like body, with two countries suggesting that the plenary could be the CBD SBSTTA;
- on the secretariat, which several countries and organizations offered to support and host, many delegates suggested the need for criteria and a transparent process for selection of the secretariat, with agreement that it should be a small secretariat, and one delegation suggested the use of an existing secretariat if the proposed platform was a subsidiary body of the CBD SBSTTA; and
- on the legal status, there was strong support for either a distinct intergovernmental body, or a combination of an intergovernmental and non-governmental body, hosted by an existing institution, and there was some support for an intergovernmental body subsidiary to an existing institution, but that no options were taken off the table.

It outlines that: some countries suggested that the early warning and lessons activity was an important activity in its own right, while others suggested that it could be integrated into the assessment processes; one government recommended

that the two main activities of any new mechanism should be capacity building and assessment; and there was broad agreement that the platform should include strengthening capacity in developing countries, with some delegates suggesting that capacity building is an integral part of the assessment process.

The Summary states that the Chairs recommend:

- to continue to explore mechanisms to improve the science-policy interface for biodiversity and ecosystem services for human wellbeing and sustainable development, which could include components of early warning, multiple-scale assessments, policy information and capacity development; and
- that a preliminary gap analysis be undertaken for the purpose of facilitating the ongoing discussions on how to strengthen the science-policy interface, and that a report be made available as an information document at the 25th session of the UNEP Governing Council, which would later be reviewed and further refined.

The Summary further states that the meeting recommends that the Executive Director of UNEP report to the 25th session of the Governing Council on the outcome of the present meeting, and that the Governing Council request the Executive Director to convene a second Intergovernmental Multi-stakeholder Meeting on an IPBES, with the view to strengthening and improving the science-policy interface for biodiversity and ecosystem services for human well-being, including consideration of a new science-policy platform.

GAP ANALYSIS: On Tuesday, delegates debated the merits of creating a contact group to discuss the way forward for producing a gap analysis, including defining its potential contents and a timeline for production. After objections by Brazil and Haiti, they decided not to develop formal terms of reference for the gap analysis, but to ask the Vice-Chairs to prepare an informal framework for the analysis, which would be discussed in plenary as last agenda item after consideration of the Chairs' Summary.

On Wednesday afternoon, Vice-Chair Watson presented a framework for conducting a preliminary gap analysis consisting of three interlinked levels: scientific knowledge and research; assessments of policy options and options for implementation; and policy formulation and implementation. He noted that at each level the gap analysis should cover the types of information required and generated, as well as the organizations requiring and supplying that information. Diversitas noted the difference between assessments conducted from science and policy perspectives, and reported that assessments by scientists have found the following gaps: international mechanisms that can synthesize increasingly complex flows of research results from a wide range of disciplines or that conduct horizon scanning do not exist; there is no systematic routine at the international level to account for biodiversity values for human health and well-being; and an IPBES could signal to the research community which issues are most important from a policy perspective.

Brazil asked to clarify that the gap analysis will consider research capacity-building needs in developing countries and that UNEP should consult with developing countries regarding those needs. Canada and China said the gap analysis should



L-R: Chair Datuk Suboh Mohd Yassin (Malaysia), Vice-Chair Robert Watson (UK), and Vice-Chair Alfred Oteng-Yeboah (Ghana)

show which questions need to be answered regarding ways and means to strengthen the science-policy interface and whether a new mechanism is needed.

CLOSING PLENARY

The closing plenary convened on Wednesday afternoon. Vice-Chair Benítez introduced the meeting's report (UNEP/IPBES/1/6/L.1) which delegates adopted after numerous corrections and small amendments.

The EU stressed the need to start a negotiation process with respect to establishing a platform, and invited the participation of governments and stakeholders to this end. China said the meeting enhanced participants' understanding of the importance of strengthening the science-policy interface, and expressed hope that governments not represented at the meeting would participate in future discussions.

Congo, on behalf of the African Group, said this meeting was an important step forward in establishing a platform, and Turkmenistan called for establishing a platform that would enhance cooperation and information sharing on biodiversity. Diversitas welcomed the outcome of this meeting and participants' willingness to strive towards an IPBES, and drew attention to the urgency of the situation and the need to come to a decision soon on a platform.

Ibrahim Thiaw, on behalf of the UNEP Executive Director Achim Steiner, thanked all participants for the constructive discussions, and called for the continuation of the efforts and commitment displayed by countries and scientific organizations. Chair Yassin expressed hope that the "Putrajaya roadmap" contained in the Chairs' Summary would lead the way forward to a strengthened science-policy interface.

He closed the meeting at 6:15 pm.

UPCOMING MEETINGS

FIRST MEETING OF THE CBD AHTEG ON BIODIVERSITY AND CLIMATE CHANGE: The first meeting of the *Ad Hoc* Technical Expert Group on Biodiversity and Climate Change, to be held from 17-21 November 2008, in London, UK, is being organized by the CBD Secretariat. It will address scientific and technical matters concerning the links between biodiversity and climate change with regards to identifying risks and vulnerabilities, and impacts and opportunities from climate change mitigation. For more information, contact: CBD Secretariat; tel: +1-514-288-2220; fax: +1-514-288-6588; e-mail: secretariat@cbd.int; internet: <http://www.cbd.int/doc/?meeting=AHTEG-BDCC-01>

NINTH CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES TO THE CONVENTION ON MIGRATORY SPECIES (CMS COP 9):

This meeting will be held from 1-5 December 2008, in Rome, Italy. COP 9 is organized by the CMS Secretariat and the Government of Italy, and will be preceded by the 15th meeting of the CMS Scientific Council (27-28 November), a meeting of the Steering Committee of the UNEP/GEF Siberian Crane Wetlands Project (28-30 November), the first Meeting of the Parties to the Gorilla Agreement (29 November), a meeting on arid land mammals (30 November) and the 34th meeting of the CMS Standing Committee (30 November). The second meeting on international cooperation on migratory sharks will be held from 6-8 December 2008, immediately following the COP. For more information, contact: CMS Secretariat; tel: +49-228-815-2426; fax: +49-228-815-2449; e-mail: secretariat@cms.int; internet: http://www.cms.int/bodies/COP/cop9/cop9_meeting_docs.htm

FIFTH SESSION OF THE CGRFA

INTERGOVERNMENTAL TECHNICAL WORKING GROUP ON ANIMAL GENETIC RESOURCES FOR FOOD AND AGRICULTURE (ITWG-ANGR): This meeting will be held from 28-30 January 2009, at UN Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) headquarters, Rome, Italy. The ITWG-ANGR is established within the framework of the FAO Commission on Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture (CGRFA). For more information, contact: Irene Hoffmann; tel: +39-06-570-52796; e-mail: irene.hoffmann@fao.org; internet: <http://www.fao.org/ag/againfo/programmes/en/genetics/angrvent2009.html>

TWENTY-FIFTH SESSION OF THE UNEP GOVERNING COUNCIL/GLOBAL MINISTERIAL ENVIRONMENT FORUM: The 25th session of the UNEP Governing Council/Global Ministerial Environment Forum will convene from 16-20 February 2009, in Nairobi, Kenya. For more information, contact: fax: +254-20-623929/217119/6237; e-mail: beverly.miller@unep.org; internet: http://www.unep.org/ecalendar/e_details_view_new.asp?EventID=1225

TWENTY-FOURTH MEETING OF THE CITES ANIMALS COMMITTEE: This meeting will be held from 20-24 April 2009, in Geneva, Switzerland. For more information, contact: CITES Secretariat; tel: +41-(0)22-917-8139/40; fax: +41-(0)22-797-3417; e-mail: info@cites.org; internet: <http://www.cites.org/eng/news/calendar.shtml>

THIRD MEETING OF THE GOVERNING BODY OF THE INTERNATIONAL TREATY ON PLANT GENETIC RESOURCES FOR FOOD AND AGRICULTURE: This meeting will be held from 1-5 June 2009, in Tunis, Tunisia. For more information, contact: ITPGR Secretariat; tel: +39-06-570-53057; fax: +39-06-570-56347; e-mail: pgrfa-treaty@fao.org; internet: http://www.planttreaty.org/meetings/gb3_en.htm

FOURTH SESSION OF THE CGRFA INTERGOVERNMENTAL TECHNICAL WORKING GROUP ON PLANT GENETIC RESOURCES FOR FOOD AND AGRICULTURE (ITWG-PGR): This meeting will be held from 16-18 June 2009 at FAO headquarters, Rome, Italy. The ITWG-PGR is established within the framework of the CGRFA. For more information, contact: Linda Collette; tel: +39-06-5705-2089; e-mail: linda.collette@fao.org; internet: <http://www.fao.org/ag/AGP/AGPS/pgr/default.htm>

58TH MEETING OF THE CITES STANDING COMMITTEE:

This meeting will be held from 6- 10 July 2009 in Geneva, Switzerland, and is organized by the CITES Secretariat. For more information, contact: CITES Secretariat; tel: +41-(0)22-917-8139/40; fax: +41-(0)22-797-3417; e-mail: info@cites.org; internet: <http://www.cites.org/eng/news/calendar.shtml>

CGRFA 12: The twelfth regular session of the CGRFA will be held from 3-9 October 2009, at FAO headquarters, Rome, Italy. For more information, contact: CGRFA Secretariat; e-mail: cgrfa@fao.org; internet: <http://www.fao.org/ag/cgrfa/>

CITES COP 15: The fifteenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to CITES will be held from 16-28 January 2010, in Doha, Qatar. For more information, contact: CITES Secretariat; tel: +41-(0)22-917-8139/40; fax: +41-(0)22-797-3417; e-mail: info@cites.org; internet: <http://www.cites.org>

CBD SBSTTA 14: The fourteenth meeting of the CBD's Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice will be held from 13-21 May 2010, at a venue to be determined. For more information, contact: CBD Secretariat; tel: +1-514-288-2220; fax: +1-514-288-6588; e-mail: secretariat@cbd.int; internet: <http://www.cbd.int/meetings/>

WGRI 3: The third meeting of the *Ad Hoc* Open-ended Working Group on Review of Implementation of the CBD will be held from 24-28 May 2010, at a venue to be determined. For more information, contact: CBD Secretariat; tel: +1-514-288-2220; fax: +1-514-288-6588; e-mail: secretariat@cbd.int; internet: <http://www.cbd.int/meetings/>

CBD COP 10: The tenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the CBD will be held from 18-29 October 2010, in Nagoya, Japan. The meeting is expected to assess achievement of the 2010 target to reduce significantly the rate of biodiversity loss, adopt an international regime on access and benefit-sharing and celebrate the International Year of Biodiversity 2010. The High-level Segment will be held from 27-29 October. For more information, contact: CBD Secretariat; tel: +1-514-288-2220; fax: +1-514-288-6588; e-mail: secretariat@cbd.int; internet: <http://www.cbd.int/meetings/>

GLOSSARY

CBD	Convention on Biological Diversity
ICSU	International Council for Science
IMoSEB	International Mechanism of Scientific Expertise on Biodiversity
IPBES	Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
CITES	Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora
FAO	UN Food and Agriculture Organization
MA	Millennium Ecosystem Assessment
COP	Conference of the Parties
MEA	multilateral environmental agreement
SBSTTA	Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice
IPCC	Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change
UNESCO	UN Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization