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MEA BULLETIN

A newsletter on the activities of key multilateral environmental agreements (MEAs) and their secretariats
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RECENT MEA ACTIVITIES

▶ FORESTS, DESERTS AND LAND

UN FORUM NEGOTIATING NON-BINDING INSTRUMENT ON FORESTS



Hans Hoogeveen, the Netherlands (left), and Hamidon Ali, Malaysia (center left), are co-chairing Working Group I, which is discussing the non-legally binding instrument.

The seventh session of the UN Forum on Forests (UNFF-7), which is convening from 16-27 April 2007 at UN headquarters in New York, US, is negotiating a non-legally binding instrument on all types of forests (NLBI), as well as a multi-year programme of work (MYPOW) for the period 2007-2015, including themes and cross-cutting issues for future UNFF sessions. At the start of the second week of the meeting, delegates in two working groups had completed a first reading of composite draft texts of both the NLBI and the MYPOW. Contentious issues in the NLBI negotiations included: a financing mechanism, including a Bureau paper on a Global Forest Partnership Trust and a World Bank Programme on Forests paper on a portfolio approach to financing; international trade in forests; and a facilitative mechanism to aid national implementation. Delegates also engaged in two Multi-Stakeholder Dialogue sessions, where major groups were able to express their concerns on the NLBI and the MYPOW, and celebrated the preparations to launch the International Year of Forests 2011 (<http://www.iisd.ca/forestry/unff/unff7>).

RESEARCH AND RESOURCES

CITY OF NAIROBI ENVIRONMENT OUTLOOK

(City Council of Nairobi, 2007) This report, compiled by the Nairobi City Council in collaboration with the UN Environment Programme and the UN Centre for Human Settlements, highlights the challenges and opportunities for sustainable and environmentally-friendly living in Nairobi, Kenya, recommending a City Development Strategy that uses a bottom-up approach (http://www.unep.org/pdf/NEO_Exec_Summ.pdf).

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GUEST ARTICLE

A Structured Approach to the Promotion of Synergies among MEAs

*By Jerry Velasquez**

Abstract

If synergy is so important, then why aren't more people promoting it? The issue here is two-fold. First is the understanding of what it actually is, and second, clarifying the costs and benefits of doing it.

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RESEARCH AND RESOURCES (cont.)

GLOBAL MONITORING REPORT 2007: MDGS CONFRONTING THE CHALLENGES OF GENDER EQUALITY AND FRAGILE STATES

(World Bank, 2007) The 2007 Global Monitoring Report takes stock of progress toward achieving the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and assesses the contributions of developing countries, donor nations and the international financial institutions as they work toward meeting commitments under the 2002 Monterrey consensus. The report highlights areas of progress and gaps where greater effort is required, and its special topics—achieving gender equality and addressing the problems of fragile States—present two areas where challenges confront the international community (<http://web.worldbank.org/WBSITE/EXTERNAL/EXTDEC/EXTGLOBALMONITOR/EXTGLOMONREP2007/0,,menuPK:3413296~pagePK:64218926~piPK:64218953~theSitePK:3413261,00.html>).

A REVIEW OF ENERGY IN NATIONAL MDG REPORTS

(UNDP, 2007) This study reviews more than 100 national MDG reports in an effort to understand how energy issues are recognized and integrated in the MDG monitoring framework. The study highlights examples of how some countries have tried to link energy services to a broader set of development issues, such as poverty reduction, gender equality, and environmental sustainability and climate change (<http://www.energyandenvironment.undp.org/UNDP/indexAction.cfm?module=Library&action=GetFile&DocumentAttachmentID=2088>).

CASE STUDIES ON CLIMATE CHANGE AND WORLD HERITAGE

(UNESCO, 2007) This publication outlines the threats posed by climate change to natural and cultural sites on the UN Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization's (UNESCO) World Heritage List. Intended to raise awareness and mobilize support for heritage preservation, the publication is divided into five chapters that deal with glaciers, marine biodiversity, terrestrial biodiversity, archaeological sites, and historic cities and settlements (http://whc.unesco.org/documents/publi_climatechange.pdf).

► BIODIVERSITY AND WILDLIFE



Banner courtesy of CBD

CBD SECRETARIAT LAUNCHES GUIDANCE ON BIODIVERSITY AND CLIMATE CHANGE

The Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) has launched web-based guidance on the integration of biodiversity within adaptation planning, aiming to support Parties as they integrate climate change impacts and response activities into their implementation of the CBD. The guidance gathers information and tools from a number of relevant partners (<http://adaptation.biodiv.org/default.shtml>).

The CBD Secretariat has also announced that, in cooperation with the UN Environment Programme and the UN Development Programme, as well as the courtesy of the Paris Museum of Natural History, a training workshop on National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans will be organized on 8 July 2007, for the participants of the second meeting of the *Ad Hoc* Open-ended Working Group on Review of Implementation of the Convention, to be held from 9-13 July 2007, in Paris,

France (<http://www.biodiv.org/doc/notifications/2007/ntf-2007-048-wgri-en.pdf>). Participants to the twelfth meeting of the CBD Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice (SBSTTA), to be held from 2-6 July in Paris, will have the opportunity to attend a training course on 1 July, addressing the ecosystem approach, the Global Strategy for Plant Conservation and climate change. Workshops will also be organized on a range of other subjects (<http://www.biodiv.org/doc/notifications/2007/ntf-2007-049-sbstta-en.pdf>).

CITES SECRETARIAT POSTS SC-55 AGENDA

The Secretariat of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES) has posted the agenda of the 55th meeting of the Standing Committee, to be held on 2 June 2007, in The Hague, the Netherlands. Further documents will be posted as they become available (<http://www.cites.org/eng/com/SC/55/index.shtml>).

► CHEMICALS AND WASTES

CHEMICALS CONVENTIONS DISCUSS ENHANCED COOPERATION

The *Ad Hoc* Joint Working Group on Enhanced Cooperation and Coordination between the Basel, Stockholm and Rotterdam Conventions held its first meeting in Helsinki, Finland, from 26-28 March 2007. The meeting was co-chaired by Chile, China and Finland. The Working Group developed guiding principles for their work and identified areas of cooperation and coordination that could be promoted along with national needs to be addressed in promoting cooperation and cooperation. Participants agreed on ten principles to guide their work, including: promoting the implementation and enforcement of the conventions; respecting the legal autonomy of each convention; ensuring that form follows function; responding to the specific needs of developing countries and countries with economies in transition; and promoting programmatic coordination and cooperation. The Working Group also identified three areas of cooperation and coordination that could be promoted, including among the three secretariats, in new areas such as coordinated use of regional offices and shared legal and financial arrangements, and in formal management and oversight. The Working Group agreed to hold a second meeting in December 2007 to further discuss the three areas of cooperation and coordination (<http://ahjwg.chem.unep.ch/>).

BASEL HOSTS REGIONAL MEETING, AFRICA INSTITUTE ON WASTES ESTABLISHED

The Basel Convention Regional Centre (BCRC) in China, together with the Chinese State Environmental Protection Administration, the Japanese Ministry of the Environment and the Basel Convention Secretariat, organized a Regional Workshop on the Prevention of Illegal Transboundary Movements of Hazardous Waste in Asia from 28-29 March 2007, in Beijing, China. Participants exchanged information on regulation, cooperation and capacity building for preventing illegal transboundary movements of hazardous wastes for Asia. On the issue of e-waste, participants highlighted the need for capacity building in the control of e-waste, through the development of e-waste inventories and a legal framework.

In other Basel-related news, the Parliament of the United Republic of Tanzania approved the ratification of the Agreement establishing the Africa Institute for the Environmentally Sound Management of Hazardous and other Wastes. Tanzania's ratification joins those of Mauritius, Namibia, Nigeria and Botswana and, as the fifth ratification, brings the Agreement into force. The agreement provides for the formal establishment of the Africa Institute, an intergovernmental organization to serve its members in the implementation of the Basel and Bamako Conventions (<http://www.basel.int/press/bcb-April-2007.pdf>).

RESEARCH AND RESOURCES *(cont.)***BACKGROUND PAPER ON MEANS OF IMPLEMENTATION [UNFF]**

(PROFOR, 2007) Authored by Hosny El-Lakany, Michael Jenkins, and Michael Richards, who were commissioned by the World Bank's Program on Forests (PROFOR), this paper serves as background information for discussions at the seventh session of the UN Forum on Forests (UNFF-7). The paper reviews current and emerging financial instruments or "financial architecture" for forestry, advocating a portfolio approach to financing, and discusses the range of financial or incentive instruments that can respond to UNFF objectives. It also discusses the possibility of establishing a Forest Financing Mechanism (http://www.profor.info/pdf/BackgroundPaper_Mol_April12.pdf).

SMARTWOOD STANDARDS FOR VERIFICATION OF LEGALITY AND ORIGIN

(SmartWood, 2007) The Rainforest Alliance SmartWood programme has developed drafts of standards to address verification of legal origin and of legal compliance. The consultation drafts are available for review (http://www.illegal-logging.info/uploads/StandardVerificationOrigin_Draft_0107.pdf; http://www.illegal-logging.info/uploads/StandardVerificationCompliance_Draft0307.pdf).

▶ WATER, WETLANDS AND COASTS

DOALOS RELEASES AGENDA FOR UNICPOLOS-8, COMMISSION ON THE LIMITS OF THE CONTINENTAL SHELF EXAMINES SUBMISSIONS

The Division for Ocean Affairs and the Law of the Sea (DOALOS) has released the advanced and unedited provisional agenda for the eighth meeting of the UN Open-ended Informal Consultative Process on Oceans and the Law of the Sea (UNICPOLOS-8), scheduled to take place in New York, US, from 25-29 June 2007. The Chairpersons propose that the discussion panel on "Marine genetic resources" concentrate its discussions on: understanding marine genetic resources, their vulnerability and the services they provide; understanding the activities related to marine genetic resources and other relevant aspects; and international cooperation and coordination on issues related to marine genetic resources (http://www.un.org/Depts/los/consultative_process/format_icp%20_8_advance%20.pdf).

In other DOALOS news, the nineteenth session of the Commission on the Limits of the Continental Shelf took place from 5 March-13 April 2007 in New York, US, as a closed meeting. Participants engaged in a technical examination of Parties' submissions from 5-23 March and 9-13 April. The Plenary of the session convened from 26 March-5 April 2007. The Chairman of the Commission's statement, which summarizes the proceedings, will be submitted to the seventeenth Meeting of States Parties to the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea, scheduled to take place at UN headquarters on 14 June and from 18-22 June 2007 (IISD Sources and

<http://www.un.org/News/Press/docs/2007/sea1881.doc.htm>).

NEW RAMSAR SITES DESIGNATED AND EXISTING SITE EXTENDED

The Ramsar Secretariat has announced that Benin, the Czech Republic and Zambia have designated new sites, while the Spanish government has significantly extended the Ramsar site Parque Nacional de Doñana, which was first designated in 1982. The new area called "Doñana" now covers 234,052 hectares (http://www.ramsar.org/index_bulletin.htm). The Benin Agency for the Environment has designated two new Ramsar sites, effective 2 February 2007: the Site Ramsar du Complexe W and the Zone humide de la rivière Pendjari, both National Parks and also UNESCO Biosphere Reserves.

With these new designations, Benin now has four Ramsar sites in total, covering 1,179,354 hectares

(http://www.ramsar.org/wn/w.n.benin_two.htm). The Czech Republic's Ministry of the Environment has added Krušnohorská rašeliniště (Krušnohorská mountains mires) to the Ramsar List, effective 22 December 2006. The new site hosts a high number of endangered plant species (http://www.ramsar.org/index_bulletin.htm). The new Zambian site, "Tanganyika," effective 2 February 2007, includes the Zambian part of Lake Tanganyika, as well as shoreline areas of Nsumbu National Park and Kaputa GMA (http://www.ramsar.org/index_bulletin.htm).



Scene from new Ramsar site in Benin (Photo courtesy of Ramsar)

▶ INTERGOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS

UN SECRETARY-GENERAL PRESENTS REPORT ON REFORM RECOMMENDATIONS TO UNGA

UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon's report on Recommendations contained in the report of the High-level Panel on UN System-wide Coherence in the areas of development, humanitarian assistance and the environment (A/61/836) was released on 9 April 2007, in which he stressed his support for a stronger, more coherent UN and for the recommendations contained in the High-level Panel's report. He noted that many of the recommendations are consistent with existing mandates and processes for reform, while stressing that other areas will require fuller discussions and deliberation. Regarding the environment-related recommendations, he noted these could be raised by the General Assembly's informal consultative process, while taking into account relevant discussions and decisions in other intergovernmental forums, including the Global Ministerial Environmental Forum of the UN Environment Programme (UNEP) Governing Council, the Council of

the Global Environment Facility (GEF) and the Conferences of the Parties to relevant multilateral environmental agreements. The Secretary-General also stated that he will give due attention to the Panel's recommendation to commission an independent and authoritative assessment of the current UN system of international environmental governance (<http://www.undg.org/docs/7136/A-61-836> (SG Ban Note on HLP).doc).

On 16 April 2007, the Secretary-General presented his report at a UN General Assembly (UNGA) meeting at UN headquarters, New York, US. In their ensuing statements, most countries generally agreed with the Panel's recommendations and welcomed the Secretary-General's call for an open and transparent intergovernmental review on ways to implement the recommendations. Pakistan, on behalf of the Group of 77 and China and the Non-Alignment Movement, cautioned against the introduction of new conditionalities through the reform process. Some countries expressed concern about the creation of new bodies, while others welcomed the recommendation to establish

a Sustainable Development Board. The EU supported the recommendation to upgrade UNEP and Switzerland said an independent evaluation of international environmental governance was not necessary. Many speakers commended the "One UN" pilot programme, anticipating valuable country experiences and lessons learned, whereas some delegations considered the timeframe too short to produce reliable results. Several countries participating in the pilot programme said development strategies must be tailored to each country's specific socio-economic conditions and national priorities (<http://www.un.org/News/Press/docs/2007/ga10586.doc.htm>; <http://www.un.org/News/Press/docs/2007/ga10588.doc.htm>).

SECURITY COUNCIL ADDRESSES CLIMATE CHANGE

The UN Security Council has discussed climate change for the first time. The meeting, held on 17 April 2007 at UN headquarters in New York, US, focused on the impact

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GUEST ARTICLE (cont.)

What is synergy?

The term synergy itself has been interpreted in different ways and the literature suggests that there are a variety of types of synergies. In short, synergy is when $2 + 2$ is greater than 4.

There are several popular modes for promoting synergies, including clustering and mainstreaming. Clustering can be approached by issue, function, impacts, regions, etc. Mainstreaming is an approach where a smaller issue is brought in to the "main stream" of issues. The decisions by the three Conferences of the Parties (COPs) of the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm Conventions on synergy is one example of a clustering approach, while the work by the UN Convention to Combat Desertification's Global Mechanism is that of mainstreaming convention objectives into national development plans.

The global environment is naturally synergistic. These tendencies are driven by the natural linkages that exist within science (biophysical), functions (implementation), impacts, geography, etc. These linkages then drive activities that will eventually lead to synergies. What should be noted is that inter-linkages are not synergies. Scientific or implementation linkages may be absolute and obvious, but the promotion of synergies that take advantage of these linkages are optional and conditional.

Identifying synergies and transaction costs for promoting synergies

Numerous consultations, official decisions, recommendations, guidance documents and studies have identified activities or areas ripe for promoting synergies. But identifying areas where synergies can be taken advantage of is just the first step in actually implementing them on the ground.

The costs and benefits of cooperation and coordination need to be understood before determining if synergies will happen. Focus should particularly be given to transaction costs including issues such as financial costs, contamination risks, loss of accountability, initiative and motivation, problems with human relationships, competing priorities, and resource constraints. This paper proposes a structured approach to the promotion of synergies among MEAs as shown in the attached figure: <http://www.iisd.ca/mea-l/sm.jpg>

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▶ INTERGOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS

Continued from page 3

of climate change on peace and security. Over 50 participants spoke. Some delegates, including China and Pakistan, which spoke for the Group of 77, raised doubts regarding the Council's role on this issue, with some suggesting that it was primarily a socio-economic and/or sustainable development issue that should be addressed by UNGA. However, many others, particularly small island States, welcomed the Council's discussions. Many speakers also urged the UN to give urgent consideration to holding a global summit on climate change. The Security Council discussion was requested by the UK and chaired by its Foreign Secretary, Margaret Beckett. She labeled climate change a global security issue, noting scientific evidence reinforcing fears that climate change would bring about large-scale migration due to flooding, disease and famine, as well as increased competition for food, water and energy. Participants also discussed the recent reports from the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, the upcoming negotiations in Bali in late 2007 on the post-2012 framework for addressing climate change when the Kyoto Protocol's first commitment period expires, and the needs of the most vulnerable countries, including small island States, States with large coastal populations, and least developed countries. The EU reiterated its recent unilateral commitment to reduce its greenhouse gas emissions by 20 % by 2020 compared with 1990 levels, and to increase this to 30 % if other developed countries take similar steps (<http://www.un.org/News/Press/docs/2007/sc9000.doc.htm>).

UNEP AND GEF ORGANIZE WORKSHOP FOR POPs PROJECT, UNEP SOLAR PROGRAMME RECEIVES AWARD

The final workshop of the UN Environment Programme/Global Environment Facility (GEF) project on the "Assessment of Existing Capacities and Capacity Building Needs to Analyze Persistent Organic Pollutants (POPs) in Developing Countries" convened in Amsterdam, the Netherlands, from 5-7 March 2007. The project is focused on establishing and building the capacity of laboratories in China, Ecuador, Fiji, Kenya, Moldova, Uruguay and Vietnam to analyze POPs. A report on the workshop will be presented to the GEF Council and to the third meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Stockholm Convention in May 2007 (<http://www.basel.int/press/bcb-April-2007.pdf>).

On 2 April 2007, at the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) Headquarters in Vienna, Austria, the UNEP Caribbean Environment Programme Regional Coordinating Unit signed a memorandum of understanding with the IAEA to formal-

ize collaborative work for the promotion of integrated coastal zone management and the improvement of national and regional capacity to help reduce degradation of the coastal and marine ecosystems of the Wider Caribbean Region. The collaboration also paves the way for other future initiatives related to environmental management in Latin America (<http://www.cep.unep.org/newsandevents/news/2007/iaea-and-unep-car-rcu-sign-a-memorandum-of-understanding>).



The signatories of the MOU on behalf of their respective organizations: L-R: Vilmos Cserveny, Director, Office of External Relations and Policy Coordination, IAEA, and Nelson Andrade-Colmenares, Coordinator, UNEP-CAR/RCU (Photo courtesy of the Caribbean Environment Programme (CEP))

In other UNEP news, UNEP's Indian Solar Loan Programme was honored with the Energy Globe at a ceremony on 11 April 2007 in Brussels, Belgium. The four-year Indian Solar Loan Programme was launched in 2003 and is a partnership between UNEP, the UNEP Risoe Centre, and two of India's largest banking groups with the objective to establish a consumer credit market for financing solar home systems in Southern India. The programme's innovative financing arrangement involves an interest rate reduction, market development support, and a process to qualify solar suppliers (www.uneptie.org/energy/act/fin/india/).

UNDP ORGANIZES WORKSHOP TO ASSESS AFRICA'S PROGRESS TOWARDS MDGS

A workshop taking stock of Africa's progress towards the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) gathered senior African government planners, UN Development Programme (UNDP) policy advisers, and representatives of donor and multilateral agencies in Lomé, Togo, from 11-13 April 2007. The workshop focused on identifying barriers, obstacles and what African countries can do to catch up with other regions to reach the MDGs. To date, 40 of the 45 countries covered by UNDP's Regional Bureau for Africa have embarked on MDG-based planning, and about 20 of these countries have established credible MDG-based plans. The Lomé workshop is the first of two workshops organized by UNDP's Regional Bureau for Africa in 2007 (<http://content.undp.org/go/newsroom/2007/april/africa-mdg-workshop-20070512.en.jsessionid=axG9RAC-kfi4>).

GUEST ARTICLE (cont.)

A means, not an end

Andrew Campbell and Michael Goold, presenting their study on cooperation among businesses in the Harvard Business Review, noted that "These studies have concluded that collaboration is not always good for organizations. Sometimes it's downright bad." However, in a more recent article in the Financial Times, Andrew Campbell wrote "... most organizations have 'first generation structures and second generation management capabilities'. Internal synergies will only come with the right organization structure... and when managers have acquired the right skills and attitude."

The promotion of synergy is not an end to itself. It's like a hammer in our little toolbox. We can either build a house with it, or destroy one that already exists.

Editor's note:

MEA Bulletin invites articles from practitioners, MEAs and academics on issues that are of interest across the MEA community. Please contact the Editor, lynn@iisd.org, for further information.

**Jerry Velasquez works for the UN. These are his personal views.*

► SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

DSD RELEASES PUBLICATIONS IN PREPARATION FOR CSD-15

The Division for Sustainable Development (DSD) of the UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs (DESA), which serves as the Secretariat for the Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD), has released two new publications in preparation for the fifteenth CSD session, which will begin 30 April 2007. *Industrial Development for the 21st Century: Sustainable Development Perspectives* and *Energy Indicators for Sustainable Development: Country Studies on Brazil, Cuba, Lithuania, Mexico, Russian Federation, Slovakia and Thailand* address two of the themes to be discussed during CSD-15 (http://www.un.org/esa/sustdev/publications/industrial_development/index.htm; http://www.un.org/esa/sustdev/publications/energy_indicators/index.htm).

The Secretariat has also posted presentations offered during the 29-30 March 2007 meeting in New York, US, of an expert group on "Small-Scale Production and Use of Liquid Biofuels in Sub-Saharan Africa: Perspectives for Sustainable Development." This meeting brought together energy experts from Africa and Asia to present country and

project experiences on production and use of liquid biofuels, to discuss policy options for replication and scaling-up, and to review a draft background and information paper for CSD-15 (http://www.un.org/esa/sustdev/sdissues/energy/op/biofuels/biofuel_egm.htm).

In preparation for the review at CSD-16 in 2008 of the implementation of the CSD-13 decisions on Integrated Water Resources Management (IWRM) and related themes, the CSD Secretariat has requested responses by 30 June 2007 to a recently posted questionnaire to gather information (http://www.un.org/esa/sustdev/natlinfo/csd16/iwrm_questionnaire_guiding%20note.doc).



Participants at the expert group meeting on Small-Scale Production and Use of Liquid Biofuels in Sub-Saharan Africa (Photo courtesy of the UN)

► CLIMATE AND ATMOSPHERE

IPCC SECRETARIAT PREPARES FOR BANGKOK MEETING

The Secretariat for the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) has posted a number of new reports on its website in the lead-up to the IPCC's 26th Session and a meeting of Working Group III in Bangkok, Thailand, in late April/early May 2007. The meeting of Working Group III, which focuses on climate change mitigation, is expected to approve its contribution to the Fourth Assessment Report and follows recent events for the two other working groups in Brussels and Paris.



Photo courtesy of IPCC

Recently-posted documents include Working Group III's draft Summary for Policymakers and the draft underlying Scientific-Technical Assessment (<http://www.ipcc.ch/meet/session26.htm>).

UNFCCC REGIONAL WORKSHOP ON ADAPTATION HIGHLIGHTS ASIAN CONCERNS; UNFCCC REPORTS ON RECENT LDC, DEFORESTATION EVENTS

A UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) Asian Regional Workshop on Adaptation has highlighted Asian concerns related to climate change adaptation and vulnerability reduction, with a view to identifying specific adaptation needs to be considered under the UNFCCC. The event, which took place in Beijing, China, from 11-



Dais at the UNFCCC Asian Regional Workshop on Adaptation

13 April 2007, considered recent developments under the UNFCCC, climate change in Asia, integrated impact and vulnerability assessments, agriculture and food security, water resources, coastal zones, health, mountainous regions, support for adaptation in the context of sustainable development, and South-South and North-South collaboration (<http://www.iisd.ca/climate/ccaw/>).

In other UNFCCC news, the Secretariat has published reports from recent meetings on Least Developed Countries (LDCs) and reducing emissions from deforestation in developing countries. The eleventh meeting of the LDCs Expert Group took place in Honiara, Solomon Islands, from 26-28 March 2007, with delegates considering issues such as a work programme, the implementation of national adaptation programmes of action (NAPAs), and a stocktaking exercise to consider progress made in preparing and implementing NAPAs. The Subsidiary Body for Implementation is expected to consider this report at its 26th session in May (<http://unfccc.int/resource/docs/2007/sbi/eng/12.pdf>).

The second workshop on reducing emissions from deforestation in developing countries was held in Cairns, Australia, from 7-9 March 2007. Discussions focused on "ongoing and potential policy approaches and positive incentives, and technical and methodological requirements related to their implementation." Participants also discussed the assessment of results and their reliability, and improving the understanding of reducing emissions from deforestation in the South. Financing options and capacity building were considered. The Subsidiary Body for Scientific and Technological Advice (SBSTA) is expected to take up this issue in May (<http://unfccc.int/resource/docs/2007/sbsta/eng/03.pdf>).

The Secretariat has also posted several other documents on its website in the lead-up to the next sessions of the UNFCCC subsidiary bodies, which will open in Bonn, Germany, on 7 May 2007. Newly-posted documents address such issues as terrestrial observing systems for climate; the Mauritius Strategy and its relationship to the UNFCCC and Kyoto Protocol; networking between the UNFCCC's technology information clearing house and other information centers; and expedited financing of national communications from Parties not included in Annex I to the Convention (i.e. most developing countries) (<http://unfccc.int/resource/docs/2007/sbsta/eng/misc06.pdf>, <http://unfccc.int/resource/docs/2007/sb/eng/inf02.pdf>, <http://unfccc.int/resource/docs/2007/sbsta/eng/inf01.pdf>, <http://unfccc.int/resource/docs/2007/sbi/eng/inf02.pdf>).

▶ CLIMATE AND ATMOSPHERE



Logo courtesy of the Multilateral Fund

MULTILATERAL FUND AND OZONE SECRETARIAT RELEASE REPORTS, REGIONAL AND COUNTRY ACTIVITIES REPORTED

The Multilateral Fund has released the Report of the 51st Meeting of the Executive Committee, and a summary of the significant decisions and discussions. Topics discussed included the status of contributions, which were at less than 10 % of the amount pledged for 2007, the business plans for implementing agencies through 2009, and funding requests (http://www.multilateral-fund.org/summaries_of_executive_committ.htm, <http://www.multilateralfund.org/files/51/5146.pdf>).

In advance of the upcoming Open-Ended Working Group meeting (OEWG-27), to be

held from 4-7 June 2007, in Nairobi, Kenya, and the Dialogue on key future challenges faced by the Montreal Protocol (the Dialogue), to be held 2-3 June 2007, the Ozone Secretariat has released an advance copy of the Technology and Economic Assessment Panel's (TEAP) 2007 Progress Report. In the report, TEAP, *inter alia*: recommends approving the new essential use nominations for chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs); reports on the interim evaluations of critical-use nominations submitted in 2007; and reports on progress in the other Technical Options Committees (http://ozone.unep.org/Assessment_Panels/TEAP/Reports/TEAP_Reports/Teap_progress_report_April2007.pdf).

In news on implementation efforts, a meeting of the South Asia Network of Ozone Officers was held 10-13 April 2007 in Bhutan. Participants discussed the significant achievements made in the past 20 years of the Protocol, and the challenges ahead for South Asian countries in attaining their re-

maining commitments, stressing phasing out CFCs and the increasing use of hydrochlorofluorocarbons (HCFCs). Participants also discussed illegal trade in CFCs across Asia, and in particular the problem of illegal trade in CFCs in India. In addition, the UN Environment Programme honored Bhutan, Cambodia, Afghanistan and Sweden with awards for their progress in meeting their commitments under the Montreal Protocol (<http://www.earthtimes.org/articles/show/51743.html>, http://www.financialexpress.com/fe_full_story.php?content_id=161079, <http://www.kuenselonline.com/modules.php?name=News&file=article&sid=8320%20>).

In an effort to meet their commitments under the Montreal Protocol, officials in the Philippines are establishing Regional Information Centers and Networks to disseminate information on ozone depletion and encourage local action (<http://www.pia.gov.ph/default.asp?m=12&fi=p070423.htm&no=31>).

▶ TRADE, FINANCE AND INVESTMENT

WTO DISCUSSIONS ON MEA OBSERVER STATUS CONTINUE

An informal meeting of the Committee on Trade and Environment Special Sessions (CTE-SS) met on 30 March 2007 to discuss a 'non paper' submitted by Canada regarding the observer status of multilateral environmental agreements (MEAs) in the World Trade Organization (WTO). The paper seeks to bridge the disagreement between the EU and the US on how and in which cases to grant observer status to MEA secretariats within WTO proceedings. The next formal meeting

of the CTE-SS will be on 3-4 May 2007, for which Canada is expected to present an official submission of its 'middle-ground' proposal (ICTSD Bridges, <http://www.ictsd.org/weekly/07-04-04/wtoinbrief.htm#3>).

WORLD BANK SUPPORTS INTEGRATED SOLAR COMBINED CYCLE POWER IN MOROCCO

The World Bank approved, on 19 April 2007, a US\$ 43.2 million project to diversify Morocco's power generation mix. The main objective of the project is to demonstrate

and encourage replication of integrated solar combined cycle power generation technology in Morocco and elsewhere in the world. The proposed project is one of a number of similar projects in the world to be supported by the GEF as part of a program to accelerate cost reduction and commercial adoption of large-scale non-carbon emitting generation technologies (<http://web.worldbank.org/external/projects/main?Projectid=P041396&Type=Overview&theSitePK=40941&pagePK=64283627&menuPK=64282134&piPK=64290415>).

▶ COMINGS AND GOINGS

- Peter Kenmore was appointed **Co-Executive Secretary of the Rotterdam Convention on the Prior Informed Consent Procedure for Certain Hazardous Chemicals and Pesticides in International Trade** and Chief of the Plant Protection Service of the UN Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO). His appointment was effective 27 February 2007 (<http://www.pic.int/home.php?type=t&id=167>).



Peter Kenmore

▶ KEY UPCOMING MEA MEETINGS

- **SEVENTH SESSION OF UN FORUM ON FORESTS:** 16-27 April 2007. New York, US. <http://www.iisd.ca/forestry/unff/unff7/>
- **SECOND MEETING OF THE OPEN-ENDED AD HOC WORKING GROUP ON NON-COMPLIANCE:** 25-27 April 2007. Dakar, Senegal. http://www.pops.int/documents/meetings/cop_3/default.htm
- **THIRD MEETING OF THE UNCCD IIWG:** 26-28 April 2007. Namibia. <http://www.unccd.int/convention/jiu/menu.php>
- **9TH SESSION OF IPCC WORKING GROUP III AND 26TH SESSION OF IPCC:** 30 April-4 May 2007. Bangkok, Thailand. <http://www.iisd.ca/climate/ipwg3/>
- **THIRD MEETING OF THE CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES TO THE STOCKHOLM CONVENTION ON PERSISTENT ORGANIC POLLUTANTS:** 30 April-4 May 2007. Dakar, Senegal. <http://www.iisd.ca/chemical/pops/cop3/>
- **FIFTEENTH SESSION OF THE COMMISSION ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT:** 30 April-11 May 2007. New York, US. <http://www.iisd.ca/csd/csd15/>



UNFF7 delegates during the discussion of the Multi-Year Programme of Work (MYPOW) for the period 2007-2015