



A Special Report on Selected Side Events at the Ninth Conference of the Parties (COP 9) to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD)

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Events convened on Monday, 19 May 2008

Innovative MEA Implementation: Capacity Enhancement for ACP countries

Presented by: UNEP Division of Environmental Law and Conventions



Marko Berglund, UNEP, described the role that the ACP Regional Hubs will play in facilitating the implementation of environmental agreements in member countries.

Elizabeth Mrema, UNEP, provided an overview of an EC-sponsored programme to build capacity for the implementation of multilateral environmental agreements (MEAs) in African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) countries. She described the programme's two main components: first, to utilize the ACP Regional Hubs to enhance capacity for compliance, implementation and enforcement of MEAs in their respective regions; and second, to address the specific themes of climate change, desertification, biodiversity, and the management of obsolete pesticides. She described the governance and funding of the programme, noting a total budget of over 21 million Euros.

Kate Brown, Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP), provided an overview of SPREP's role in promoting cooperation in protecting the environment and promoting sustainable development. She described SPREP's role as a Regional Hub, noting that it will focus on implementing MEAs in 14 member countries. She listed the programme's expected results, including facilitation of national reporting and stakeholder capacity building.

Marko Berglund, UNEP, presented on the African and Caribbean Regional Hubs, which are coordinated by the Commission of the African Union and the CARICOM Secretariat, respectively. He noted that the overall objective of the programme is to improve the state of the environment in ACP countries in line with the Millennium Development Goals, and to strengthen capacity to address sustainability and environmental priorities.

Inès Chaalala, UN Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD), described the Global Mechanism of the UNCCD and the role that it plays in mainstreaming desertification into national policies and enhancing knowledge of financing sources. She said that UNCCD activities will focus on building capacity and interregional bridges, and supporting the implementation of National Action Plans within ACP countries.

Linda Collette, FAO, highlighted the objectives of the thematic sub-component on reducing the use of obsolete pesticides, including: raising awareness; building capacity; preventing the re-accumulation of obsolete pesticide stocks; and facilitating the review of relevant legislation within ACP countries.

Jaime Webbe, CBD, described objectives related to enhancing the implementation of the CBD, including: increasing stakeholder participation and engagement; mainstreaming biodiversity issues across sectors and within development plans; increasing technical capacity for implementation; and strengthening partnerships.

Participants discussed the harmonization of national reporting, and how countries were selected for participation in the programme.

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Ecological, Economic, Cultural and Social Benefits of Protected Areas: Launch of SCBD Publication "The Value of Nature"

Presented by the Secretariat of the CBD

Lea M. Scherl, The Nature Conservancy, speaking on the contribution of protected areas to poverty reduction, presented four country studies on marine protected areas (PAs) and explained their implications for the current policy debate. The four marine PAs under consideration contributed to poverty reduction through: increased fish catches; new jobs; better local governance; benefits to health; benefits to women; more social cohesion; and the revival of traditional customs and values. Finally, she also stressed that the link between conservation and poverty reduction should be better addressed at this COP.

Liza Higgins-Zogib, WWF International, explained the linkages between faith, spirit, sacred sites and biodiversity conservation. She noted that sacred sites occur in thousands of official protected areas around the world and for many local communities, sacred sites are the most compelling argument for protection. She concluded that well-managed protected areas have a role to play in protecting spiritual heritage and that success in co-managing for faith and nature is likely a matter of developing effective and trusting partnerships between stakeholders involved.

Rosimeiry Portela, Conservation International, described the benefits of PAs at multiple scales focusing on international science and practice and the development of appropriate indicators. Her main recommendations regarding the protection of areas for biodiversity were to: recognize that benefits extend to users at different scales; consider the heterogeneous spatial distribution of biodiversity value, ecosystem services, threats and opportunities; account for costs and trade offs; and use innovative ways to fund biodiversity conservation.

Jenny Asch, Ministry of Environment and Energy, Costa Rica, and Jorgeli Rodriguez, Territorio Indigena Talamanca BriBri, described "La Amistad," which is an international park between Costa Rica y Panama with an extension of 1.24 million hectares, which comprises seventeen PAs and twelve indigenous territories. They explained the need for a development project related to this PA. The seventeen groups in the area have developed sustainable ecotourism activities with the involvement of women and positives outcomes for local people.

Participants discussed the need to institutionalize monitoring in PAs and identified the need to strengthen institutional capacity as a key issue. In particular, the management of PAs should consist of a participatory process, which must be open to all actors though the implementation of a bottom-up approach for training and research. Participants also focused on the need to develop an effective partnership, the success of which may depend on respecting and understanding the spiritual and cultural values of a particular site.



Lea M. Scherl, The Nature Conservancy, emphasized the need to ensure that in situations where conservation activities affect people at the local level, those activities should strive to contribute to poverty reduction and, at least, should do no harm.



Liza Higgins-Zogib, WWF International, stressed that attempts to work with local communities and indigenous peoples must include a spiritual dimension: believers are for the most part untapped supporters of the global protected area network.

More information:

<http://www.conservation.org>

<http://www.nature.org>

<http://www.panda.org>

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Community Conserved Areas: from “oldest secret” to crucial avenue for the conservation for biodiversity

Presented by IUCN’s TILCEPA

Grazia Borrini-Feyeraband, Theme on Indigenous and Local Communities, Equity and Protected Areas (TILCEPA), outlined the definition of Community Conserved Areas (CCAs) and noted that they are used to describe natural and modified ecosystems. She emphasized that CCAs have three defining characteristics, including: a well-defined link between natural resource availability and communities; community involvement in decision making processes; and conservation with communities’ participation.

Ashish Kothari, TILCEPA, noted that a number of areas protected by local communities were not necessarily formed for the protection of biodiversity. He observed that a number of the CCAs formed in India had been established due to threats on local natural resources. Kothari underscored the need to legally recognize CCAs and formalize land tenure.

Maurizio Farhan Ferrari, Forest Peoples Programme, presented a study of a community in the Dolomites, who have developed a civil code over the last thousand years, which is now established as law. He explained that the revenues the community receives from use of natural resources are then reinvested to finance the continued land management of the area.

M. Taghi Farvar, Commission on Environmental, Economic and Social Policy, presenting on nomadic pastoralist tribes in Iran as a case study of CCAs, lamented that the tribes had faced much instability over the preceding hundred years due to political upheaval. He stressed the local knowledge of the land and the strong indigenous knowledge system that was present within the tribes.

Juan Chavez Munoz, Interethnic Association for the Development of the Peruvian Amazon, stated that land encompassing both forest and wetlands was given back to the Shipibo Kinobo tribes of Peru. He highlighted that a number of natural resources within these lands were not harvested as the areas were sacred.

Chandrika Sharma, International Collective in Support of Fishworkers, emphasized that the nature of the marine environment meant that CCAs were difficult to discuss in this context. She underscored the need for better land management and the conservation of coastal and fisheries resources due to the strong link between marine resources and livelihoods.

Participants discussed a number of issues, including: the importance of property rights and land titles for communities to control and benefit from natural resources; the lack of local participation in conservation efforts within Africa; the vulnerability of land from over-population pressures; and the pitfalls that CCAs can avoid by sharing lessons learned.



Ashish Kothari, TILCEPA, noted that threats to CCAs included countries attempting to reach 10% GDP growth and the inappropriate imposition of government programmes on local communities.



Grazia Borrini-Feyeraband, TILCEPA, lamented that some states do not recognize CCAs as a form of conservation, and highlighted that they are valuable due to the wealth of local and customary knowledge, as well as preserved biodiversity.

More information:

<http://www.tilcepa.org>

<http://www.tger.org>

<http://www.iucn.org/themes/ceesp/CCA/>

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Interlinkages Between Biological and Cultural Diversity: towards a joint UNESCO-CBD Secretariat Programme

Presented by UNESCO and the Secretariat of the CBD

Jo Mulongoy, CBD Secretariat, highlighted the codependence between biodiversity and culture, and welcomed the joint UNESCO-CBD programme.

Lisa Janishevski, CBD Secretariat, commented on the mutually reinforcing nature of culture and biodiversity, and detailed references to people and culture within the CBD, especially Article 8(j) which seeks to preserve traditional knowledge and encourage equitable benefit sharing.

Ana Persic, UNESCO, introduced the joint programme and elaborated on its aim to enhance the link between biological and cultural diversity at the scientific, practical and normative levels and develop innovative and integrated approaches to ensure the sustainability of environmental and human wellbeing. This aim, she explained, will be pursued in three main ways: developing conceptual and methodological frameworks; integrating cultural diversity in multilateral environmental agreements, and biological diversity in other international treaties; and enhancing working relationships between related organizations and bodies.

Joji Cariño, Tebtebba Foundation, discussed the role of indigenous peoples in enhancing the links between biological and cultural diversity. She highlighted the eco-centric nature of indigenous cultural systems, highlighting the need to rejuvenate this "biocultural heritage" in a contemporary setting. Cariño highlighted the need for traditional lifestyles to be valued according to their positive contribution to the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity.

Pablo Eyzaguirre, Biodiversity International, highlighted Biodiversity International's promotion of traditional production systems compatible with biodiversity conservation, and provided examples of community projects designed to develop the relationship between agrobiological and cultural diversity.

Rieks Smeets, UNESCO, presented on a number of UNESCO conventions addressing the protection of culture. On the 2003 UNESCO Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage, he stated that it aims to engage communities in the enactment and transmission of cultural heritage with a view to safeguarding expressions, practices, knowledge and skills that are in conformity with human rights.

Participants discussed four related elements. Formal education was criticized for the negative effect it has on the transmission of local knowledge and cultural practice. In this context, one participant raised the conflict between preserving local culture and human migration. Biocultural landscapes were promoted as useful frameworks with which to protect culture and biodiversity in a time of environmental change and social adaptation. The breadth and depth of debate about this issue being conducted as part of the access and benefit sharing negotiations was highlighted as a rich reference source for the latest legal developments in this area.



Pablo Eyzaguirre, Biodiversity International, presented on a number of examples of the mutual reinforcement of agrobiological and cultural diversity.



Rieks Smeets, UNESCO, presented on a number of UNESCO conventions aimed at protecting culture.

More information:

<http://www.unesco.org/mab/biodiv.shtml>

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