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INCD HIGHLIGHTS THURSDAY, 10 AUGUST 1995

WORKING GROUP I

The Group, Chaired by Algeria's **Mourad Ahmia**, begun consideration of Agenda Item 2, Preparation for the Conference of the Parties. The Chair proposed a work programme for the Group which was adopted without objection.

DESIGNATION OF A PERMANENT SECRETARIAT AND ARRANGEMENTS FOR ITS FUNCTIONING

The Secretariat introduced document A/AC.241/34, which analyses two separate but related issues; administrative arrangements for the functioning of the Secretariat and the physical location. He said there is need to consider administrative costs and overheads and the possibility of the Secretariat receiving services from various sources. Several countries have indicated their interest. As a follow-up, organizations interested in providing administrative arrangements and countries wishing to host the Secretariat should submit their written offers, using criteria contained in the Annexes.

Spain, on behalf of the EU, and supported by several delegations including Benin, Canada and Australia, said the Secretariat document provided a good basis for work. The process should be transparent.

Uganda, on behalf of the G-77 and China, presented a draft decision that focuses on the administrative arrangements. It suggests that: the Permanent Secretariat (PS) should be linked to the Secretariat of the UN; invites all international institutions to support the PS including by secondment of staff; the GA transfer the financial costs of the core staff and operating expenses of the Interim Secretariat to the PS; the GA should consider providing conference services for the COP and its subsidiary bodies; and these arrangements should be reviewed at COP-3.

There was general consensus to follow the Secretariat's proposals, but that timelines should be set for the written submissions and when the Secretariat would report back to the INCD. Some delegations also suggested that the two processes of identifying the organization and the location be considered separately. Morocco, Spain and WMO proposed additional criteria to the annexes.

Germany, Kenya, Spain and Switzerland indicated their interest to host the Permanent Secretariat.

Although several delegations considered the G-77 and China's proposal "interesting" and worthy of consideration, they questioned the wisdom of preparing a draft decision at this time. G-77 members argued that this was necessary in view of the fact that the CCD may enter into force in 1996 and the 1995 General

Assembly will consider the biennial work programme that would cover CCD activities.

The Chair then read a draft decision on the location of the Permanent Secretariat, which delegates said should be considered during the informal consultations during the second week.

IDENTIFICATION OF AN ORGANIZATION TO HOUSE THE GLOBAL MECHANISM

The Chair introduced the documents including the request for proposals to host the Global Mechanism (GM) and replies received from IFAD, UNDP, UNEP and the World Bank (A/AC.241/33) and the reply of the GEF (A/AC.241/33/Add.1).

Uganda, on behalf of the G-77 and China, supported by Guinea, Benin, Mali, Senegal, the Philippines, Lesotho, Ethiopia, Bolivia and Syria, said GM host proposals responded to little guidance with limited information. The G77 and China will submit a proposal requesting additional and complementary information including modalities and operations, relations between the COP and the host institution, financial mobilization and accountability of resources. He requested the Interim Secretariat to prepare additional guidelines and terms of reference.

Spain, on behalf of the EU, supported by Switzerland and Australia, said the GM is not a fund in itself but a facilitator of existing finances. Delegates must decide on modalities and the GM's detailed functions, taking into account the resources and capacity of interested organizations. Modalities, including administration and finance of the GM, should be discussed in an informal document for INCD-8.

Switzerland said the GM cannot have the possibility of fundraising but should be a facilitator and an advisor.

The UK said that the GM's modalities are related to the choice of a host organization because only the COP can agree with the host organization on modalities. There is overlap between the GM's role and the COP's financial responsibilities, so the Interim Secretariat should summarize possible GM roles in the CCD's financial provisions.

Senegal called for a study to clarify some vague aspects of the GM. For the GM only to forward information is not enough; it must also play a role in ensuring necessary funds even if it is not called fundraising.

Tunisia, supported by Ethiopia, expressed concern over the discussion of modalities of the GM only as facilitator and clearing house for financial resources.

China, supported by Algeria and Iran, said the GM's function is to ensure affected countries are easily able to obtain financing. Delegates cannot consider the GM without its role as a funding mechanism.

This issue of the *Earth Negotiations Bulletin* © <enb@econet.apc.org> is written and edited by Elisabeth Corell <elico@tema.liu.se>, Wagaki Mwangi <econews@mukla.sasa.unep.no> and Steve Wise <swise@econet.apc.org>. French translation by Mongi Gadhoun <gad@tunisia.eu.net>. The managing editor is Langston James Goree VI "Kimo" <kimo@pipeline.com>. The sustaining donors of the *Bulletin* are the International Institute for Sustainable Development <iisd@web.apc.org>, the United Nations Environment Programme and the Pew Charitable Trusts through the Pew Global Stewardship Initiative. General support for the *Bulletin* for 1995 is provided by the United Kingdom, Switzerland, GTZ, and the World Bank. Partial funding for this volume of the *Bulletin* has been provided by the United States Department of Agriculture and by ACCT for the French translation. During the session the authors can be contacted at tel: (254) 2 211199 and fax: (254) 2 217120. 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 *Earth Negotiations Bulletin* are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the views of IISD and other funders. Excerpts from the *Earth Negotiations Bulletin* may be used in other publications with appropriate citation. Electronic versions of the *Bulletin* are automatically sent to e-mail distribution lists (ASCII and PDF format) and can be found on the gopher at <gopher.igc.apc.org> and in searchable hypertext through the *Linkages* WWW-server at <http://www.iisd.ca/linkages/> on the Internet.

The **US** said the Interim Secretariat, with input from a small informal group, should write a guidance document to deal with the scope, functions and modalities of GM, drawing from relevant convention provisions.

The **IFAD** said the GM's role can be cast as low or high potential. A minimalist GM would identify resource gaps but would not be able to do more. The high potential approach would encompass active efforts to mobilize, catalyze and leverage financial resources.

ELCI, on behalf of NGOs, said the GM should mobilize funds for a process approach, not just projects, including awareness raising and popular participation.

Mauritania called for IFAD to try a high intensity proposal, but he said a quick decision was not necessary. **Benin** said it was not the time to assess specific offers. **Morocco** said existing offers could provide ideas for defining and selecting the GM.

The Chair asked delegates to submit recommendations in writing on how to further develop guidelines for the GM. Those that are submitted will be circulated to delegates, and after consideration of the procedure, discussion on the GM will resume Monday.

WORKING GROUP II

The Chair, **Takao Shibata** (Japan), opened the first session of Working Group II, which considered science and technology cooperation (A/AC.241/37) and the draft rules of procedure of the COP (A/AC.241/38).

COMMITTEE ON SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

Canada, supported by the US, the EU and India, suggested that the Secretariat could combine comments on its document with the informal paper the OECD scientific advisers have produced under Canada's guidance. The Committee on Science and Technology (CST) should provide advice, evaluate institutions and networks, recommend areas of research appropriate to support the CCD and evaluate the scientific aspects of implementation. Although open to all, the CST needs a smaller Bureau or core group to direct its operation. The COP should specify criteria for the roster of experts, possibly including membership in international scientific associations, degrees, and field experience.

India suggested various topics for CST consideration, including integrated land use planning, improved rangeland management, improved dryland farming techniques and sand dune stabilization.

The **US** said the CST should not conduct or fund new research. It should provide advice to the COP and distribute information based on the past 20 years of research. The CST should be multidisciplinary and diverse, but its size and cost should be kept to a minimum; one member per Party.

Australia said at the request of the COP, the CST could commission specialized research to identify special scientific approaches. It should not have its own scientific agenda.

Kenya said the first meeting of the CST should take a multidisciplinary approach to capacity building, institutional strengthening, technology and information transfer, and financial support to affected countries.

Benin, supported by Tunisia, said delegates cannot speak of reduction or limitation of CST membership. It must be open and multidisciplinary. Requiring international scientific membership would be discriminatory to developing country scientists.

Colombia, speaking in behalf of G-77 and China, said the Group will submit a written proposal later.

Regarding the number of experts on the roster, **Switzerland** agreed with Canada that it should be limited. **Norway** concurred, adding that the roster should make available a list of developing countries experts, to avoid using foreign expertise. **Kenya** said the roster should be organized in subregions. **Spain**, on behalf of the EU, said that experts with a holistic approach should be included.

France said the role of the CST is to answer questions from the COP; not to create knowledge but to assemble it. **Brazil** said

the CST should be free to take initiatives with the permission of the COP. The NGO network **RIOD** emphasized the innovative approach in the CCD and said the CST should include indigenous knowledge and capacities.

Japan recommended that a small, informal experts group should discuss CST member qualifications before COP-1.

Benin, supported by **France** and **WMO**, suggested that a small group of 10 experts, two from every geographic region, should meet to consider the proposals on the CST. **Iran**, **Senegal** and **Canada** suggested different numbers for a possible group. The Secretariat could compile the views into a document for consideration Tuesday. The **Chair** agreed to meet representatives of the regional groups in an informal meeting on Monday to decide on the matter.

DRAFT RULES OF PROCEDURE FOR THE CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES

The Secretariat said document A/AC.241/38 was largely drawn from other Conventions and the CCD. There was general agreement that the document would form a good basis of work.

In **Rule 2** on definitions, a sub-paragraph is needed referring to the date of entry into force of the CCD. With respect to **Rule 3**, place of sessions, **Benin** said the decision on where the COP holds its meetings should be decided by the UNGA. Regarding **Rule 4**, dates of sessions, **Benin** suggested that an extraordinary session be held not more than 45 days after the submission of a written request, instead of the proposed 90 days.

Regarding **Rule 6**, participation of UN and specialized agencies, **Spain** preferred that their participation as observers be determined by consensus, not a minimum one-third vote.

Rule 9 on the preparation of the provisional agenda, **Benin** suggested replacing "President" with "Bureau" to provide for broader agreement. **Rule 10 (d)** concerns the agenda item on accounts and financial arrangements. **Brazil** proposed that the proposed budget should include that of the subsidiary bodies of the COP. **Uganda** said it should cover the proposed "programme and budget." **Benin** and **Uganda** provided two alternatives to **Rule 15**, reporting on administrative and budgetary implications, aimed at clarifying that substantive issues to be raised should have been submitted to the COP at least 48 hours before consideration.

With respect to **Rule 22**, election of officers, **Benin** suggested the addition to the Bureau of a seat for the small island developing states. **Iran** wanted each geographical region to have two representatives as well as the Chair of the CST, in the Bureau.

The **UK** proposed that **Rule 27** read: "Save as provided in Rule 28-31, the present rules shall apply" to all bodies.

Rule 30, on dates of meetings, drew protracted debate due to the lack of clarity on what is meant by "in conjunction with." **China** suggested that in **Rule 31** on election of officers, reference should be made to "chairperson" instead of "chairman." She suggested that similar language be adopted, as appropriate, in the entire document. Protracted debate followed **Canada's** proposal with respect to **Rule 35**, to have two rules: one for the COP and one for the subsidiary bodies, empowering each of the bodies to hold public meetings unless the body decides otherwise. Some argued these should be closed meetings unless the COP, or even the subsidiary body itself, decides otherwise.

THINGS TO LOOK FOR TODAY

WORKING GROUP I: The Group will discuss financial rules (A/AC.241/35), followed by consideration of the Programme and Budget (A/AC.241/36). Look for the draft decision on location of the Secretariat.

WORKING GROUP II: The Group will begin consideration of document A/AC.241/39, Procedures for Communication of information and review of implementation. They will then take up the remaining Sections of the draft Rules of Procedure of the Conference of the Parties.