



Earth Negotiations Bulletin

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#3

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HIGHLIGHTS FROM CCD COP-3 TUESDAY, 16 NOVEMBER 1999

Delegates to COP-3 heard opening statements by Parties, observers, UN agencies and international and non-governmental organizations during a morning Plenary session. They commenced work on the programme and budget and medium-term strategy in the Committee of the Whole (COW) during the afternoon. The Committee on Science and Technology (CST) deliberated on the roster of experts, the survey and evaluation of networks, and traditional knowledge, among other issues, during its first day of meetings.

PLENARY

Hama Arba Diallo, CCD Executive Secretary, presented an overview of the Secretariat's activities in 1999. He noted that many countries have drawn up National, Regional and Sub-regional Action Programmes and underscored the implementation, monitoring and assessment, and promotion of bottom-up programme synergies. GUYANA, on behalf of the G-77/CHINA, encouraged the Global Mechanism to adopt a more proactive role in identifying partners that will enable it to fulfill its mandate. She called for integrating the regional coordination units in Africa, Latin America and the Caribbean into the programme budget. Noting that further implementation of the CCD will depend on the ability of the CST to provide relevant information and advice to the COP, she said it should meet more frequently intersessionally and broaden its scope to include scientific and academic institutions in its work.

FINLAND, speaking for the EU, stressed the need to work constructively without losing sight of the overriding theme of reviewing CCD implementation. He stressed including actions to combat desertification as part of the mainstream development strategies of the affected countries as well as of the implementing agencies. LESOTHO, with COLOMBIA, said the Global Mechanism should support the elaboration of national reports and action programmes. Noting the important role of local and international NGOs in the implementation of NAPs, LEBANON called for improved coordination and efficiency of all actors involved in the NAPs.

The AFRICAN GROUP called for a COP-3 decision to establish a Committee to Review the Implementation of the Convention. He underscored the need for a medium-term strategy for the Secretariat and urged Parties to support the CCD Secretariat in the same way as they have supported the Secretariats of the other Rio Conventions. The REPUBLIC OF KOREA emphasized capacity building as essential to combating desertification. The Convention on Wetlands (RAMSAR) highlighted the strong synergies that exist

between it and the CCD and supported the CCD's document reviewing activities for the promotion of relationships with other relevant conventions.

The LEAGUE OF ARAB STATES outlined the activities of the Arab Centre for Studies of Arid Zones and Drylands (ACSAD) in addressing the effects of drought and desertification. The ARAB ORGANIZATION FOR AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT highlighted its experiences in implementing the CCD in the Arab region and its activities aimed at achieving sustainable development and food security. L'INSTITUT DE L'ENERGIE ET DE L'ENVIRONNEMENT DE LA FRANCOPHONIE highlighted its activities to achieve the long-term objective of combating desertification and, with ALGERIA, underscored the need to build partnerships and promote solidarity to combat desertification. UNDP stressed the important role of civil society in combating desertification. FAO outlined its activities to offer technical assistance to affected countries. UNESCO announced that a Memorandum of Understanding between UNESCO and the CCD to collaborate in the areas of science, education and training, and culture and communication would be signed during COP-3. FUNDAÇÃO GRUPO ESQUEL - BRAZIL, on behalf of the NGOs, called for a new commitment in the form of a Protocol that would set objectives and specific benchmarks for CCD implementation.

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

The COW considered and adopted the organization of work including review of outstanding items (ICCD/COP(3)/1 and Corr.1).

PROGRAMME AND BUDGET: On the programme and budget for biennium 2000-2001 (ICCD/COP(3)/2 and Add.1, ICCD/COP(3)/3 and Add.1, ICCD/COP(3)/4 and Add.1 and 2), the Secretariat underlined the main areas of budget growth as the need to provide efficient services to Parties, facilitate the preparation of national reports, and strengthen the administrative capacity of the Secretariat. She also noted the proposal to establish additional posts in 2000-2001 and the installation and maintenance in Bonn of the Integrated Management Information System (IMIS).

The EU said there was room to improve the transparency in the budget and called for a clear distinction in reporting between activities financed by the core budget and those by the extrabudgetary funds. She sought more information on, *inter alia*, the share of the Secretariat's personnel resources allocated to the CST and the basis for the post requirements proposed by the Secretariat.

MAURITANIA for G-77/CHINA suggested maintaining the contingency envisaged for conference costs until the UN General Assembly adopts a resolution to meet those costs. He sought clarification on, *inter alia*: the structure of the budget and its failure to

This issue of the *Earth Negotiations Bulletin* © <enb@iisd.org> is written and edited by Angela Churie <achurie@yahoo.com>, Jan-Stefan Fritz <j.fritz@lse.ac.uk>, Mark Schulman <markschulman@hotmail.com> and Lynn Wagner, Ph.D. <lynn@iisd.org>. The Editor is Pamela Chasek, Ph.D. <pam@iisd.org> and the Managing Editor is Langston James "Kimo" Goree <kimo@iisd.org>. Digital editing by Leila Mead <leila@interport.net>. The Sustaining Donors of the *Bulletin* are The Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Government of Canada (through CIDA), the United States (through USAID), the Swiss Agency for Environment, Forests and Landscape, the United Kingdom Department for International Development (DFID) and the European Commission (DG-XI). General Support for the *Bulletin* during 1999 is provided by the German Federal Ministry of Environment (BMU) and the German Federal Ministry of Development Cooperation (BMZ), the Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Government of Australia, the Ministries of Environment and Foreign Affairs of Austria, the Ministries of Foreign Affairs and Environment of Norway, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of Environment of Finland, the Government of Sweden, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), and the Global Environment Facility (GEF). The *Bulletin* can be contacted by e-mail at <enb@iisd.org> and at tel: +1-212-644-0204; fax: +1-212-644-0206. IISD can be contacted by e-mail at <info@iisd.ca> and at 161 Portage Avenue East, 6th Floor, Winnipeg, Manitoba R3B 0Y4, Canada. The opinions expressed in the *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 non-commercial publications only and only with appropriate academic citation. For permission to use this material in commercial publications, contact the Managing Editor. Electronic versions of the *Bulletin* are sent to e-mail distribution lists and can be found on the Linkages WWW server at <http://www.iisd.ca/linkages/>. The satellite image was taken above Costa Rica (c)1999 The Living Earth, Inc. <http://livingearth.com>. For information on the *Earth Negotiations Bulletin*, send e-mail to <enb@iisd.org>.



integrate the budget of the Global Mechanism into the Convention budget; the absence in the budget of costs associated with the regional coordination units; and the new and additional functions that require the use of the IMIS. Regarding the Annexed proposed Global Mechanism programme and budget, he noted that some of the activities outlined do not conform with the decision adopted by COP-1. CANADA, on behalf of JUSCANZ, called for informal-informal consultations to deliberate further on the budget. BENIN, on behalf of the AFRICAN GROUP, said the budget does not take into account the work of a Committee to Review Implementation of the Convention and requested clarification on the Global Mechanism resources for 1999 and the need to increase this budget item in 2000-2001.

REVIEW OF THE STATUS OF EXTRABUDGETARY FUNDS: The Secretariat introduced the documentation on the review of the status of extrabudgetary funds (ICCD/COP(3)/3 and Add.1) containing a summary for the activities carried out in the first half of 1999. EGYPT said more consideration of supplementary funds should be given to Africa.

MEDIUM-TERM STRATEGY: On the medium-term strategy of the Secretariat (ICCD/COP(3)/6), CANADA noted its concern that the Convention does not provide an operational role for the Secretariat, despite some language in the medium-term strategy indicating otherwise. The G-77/CHINA regretted that there were no specific proposals to reformulate the medium-term strategy. He also asked for clarification between reference units and information and communication systems. As the medium-term strategy and the review of the status of extrabudgetary funds were not scheduled for discussion Tuesday afternoon, the EU reserved its right to revisit the agenda item after consultations within its group. COW Chair Ashe said he would convene informal-informal consultations on the programme and budget including the status of the extrabudgetary funds and the medium-term strategy, during which the Secretariat could respond to the Parties' questions.

COMMITTEE ON SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

The CST, chaired by Moses Munemo (Zimbabwe), elected Ola Smith (Canada) and Carlos Valarezo (Ecuador) as Vice-Chairs. Additional Vice-Chairs will be elected at a later date. The Secretariat called attention to three new documents: ICCD/COP(3)/CST/14 Add.1/Corr.1 on the roster of experts and two conference room papers on meetings in Niamey and Beijing concerning Early Warning Systems. Delegates adopted the agenda (ICCD/COP(3)/CST/1) with those additions.

ROSTER OF EXPERTS: On the roster of experts (ICCD/COP(3)/CST/14, Add.1 and Add.1/Corr.1), the Secretariat noted the need for more balance in terms of gender and disciplines. JAPAN asked about the distinction between different disciplines specified on the roster, such as biology, ecology and botany. SPAIN asked how the Secretariat would ensure a greater gender balance. BENIN said the number of female experts can be small in some countries. MALAWI stressed the need to make a deliberate statement favoring women to include existing female experts. FRANCE, supported by others, suggested that information be supplied on the uses of the roster. Based on a proposal by EGYPT and others, an open-ended working group, chaired by Vice-Chair Smith (Canada), convened.

SURVEY AND EVALUATION OF NETWORKS: Timo Maukonen (UNEP) presented progress on Phase 1 of the survey and evaluation of existing networks supporting the implementation of the Convention (ICCD/COP(3)/CST/4) and introduced proposals for Phase 2, which he said will consider ways of strengthening networks to improve CCD implementation.

The NETHERLANDS expressed concern with the document's lack of information on the links between networks, indigenous knowledge and NAPs, and the proposed costs of Phase 2, among others. CANADA and the US suggested focusing efforts on addressing the problems UNEP identified in its report on Phase 1 before beginning Phase 2. FRANCE with others noted that Phase 2 should focus on small scale and thematically narrowly focused activities at the sub-regional level. ARGENTINA sought clarification on what constitutes "small scale." BELGIUM stressed the need to limit expenses. SENEGAL suggested that existing work should be consolidated and lessons learned highlighted before initiating Phase 2. He proposed focusing Phase 2 on Africa. MALI suggested that only African consortium members should continue in Phase 2 as a means of encouraging sub-regional networks and controlling costs.

The Chair proposed that an open-ended group, including Argentina, Canada (convener), France, the Netherlands, Senegal, the US and UNEP, should work out details as to which region or sub-region Phase 2 would consider, its topical focus and method of implementation. EGYPT said this group was biased against an implementation of Phase 2.

BODIES DOING WORK OF RELEVANCE TO CST: The Secretariat noted that the update on this issue (ICCD/COP(3)/CSD/5) incorporates the one submission it received since COP-2. Delegates requested the Secretariat to draft a decision calling for continued updates to the document.

BENCHMARKS AND INDICATORS: On benchmarks and indicators (ICCD/COP(3)/5 and Add.1, Add.1(A), Add.2, Add.2(A)-(E), Add.3, Add.3(A), Add.4 and Add.5), NORWAY stressed that future national reporting should give more attention to gender issues. The Observatoire du Sahara et du Sahel (OSS) suggested that the CST recommend strengthening programmes on the ground to test the indicators, with a view to establishing permanent testing. Noting the Gambia's report and its efforts to apply the indicators, JAPAN suggesting discussion the type of numerical indicators that could be used to understand the achievements of different countries. CILSS highlighted the need for capacity building in using the indicators.

TRADITIONAL KNOWLEDGE: The Secretariat introduced its synthesis report on traditional knowledge (ICCD/COP(3)/CST/2) and the report of the *Ad Hoc* Panel (ICCD/COP(3)/CST/3). On the synthesis report, BRAZIL highlighted the need for initiatives that could revive traditional models. UNESCO noted its activities on traditional knowledge. SUDAN highlighted the priority of traditional knowledge. On the Panel's recommendations regarding implementation of NAP, BRAZIL suggested ongoing evaluations of cost-benefit ratios of technologies and their ecological effectiveness. TANZANIA suggested establishing a system to monitor threats to traditional knowledge. CANADA said care should be taken if the recommendation to reappoint the Panel is approved to ensure it is given realistic terms of reference. DENMARK said reappointing the Panel may not be the best way forward and suggested that national reports contain the information in the Panel's other recommendations.

THINGS TO LOOK FOR TODAY

COW: The COW will convene in the Plenary Hall during morning and afternoon sessions to consider, *inter alia*, headquarters arrangements and implementation of the Convention.

CST: The CST will convene in the Main Committee Hall during morning and afternoon sessions to continue its discussion of traditional knowledge and to discuss Early Warning Systems.