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#6

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HIGHLIGHTS FROM CCD COP-3 FRIDAY, 19 NOVEMBER 1999

CCD COP-3 delegates dialogued with NGOs in a Plenary session and concluded the third session of the CST on Friday morning. The met briefly in an afternoon Plenary to review the first week's progress and then convened in the COW to hear reports on the Global Mechanism and from the International Fund for Agricultural Development. On Saturday, informal consultations continued considering the medium-term strategy, cooperation between conventions, implementation of the Convention and the programme and budget.

PLENARY

DIALOGUE WITH NGOs: CCD Executive Secretary Diallo highlighted the important role NGOs play in facilitating grassroots participation. MORABI (Cape Verde) made a presentation of the successful partnership that exists between government, NGOs and civil society, particularly the role of farmers' associations and women, in the Cape Verdian NAP process. She added that municipal-level programmes form the basis to initiate many national programmes and noted the serious problem NGOs face due to inadequate financing and institutional capacity building. The ASSOCIATION FOR VOLUNTEERS FOR DEVELOPMENT (Burkina Faso) focused its presentation on support to partnership activities and emphasized the need to involve all stakeholders in decision-making and monitoring of implementation. The DESERT RESEARCH FOUNDATION (Namibia) outlined its experiences in the management of partnerships. She stressed the need for long-term partnerships with stakeholders through community-based organizations and the participation of women.

Noting the central role of NGOs in CCD implementation, the EU suggested dedicating more time in the COP's work programme to NGOs. NORWAY reiterated the link between participation by civil society, human rights and democracy. EGYPT called for elaboration of criteria, guidelines and responsibilities to assess and help improve the performance of NGOs. ICELAND, with BRAZIL, SYRIA and MONGOLIA, encouraged Parties to ensure broad involvement of civil society stakeholders in the NAP process. He called on RIOD, the CST and others to establish indicators for NGO involvement. UZBEKISTAN stressed the importance of jointly developing projects for CCD implementation. AUSTRALIA noted the need for strategic interventions to control the serious problems of land degradation and associated economic and social threats. ALGERIA underlined the need for a decentralized process with more power given to grassroots and local communities. CHILE noted the role NGOs play in training and awareness campaigns. ARGENTINA noted the need for adequate

institutional participation, increased management capacities, networking and funds. ARMENIA, with CHINA, urged donors and Parties to support the work of NGOs. He said he looked forward to a fifth annex to the convention to promote CCD implementation in Central and Eastern Europe. CAMEROON noted the lack of access to credit and land as constraints to women's involvement in the desertification process. MAURITANIA said procedures of financing organizations should be revised and national programmes should find financing to reinforce the actions of NGOs. The AFRICAN-AMERICAN ISLAMIC INSTITUTE emphasized streamlining procedures to access funding for grassroots desertification projects. PAKISTAN called for desertification funding from the GEF while KENYA and NIGERIA supported the need for national development funds.

COW AND CST REPORTS: The Plenary convened in the afternoon to consider reports by the COW and CST. COW Chair Ashe reported that the COW had met 3 times and had made substantial progress. A number of outstanding issues are still being considered informally. CST Chair Munemo said the CST had concluded its work and drafted decisions on the roster of experts, benchmarks and indicators, traditional knowledge, EWS and the programme of work for the CST. The EU requested including the review of CCD implementation on the CST-4 agenda. Delegates agreed to postpone consideration of arrangements for the functioning of the permanent secretariat until consultations were completed.

OTHER STATEMENTS: PERU, for the Latin American and Caribbean group, noted that the countries were in the process of drafting NAPs. She requested including in the Secretariat a position for a technical secretary to support the efforts of these countries.

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

REPORT ON THE GLOBAL MECHANISM (GM): Per Rydén (GM Managing Director) presented the Review of the Report on Policies, Operational Modalities and Activities of the GM (ICCD/COP(3)/11) and the Operational Strategy for the GM (ICCD/COP(3)/CRP.3). He said the GM requires its own resources to fulfill its function of partnership building and to assist countries to launch key activities. He noted that IFAD has provided US\$2.5 of the US\$10 million it promised when bidding to host it. The balance will be provided when other donors make contributions. The GM is currently building a database and Rydén requested delegates to complete a prepared questionnaire to ensure its design meets all stakeholders' interests.

BENIN, on behalf of the G-77/CHINA, called for establishing one staff position for each of three regional units: Africa, Latin America and Caribbean, and Asia. He also suggested that Facilita-

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tion Committee (FC) members nominate a focal point to act as a link with the GM. He stressed that the funds IFAD promised should be released and that the GM should make available a comprehensive inventory of bilateral and multilateral financial mechanisms. He added that the GM should have contact with the private sector. He hoped the operational strategy would be discussed in depth at COP-4. The EU underlined the need to mainstream desertification issues within the FC institutions and the need for the GM to avoid overlap with the CCD Secretariat. He questioned the GM's involvement in technical-oriented projects. On the operational strategy, he urged the GM to focus its activities on increasing the effectiveness of existing funding mechanisms and resources.

Responding to a request for reports on FC meetings, Rydén said the GM will begin acting as secretariat for the FC. He said whether the GM provides reports depends on the COP and noted that the major objective of building the database is to assist with the GM's inventory of existing resources. IFAD said each of the FC institutions has appointed a focal point. Regarding the US\$10 million, she said the money will be forthcoming.

Additional comments included: the need for the strategy's principles to be reflected in the form of concrete action plans (EGYPT); concern that the strategic initiative on carbon sequestration may cause controversy due to its consideration under UNFCCC (TANZANIA); the GM's role regarding new and additional resources for funding implementation activities (CHINA); the importance of a good communication strategy to inform Parties about activities (SENEGAL); the need for reports regarding FC meetings (ARGENTINA); and praise for the inclusion of self-evaluations in the report from the GM (SWITZERLAND). COW Chair Ashe asked the informal consultations facilitated by Michael Ellis (UK) to consider the issue further.

REPORT BY THE INTERNATIONAL FUND FOR AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT: Vera Weill-Hallé, on behalf of Takao Shibata (Assistant President of IFAD), presented the report of IFAD (ICCD/COP(3)/12 and Add.1 and CRP.4), highlighting the high priority it places on desertification and participatory approaches to development and noted its strong collaboration with NGOs. She added that funds and technical grants are available to strengthen NGO and civil society partnerships. She also highlighted the work of FC members on CCD awareness raising and welcomed the recent membership of UNEP and FAO in the FC. BENIN, on behalf of the G-77/CHINA, noted that the report did not indicate what IFAD was doing to make available the US\$100 million it promised for projects linked to the Convention. IFAD confirmed its intention to devote such funds to dryland management.

REVISED DRAFT MOU BETWEEN THE COP AND IFAD: CCD Executive Secretary Diallo introduced the revised memorandum of understanding (MOU) (ICCD/COP(3)/10) for COP consideration. The EU noted its satisfaction with the revised draft MOU. MAURITANIA, on behalf of the G-77/CHINA, requested further study of the MOU and sought clarification on the role of IFAD in mobilizing funds. IFAD said it has demonstrated its commitment by releasing US\$2.5 million and encouraging the World Bank to supply funds. She said it is not necessarily envisioned that IFAD would mobilize funds directly, but it will assist as deemed appropriate by the GM. COW Chair Ashe asked the informal consultations chaired by Franklin Moore (US) to consult further on the MOU.

COMMITTEE ON SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

EARLY WARNING SYSTEMS (EWS): Vice-Chair Valarezo said an informal group had proposed to extend references to "early warning systems" to include "and desertification monitoring and

assessment." CHINA, JAPAN, KENYA and others endorsed this addition. NIGERIA proposed EWS "for desertification monitoring and assessment" while BRAZIL suggested EWS "for drought and desertification." FRANCE, SUDAN, SWITZERLAND and others supported maintaining reference to EWS only. The Secretariat suggested retaining the CST-2 reference to EWS "in their broadest sense" in the title and referring to EWS "and desertification monitoring and assessment" in the text. FRANCE, ECUADOR and others agreed. The NETHERLANDS proposed specifying that the *ad hoc* panel elaborate "on the following scientific" and technical topics rather than elaborate "on a selection of" topics. She also suggested linking the evaluation and prediction of drought to the follow-up of the UN Decade for Natural Disaster Reduction. BRAZIL protested the adoption of the evaluation and prediction text, citing a lack of discussion on it. The CST adopted the draft decision.

SURVEY AND EVALUATION OF NETWORKS: On behalf of an informal working group, Vice-Chair Smith presented proposed amendments to the draft decision. The NETHERLANDS, with the support of CANADA, FRANCE and others, suggested that contractual arrangements with UNEP as mentioned in the Preamble should make specific reference to Phase 1. EGYPT announced that the African Group had decided the pilot phase would be implemented in the Southern African sub-region. The draft decision was accepted.

CST PROGRAMME OF WORK: DENMARK reemphasized the need to relate the CST's work to implementation and suggested that CST-4 comment on the NAPs and country reports as they relate to the CST's work on traditional knowledge, EWS and indicators and benchmarks. CANADA suggested that the proposed examination of soil and water management could serve to examine the applications of traditional knowledge, indicators, and EWS monitoring and assessment to the sustainable management of soil and water resources for the effective implementation of NAPs. The US added a reference to "benchmarks" in addition to indicators and NORWAY suggested including consideration of similar and complimentary work done by other conventions. Delegates agreed to the CST-4 focus, as amended.

EGYPT thanked the CST Chair and Bureau for leading the Committee to reasonable draft decisions.

IN THE CORRIDORS

At the close of COP-3's first week, several participants voiced their disappointment over the apparent lack of enthusiasm to resolve outstanding issues on several agenda items. Murmurs in the corridors hint that a proposal for a Recife Mandate may be presented during the second week. Some delegates hope such a decision would serve to revisit and reaffirm Parties' commitments and reenergize the process.

THINGS TO LOOK FOR TODAY

PLENARY: The Special Segment will meet during the morning and afternoon in the Plenary Hall. Over thirty statements are expected from Ministers, government officials and heads of UN organizations.

COW: The COW is expected to meet at 3:00 pm to consider the additional regional implementation annex and programme of work for COP-4 and -5.

INTERPARLIAMENTARY ROUND TABLE: Parliamentarians will commence their round table during the morning.