



Earth Negotiations Bulletin

COP-3
#9

A Reporting Service for Environment and Development Negotiations

Vol. 4 No. 136 Published by the International Institute for Sustainable Development (IISD) Thursday, 25 November 1999

HIGHLIGHTS FROM CCD COP-3 WEDNESDAY, 24 NOVEMBER 1999

CCD COP-3 delegates heard 16 statements during a morning session of the Special Segment. They dialogued with NGOs during the afternoon on empowering women's role in the NAP process. Delegates also met for short morning and afternoon meetings in the COW to consider outcomes from informal consultations.

PLENARY

SPECIAL SEGMENT: Sixteen officials, including 1 Minister and 2 heads of international organizations, addressed the final session of the Special Segment.

LIBYA linked alleviating the effects of drought and combating desertification to food security. He expressed support for the Secretariat's efforts to make linkages with the other Rio conventions. He further supported the GM and its functions and expressed the need for an appropriate financing mechanism to enable his country to carry out its responsibilities and share experiences with other countries, especially in Africa. He noted that lifting the embargo on his country would allow it to gather funds to implement the CCD. KYRGYZSTAN highlighted its activities including holding a national forum that reached agreement on national priorities and considered legislative frameworks. IRAN stated that his country has adopted preventive and rehabilitative measures to combat desertification and said this experience provides a valuable asset. National activities in IRAN include the election of coordinators at the local level and the development of national, steering and executive committees. ZIMBABWE's analysis of past experience in combating desertification led to the identification of six priority programme areas: water, energy, poverty eradication, land rehabilitation, education and environmental information systems. His country has identified possible domestic funding sources, including national and local governmental bodies, NGOs and the private sector. He called for intensified partnership building with international partners and organizations.

PALAU noted that information about the CCD has not yet been made available to the public and decision-makers, which is a problem in a country increasingly affected by drought and desertification. He called on the CCD Secretariat to hold a regional meeting next year for small island States so that information can be shared on drought, erosion, land degradation and salinization, and asked for financial aid from the GM and donor countries for the meeting. COLOMBIA said the African country reports are important examples for other regions in the preparation of their reports. He

welcomed the annex for Central and Eastern Europe as a sign that drought and desertification are problems facing the whole world. He supported the medium-term strategy and the proposed Recife Mandate, which he highlighted as a valuable contribution to CCD implementation.

The ARAB MAGHREB UNION said his organization is willing to make its experience available and appealed to all able Parties to assist with the NAP implementation process. Activities to be undertaken by the AFRICAN DEVELOPMENT BANK (ADB) include playing an active role as a member of the GM's Facilitation Committee and building partnerships with African governments, NGOs and the private sector to ensure the effective use of African natural resources. The INTERGOVERNMENTAL AUTHORITY ON DEVELOPMENT (IGAD) outlined progress with its SRAP and noted that implementation is hampered by communication and infrastructure problems as well as financial and technical constraints. The FRAMEWORK CONVENTION ON CLIMATE CHANGE (FCCC) noted that, while collaboration has been initiated with the CCD, their synergies have not been fully exploited since negotiations have focused on few issues. He looked toward UNEP to play a strong role in coordinating the provision of public information, awareness and participation.

The CONVENTION ON BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY (CBD) noted several areas in which CBD and CCD issues overlap, including the upcoming CBD work programmes on dryland ecosystems and traditional knowledge and additions to that on forest biodiversity. He noted potential complementarities between Secretariat activities and programme development at national and regional levels, including through harmonized reporting processes. The AFRICAN ORGANIZATION FOR CARTOGRAPHY AND REMOTE SENSING outlined efforts for regional implementation, including facilitating the exchange of information and development of an integrated information system and monitoring the implementation of NAPs and SRAPs.

UNCTAD noted that its 1999 Least Developed Country Report highlights the links between trade and environmental protection, including combating desertification. He proposed helping countries use globalization for their own development ends and as a positive means of combating desertification. PAKISTAN noted that developed countries have an important responsibility to support CCD implementation in developing countries, and developing countries have an obligation to find financial and technical support from the private and non-governmental sectors. KAZAKHSTAN

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has established a monitoring network, will increase the number of indicators it is using and wants to test the impact indicator methodologies developed by the CCD. She said over 300 hundred NGOs are active in her country and that the country has signed the Aarhus Convention on Access to Information, Public Participation in Decision-Making and Access to Justice in Environmental Matters. DIACONIA (Brazil), on behalf of NGOs, regretted the smaller number of NGOs that received Secretariat funding to attend COP-3 compared with previous COPs, especially since many wanted to follow-up on the national reports in which they participated. She invited affected countries to create an adequate environment for NGO participation and said it is imperative to solve problems of external debt.

NGO DIALOGUE: EMPOWERING WOMEN'S ROLE IN THE NAP PROCESS: In his opening remarks, CCD Executive Secretary Diallo emphasized the need to strengthen the involvement of women in the desertification process, especially since women play a major role in natural resource management. He encouraged member States to better incorporate the involvement of women in the formulation and elaboration of NAPs.

Ruth Mubiru (Uganda) of the RIOD WOMEN'S CAUCUS stressed the need to strengthen the role of women in CCD implementation. She urged delegates and partners to support programmes for women through capacity building, training, awareness-raising, education and micro-credit loans. Maiga Sina Damba (Mali) of AFAD underlined a geographic approach, which includes national coordinating bodies with NGOs, and a category of actors approach, which includes working with civil society, women's organizations and others, to ensure the involvement of women in the NAP process. She noted the need for women to: identify development projects for women by women; acquire visibility in the decision-making process; promote decentralized, gender-oriented processes; and access financing mechanisms for gender awareness. Najwa Essiari (Morocco) of ENDA - MAGHREB stressed the importance of participatory processes and the need for equitable gender participation in NAPs. She noted the lack of women's involvement and gender awareness at the national level. Eudalda Torres (Brazil) of FUNDAÇÃO GRUPO ESQUEL DO BRASIL outlined her organization's activities in disseminating information about the risk of desertification and noted the importance of instituting a permanent and interactive relationship between NGOs, local, state, and national level governments. She added that gender equality must be stressed in all public actions and legislation. Enoch Okpara (Nigeria) of NEST noted the need to involve women in the rehabilitation of marginal and degraded land, particularly through integrated community projects. Jacqueline Nkoyok (Cameroon) of CONGAC outlined her organization's efforts to go into the field to devise an action plan that enables rural women to participate in the NAP process. She emphasized involving women in rural areas in activities to combat desertification through strengthening their capacities, providing education and information, giving them access to land resources and involving them in decision-making at the local level. She read a Women's Declaration for COP-3 stressing the importance of equitable participation of women in the NAP and desertification processes.

CHAD supported the declaration and noted the decisive role women play in socio-economic development by reducing poverty and contributing to stem desertification. BRAZIL stressed the importance of considering gender perspectives in NAPs.

FINLAND said women should be involved not only in CCD implementation, but at the decision-making level as well. ARGENTINA noted that gender issues must be integrated into the mainstream of all CCD related activities, rather than being treated as a distinctive issue. UNSO commented on the uniqueness of the NGO dialogue within the CCD process. SENEGAL suggested that it would be useful to consider gender as an evaluation criteria for development projects. SWEDEN noted with satisfaction that the role of women has maintained its level of priority in the CCD process since the very beginning, but asked whether the Convention has registered any difference regarding the status of women. He, along with MAURITANIA and others, suggested that national delegations should include more women.

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

The COW met briefly to adopt a draft decision on the programme of work for the COP. Franklin Moore (US) reported that the text of the draft decision was agreed upon by consensus and recommended it to the COW for adoption. The EU said the text was agreed to in the informal group with the understanding that some issues arising from other forthcoming decisions will be taken into account in the work programme. The COW adopted the draft decision.

COW Chair Ashe drew attention to a proposal by the Chair for a draft decision on the budget and requested the delegates to adopt it by consensus. The EU said it was not yet in a position to adopt the proposed draft decision and suggested continuing the informal consultations with a view to arriving at an early conclusion. The COW adopted the draft decision, noting the objection of the EU. Further consultations on this issue continue.

IN THE CORRIDORS I

Tension permeated the corridors Thursday as delegates were unable to reach consensus on the budget for the biennium 2000-2001 during the last meeting of the COW. Several delegates expressed deep concern that this standoff reflects negatively upon the spirit of partnership in the CCD and feared that it would have repercussions on the future implementation of the NAPs.

IN THE CORRIDORS II

NGOs participating in COP-3 voiced their optimism in CCD implementation at the country level. Many noted that, despite the difficulties encountered in the NAP process, the emerging benefits are surpassing their initial expectations. They reported positive developments in their relationships with their governments, with many already being actively involved in decision-making on key issues. They felt it was time for the partners to recognize the multiple benefits of the NAPs, which include empowerment of women and civil society and democratization.

THINGS TO LOOK FOR TODAY

PLENARY: The Plenary is expected to meet during the morning to consider for adoption the CST draft decisions.

INFORMAL CONSULTATIONS: Informal consultations will continue with a view to resolving all outstanding issues, including the GM, the MOU, the Recife Mandate and procedures for review of implementation.