



CCD COP-4

WEDNESDAY, 13 DECEMBER 2000

Delegates met in morning and afternoon sessions of the Committee on Science and Technology (CST) to consider the roster of experts, survey of networks, traditional knowledge and early warning systems. The Committee of the Whole (COW) met briefly in the morning and nominated the Co-Chairs of the Bureau of the *ad hoc* working group, after which it adjourned to facilitate regional group consultations. It convened again in the afternoon to consider programme and budget issues and decided to establish open-ended informal groups on these issues.

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

IMPLEMENTATION OF THE CONVENTION: Chair Mafura (Lesotho) reported that following informal consultations on Tuesday, the COP Bureau had resolved to constitute a five member bureau of the *ad hoc* working group that will review CCD implementation. The COW elected Willem van Cotthem (Belgium) and Mohammed Mahmoud El Ghaouth (Mauritania) to serve as Co-Chairs and be *ex-officio* members of the COP Bureau, on an exceptional basis.

The EU stressed that the Co-Chairs' appointment as *ex-officio* Bureau members is for COP-4 duration only. CHILE, speaking for the Latin American and Caribbean group, with NIGERIA and SYRIA, said the bureau members should reflect the UN regional balance. CANADA indicated it had proposals to address the reservations placed on the document on Implementation of the Convention (ICCD/COP(4)/2/Add.7), which lacks a detailed methodology for the working group, and supported the EU proposal made Tuesday to establish a contact group to discuss the nature and timing of the intersessional meetings. The G-77/CHINA said the group had not consulted on the matter and could not comment on the proposal. The COW adjourned until the afternoon to for allow consultations.

PROGRAMME AND BUDGET: CCD Deputy Executive Secretary Aira Kalela presented the Secretariat's Programme and Budget (ICCD/COP(4)/2, and Add.1-8). Only the reports on regional coordination units (RCUs) and ways to improve budgeting and reporting process were considered individually.

On RCUs, MAURITANIA, speaking for the G-77/China and supported by several developing countries, urged the COP to allocate, on a predictable basis, US\$420,000 to finance the core aspects of each of the three RCUs that are based in Mexico, Abidjan and Bangkok. He suggested establishing an informal group to consider the issue. He supported SWITZERLAND's

suggestion to consider drawing the funds from the Secretariat and the Global Mechanism (GM) operational budgets. CHINA offered partial support to the Asian RCU.

Noting the RCU's importance in South-South cooperation, the EU preferred mobilizing resources from member states and existing institutions, for example, the Sahara and Sahel Observatory. In response to JAPAN's question regarding the relation between the RCUs and CCD, ARGENTINA pointed to the regional coordination activities mentioned in the CCD's four regional implementation annexes. CANADA said the effort duplicated existing regional initiatives.

Chair Mafura then established an informal open-ended working group to consider the issue and report to the COW.

Delegates also discussed ways to improve budgeting and reporting, following the Secretariat's presentation of three approaches to budgeting, namely, programme-based, result-based and programme-based with an indication of the results. Although they acknowledged the need for transparency, they differed over whether to continue with the current programme-based approach, which is also used by the sister conventions, or the results-based approach used by UNDP and the UN Population Fund. The G-77/CHINA, and several developing countries, preferred programme-based budgeting. The EU opted for results-based budgeting, based on three work programs of the Secretariat, GM and CST, and also requested an audit of the base budget for the 2000-1 period to be submitted to COP-5. EGYPT said the proposals were techniques, not systems assuring transparency, and the techniques were currently under consideration in the UN. She referred to several UN resolutions to demonstrate how the EU's proposal would flout current UN budgeting rules. CANADA sought information on the latest General Assembly decisions on the matter.

Delegates then considered the last four sub-items collectively. The G-77/CHINA proposed allocating new resources to the *ad hoc* working group on early warning systems; noted the clean audit report but disagreed with a recommendation to do away with the small assessed contributions from UN member states; and sought clarification from the GM about a carry-over in the 1999 budget without COP approval, and a US\$2.5 million donation from IFAD that is not reflected in the report. The EU noted the large number of workshops and low level of CST activities, and requested elaborating a work programme for the next biennium with performance indicators, a distinction between the basic and extraordinary budgets and a reflection of the synergies with sister conventions. Another open-ended working group was established to consult on these sub-items and on the budgeting approach.



COMMITTEE ON SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

ELECTION OF VICE CHAIRS: Valentin Sofroni (Republic of Moldova) and Md. Nuruzzaman (Bangladesh) were elected to serve as CST Vice Chairs, along with Rafael Vilorio (Mexico) and Mebrahtu Iyassu (Eritrea), who will also act as Rapporteur.

ESTABLISHMENT OF A ROSTER OF EXPERTS: In introducing the roster of experts (ICCD/COP(4)/5 and Add.1), the Secretariat said that 14% of the 1510 experts are women, that some disciplines, including agriculture, are underrepresented and that Parties have not reported on the use of the roster.

On the underrepresented disciplines, EGYPT said agriculture is well represented through some of the other disciplines. CHINA said each country may have its own interpretation of the disciplines and requested the Secretariat to prepare a guiding structure for the disciplines.

Regarding the limited use of the roster, several delegates urged the CST to consider how to enhance its use. ITALY proposed that the CST start identifying research needs that the experts can work on. The NGO NETWORK ON DESERTIFICATION (RIOD) urged governments to include NGO and civil society experts in their submissions to the roster.

SURVEY AND EVALUATION OF NETWORKS: On this issue, the Secretariat noted the work carried out during Phase I and the terms of reference for a second phase involving a pilot in-depth survey in the southern African sub-region and maintenance and development of the database developed during Phase I.

A representative of the consortium led by UNEP that carried out the work presented their plan for Phase II. He said the consortium would, *inter alia*: identify and work with partners in the sub-region; establish a web forum hosting thematic discussions; and link up with other relevant networks and databases. He said the database will be operationalized through awareness campaigning, training and capacity building in the subregion.

In the ensuing discussion, KENYA supported early identification of network hubs, and, with SENEGAL and EGYPT, expressed concern at the slow rate of progress. MEXICO highlighted the need for synergies with similar efforts in other regions.

TRADITIONAL KNOWLEDGE: ITALY, on behalf of the *ad hoc* panel on traditional knowledge (TK), reported on the panel's work and outlined recommendations for future activities, including: establishing a web-based network, for which a first node has been set up in Italy; collecting and inventorying data; using copyright protection for TK; and establishing indicators and benchmarks for the purpose of protecting TK at the national level.

In the ensuing discussion, some participants called for a new approach to reconcile TK and modern knowledge.

On means of protecting TK, UNESCO noted the risks associated with copyright use and stressed a long-term approach to inventory, validate and examine the interrelationship between the people's ownership of TK and diffusion of the knowledge. MOROCCO questioned how using copyrights would work in practice, noting that individuals do not own such knowledge. He underscored raising awareness on the need to preserve this capital as key to protecting TK.

On further work for the panel on TK, WMO recommended research that integrates traditional and modern forecasts. JAPAN encouraged the use of indicators and benchmarks to measure the effectiveness of TK and understand its links with modern knowledge. The Chair invited ITALY to develop a proposal on a TK network.

EARLY WARNING SYSTEMS: JAPAN, speaking for the *ad hoc* panel on early warning systems (EWS), presented the panel's work and discussed the three focal areas addressed: data collection,

accessibility and integration; evaluation and prediction of drought and desertification, and measures of preparedness; and dissemination of information to end-users on EWS applications and desertification monitoring and assessment, as well as response mechanisms. He noted that strengthening existing systems is more important than establishing new ones, and recommended analyzing vulnerability, and linking TK with EWS. Several delegates supported reappointing the *ad hoc* Panel on EWS.

On further work for the panel, the US suggested that the panel's terms of reference specify tangible outputs. KENYA suggested addressing mechanisms to facilitate data collection and exchange. EGYPT proposed focusing on systems applicable to drylands.

The WMO called for, *inter alia*, development of vulnerability profiles, assessment of social and economic impacts of drought and establishment of coordinated and multidisciplinary institutions focusing on drought management and national drought policies. MEXICO asked whether there was a plan to assess the costs to communities due to the lack of preventive plans.

On the composition of the panel, ARGENTINA said it should be expanded to include experts with legal and administrative expertise.

FUTURE CST ACTIONS: Noting the large amount of information available, SOUTH AFRICA, supported by the US, NORWAY, SWEDEN, GUYANA, and CANADA proposed focusing on information management. The US underscored the need for a two-way information flow between communities and scientists. SENEGAL submitted the recommendations for further CST work elaborated by the African preparatory meeting held in October. Chair Smith then established a group to work on strategies for information sharing among stakeholders, which will report back to the CST on Thursday.

IN THE CORRIDORS

Consultations continued late on Wednesday to try and resolve differences on some organizational matters relating to the *ad hoc* working group on implementation, which is already a day late in commencing its work. According to some observers, the main divergences were over whether all reports should be reviewed before COP-5 and thus, whether there was a need for intersessional meetings and, if so, their duration. Also, there was still no agreement on whether to defer the issue to a contact group or consider it in the *ad hoc* working group.

THINGS TO LOOK FOR TODAY

PLENARY: Plenary will convene at 10:00 a.m. to elect the Co-Chairs of the *ad hoc* working group, nominated by the COW, and hear a statement by the GEF.

AD HOC WORKING GROUP: This group will convene immediately following the adjournment of Plenary to begin examining the reports on CCD implementation.

COMMITTEE ON SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY : The CST will convene at 10:00 a.m. Delegates will hear reports by the groups on scientific and technical information and on strategies for information management and continue discussing areas for further CST work.

SPECIAL EVENTS: A workshop on "The CCD as a framework for greater coherence between the scientific community and Development Cooperation in Central Asia," organized by the GTZ, BMZ, DesertNet and CCD Secretariat will take place in the press briefing room at 5:00 p.m.