



## CCD COP-5 HIGHLIGHTS: TUESDAY, 2 OCTOBER 2001

Delegates met in a morning Plenary to consider outstanding organizational issues and in two COW sessions that considered programme and budget issues. Three contact groups to consider further programme and budget, legal and CCD implementation aspects were established. The CST met in morning and afternoon sessions to consider organizational matters, the report of the CST Bureau, the survey and evaluation of networks, the roster of experts and improving CST efficiency and effectiveness.

### PLENARY

**Organizational Matters:** Delegates adopted the proposed organization of work (ICCD/COP(5)/1) and accredited intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations (ICCD/COP(5)/9). Accreditation of some NGOs (ICCD/COP(5)/9/Add.1) was deferred pending completion of processing of some requests. Delegates appointed Dagmar Kubinova (Czech Republic) as Rapporteur.

**General Statements:** CCD Executive Secretary Hama Arba Diallo elaborated on the Secretariat's interventions since COP-4 at national, subregional and regional levels, and its work with NGOs.

The G-77/CHINA noted, *inter alia*, the importance of the 2002-3 budget, the need for the Secretariat to strengthen the *Ad Hoc* Working Group (AHWG) on national reports and to adopt strategic decisions for the WSSD. They also supported the possibility of the GEF designating a focal area for land degradation. The EU stated the need to mainstream NAPs into national strategies for sustainable development, stressed the need to promote synergies between multilateral environmental agreements and supported GEF efforts to increase support for dryland management.

The AFRICAN GROUP highlighted progress made and constraints encountered in CCD implementation; welcomed the Executive Secretary's contract extension to 2004; and called for making the GEF the CCD's financing mechanism. The ASIAN GROUP noted the high number of CCD regional and sub-regional implementation plans, emphasized the need for partners to support national plans and projects and supported partnerships with other environmental agreements. GRULAC, *inter alia*, expressed hope for resolution of CST and implementation review issues and called for the Secretariat's support in the NAPs.

UNEP called for stronger global environmental governance with links to poverty alleviation, and stressed linkages between trade, land degradation and development, as well as the need to support local community participation. An NGO representative

outlined several issues of concern, including low prioritization of socio-economic issues and Parties' limited implementation capacity at the community level.

### COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

Chair Mohammed Jabbari (Iran) opened the first session of the Committee of the Whole (COW). Executive Secretary Diallo introduced the programme and budget (ICCD/COP(5)/2) items covering: the 2002-3 biennium (ICCD/COP(5)/2/Add.1 and Add.2); performance of the Convention's trust funds for 2000-1 (ICCD/COP(5)/2/Add.3); performance of the trust fund for supplementary activities in 2000-1 (ICCD/COP(5)/2/Add.4); regional coordination units (ICCD/COP(5)/2/Add.5); and status of contributions to the Convention's trust funds for 2000-1 (ICCD/COP(5)/2/Add.6). He recommended further consideration of a draft proposal that explores the establishment of common administrative services with the UNFCCC.

The EU noted a considerable increase in the Secretariat and Global Mechanism (GM) budgets and suggested, with the AFRICAN GROUP, JAPAN, and IRAN, discussion of such budget-related issues in small contact groups. The AFRICAN GROUP sought clarification on the 126% increase for the GM and stressed, with SYRIA, the need to separate Asia and Africa under the GM core staffing. With EGYPT, SENEGAL and others he: sought the GM's explanation for its proposed budget increase; stressed that the GM is not a financing mechanism, but an institution aimed at mobilizing resources; and with BOTSWANA, KENYA, BURUNDI and others, said he could not justify a GM staff increase. SENEGAL said the GM can serve as a financing mechanism. TANZANIA said some of the envisioned GM activities may fall under what the GEF could fund. Urging a practical approach, EGYPT proposed separating the GM and Secretariat's budgets into two documents and establishing a fixed timeframe for the completion of the GM operational strategy. CHINA said the staff increase was too sudden, but he could consider a gradual increase and stressed the need for technology transfer. KAZAKHSTAN supported an increase in GM staff and underscored its role as a facilitator for negotiations with donors.

Executive Secretary Diallo noted the CCD's modest financial contributions for NAPs compared to similar conventions and stressed the need for resources for positions approved at COP-3 in fulfillment of CCD statutory functions to provide support and advice for NAP preparation. GM's Per Rydén welcomed collaboration with the GEF and said the increase in budget and staff were based on an increased workload requested by the COP.

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Two contact groups on programme and budget and review of CCD implementation were set up, in addition to the existing contact group on legal issues, to further consideration of this item. Patrick Szell (UK) was nominated as chair of the contact group on legal matters.

**Regional Coordination Units (RCUs):** Delegates briefly considered the report (ICCD/COP(5)/2/Add.5). The G-77/CHINA, as well as MONGOLIA, MEXICO, CUBA, KAZAKHSTAN and UZBEKISTAN, supported the need for RCUs and their financing, explaining that the RCU's had proved both effective and efficient. Drawing attention to CCD Article 7, KENYA said RCU's should indicate their strategy for SRAP and NAP support.

**Status of Contributions to the Convention's Trust Funds:** Chair Jabbari introduced the report (ICCD/COP(5)/2/Add.6). Executive Secretary Diallo urged Parties to pay their contributions on time. Some countries asked the Secretariat to confirm receipt of their funds.

### COMMITTEE ON SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

**Election of the Vice-Chairs and Adoption of the Agenda and Organization of Work:** CST Chair Philbert Brown (Jamaica) called the first session of the CST to order. Delegates elected four CST Vice-Chairs: Moussa Hassane (Niger) for the Africa Group; Abdel-Majid Khabour (Jordan) for the Asia Group; Marija Vihovane (Croatia) for the Eastern European Group; and Helmut Woehl (Germany) for the WEOG. Helmut Woehl will also function as Rapporteur. Delegates then adopted the agenda and organization of work (ICCD/COP(5)/CST/1), with minor scheduling changes.

**Report of the Bureau of the CST:** Olanrewaju Smith (Canada), Chair of CST-4, reported on the work of the Bureau, noting its meeting in Geneva from 14-15 August. He said the Bureau had: noted the report of the *ad hoc* panel on early warning systems (EWS) and suggested ground-level testing; noted the lack of funding for phase two of the survey and evaluation of existing networks; expressed concern at the low level of response from Parties regarding strategies for the communication of information; and stressed collaboration with the Millennium Ecosystem Assessment.

**Survey and Evaluation of Networks:** The Secretariat highlighted the revised proposal for Phase Two, focusing on Anglo-phone countries in southern Africa (ICCD/COP(5)/CST/3). UNEP outlined the proposal's objective of reducing costs without affecting the output level.

NAMIBIA expressed support for the revised proposal. CILSS expressed reservations about reducing the cost of the program without studying the funding constraints. FRANCE highlighted the lack of information on Phase One of the project. GERMANY expressed the need to rely more on regional organizations, questioning whether the project could be implemented on a global scale. The Secretariat, noting that the program's mandate has been endorsed by all Parties, stressed the need to refine the pilot project's methodologies through a second phase. He suggested that doubts about Phase One might reflect a lack of information, and said an assessment was available.

UNEP said refining the methodologies would make the project scalable and encouraged Parties to review the assessment of Phase One. The US, supported by CANADA, said lack of understanding of the project's aims hindered further advance. With the COMMONWEALTH SECRETARIAT, he expressed satisfaction with the evaluation report of Phase One and urged support of Phase Two. Chair Brown concluded by noting agreement for furthering the work of the Consortium.

**Establishment of a Roster of Experts:** The Secretariat introduced the document on the maintenance of the roster of experts (ICCD/COP(5)/5/Add.1), noting the roster was set up and maintained by the Secretariat, based on nominations from Parties, and

aims to ensure geographic representation, gender balance and distribution of disciplines. He said the roster is available on the CCD website and is updated continually.

The ARAB CENTER FOR STUDIES OF ARID ZONES AND DRY LANDS called on countries to provide more detail regarding the area of specialization of their experts, to make the roster more useful. BURKINA FASO questioned how much the roster is used.

In response to a question by CANADA on civil society nominees, the Secretariat said only two countries had included NGOs. CILSS suggested that NGOs accredited with the CCD could appoint experts to diversify the roster. SENEGAL underscored the responsibility of countries to involve and put forward NGO experts.

**Improving the Efficiency and Effectiveness of the CST:** The Secretariat presented a report synthesized from the seven submissions it received (ICCD/COP(5)/3/Add.2). Points of general agreement included reforms based on the existing mandate of the CST and smaller scientific and technical groups reflecting geographical diversity. Proposals differed regarding how experts should be selected. Other concerns included the political nature of discussion within the CST, the competence and continuity of representation to the CST, and interlinkages with other environmental conventions.

A proposal by the EU suggests the formation of a task force composed of a group of panels, organizing the program of work around knowledge, impact, mitigation and results. Alternate language calls for the formation of a group of experts organized around themes, activities and priorities identified annually within the CST.

Delegates expressed viewpoints on the challenges of selecting experts for the proposed small group, especially with respect to the complexity of desertification issues. Concerns over designation of terms of reference for such a body included the range of potential topics and the need to realize synergies with other conventions and initiatives. Methodological issues for mobilizing resources and integrating the work of the CST into the COP were also raised.

Chair Brown noted progress in clarifying proposals and finding common positions in the discussion. A contact group composed of the members of the current CST Bureau and one additional member of each regional group was formed to resolve language on the report to the COP.

### IN THE CORRIDORS

The diplomatic gloves came off in the afternoon COW session in a scene one delegate adequately described as an hour of "Global Mechanism bashing." In a rare display of delegates "speaking their minds," many expressed dissatisfaction with the GM's massive budget increase and attempts to formulate their own mandate without the consent of the Parties. Some delegates speculated that the harsh criticism of the GM reflected developing country annoyance at the grouping of North Africa with Asia in the GM's internal structure, and at the same time the growing confidence that the GEF may soon become the Convention's financing mechanism.

### THINGS TO LOOK FOR TODAY

**COW:** The COW will meet in a morning session at 10:00 am in Conference Room XVIII to consider the AHWG COP-3 and -4 reports and to consider additional institutional mechanisms to assist the COP in reviewing the implementation of the Convention.

The three contact groups on programme and budget, legal matters and review of implementation will meet in the afternoon.

**CST:** The Group will convene at 10:00 am and at 3:00 pm in Conference Room XII to consider benchmarks and indicators, traditional knowledge, proposals on how to revise the national reports' help guide, strategies for communication of information, early warning systems and the Millennium Ecosystem Assessment.