



CCD COP-5 HIGHLIGHTS: 4 OCTOBER 2001

The Committee on Science and Technology (CST) met in morning and afternoon sessions and considered benchmarks and indicators, the future work programme of the CST and its group of experts, and adopted draft decisions on most of its agenda items for transmission to the COP. The Committee of the Whole (COW) met in the afternoon and considered the review of available information regarding CCD financing and progress made by affected countries in CCD implementation, and adjourned early to pave the way for contact group meetings on legal matters and the committee on the review of implementation (CRIC). The contact group on programme and budget met in an evening session. Regional groups met in the morning to consult on issues under consideration by the COW contact groups.

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

REVIEW OF AVAILABLE INFORMATION

REGARDING CCD FINANCING: CCD Executive Secretary Diallo introduced the report (ICCD/COP(5)/3/Add.3). He highlighted action on decisions taken at the November 2000 GEF Council and CCD COP-4, and reported on follow-up action to the May 2001 GEF Council decisions, which agreed that designating land degradation as a focal area should be pursued as a means for enhancing GEF support for CCD implementation. He also requested the preparation of a detailed note to elaborate the modalities for designating land degradation as a GEF focal area for consideration at the GEF Council's December 2001 meeting and October 2002 Assembly.

The G-77/CHINA, along with GRULAC, MAURITANIA, CUBA, ST. VINCENT AND THE GRENADINES, HONDURAS, MALAWI, LIBYA, COSTA RICA, MALI, THE BAHAMAS, THE DOMINICAN REPUBLIC, MEXICO, URUGUAY, and others, stressed the need to designate the GEF as the main financial mechanism for CCD implementation. NEPAL, ZIMBABWE, MOROCCO and others expressed hope that future GEF funding would be instrumental in implementing NAPs. ARGENTINA, TUNISIA, and others said GEF funding for the CCD should be on the same basis as other environmental conventions, such as Climate Change and Biodiversity. The EU welcomed strengthening the efforts of the GEF to finance land degradation activities, but said the COP should look to other multilateral agencies. SWITZERLAND said it would be premature to designate the GEF as the CCD's principal financial mechanism, as *inter alia*, it only covers additional project costs. NORWAY noted that the COP

should not preempt decisions to be made by the GEF and added that the GM should continue to play a central role in mobilizing funding. AUSTRALIA, with the US and CANADA, encouraged the Secretariat to work closely with the GEF on modalities for designating land degradation as a GEF focal area, but said that any COP decisions should await confirmation of the GEF Council and Assembly. CCD Executive Secretary Diallo said that the Secretariat will proceed with negotiations, but stressed that the GEF is not a short-cut solution.

PROGRESS MADE BY AFFECTED COUNTRY

PARTIES IN CCD IMPLEMENTATION: The Secretariat presented its report (ICCD/COP(5)/3), containing a partial account of its support, following Party requests, for national, subregional and regional activities. He drew attention to the complementary informational AHWG report to COP-5 (ICCD/COP(4)/AHWG/6).

MOROCCO and TUNISIA suggested updating the report to cover all activities undertaken before COP-5. MALAWI noted successful incorporation of NAP activities in its cooperation framework with the African Caribbean, Pacific and the EU (ACP/EU) "Cotonou Agreement." Executive Secretary Diallo expressed hope that such cooperation would take place within a wider context including with the World Bank and UNDP poverty eradication initiatives.

COMMITTEE ON SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

BENCHMARKS AND INDICATORS: Discussion of this issue continued from Wednesday with statements by delegates. Parties commended CILSS and OSS on their work, and ETHIOPIA, CHILE and ZAMBIA expressed interest in promoting similar initiatives in their own regions. BURKINA FASO, TURKEY, GERMANY, FRANCE, CAPE VERDE, DENMARK, MEXICO and the INTERNATIONAL NGO NETWORK ON DESERTIFICATION AND DROUGHT (RIOD) noted needs for: national capacity building; financial support; attention from decision makers; harmonization between actors; coordination and decentralization of data; strengthened regional cooperation; civil society indicators and involvement; and information sharing mechanisms.

NAMIBIA asked that parties share information on grassroots indicators. MOROCCO highlighted inter-regional differences in causes of desertification, the need to coordinate NAPs to facilitate regional cooperation, and the need to strengthen proven organizations for country support. The EUROPEAN COMMISSION noted

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its development of a new research project on impact indicators. CANADA, GERMANY and MEXICO advocated strong follow-up measures by the CST.

FUTURE WORK PROGRAMME OF THE CST: The Secretariat recalled a COP decision stating that each CST session consider a priority item, and delegates discussed possible topics for the next CST session. NAMIBIA highlighted proposals on, *inter alia*, new and renewable energy and promotion of alternative livelihoods. The EU, with wide support from other participants, suggested the topic of land degradation. This triggered discussion of the concept's definition and relation to desertification. ISRAEL noted links between land degradation and unsustainable pastoralist and agricultural practices and supported focusing on alternative livelihoods. JAPAN and others supported attention to synergies between the Rio Conventions. NORWAY, with other delegates, proposed an integrated evaluation of early warning systems, benchmarks and indicators, and traditional knowledge. PERU highlighted land degradation in highland areas as a potential topic. EGYPT and NIGER supported focus on success stories of land rehabilitation. ARGENTINA called for the consideration of indicators for monitoring and evaluation. The Secretariat assured delegates that monitoring and follow-up of previous topics are included in the work plan. A small contact group was created, and returned with a proposed CST topic on "land degradation, vulnerability and rehabilitation: an integrated approach," which was adopted.

Delegates then discussed the establishment of a work programme for a smaller group of experts under the CST. Delegates noted the subject must emanate from national reports, but felt a precise definition for the work was premature. MOZAMBIQUE questioned whether the group of experts should focus on the same topic as had been defined for the CST for the subsequent year, but the Secretariat noted their different mandates and time spans. MOROCCO, supported by the EU and JAPAN, noted that the group of experts should operationalize the Convention in a concrete way. A US draft decision requesting Parties to submit proposals on the topic through the regional groups by 31 January 2002 was adopted. The CST Bureau will consider the proposals and determine the group of experts' terms of reference and, with the regional groups and the Secretariat, select the experts.

DRAFTING OF THE REPORT TO THE CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES: The CST considered and adopted draft decisions to be transmitted to the COP relating to most of its agenda items considered during its session (ICCD/COP(5)/L. 1-7). The decisions cover: the survey and evaluation of existing networks, institutions, agencies and bodies; the roster of independent experts; review and implementation of scientific and technological aspects of national reports; traditional knowledge; early warning systems; the Dryland Degradation Assessment and the Millennium Ecosystem Assessment; and improving the efficiency and effectiveness of the CST. During the discussion, minor changes were made to the draft decisions. On the draft decision on the survey and evaluation of existing networks, NORWAY proposed an amendment to fund this project from the Convention's core budget rather than through voluntary contributions. The EU raised strong objections and the proposal was dropped. On the draft decision on the roster of independent experts, a proposal by BURKINA FASO that countries be requested to report on their use of the roster was adopted. On the draft decision on traditional knowledge, delegates debated removing a reference to the GM in exploration of partnerships, but resolved to keep the reference. The adoption of the three final draft decisions on the programme of work of the CST, on the programme of work of the group of experts, and on benchmarks and indicators, were deferred until Friday.

CONTACT GROUPS

The contact group on programme and budget met in the evening to hear the Secretariat's clarifications on a number of specific items. Another contact group is expected to convene Friday to discuss further outstanding issues.

Primarily due to the pending issue of the committee on the review of implementation of the CCD (CRIC), the contact group on legal matters agreed to have only general discussion and not seek agreement on Articles 27 (measures to resolve questions on implementation) and 28 (settlement of disputes). Discussion on Article 27 centered on the scope of the resolution of questions and whether compliance was linked to Articles 22 (COP), 26 (communication of information) and 28 (settlement of disputes). With regard to scope, delegates discussed whether "resolution of questions" referred to the overall review of CCD implementation or to individual country compliance. Regarding Article 28, there was brief general debate on whether the Article was sufficiently independent of Article 27 to warrant conclusion. Despite apparent consensus emerging on its independence, discussion was deferred, pending the outcome of the CRIC. The group is likely to adopt a decision that calls for further consideration of this issue by the *Ad Hoc* Group of Experts at COP-6.

The contact group on the CRIC met briefly and agreed that regional groups should submit their views in writing, to enable the preparation of a draft document that would serve as the basis for a Friday discussion. The draft document is expected to contain an introduction and regional proposals. The three broad preferences for the CRIC are to have: a full-fledged intersessional body to review implementation and address all aspects of the process; a body that is limited both in its scope of review and time, and possibly a reformed CST to carry out this review function; and an intersessional body whose permanence or *ad hoc* nature is still undetermined.

IN THE CORRIDORS

The corridors were relatively quiet as the better part of Thursday's morning and afternoon COW sessions were dedicated to regional and informal consultations on the outstanding contact group issues. At the same time, the CST struggled to conclude its work.

There was, however, much activity as the two-day interparliamentary Round Table got off to a good start, with over 30 parliamentarians from around the world in attendance. Within the overall COP-5 theme of poverty, sustainable development and desertification, the Round Table's discussion focused on synergies between the CCD and other conventions, and on Friday will discuss the GEF as the CCD financing mechanism. The Round Table is expected to prepare and present its draft declaration to the COP on Friday.

THINGS TO LOOK FOR TODAY

PLENARY: Plenary will meet at 10:00 am in Conference Room XVIII to devote time to an NGO open dialogue session. It will reconvene in the same room at 3:00 pm to: adopt the report of the CST; conclude the accreditation of NGOs; hear statements by Parties and observers, including the Director-General of the FAO; possibly hear the report from the interparliamentary Round Table; and hear a progress report of the COW.

COW: Following adjournment of the afternoon Plenary, the COW will meet to review the report of the GM, Rule 47 of the procedures and the report of the contact group on legal matters.

CST: The CST is scheduled to meet for an hour at 10:00 am in Conference Room XII, to adopt the three outstanding draft decision on the programme of work of the CST and of the group of experts, and on benchmarks and indicators.