



## CCD COP-5 HIGHLIGHTS: WEDNESDAY, 10 OCTOBER 2001

Delegates met in morning and evening sessions to conclude the High Level Special Segment, and also adopted a draft decision on the fourth interparliamentary Round Table. Delegates also met in the afternoon for an open NGO dialogue to consider the inclusion of NGOs within the official COP work programme. Informal contact groups on the committee for the review of implementation (CRIC) and on programme and budget issues continued, but did not conclude their deliberations.

### HIGH LEVEL SPECIAL SEGMENT

During the morning session, delegates at the High Level Special Segment adopted a draft COP decision on the fourth Round Table of Parliamentarians (ICCD/COP(5)/L.13). The Parliamentarian Declaration notes, *inter alia*, deep alarm at increasing environmental degradation, particularly desertification, which "threatens the very basis of life on earth," and affirms the commitment to contribute fully to CCD implementation, including support for making land degradation a GEF focal area. The COP decision takes note of the Declaration and annexes it to the COP-5 report.

**GENERAL STATEMENTS:** COP-5 President Charles Basset opened the final day of the High Level Special Segment on CCD implementation. Many speakers highlighted NAP-related activities and noted the linkages between the CCD and other MEAs. Developing country representatives, in particular, called for more financial support and capacity building. A number of delegates welcomed a GEF proposal to designate land degradation as a focal area for funding. The role of civil society and NGOs was also recognized.

SENEGAL highlighted the benefits of decentralization in helping local communities manage their resources, and YEMEN reported on the role of its Ministry of Agriculture and Irrigation as a desertification focal point. INDIA outlined the cross-sectoral Integrated Watershed Programme and land rejuvenation and stressed the need to empower women. Noting its numerous historical and cultural heritage sites threatened by desertification, MYANMAR elaborated on its Three-Year Greening Project. SYRIA linked desertification issues to military occupation and emphasized the need for peace and respect for civil rights in land rehabilitation. ITALY said the GEF should not be the sole funding source for the CCD and announced a doubling of Italy's voluntary contribution.

The UN INTERNATIONAL STRATEGY FOR DISASTER REDUCTION called for strengthening synergies with the CCD, and between disaster destruction strategies and socio-economic and humanitarian fields. The LEAGUE OF ARAB STATES called for securing funding to implement monitoring and rehabilitation activities. BOTSWANA said resources should be made available to strengthen the capacity of the Secretariat and GM. The ORGANIZATION OF AFRICAN UNITY called for predictable financial resources for CCD implementation.

The ARAB ORGANIZATION OF AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT supported regional and subregional coordination and the preparation of NAPs, and the RAMSAR CONVENTION highlighted linkages with the CCD through, *inter alia*, cooperation on the Millennium Ecosystem Assessment and at the country level.

PALESTINE reported difficulties in combating desertification and land degradation due to the "occupation and military blockade." The INTERNATIONAL CENTER FOR AGRICULTURAL RESEARCH IN THE DRY AREAS reported on its work to improve germplasm and natural resource management. ETHIOPIA stressed the importance of financial support to effectively implement NAPs. ARGENTINA highlighted the participatory process in combating desertification, and noted its involvement in South-South cooperation. BURUNDI emphasized grassroots activities and called on Parties to mobilize more resources.

Noting their geographic isolation, SAMOA and FIJI called for assistance in formulating integrated subregional and regional programmes. CYPRUS stressed the need for increased public awareness and the inclusion of civil society in combating desertification.

RWANDA noted efforts to fight poverty, food insecurity and environmental degradation following the 1994 genocide. PAKISTAN called for technical and financial support. The REPUBLIC OF KOREA highlighted constraints in accessing technology, and noted the involvement of its private sector in CCD implementation.

CAPE VERDE said it had started implementing its NAP, although resource mobilization remains a key issue. INDONESIA recommended that COP-5 adopt decisions that would ensure an appropriate focus on desertification at the WSSD. EGYPT stressed the need to avoid duplication of work, and CAMBODIA highlighted intensifying drought and flooding as a result of soil erosion. The GAMBIA noted the importance of a cross-sectoral legal framework, and ALGERIA highlighted cross-boundary aspects of desertification and close integration of its NAP and SRAP. BANG-

This issue of the *Earth Negotiations Bulletin* © <enb@iisd.org> is written and edited by Jenny Mandel <jenny@iisd.org>, Wagaki Mwangi <wagaki@iisd.org>, Mark Schulman <mark@iisd.org> and Chris Spence <chris@iisd.org>. The Digital Editor is David Fernau <david@iisd.org>. The Operations Manager is Marcela Rojo <marcela@iisd.org> and the On-Line Assistant is Diego Noguera <diego@iisd.org>. The Editor is Pamela S. Chasek, Ph.D. <pam@iisd.org> and the Director of IISD Reporting Services is Langston James "Kimo" Goree VI <kimo@iisd.org>. The Sustaining Donors of the *Bulletin* are the Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Government of Canada (through CIDA), the United States (through USAID), the Swiss Agency for Environment, Forests and Landscape (SAEFL), the United Kingdom (through the Department for International Development - DfID, and the Foreign & Commonwealth Office), the European Commission (DG-ENV), the Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and the Government of Germany (through German Federal Ministry of Environment - BMU, and the German Federal Ministry of Development Cooperation - BMZ). General Support for the *Bulletin* during 2001 is provided by the Ministries of Foreign Affairs and Environment of Finland, the Government of Australia, the Ministry of Environment and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Sweden, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade of New Zealand, the Ministries of Foreign Affairs and Environment of Norway, Swan International, and the Japan Environment Agency (through the Institute for Global Environmental Strategies - IGES.) The *Bulletin* can be contacted by e-mail at <enb@iisd.org> and at tel: +1-212-644-0204; fax: +1-212-644-0206. IISD can be contacted by e-mail at <info@iisd.ca> and at 161 Portage Avenue East, 6th Floor, Winnipeg, Manitoba R3B 0Y4, Canada. The opinions expressed in the *Earth Negotiations Bulletin* are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the views of IISD and other funders. Excerpts from the *Earth Negotiations Bulletin* may be used in non-commercial publications only and only with appropriate academic citation. For permission to use this material in commercial publications, contact the Director of IISD Reporting Services. Electronic versions of the *Bulletin* are sent to e-mail distribution lists and can be found on the Linkages WWW server at <http://www.iisd.ca>. The satellite image was taken above Geneva ©2001 The Living Earth, Inc. <http://livingearth.com>. For information on the *Earth Negotiations Bulletin* or to arrange coverage of a meeting, conference or workshop, send e-mail to the Director, IISD Reporting Services at <kimo@iisd.org>.



LADESH focused on population density and the need to increase land productivity, while ISRAEL highlighted its efforts to promote regional coordination.

**OPEN NGO DIALOGUE:** COP-5 President Basset invited NGO representatives and government delegates to discuss civil society involvement in CCD implementation. CCD Executive Secretary Diallo highlighted the need for civil society involvement in the preparation of national reports and action programmes.

Zakiya Uzoma-Wadada (Caribbean Network for Integrated Rural Development) outlined key requirements for effective NGO consultation, and expressed hope that this dialogue would produce tangible recommendations and results. Tsaruk Oleg (International Central Asian Network on Biodiversity) highlighted NGO integration in government efforts as a result of CCD activities, but noted obstacles related to the legal status of NGOs and allocation of project funds. Jürgen Gliese (AG Desertifikation/Forum Umwelt & Entwicklung) presented results from a survey of German NGOs noting, *inter alia*, low awareness of linkages with the CCD, need for capacity building at the government and NGO levels in developing countries, and the value of support for NGO involvement in policy making.

Octavio Perez Pardo of ARGENTINA said civil society organizations (CSOs) can play an important role in: ensuring continuity of CCD implementation, despite changes in government administrations; creating CCD awareness among peers; and channeling resources to local activities. Sina Maiga (Association de Formation et d'Appui au Développement) and Anne Mossige (Drylands Coordination Group) presented findings from studies in Mali and Ethiopia identifying lessons on the participation of CSOs and local level actors in CCD implementation. Maiga recommended that CSOs facilitate, *inter alia*, resource mobilization, capacity building and training, communication, experience sharing, and coordination with national- and regional-level actors. Mossige reported a relative lack of civil society involvement in NAP development in Ethiopia due to deficiencies in resources, issue awareness and coordination. She proposed strengthening donor support and NGO-government coordination, and mainstreaming a bottom-up approach.

Noting democratization, political will, and adequate funding as prerequisites for active NGO involvement, Juan Luis Mérega (Fundacion del Sur) highlighted measures to strengthen civil society participation, including: improving NGO-government cooperation; effecting a bottom-up approach; increasing NGO capacity to act at a local level; and raising public awareness.

In the ensuing discussion, several delegations, including MAURITANIA, SENEGAL and CHINA, highlighted the useful CSO input in CCD implementation. ETHIOPIA, with others, recommended, *inter alia*: that donors earmark a significant percentage of desertification-related funding for government and civil society activities at the local level and assist affected country Parties develop monitoring mechanisms; and that affected Parties allocate a significant percentage of funds to addressing social and environmental issues relating to land degradation, and clearly identify stakeholders' roles and responsibilities. Several subsequent speakers endorsed these recommendations. SWEDEN drew attention to work on indicators already undertaken by the Global Coalition for Africa. NORWAY called for government-NGO cooperation in developing indicators and, with DENMARK, emphasized NGO capacity building. SENEGAL called for models of effective partnerships with NGOs and with vulnerable groups.

MALI, NIGER and BURKINA FASO highlighted lack of funding as a critical obstacle for NGOs and for developing country governments. The UGANDA WOMEN TREE PLANTING MOVEMENT asked for support to the RIOD Women's Network to

showcase best practices on CCD implementation at the WSSD. MAURITANIA challenged the involvement of foreign NGOs in the South, where there are capable indigenous NGOs.

Regarding CSO-NGO collaboration, ENDA-TM said perceptions about CSOs need to be altered so that the complementary roles of NGOs and governments are recognized. UZBEKISTAN called for a pragmatic and business-like relationship, while RIOD EASTERN EUROPE labeled collaboration a "one-sided love affair," and urged closer collaboration and a focus on joint programmes. The SOCIETY FOR CONSERVATION AND PROTECTION OF THE ENVIRONMENT noted the absence of CSOs at the provincial and national levels.

Underscoring the difficult role of NGOs in both expressing and shaping the opinions of those they represent, COP-5 President Basset said a Chair's summary of the discussion will be produced, incorporating the proposals made by Ethiopia.

### CONTACT GROUPS

The contact group on programme and budget addressed substantive issues including NAP implementation, CRIC and CST support, synergies with other conventions, and WSSD preparation. Some delegates expressed concerns at the lack of progress, as new proposals have been introduced, and questioned whether it will be possible to conclude work by the close of COP-5. New proposals for the budget increase now range from 0% to 30%. Other disputed issues included budget priorities, and whether to determine the overall budget level before determining priority areas for spending.

Informal consultations between the US and the CST bureau to resolve language on Annex I of the draft decision on improving the efficiency and effectiveness of the CST (ICCD/COP(5)/L.7) were also held on Tuesday, with participants reaching agreement on outstanding issues. Negotiators agreed that the group of experts to be established under the CST will be selected by the CST Bureau on a one-time basis, and subsequently will be selected by the CST body for COP approval. The group's programme of work will last four years, after which time its functioning will be reviewed. The composition will be based on equitable geographical distribution.

### IN THE CORRIDORS

Despite claims that the CCD is one of the most NGO-friendly MEAs, some participants have observed a relatively low NGO profile at COP-5. As delegates stressed the importance of civil society in the High Level Special Segment, several NGOs noted, ironically, that they had been confined to the gallery for most of its sessions. Other NGO representatives were disappointed at the low attendance at the second NGO dialogue and the absence of the kind of participatory role enjoyed in past COPs and in other MEAs. Nonetheless, several participants observed that, in spite of these reported difficulties, NGOs have been working diligently and successfully behind the scenes, forwarding their recommendations through country representatives.

Commenting on the morning High Level Special Segment, some observers expressed surprise that the report of the Round Table of Parliamentarians was introduced and adopted, noting that it was not on the agenda, and that the decision should have been channeled through the COW.

### THINGS TO LOOK FOR TODAY

**COW:** The COW will resume at 10:00 am and 3:00 pm in Conference Room XVIII to consider the review of the report and specific conclusions and recommendations of the GM, review of activities for the promotion and strengthening of relationships with other relevant conventions, international organizations and agencies, and to consider Rule 47 under the Rules of Procedure.

**CONTACT GROUPS:** The contact group on the CRIC and programme and budget are expected to meet again Thursday.