



CCD COP-6 HIGHLIGHTS TUESDAY, 26 AUGUST 2003

Delegates to COP-6 met in morning and afternoon sessions and began their deliberations in the Committee of the Whole (COW), the Committee for Science and Technology (CST), and the Committee for the Review of the Implementation of the Convention (CRIC). The morning Plenary heard statements from Parties, UN agencies and observer organizations, and was followed by the opening of the COW, in which the programme budget was discussed. The CST met in morning and afternoon sessions to address the roster of independent experts, the survey and evaluation of existing networks, and improving the efficiency and effectiveness of the CST. The CRIC met in an afternoon session to adopt the organization of work, consider the CRIC-1 report, and begin a first reading of draft decisions.

COP PLENARY

MOROCCO, for the G-77/CHINA, underscored the importance of regional coordination units to assist in implementing the CCD, and the GEF's offer to become one of the CCD's financial mechanisms. He urged renewed support from the GM's partners. ITALY, for the EU, noted that the CCD is an important tool to assist in achieving the Millennium Declaration goals. Noting that the CCD Secretariat's budget cannot be exempted from the "financial reality faced by the world," he said there is a need for more transparency, justification of all expenses, and more information on the Secretariat's sources of income and savings. ARMENIA, for the Central and Eastern European Group, highlighted the importance of implementing the CCD through regional and sub-regional cooperation. He stressed that no countries are immune to the natural process of desertification and called on COP-6 to make a "seminal contribution" to the common cause of combating desertification.

SYRIA, for the Asian Group, identified the designation of the GEF as a financial mechanism of the CCD as a turning point in the implementation of the CCD. SWAZILAND, for the African Group, said that the review of the policies and activities of the GM should result in a renewed and delivery-oriented institution. CHILE, for the Latin American and Caribbean Group, highlighted the importance of addressing land degradation in small island developing States and expressed hope that the GEF will become an effective mechanism to support the CCD's implementation. UNESCO highlighted its work in promoting capacity building and environmental education programmes. FAO stressed combating land degradation as a prerequisite for increasing food security. UNDP underscored the CCD as an important tool for achieving the Millennium Declaration goals relating to poverty alleviation, eradicating hunger, and ensuring environmentally sustainable develop-

ment. The WORLD FOOD PROGRAMME highlighted the importance of improving food security and livelihoods of people living in degraded areas. A representative of the NGO community suggested that Parties' military expenditures be channeled to a UN fund, and a tax on international financial transactions be established.

COW

PROGRAMME AND BUDGET: Chair Ositadinma Anaedu (Nigeria) opened the first meeting of the COW. CANADA, as the outgoing Chair of JUSSCANNZ, identified a number of questions and information requests pertaining to the biennium budget, *inter alia*, that the Secretariat provide an updated table highlighting the status of contributions and the indicative scale of contributions, and provide an organizational chart reflecting the institutional linkages between the six decentralized offices and Secretariat headquarters. Regarding the working and operating reserves and overheads, he said that information provided in the budget document is not clear, and that information provided on the costs of the GM is incomplete. He said that unless these questions have been clarified, the Group would be unable to commence discussion on the budget. The G-77/CHINA stressed that the guiding principle on the budget should be how to render the work of the Secretariat more effective.

The EU said that the budget must be based on four overarching criteria: facilitation of the CCD's implementation; affordability; coherence with CRIC and CST decisions; and transparency and clarity. He stressed that the budget proposal does not meet these requirements and cannot be the basis for fruitful negotiations, and expressed disappointment that COP-5 decisions on budget reform have not been "fully respected." He proposed that COP-6 direct the Secretariat to investigate the advantages and institutional implications of adopting the Euro as the budget's currency. MAURITANIA said that the budget increase and staffing requirements are necessary for a solid implementation of the CCD. NORWAY, as the incoming Chair of JUSSCANNZ, noted some scepticism regarding the budget increase and identified the need to ensure efficiency and clear definition of roles of the different CCD bodies. Chair Anaedu announced that he would chair a contact group on the outcomes of the WSSD and other issues, and that John Ashe (Antigua and Barbuda) would chair a contact group on the programme budget.

CST

OPENING OF THE SESSION: Chair Riccardo Valentini (Italy) opened the first session of the CST. He emphasized that the CST must produce policy-relevant advice and contribute to the CCD's implementation. Stressing that the CST has an important

This issue of the *Earth Negotiations Bulletin*© <enb@iisd.org> is written and edited by Karen Alvarenga <karen@iisd.org>, Dagmar Lohan, Ph.D. <dagmar@iisd.org>, Lisa Schipper <lisa@iisd.org>, Richard Sherman <rsherman@iisd.org>, and Andrey Vavilov, Ph.D. <andrey@iisd.org>. The Digital Editor is Leslie Paas <leslie@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 Government of the United States of America (through the Department of State Bureau of Oceans and International Environmental and Scientific Affairs), The Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Government of Canada (through CIDA, DFAIT and Environment Canada), the Swiss Agency for Environment, Forests and Landscape (SAEFL), the United Kingdom (through the Department for International Development - DFID and Department for Environment Food and Rural Affairs - DEFRA), the European Commission (DG-ENV), the Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and the Government of Germany (through the German Federal Ministry of Environment - BMU, and the German Federal Ministry of Development Cooperation - BMZ). General Support for the *Bulletin* during 2003 is provided by the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), 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 Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Norway, Swan International, the Japanese Ministry of Environment (through the Institute for Global Environmental Strategies - IGES), the Japanese Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry (through the Global Industrial and Social Progress Research Institute - GISPRI), and the Ministry for Environment of Iceland. The opinions expressed in the *Earth Negotiations Bulletin* are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the views of IISD or other donors. Excerpts from the *Earth Negotiations Bulletin* may be used in non-commercial publications with appropriate academic citation. For information on the *Bulletin*, including requests to provide reporting services, contact the Director of IISD Reporting Services at <kimo@iisd.org>, +1-212-644-0217 or 212 East 47th St. #21F, New York, NY 10017, USA.



role to play in increasing synergies between the CCD, the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change and the Convention on Biological Diversity, he suggested that the CST draw on relevant aspects of other conventions to improve its agenda.

ELECTION OF VICE-CHAIRS: Delegates elected the following Vice-Chairs: for the African Group, Moussa Hassane (Niger) was re-elected; for the Asian Group, Sopon Chomchan (Thailand); for the Central and Eastern European Group, Pavol Bielek (Slovakia); and for the Latin American and Caribbean Group, Julio Roberto Cucurriche Gómez (Guatemala). Pavol Bielek was elected as Rapporteur.

ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA AND ORGANIZATION OF WORK: COLOMBIA and BRAZIL suggested deferring consideration of the agenda item on traditional knowledge until COP-7. The Secretariat clarified that this matter was a standing agenda item. The agenda and the organization of work (ICCD/COP(6)/CST/1) was adopted without amendment.

ROSTER OF INDEPENDENT EXPERTS: The Secretariat introduced the roster of experts, and urged greater representation in some disciplines, such as political science, anthropology and sociology. Participants requested information on how the roster is being used, and on ways of increasing NGO participation, updating experts' details, and improving gender balance. Delegates agreed to establish a group to consider these issues, and report back to the CST on Wednesday, 27 August.

SURVEY AND EVALUATION OF EXISTING NETWORKS, INSTITUTIONS, AGENCIES AND BODIES: SOUTH AFRICA, with others, commended the relevant project undertaken by UNEP and expressed interest in carrying it into its second phase. The EU and others acknowledged that it had not been possible to mobilize funding for the project. Chair Valentini established a group, with the participation of UNEP and interested countries, to look into the issue again and report to the CST on Wednesday, 27 August.

ENHANCING THE USEFULNESS AND EFFECTIVENESS OF THE CST: The Secretariat reviewed the reports of the CST Bureau and of the first meeting of the Group of Experts (GoE) on improving the efficiency and effectiveness of the CST. THE INTERNATIONAL NGO NETWORK ON DESERTIFICATION (RIOD) EUROPE expressed concern at the lack of NGO participation in the GoE. The GEF expressed hope that the CST would provide input into its operational programme on sustainable land management. David Mouat, Coordinator of the Facilitation Committee of the GoE, presented the GoE's preliminary report. Participants identified various priorities for the GoE's future work, including poverty, early warning systems, land degradation, conservation, drought, and sustainable dryland development. ZIMBABWE and BELGIUM noted the importance of ensuring that the GoE's final report be understandable to the layperson. GERMANY, with CUBA and UNESCO, emphasized the need to close the gap between scientific information available at the global level, and the ability to use it at the local level.

CRIC

ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA AND ORGANIZATION OF WORK: CRIC Chair Mohamed Mahmoud Ould El Ghaouth (Mauritania) opened the first meeting of the CRIC, expressing hope that the "good work" from CRIC-1 could be continued at CRIC-2. He outlined six draft decisions that he hoped would be forwarded to the COP for adoption. One draft decision is an omnibus decision on further steps in the implementation of the CCD. The other draft decisions address: overall review of the activities of the Secretariat and of the progress made by affected country Parties in the imple-

mentation of the CCD; implementation of the COP-4 Declaration on the commitments to enhance the implementation of the obligations of the CCD; review of the policies, operational modalities and activities of the GM; collaboration with the GEF; and the programme of work for CRIC-3. Participants then adopted the agenda and the organization of work (ICCD/CRIC(2)/1).

REVIEW OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE CCD AND OF ITS INSTITUTIONAL ARRANGEMENTS: Parties considered the report of CRIC-1. CANADA urged caution in the consideration of the recommendations in the report. The EU stressed that the CRIC should not duplicate the work of the COP. He welcomed the new GEF focal area, but underscored the importance of maintaining the independent status of international bodies when making arrangements among them. Welcoming the independent review of the GM, he said the GM continues to have a distinct and crucial role in mobilizing resources and building partnerships. Regarding the overall review of the activities of the Secretariat and of progress made by affected country Parties in implementing the CCD, the US highlighted a typographical error in the document, and said that reference should be made to "financial mechanisms" rather than "financial mechanism," as there are provisions for several financial mechanisms of the CCD. Delegates approved the document with this correction.

On the review of the report on enhanced implementation of the CCD's obligations, the EU asked for procedural clarification and Chair El Ghaouth said there are two procedures: one is to follow the agenda items consecutively when considering the formal reports; and another is to consider the draft decisions in an informal setting, paragraph-by-paragraph, page-by-page, to reach conclusions and transmit the recommendations to the COP. Delegates agreed to consider the first reading of the three draft decisions on the review of the CCD's implementation in an informal meeting.

Informal meeting: On the omnibus draft decision on further steps in the CCD's implementation, CHINA suggested language to the preamble reflecting the outcomes of the WSSD. The G-77/CHINA, supported by CANADA, suggested suspending the meeting to allow the various regional groups to consider the three texts. Delegates agreed, and the meeting was adjourned.

IN THE CORRIDORS

With all COP bodies finally established, the Parties settled into a structured discussion of the business at hand. COW Chair, and New York and Johannesburg veteran, Ositadinma Aneadu referred the budgetary issues, the WSSD outcomes and other items to two contact groups. These groups are bound to create much interest, as they will focus on a number of matters crucial to the future CCD implementation agenda. There are already indications that deliberations on the budget may not be easy riding for the Secretariat, and some delegations are clearly eager to inspect its suggestions with a magnifying glass. They believe that much more transparency is in order, whether in contributions, expenditures, or Secretariat staffing.

THINGS TO LOOK FOR TODAY

CRIC: The CRIC will meet from 10:00 am to 1:00 pm and from 3:00 pm to 6:00 pm. Issues to be discussed include the GM and the review of financing the CCD's implementation.

CST: The CST will meet from 10:00 am to 1:00 pm and from 3:00 pm to 6:00 pm to address benchmarks and indicators and early warning systems, among other things.

Please check the announcement screen and the Journal for further information.