



CCD COP-6 HIGHLIGHTS THURSDAY, 28 AUGUST 2003

Delegates met in morning and afternoon sessions of the COW and CST. Informal consultations on the programme and budget and the CRIC also took place. The COW considered: the Regional Coordination Units (RCUs); promotion and strengthening of relationships with other conventions and relevant international organizations, institutions and agencies; and additional procedures or institutional mechanisms to assist the COP in regularly reviewing the CCD's implementation. The CST deliberated the creation of *ad hoc* panels, and its future programme of work. The CRIC met in an informal consultation to begin negotiation on its draft decisions.

CST

CREATION OF AD HOC PANELS OF EXPERTS: CUBA reported on the working group's discussion regarding the maintenance and characteristics of the current roster of experts. He summarized the group's proposals for a draft decision, which includes: reviewing the roster of experts; adopting new recommendations aiming at greater participation of local communities, NGOs and other segments of civil society; ensuring balanced gender and geographical representation; and establishing a relationship between national focal points and the CCD Secretariat to periodically assess the work of the experts. NIGER and INDIA said addressing imbalances in the roster of experts is a responsibility of Parties. THE LEAGUE OF ARAB STATES suggested that the CST coordinators should rely more on the experts in the roster. The UK proposed checking the accuracy of the existing list of experts. KENYA said the national focal points could assist in addressing gender and geographical imbalances. A representative of the NGO community welcomed the working group's suggestion to include experts representing NGOs, local communities, farmers, and women as this would facilitate the implementation of local-level projects. Chair Valentini requested a small group to assist in drafting a decision on this issue.

David Muat, Coordinator of the Facilitation Committee of the Group of Experts (GoE), presented a proposal for increasing the GoE's effectiveness, highlighting the need to address: gaps in the use of available research results; linkages with other conventions and organizations; and financing and workload. FRANCE, CANADA, GERMANY, ITALY and NORWAY emphasized the importance of setting priorities in the GoE's work. GERMANY, with CUBA and NORWAY, stressed that the GoE's work should be based on existing scientific and technological information and that new pilot projects are not needed. CUBA, with SPAIN, highlighted the importance of identifying effective means through which the GoE can access existing information. COLOMBIA suggested that the GoE cooperate with relevant expert groups from

other international processes. NIGER underscored the importance of GoE funding, and TUNISIA suggested that the GoE address training of experts.

OTHER MATTERS: Chair Valentini said the contact group on traditional knowledge had decided that the Secretariat would invite Parties to express their views on this issue, which will be discussed at COP-7. COLOMBIA suggested that indigenous communities and relevant international organizations also be invited to submit their views. An NGO representative emphasized the need for updating the list of experts, including local experts that would enable an analysis of which traditional knowledge should be updated and which projects should be implemented. Chair Valentini said the mandate should specify the need for an analysis on the possibility of organizing a network for traditional knowledge in the context of the CCD, without addressing the substance of the issue. BELGIUM and GERMANY urged the GoE to provide guidance on the agenda for CST-7.

ROSTER OF INDEPENDENT EXPERTS: This draft decision was approved with minor textual amendments.

Draft decision: In the draft decision, the COP encourages Parties to revise, update and propose new candidates for the roster to achieve better representation of all relevant disciplines, women and a more balanced geographical distribution of NGOs. The COP also invites Parties to report to the Secretariat on their use of the roster and the CST, through its GoE, to fully utilize the roster to carry out the GoE's work.

SURVEY AND EVALUATION OF EXISTING NETWORKS, INSTITUTIONS, AGENCIES AND BODIES: The draft decision was approved with minor textual amendments.

Draft decision: In the draft decision, the COP requests the GM and other funding agencies, in close collaboration with the CCD Secretariat, to mobilize additional resources for the survey, and invites Parties to make voluntary contributions. The COP also requests the Secretariat to enter into contractual arrangements with UNEP for the second implementation phase of the survey.

EARLY WARNING SYSTEMS: This draft decision was approved without amendment.

Draft decision: In the draft decision, the COP invites Parties, according to their financial and technical capacities, to carry out pilot studies on early warning systems using recommendations of the *ad hoc* panel. It also encourages Parties and international organizations to provide technical and financial support to developing Parties wishing to carry out such pilot studies.

LAND DEGRADATION ASSESSMENT IN DRYLANDS AND THE MILLENNIUM ECOSYSTEM ASSESSMENT: On the involvement of the roster of experts, GERMANY and JAPAN suggested that the Secretariat facilitate linkages between

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.



the GoE and the LADA and MA. COLOMBIA, ISRAEL, CANADA and the US emphasized the active involvement of experts from the roster in the two assessments.

Draft decision: In the draft decision, the COP requests the CCD Executive Secretary to take necessary actions to strengthen the linkage between the work of the GoE, LADA and MA, and requests the LADA and MA to: involve the roster experts; include Parties' needs in their future work; report on progress at COP-7; and provide information on the role of the GoE and national focal points in carrying out their assessments.

PROGRAMME OF WORK OF THE CST: Parties approved the draft decision on the programme of work of the CST, with a minor amendment.

Draft decision: In the draft decision, the COP decides that the priority issue addressed by CST-6, "Land degradation, vulnerability and rehabilitation: an integrated approach," should be further discussed at CST-7. It encourages Parties to submit reports on case studies to the Secretariat prior to this time. The COP also requests the Secretariat to facilitate an intersessional CST Bureau meeting to review decisions taken by the COP regarding the CST's work, especially on the planning and organization of CST-7.

BENCHMARKS AND INDICATORS: On the draft decision on benchmarks and indicators, the Permanent Interstate Committee for Drought Control in the Sahel (CILSS) said it had collaborated with the Sahara and Sahel Observatory (OSS) in the development of benchmarks and indicators, and requested this be reflected in the draft decision. Parties then discussed whether to refer to the development, testing and use of appropriate benchmarks and indicators with particular emphasis on "impact indicators," or "indicators" in general. Parties agreed to refer to "impact indicators of the CCD." Regarding technical, scientific, and financial contributions to the initiatives undertaken by developing country Parties, delegates agreed to language inviting Parties, international organizations, and interested private and public entities to contribute. Chair Valentini said that two additional paragraphs had been proposed, and Parties agreed to discuss these on Friday, 29 August.

COW

REGIONAL COORDINATION UNITS: TUNISIA, CHILE, with many others, welcomed proposals on the RCUs. The EU supported regional coordination, but emphasized the need to avoid duplication. CHINA, with SYRIA, PAKISTAN and other delegations, argued for strengthening the three existing RCUs. MEXICO, UGANDA, the US, CANADA, and the ASIAN GROUP stressed the need to clearly define the terms of reference of the RCUs. NIGER suggested establishing RCUs in all regions, and the UKRAINE spoke on the possible functions of a coordination unit in Central and Eastern Europe. Several delegations requested more time to study the issue of RCUs.

RELATIONSHIPS WITH OTHER RELEVANT CONVENTIONS AND INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS: The EU reminded Parties of the different mandates of the three Rio conventions and of the need to avoid duplication of work. He suggested a focus on forests and forest ecosystems as a common topic. ZAMBIA proposed involving the FAO, and the DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF CONGO suggested establishing an *ad hoc* group to define projects that would comply with synergy requirements. The CBD Secretariat explained the Convention's current activities pertaining to dry and sub-humid lands.

ADDITIONAL PROCEDURES OR MECHANISMS TO ASSIST IN REVIEWING IMPLEMENTATION: The EU welcomed the relevant Secretariat paper and the suggestions it offered on criteria for reviewing the CRIC at COP-7, and said these

were a good basis for work. He asked the Secretariat to produce a draft decision on criteria. CANADA said it was largely in agreement with the suggested criteria.

INFORMAL MEETINGS

PROGRAMME AND BUDGET: The Secretariat and GM responded to questions raised by the EU and JUSSCANNZ in the COW plenary on Tuesday, 26 August. Their responses addressed, *inter alia*, voluntary contributions, scale of contributions, working capital reserve, staffing increases, programme support costs, currency fluctuations, RCUs, and recommendations from the UN auditors' report. Regarding arrears in contributions, the Secretariat noted that over 100 Parties have yet to fully meet their obligations. Several Parties made general statements highlighting the need for an effective and affordable Secretariat and work programme, and to avoid duplication between the activities of the CCD and GM. A group of Parties noted that it would table a draft decision requesting the Secretariat to initiate discussion on the possibility of changing the currency denomination of the Secretariat's budget.

CRIC: Parties met to discuss the draft decision on further steps in the implementation of the CCD, working through the text paragraph by paragraph. Delegates proposed amendments, and deliberated bracketing paragraphs containing reference to the GEF, until a final decision has been reached on the role of the GEF as a financial mechanism of the CCD. Negotiations continued into the night.

IN THE CORRIDORS

As expected, the informal consultations and the Secretariat's responses to Parties' questions on the programme and budget were greeted with the enthusiasm that one often finds in ring-side seats at a boxing match. To some observers, what was meant to be "a walk through the budget," was reminiscent of the "McCarthy hearings," with some country positions resembling "scorched earth" policy. There is also some healthy skepticism over proposals to change the currency denomination of the budget, and growing confusion over precedents cited for other conventions and organizations in the UN system, which had moved from the US dollar to host country currencies, or adopted scales of assessments to address currency fluctuations.

THINGS TO LOOK FOR TODAY

OPEN DIALOGUE SESSION: The open dialogue session between NGOs and governments will take place in Sala 1 from 10:00 am to 1:00 pm.

CST: The CST will convene from 10:00 am to 11:00 pm in Sala 4, to conclude its work and complete the draft decisions on benchmarks and indicators, and traditional knowledge.

CRIC: The CRIC will meet in Sala 1 from 3:00 pm to 6:00 pm to complete its work and approve the draft decisions.

COP PLENARY: A COP Plenary will take place in Sala 1 immediately after the CRIC to adopt the reports of the CST and CRIC.

CONTACT GROUPS: The contact group on the WSSD outcomes will convene from 10:00 am to 1:00 pm and from 3:00 pm to 6:00 pm. The group will take up the RCUs.

INFORMAL CONSULTATIONS: Informal consultations on the programme and budget will take place from 10:00 am to 1:00 pm and from 3:00 pm to 6:00 pm. Informal CRIC consultations on the draft decisions will convene from 10:00 am to 1:00 pm.